

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1968
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12/12/2024

Impact of Great Nicobar Project

1968 SHRI PRAMOD TIWARI:

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

- (a) whether Great Nicobar Project has allegedly courted controversy because of its potential impact on rare and endemic species, rainforests and the tribal population residing on the island;
- (b) if so, the details of the project including the controversies surrounding it;
- (c) whether report of High-Powered Committee set up in this regard has been made public; and
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

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

(a) and (b) The decision on the proposal involving development of Great Nicobar Island project has been taken after due consideration of potential environmental impacts on all the environmental components of the project including the tribal population residing on the island and also taking into account the significant strategic, defence and national importance of the developmental projects.

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. The Environmental Clearance accorded contains as many as 42 specific conditions dealing with each component of the project for the safeguard of marine and terrestrial biodiversity.

Further, three independent Monitoring Committees to oversee the implementation of Environmental Management Plan is also prescribed in the Environmental Clearance letter namely (i) Committee to oversee pollution related matters (ii) Committee to oversee biodiversity related matters (iii) Committee to oversee welfare and issues related to Shompen and Nicobarese.

(c) No Sir.

(d) The report of the High Powered Committee takes into account issues and facts related to the strategic, defence and national security of the country.
