

PARLIAMENT QUESTION: NUCLEAR ENERGY SECTOR

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The SHANTI Act which has received the assent of President of India on 21st December, 2025 allows private sector participation for setting up a nuclear facility, or to carry out activities for the production, use and disposal of nuclear energy under a license from the Central Government and safety authorization of the Regulatory Board. This Act has been enacted for the promotion and development of nuclear energy and ionising radiation for nuclear power generation, and other non-power applications, and for its safe and secure utilisation.

This Act also has provisions for civil liability for nuclear damage in case of any nuclear incident in the nuclear installation. The SHANTI Act has aligned the civil liability for nuclear damage with international liability regime. It provides a pragmatic and graded approach for nuclear damage liability from 100Cr to 3000Cr based on the type of nuclear facility. The principal for payment compensation for the nuclear damage is prompt payment by operator with strict and no-fault liability. Above operator's liability, Government of India's liability is upto 300 million SDR. Above this liability, Government can seek from Convention on Supplementary Compensation which is an international Convention to which India is party.

Government of India has established the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) by a statutory order (S.O. 4772), to carry out certain regulatory and safety functions envisaged under Section 16, 17 and 23 of the Atomic Energy Act, 1962. Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) is empowered to lay down safety standards and frame rules and regulations for regulatory and safety envisaged under the Act. Nuclear Power Plants (NPPs) in India are sited, designed, constructed, commissioned & operated in conformity with relevant nuclear safety requirements including environmental safety. Highest level of nuclear safety is ensured in the NPPs, which is verified through systematic multi-tier safety review in AERB and periodic regulatory inspections of NPPs carried out by AERB. In case any deviation is noticed, AERB enforces suitable corrective/ remedial measures.

The Parliament has recently passed the SHANTI Act, 2025 which envisages participation of private entities in the nuclear sector. The regulatory framework and requirements of AERB are generally entity and technology neutral. Therefore, the same regulatory framework can be utilised for safety regulation of any Nuclear Power Project irrespective of the entity involved (Private/Public).

AERB has established criteria for reporting of nuclear incidents by the licensee. As per the recently passed SHANTI Act, 2025, AERB is required to provide its recommendations to the Central Government for notifying such nuclear incidents, within 15 days from the date of occurrence of the nuclear incident.

This information given by Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh in a written reply in Lok Sabha today on 1st April, 2026, Wednesday.

NKR/AK

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