



17th March 2011

MoE&F strengthens the preparedness for Tsunami-like disasters

In the background of recent Tsunami tragedy that has struck Japan, concern has been raised in India on the safety of critical infrastructure projects located in the coastal areas, for instance, power plants, oil storage depots, refineries etc. More such projects are likely to come up in the coastal locations in the years to come.

Hazard Line Mapping

In this connection, it may be recalled that a very important component of the Rs.1200 crore project taken up by the MoE&F for implementation involves identification, delineation and demarcation of the hazard line along the 5400 kms of the main coastline of India.

This exercise is being done by the Survey of India and it will be completed in 24 months time. The hazard line mapping exercise assumes special importance in view of the Tsunami-type tragedies. The mapping of the hazard line is important to deal with impacts of climate change and coastal catastrophes.

Management of Islands of Oceanic Islands of Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep

In view of the dangers posed to Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep Islands by the natural disasters including earthquakes and tsunami, the Ministry has delinked the management of these islands from the Coastal Regulation Zone notification and has issued a separate Island Protection Zone(IPZ) Notification on 6.1.2011. As per this notification, an Integrated Island Management Plan would be prepared for each of the 340 islands of A&N and 32 islands of Lakshadweep taking into account the natural disasters including the tsunami like event.

EAC Reviews

Four Expert Appraisal Committees (EAC) relating to (i) Industry, (ii) Infrastructure, (iii) Thermal Power, (iv) Nuclear Power have been asked to deliberate on Tsunami-related risks and to examine how they can be included in the Terms of Reference for EIA for future projects.

Constitution of Expert Group

In addition, it is necessary to review the current systems we have for assessing Tsunami-type risks as part of environmental impact assessment of such projects. Accordingly an Expert Group is being set up to evaluate what additional safeguards are needed for existing projects as well as to suggest measures to be taken for environmental impact assessment for projects to come up in future.

The composition of the Expert Group is as follows:

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| 1. | Dr.A.M.Muthunayagam,ex Secy DOD | Chairman |
| 2. | Dr. Shetye,Director, NIO | Member |
| 3. | Prof.R.Ramesh,Director, NSCM, Chennai | Member |
| 4. | Dr. Senthilvel,Project Director, SICOM | Member Secretary |

The Expert Group will submit its report within three months.

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