

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EARTH SCIENCES  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:889

ANSWERED ON:17.08.2007

SETTING UP OF NEW RESEARCH CENTRE IN ANTARCTICA

Dhumal Prof. Prem Kumar

**Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government proposes to set up a new research centre in Antarctica;
- (b) If so, the details thereof;
- (c) the number of scientists working in research centres at Antarctica presently;
- (d) whether adverse weather conditions were responsible for the deaths occurred since 1981;
- (e) if so, the year wise details thereof;
- (f) the amount allocated in the annual budget for these research centres located at Antarctica;
- (g) whether the Government proposes to increase the amount of budget allocation and the number of scientists for these centres; and
- (h) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (KAPIL SIBAL)

(a) & (b) Yes Sir. A site has been selected near latitude 69° South and longitude 76° East for the Third Research Station at Larsemann Hill Area in Antarctica. A Comprehensive Environment Evaluation (CEE) report mandated under the Environmental Protocol of the Antarctic Treaty was prepared by the National Centre for Antarctic and Ocean Research (NCAOR), Goa in November, 2006. The CEE report was then submitted to the Committee on Environmental Protocol (CEP), constituted under the Protocol. Based on the recommendation of the X CEP, met during the XXX Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) which held at New Delhi from 30th April to 11th May, 2007 the Indian CEE was accepted. NCAOR has now initiated action to develop detailed design of the building of the new Research Station which is required for obtaining necessary administrative approval for taking up the construction work during the XI Five Year Plan. However regular scientific experiments, which were initiated in 2004 are continued at the site of the new station by sending annual expeditions, during the Antarctic summer.

(c) Twenty four personnel comprising of eight scientists and sixteen logistics personnel are presently wintering at the Indian Antarctic Station 'Maitri'.

(d) & (e) No, Sir.

(f) The present annual expenditure for the maintenance of Maitri research station is about Rs.4.00 crores.

(g) & (h) Yes, Sir. The total allocation for Polar Science Programme during the X Five Year Plan period was Rs. 160.00 crores. The proposed outlay for the XI Five Year Plan for Antarctic Research and logistic activities is about Rs.320.00 crores. This increased outlay is to strengthen the research and logistic facilities at Maitri, construction of the new research base and further develop the in-house research facilities at NCAOR. In addition the Ministry has also proposed to construct an ice-breaker class research-cum-logistic vessel during the current plan.