

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:224

ANSWERED ON:23.07.2014

IMPACT OF HYDRO POWER PROJECTS ON ENVIRONMENT

Khan Shri Md. Badariddoza

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

- (a) whether the Government has made any assessment of the cumulative impact of existing /under-construction hydro power projects on the environment;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any directive has also been issued to the Government by Supreme Court in this regard;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the action taken by the Government in this regard so far?

Answer

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

(a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) to (e) of Lok Sabha Starred Question No.224 on "Impact of Hydro Power Projects on Environment" raised by SHRI. MD. BADARUDDOZA KHAN to be answered on Wednesday, the 23rd July, 2014.

(a) & (b) Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun and an Inter-Ministerial Group headed by Shri. B. K. Chaturvedi have examined cumulative impact of hydropower projects on aquatic biodiversity, river ecology and environmental flow in Alaknanda & Bhagirathi rivers in the Himalayas. Simultaneously, carrying capacity studies in 7 river basins in Arunachal Pradesh, Teesta river basin in States of Sikkim & West Bengal, Chenab and Satluj river basins in Himachal Pradesh have been undertaken. These studies primarily examined the feasibility of development of hydropower in an environmentally sustainable manner.

(c) to (e) The Hon'ble Supreme Court vide Judgment dated 13.8.2013, directed Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF & CC) to constitute an Expert Body (EB) to make a detailed study as to whether Hydroelectric power projects, existing and under construction, have caused environmental degradation and if so to what extent, and also whether such projects have contributed to the tragedy which occurred in the month of June, 2013 in Uttarakhand. The direction also is to examine the impact of the proposed 24 hydropower projects on the biodiversity in Alaknanda and Bhagirathi River Basins.

Accordingly, MoEF & CC constituted an Expert Body (EB) and appointed Dr. Ravi Chopra as the Chairman along with 15 other members to undertake the study as directed by Supreme Court. The Expert Body submitted its report to MoEF & CC on 16.04.2014. Two members of the committee representing the Central Water Commission (CWC) & Central Electricity Authority (CEA) submitted a separate report with divergent views. These two reports were submitted to Hon'ble Supreme Court. On 7.5.2014, Hon'ble Supreme Court directed Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change to examine both the reports and submit before Court a firm and appropriate proposal. Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change has referred both these reports to a Consortium of IITs and a final view would be submitted to the Court in due course.