

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:235

ANSWERED ON:09.12.2014

CONSERVATION OF GLACIERS

Mahajan Smt. Poonam ;Nishank Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal

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

- (a) whether the Government has prepared any action plan for conservation/ sustainability of the glaciers in the Himalayan region;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including the number of glaciers in the said region;
- (c) whether the Gangotri glacier is rapidly melting due to global warming and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the measures taken by the Government to prevent melting of the Gangotri glacier?

Answer

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

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

Statement referred to in reply to Part (a) to (d) of Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 235 by Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' and Shrimati Poonam Mahajan regarding 'Conservation of Glaciers'

(a)& (b) The National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem under the National Action Plan on Climate Change aims at evolving management measures for sustaining and safeguarding the Himalayan glaciers and mountain ecosystem through enhanced monitoring of Himalayan ecosystem by establishment of monitoring network, promoting community based management, human resource development, and strengthening regional cooperation. Under the mission, a task force has been formulated to look into specific issues related to Himalayan glaciers and a National Centre for Glaciology is being set up. As per the glacier inventory prepared by Geological Survey of India, there are 9575 glaciers covering an area of 26766 sq. km in Indian Himalayan Region.

(c) As per the study conducted by the Geological Survey of India, majority of Himalayan glaciers including Gangotri are passing through a phase of recession, which is a worldwide phenomenon. The recession can be attributed to changing rainfall patterns, rising temperatures, etc. The retreat of glaciers is continuing but there has not been any alarming change in the rate of retreat of glaciers during the last couple of decades. Gangotri glacier is receding at an average rate of 18.8 meter per year during 1935-1996.

(d) Central and State Governments have taken steps to study the impact on glaciers and to suggest conservation measures. Government has prepared guidelines entitled 'Governance for Sustaining Himalayan Ecosystem' (G-SHE), which has been shared with all State Governments in the Himalayan Region.