

Need to issue a white paper on Natural Disasters in the states of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh ? laid

SHRI K. SUBBARAYAN (TIRUPPUR): In 2023, the Himalayan region has witnessed disasters, like sinking of Joshimath In Uttarakhand floods and landslides in Himachal Pradesh, a glacial lake outburst in Sikkim, and the recent tunnel collapse near Barkot in Uttarakhand.

The Himalayan ecosystem is most fragile. Himalayan geology is unstable and dynamic. The Char Dham National Highway Project in the Himalayan region is an unscientific project. The road project reveals critical mistakes, manipulation and alteration of laws to facilitate its progress. Environmental-assessment mandated for a project of this scale was not conducted. This reflects a systemic failure in ensuring compliance with environmental norms. Extreme slope cutting has led to an average of one landslide a day in the last couple of years.

The tunnel collapse near Barkot is an incident symptomatic of a more extensive problem: unplanned development in the Himalayas cost the country lives of workers besides the Himalayas itself. I urge upon the Government to issue a white paper on the above-mentioned matter.