

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1983
ANSWERED ON:23.07.2014
UTTARAKHAND CALAMITY
Thakur Shri Anurag Singh;Venkatesh Babu Shri T.G.

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

- (a) whether the Government has set up a Committee/study group to ascertain the reasons for the devastating flash floods which had ravaged the State of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh in 2013;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the findings thereto;
- (c) whether felling of trees, setting up of hydro electric projects etc. have been identified as possible causes of such natural calamities; and
- (d) if so, the action taken by the Government to prevent the recurrence of such calamities?

Answer

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

(a) to (d) In compliance to Hon'ble Supreme Court Order dated 13.8.2013, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change had constituted an Expert Body (EB) and appointed Dr. Ravi Chopra as its Chairman along with 15 other members to undertake a detailed study as to whether Hydroelectric power projects- existing and under construction have contributed to the environmental degradations and contributed to the tragedy which occurred in the month of June, 2013 in Uttarakhand and if so, to what extent. The direction also is to examine the impact of the proposed 24 hydropower projects on the biodiversity in Alaknanda and Bhagirathi River Basins as identified by the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun.

The Expert Body submitted its report to MoEF & CC on 16.04.2014. Two members of the committee namely 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 75.2014, 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 Consortium of IITs and a final view would be filed before Court after having received and evaluated the report of the Consortium.