

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 975**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 08.02.2023

**Away From Reactor Facility**

975. DR. T. SUMATHY (a) THAMIZHACHI THANGAPANDIAN:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) the time by which the Government plans to construct an Away From Reactor (ARF) facility for spent nuclear fuel in Kudankulam;
- (b) whether it is a fact that the facility was originally slated to be completed by April 2022;
- (c) if so, the reasons for the delay in construction of this facility;
- (d) whether it is a fact that the reactor has been shut down in the past due to minor hazards and if so, the details of these incidents; and
- (e) whether any study has been undertaken to understand the potential negative impact of spent nuclear fuel on the surroundings in the absence of an ARF and if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

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

- (a) Each of the three twin Units at Kudankulam are provided with an Away From Reactor (AFR) facility for storage of spent fuel till it is sent for reprocessing. The AFR facility at Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project (KKNPP)- 3&4 is estimated to be operational by 2026.
- (b) The AFR facility at KKNPP-1&2 was slated to be completed by April 2022.
- (c) The delay in construction of the AFR facility at KKNPP-1&2 is due to delay in conduct of public hearing by the State Authorities which is a part of obtaining the statutory environmental clearance.
- (d) No, Sir. The reactor was shut down in the past to carry out maintenance and refueling activities which is a routine feature in any Nuclear Power Plant. There is no hazard associated with these shutdowns.

(e) The scheme of safe storage of spent fuel in Kudankulam nuclear power plant is two-fold. The first place of storing spent fuel is located within the reactor building, generally known as the spent fuel storage pool. The other is the storage facility located away from the reactor called the 'Away From Reactor' (AFR) Spent Fuel Storage Facility, within the plant premises. The spent fuel is shifted to the AFR facility when the capacity of the spent fuel storage pool in the reactor building exceeds. At present, there is enough capacity in the spent fuel storage pools of KKNPP-1&2 till an AFR Facility at the site is ready for shifting the spent fuel. A detailed Environmental Impact Assessment of the project (including storage of spent fuel within the reactor building) did not indicate any adverse environmental impact.

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