

Cabinet approves Bill for dam safety

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

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THE UNION Cabinet approved a proposal for enactment of a new Dam Safety Bill, 2018, among several decisions taken Wednesday. Union minister Piyush Goyal said the Bill, which incorporates recommendations made by a Standing Committee of Parliament, will be introduced in the House soon. The Bill seeks to establish a national regulatory body for dam safety and create a

database of the existing dams.

Goyal also announced that the Union Cabinet had shifted the North Eastern Council (NEC) from the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) to the Home Ministry. The Union Home Minister will be ex-officio chairman of NEC, and DoNER minister will serve as its vice-chairman.

The council is a statutory body of Governors and Chief Ministers of all eight Northeastern states as members.

Giving details of the Dam Safety Bill, Goyal, the Union

Minister for Railways and Coal who also holds additional charge of Finance and Corporate Affairs, said it will help states and Union Territories to make “uniform dam safety procedures” to ensure safety of dams, and help safeguard human life, livestock and property.

India has more than 5,200 large dams and another 450 are under construction. The Bill “lays onus of dam safety on the dam owner and provides for penal provisions for commission and omission of certain acts,” the government said in a statement.