



Safety of Dams

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National Water Resource Council chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister adopted National Water Policy 2012 in its 6th meeting on December 28, 2012. Clause 8.8 of the National Water Policy 2012 mentions that "Legally Empowered Dam Safety Services needs to be ensured in the States as well as at the Centre. Appropriate safety measures, including downstream flood management, for each dam should be undertaken on top priority".

Central Water Commission (CWC) maintains the National Register of Large Dams (NRLD) as per information received from State Governments. As per latest information, total numbers of dams more than 100 years old are 196. The detailed state wise summary is at annexure-I.

Safety of dams rests primarily with dam owners which are generally state governments/central agencies such as NHPC, BBMB. In order to supplement the efforts of the State Governments, Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation provides technical and financial assistance to encourage sustainable development and efficient management of water resources through various schemes and programmes such as Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Programme (DRIP).

DRIP was started in April 2012 and is scheduled to be completed in June 2018 with the financial assistance of World Bank for the rehabilitation of about 225 dam projects from the point of view of safety across the seven States of India, namely Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Jharkhand (DVC) and Uttarakhand (UJVNL). The total project cost is Rs. 2100 Crore.

Government of India vide OM dated October 19, 1987 constituted National Committee on Dam Safety (NCDS) under chairmanship of Chairman, CWC with representatives from State Governments with the objective to oversee dam safety activities in the country and suggest improvements to bring dams safety practices in line with the latest state-of-art consistent with Indian conditions. 37 meetings of this committee have been conducted so far.

Draft Cabinet Note on the proposal for the enactment of Dam Safety Bill was circulated to Central Ministries, along with NITI Aayog, on May 18, 2016. NITI Aayog suggested fresh consultations with the States as the present Bill has national level applicability. Accordingly, the draft Dam Safety Bill was circulated to all the States and Union Territories vide DO letter dated August 09, 2016. Further, 37th meeting of NCDS held on February 17 and 18, 2017 discussed the draft Dam Safety Bill.

In accordance with the comments received from various States and outcome of the 37th Meeting of NCDS, some changes in the Bill are envisaged and the matter has been referred to Ministry of Law & Justice for incorporating the proposed changes in the Bill.

The purpose of Dam Safety Bill is to ensure safety of dams and the life and property of people downstream. The Bill will be applicable to all large dams in India.

This information was given by Union Minister of State for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Balyan in a written reply in Lok Sabha today.

Samir/jk

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