

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4005
TO BE ANSWERED ON 07.04.2022

STORAGE OF SPENT NUCLEAR FUEL AT KUDANKULAM NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

4005 SHRI P. WILSON:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has any response to the representation sent by the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Mr. M K Stalin raising concerns over storage of spent nuclear fuel at Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant as it could lead to disastrous impacts on the environment and the people residing in and around such plants;
- (b) whether studies have been conducted and undertaken by Government with regards to environmental clearances and safety on the proposal to store spent nuclear fuel (SNF) at the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KNPP) site; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES & PENSIONS AND PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (DR.JITENDRA SINGH):

- (a) The facilities for storage of spent nuclear fuel (SNF) in the premises of a nuclear power plant till it is sent for reprocessing [*including in Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant*] are designed with a comprehensive approach to safety to withstand extreme natural events like earthquakes and tsunamis with provisions of large operational safety margins for safe, sound and reliable performance. These are designed, constructed and operated as per regulatory requirements and subjected to regulatory reviews and audits which ensure robustness in safety at all stages of the facility, ensuring that there is no adverse impact on plant personnel, general public or the environment. Such facilities are already in operation at Tarapur, Maharashtra and Rawatbhata, Rajasthan sites which are operating safely without any impact on the personnel, public and environment.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB), the safety regulator, has accorded siting clearance for Away From Reactor (AFR) spent fuel wet storage facilities at KKNPP-1&2 and KKNPP-3&4 after verifying compliance with the regulatory and safety requirements specified by AERB. It is currently carrying out design safety review of AFR. In respect of KKNPP-3&4 and KKNPP-5&6 projects, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) studies of these facilities were carried out as a part of the EIA of the whole project. Environmental clearance for the projects (KKNPP-3&4 and KKNPP-5&6) including Storage facilities for SNF was accorded by MoEF&CC after careful consideration of the same, following the due processes. AERB has accorded consent to establish the facility in KKNPP-3&4.

The process to obtain environmental clearance of this facility for KKNPP-1&2 is in progress. Spent Nuclear fuel storage facilities anywhere in the country are set up only after obtaining all statutory approvals, including environmental clearance from MoEF&CC and safety clearances from the regulatory authority, AERB to ensure that it does not pose any radiological hazard to the people and nearby environment.
