

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 307
TO BE ANSWERED ON 31.03.2022

Ill-effects of climate change

307. SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH:

Will the MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any concrete policy has been formulated by the Ministry during the year 2021- 22 for water and environmental safety in Ganga- Himalayas keeping in view the ill-effects of climate change;
- (b) whether it is a fact that according to Ministry's Expert Appraisal Committee report, less than 30 per cent of construction work has been done in Vishugad-Pipalkoti dam project on Alaknanda, a tributary of Ganga; and
- (c) if so, whether the Ministry has given a fresh approval to the project without any public hearing, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI BHUPENDER YADAV)

- (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 307 DUE FOR REPLY ON 31.03.2022 RAISED BY SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH

(a) The Government is seized of the matter and addressing the challenge of the global climate change through its several programs and schemes. This includes inter alia implementation of the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) which comprises missions in specific areas of solar energy, energy efficiency, water, agriculture, Himalayan ecosystem, sustainable habitat, green India, and strategic knowledge on climate change. The NAPCC provides an overarching framework for all climate actions. Thirty-three States/Union Territories have prepared their State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC) in line with NAPCC taking into account the State specific issues relating to climate change. These SAPCCs outline sector-specific and cross-sectoral priority actions. The aforesaid national missions have been revised to align with India's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) up to 2030 under the aegis of the Paris Agreement.

(b) and (c) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has delineated a detailed procedure for comprehensive assessment of environmental and social impacts of the project/activity including hydro-power projects in the Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006, as amended; which inter-alia provides for preparation of Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Report, Environmental Management Plan (EMP), Disaster Management Plan (DMP) and Public Consultation.

Environmental Clearance (EC) to the Vishugad-Pipalkoti hydroelectric project was granted on 22nd August, 2007 with a validity period of 10 years, which was further extended for 3 years (up to 21st August, 2020) vide letter dated 25.04.2018 in terms of the provisions of the EIA Notification, 2006, as amended.

However, the project could not be completed within the span of 13 years. On receipt of application for grant of fresh EC from the project authorities, the re-appraisal was done prescribing suitable Terms of References (ToRs) for conducting EIA study addressing the environmental concerns as per the extant provisions of the EIA Notification, 2006, as amended. Thereafter, in view of the actual progress being more than 50 percent as reported by the Project Proponent vide email dated 15th April, 2021; the project was given exemption from public hearing by the MoEFCC as per the provisions of the EIA Notification, 2006, as amended. Subsequently, the Environmental Clearance was granted by the Ministry vide letter dated 26th August 2021 after due appraisal of the project.
