

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1976
TO BE ANSWERED ON 08.08.2024

Consultations on the Great Nicobar project

1976. SHRI MOHAMMED NADIMUL HAQUE:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the environmental and financial impact of the Great Nicobar project;
- (b) whether it is a fact that the Tribal Council of Nicobar Island has withdrawn its 'no objection' given in 2022, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has held consultations with the original inhabitants of the region, the Shompens and Nicobarese, if not, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether Anthropological Survey of India was consulted on the project, and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) to (e) A detailed scrutiny of the EIA/EMP report took place during the appraisal of the project by an independent Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) having experts from the field of science and engineering. It is on the basis of a rigorous appraisal process that the project was granted Environmental and Forest Clearance with requisite environmental safeguards and conservation measures. As per the information provided by the project proponent, the total estimated project cost for Port, Airport, Power Plant & trunk infrastructure for Township is Rs. 81834.22 crores which includes the estimated budget for wildlife conservation plan, Compensatory Afforestation, Tribal welfare plans, conservation and mitigation measures during construction and operation of port, airport, township and power plant and Monitoring program.

The District Level Committee of Nicobar District has approved the record of forest rights prepared by the Sub-Division Level Committee (SLDC), headed by Assistant Commissioner in the meeting held on 18.08.2022. The Chairman of the Tribal Council, Campbell Bay, Little and Great Nicobar were duly consulted during the meeting held on 13.8.2022 and no objections were raised during the statutory period prescribed in the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006.

The inhabitants of the region were duly represented at the public hearing through the Andaman Adim Janjati Vikas Samiti(AAJVS) whose views were also considered. It was also noted that the only habitation of Shompens or Nicobarese in the project area is at New Chingen, Rajiv

Nagar and the Administration is not proposing displacement of any tribal habitations. Further, due consultation with the tribal experts including Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI) has also been conducted in order to ensure the safety, protection, welfare and wellbeing of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in the wake of Holistic Development of GNI project.

Further, as per the condition of Environmental Clearance one of the Committee is exclusively prescribed to oversee the welfare and issues related to Shompen and Nicobarese. The other two Committees have been incorporated in the Environmental Clearance to oversee the implementation of Environmental Management Plan namely (i) Committee to oversee pollution related matters (ii) Committee to oversee biodiversity related matters.
