

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1269
ANSWERED ON:28.07.2015
Clearance for Hydropower Projects
Patil Shri Shivaji Adhalrao;Yadav Shri Dharmendra

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Union Government has decided to replace an expert panel with a body of technocrats to decide the fate of hydropower projects on the Ganga river;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Ministry has decided to review the clearances granted for power project on river Ganga;
- (d) if so, whether the Ministry of Power has opposed the expert committee recommendations;
- (e) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (f) the steps taken by the Government to settle these issues?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) & (b) No Madam. An Expert Body has been constituted by the Ministry in pursuance of orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court to examine the potential environmental impacts likely to be caused by certain hydropower projects in upper reaches of river Ganga in Uttarakhand. The Expert Group comprises of Technocrats, experts in the field of hydrology, biodiversity, blasting & tunneling, seismology, social science, glaciology and a representative each from Non-governmental Organization, Central Electricity Authority, Central Water Commission and State Government of Uttarakhand .

(c) to (f) Hon'ble Supreme Court in August, 2013 had directed the Ministry to examine likely impact of 24 hydroelectric power projects in the State of Uttarakhand which also included those few projects that had received approval from competent authorities. The Expert Group constituted by this Ministry in October, 2013 in pursuance of the above directions comprised a representative of Central Electricity Authority (CEA) – an organization under Ministry of Power. CEA in April, 2014 had submitted a dissent note opposing the recommendations of the Expert Group stating that all the environmental impacts likely to be caused by hydropower projects are possible to be mitigated.

The matter is pending in Supreme Court, and Government is in the process of conducting cumulative impact assessment (CIA) in river basins of upper reaches of Ganga.
