GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINES

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1867
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 05TH AUGUST, 2015

GSI WARNING REGARDING HIMALAYAN REGION

1867. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry is aware that the Geological Survey of India (GSI) in its survey report has issued a warning regarding the Himalayan region;
(b) if so, the details of the threats in the Himalayan region about which the GSI has cautioned;
(c) whether Government has taken immediate steps on the basis of the published report, if so, the details of the steps taken;
(d) if not, the reasons therefor and whether Government does not agree with the facts mentioned in the GSI report; and
(e) whether Government would constitute a high level committee to conduct a study of the Himalayan region, if not, the reasons therefor?

A N S W E R

MINISTER FOR MINES & STEEL
(SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

a & b: No warning regarding the Himalayan region has been issued by Geological Survey of India (GSI).

GSI has given a report about future possible risk of Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF) from the expanding proglacial lake of Gepang Gath glacier, draining into Chandra River near Sissu village in Lahaul area of Lahaul & Spiti district of Himachal Pradesh. The work has been carried out in 2012, 2013 and 2014. The report was sent to the Chief Secretary of Himachal Pradesh, the Deputy Commissioner of Lahaul & Spiti district, HP and the Secretary, National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), New Delhi. It was also put on the GSI portal.

In the report it was explained that there is no immediate threat of GLOF, but as the lake area is expanding every year, there could be a GLOF-risk in future. Steps for the mitigation of GLOF-risk are required.

c & d: Based on the GSI report, the Deputy Commissioner of Lahaul & Spiti district had sent two civil expert teams, with the GSI field officers, to Gepang Gath Lake successively in 2013 and 2014. A wire-crated stone-lined safety trench is proposed to be made by the concerned State civil authorities through a safety-breach site identified by GSI. This safety trench will drain away any sudden rise in water level in the lake.

e: The Ministry has no plans of constituting a high level committee to conduct a study of the Himalayan region. GSI carries out glaciological, earthquake and landslide studies in parts of Himalayan region through its annual Field Season Programme.

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