

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.4
TO BE ANSWERED ON 22.11.2012

SAFETY OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

4. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) had reviewed the safety of all nuclear power plants in the country after the disaster at the nuclear plant in Fukushima, Japan and recommended various factors to be considered before loading fuel into the Kudankulam plant;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the AERB has faced criticism for agreeing to load the fuel without heeding the recommendations; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES & PENSIONS AND PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) :

- (a)&(b) Yes Sir. The safety of Indian NPPs against external events was reviewed by the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB). AERB has also reviewed the plant specific assessments for establishing capabilities and margins for coping with severe natural events, such as earthquakes and floods and their possible effects, which inter alia include extended Station Black Out and non-availability of normal cooling water sources. AERB carried out special inspections of all the NPPs to assess the existing provisions and the preparedness of these plants to deal with such events. Accordingly, in the case of Kudankulam 1 & 2 plants, seventeen recommendations were made for implementation in different time frames. The implementation of these recommendations was not a precondition for initial fuel loading.
- (c)&(d) Following its established process of regulatory review, AERB had granted clearance for initial fuel loading to unit-1 of Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KKNPP) on August 10, 2012. This clearance was challenged in the Writ Petition 22253/2012 filed in the Hon'ble Madras High Court. The contention of the petitioner was that unless all the 17 post Fukushima safety enhancements recommended by Atomic Energy Regulatory Board for KKNPP are implemented, AERB should not have granted the clearance for initial fuel loading. In its counter affidavit, AERB submitted that the detailed safety review carried out for KKNPP indicated that KKNPP already has adequate safety measures and additional safety enhancements were recommended by way of abundant caution, and were agreed for implementation in a phased time-bound manner. Thus, the review and resolution of safety issues were completed before granting clearance for initial fuel loading. The Hon'ble Madras High Court has dismissed the writ petition.

The judgment of the Hon'ble Madras High Court has been challenged in a Special Leave Petition (SLP No.27335/2012) filed in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. The matter is subjudice.