

### **Environmental clearance to irrigation projects of Maharashtra**

3258. SHRI RANJITSINH VIJAYSINH MOHITE-PATIL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) when and what proposals have been received by Government for approval from environment and forest department of Maharashtra for the irrigation projects;
- (b) the current status thereof;
- (c) the reasons for delay in sanctioning those proposals and who is accountable for the delay; and
- (d) by when the proposals would be sanctioned, giving the time schedule?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (c) Under the provisions of Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006, eleven irrigation projects have been received from the Irrigation Department, Government of Maharashtra for environmental clearance. Eight projects out of the eleven projects so submitted have been accorded environmental clearance. The decision on remaining three projects is pending as on date because the project proponent has not provided the requisite clarification/information sought by the Expert Appraisal Committee.

- (d) As per EIA Notification, 2006, the decision on the proposal is to be taken within 105 days from the date of receipt of the complete information.

### **Appointment of legal expert in infringement of rights of tribal population case**

3259. SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that a legal expert from the Centre for Study of Developing Societies have in a report indicated Orissa Mining Corporation and Vedanta Group for infringing the rights of tribal population of Lanjigarh in Orissa;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that the same legal expert has been nominated as one of the members of committee for site inspection to the mining project;
- (c) if so, what are the reasons for appointing a person having biased approach to the project; and
- (d) what steps Government proposes to take to disassociate this member and appoint those eminent and knowledgeable persons who are not contrary to the policy of natural justice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (d) The Ministry is not aware about any report indicting M/s Orissa Mining Corporation and Vedanta by a legal expert from the Centre for Study of Developing Societies for infringing the rights of tribal population of Lanjigarh in Orissa. However, the Amnesty International has submitted a report indicting infringement of the rights of tribal population of Lanjigarh in Orissa.

A Committee consisting of Shri Vinod Rishi, Retd. Additional Director General of Forests, Regional Chief Conservator of Forests, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Regional Office (Eastern Zone), Bhubaneswar and Dr. Usha Ramanathan, Research Fellow, Centre for Study of Developing Societies, a former member of Amnesty International's Advisory Panel on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, a member of the Governing Board of the Centre for Equity Studies, was constituted by the Ministry for submitting a report on alleged violation of the provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, and impact of the proposed mining project on Tribal Rights and Wildlife Conservation. All three members of the Committee have submitted their report. Dr. Ramanathan was taken on the Committee keeping in view her expertise in working with Government Committees on human rights issues. So imputation of biasedness against Dr. Usha Ramanathan was not found to be substantiated.

#### **Environmental clearance for allocation of coal blocks to GMDC**

3260. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Chhattisgarh Government has requested the Central Government for forest clearance for prospecting licence over forest area measuring 1987.912 hectare land of Morga-II coal block allocated to GMDC, an undertaking of Gujarat Government;

(b) whether the forest clearance has been accorded to Chhattisgarh Government; and

(c) if not, by when the clearance is likely to be given?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Yes, Sir. A proposal for prospecting over 1987.912 ha. of forest land of Morga-II coal block allotted to M/s Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation Limited in Katghora Forest Division in Korba district of Chhattisgarh has been received in the Ministry in the month of December, 2009.

(b) and (c) So far, forest clearance to the Government of Chhattisgarh has not been granted as the proposal did not contain certain necessary information required to take decision. These details are still awaited from the State Government.

#### **Cleaning of river Yamuna**

3261. SHRI PARVEZ HASHMI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite several efforts by the State Governments nothing has been done to clean the river Yamuna;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government has any specific programme to clean the river Yamuna in near future;

(d) how much amount has been spent on cleaning of the river till 2009;