

Clearance to Peddar Road fly-over in Mumbai

1261. DR. BHARATKUMAR RAUT: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has proposed second public hearing before clearing the Peddar Road fly-over in Mumbai;

(b) what are the reasons of second hearing whereas a similar exercise has already been carried out a few years ago; and

(c) what is the response of the Maharashtra Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) No Sir. As per the details submitted and presented by the Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation Ltd. (MSRDC), a public consultation was conducted by them in March, 2008 for the proposed Peddar Road Flyover in Mumbai.

(b) Ministry had received representations from local residents of the Peddar Road area raising environmental issues, which were put up for consideration of the Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC), constituted by this Ministry for the appraisal of Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ), Infrastructure and Building/Construction projects. The EAC suggested to conduct a public hearing as per the provisions of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006 and to incorporate the issues raised by the public in the Environmental Management Plan.

(c) Government of Maharashtra has informed the same, as detailed in Part (a) above.

Review of mining leases

1262. DR. BHARATKUMAR RAUT: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has asked the Chief Minister of Maharashtra to review the 49 mining leases given for excavation of iron ore and bauxite in Sindhudurg region of Western Ghats;

(b) what is the response of the Maharashtra Government in the matter;

(c) whether it is a fact that the proposed mining projects would create serious environmental threat to this beautiful, lush green belt along the Western Ghats; and

(d) what further action Ministry intends to take to stop the large scale mining in the region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Yes, Sir. The Ministry, while attaching the news item appeared in the 'Times of India' on October 15, 2010, has requested the Chief Minister of Maharashtra to review the 49 leases given for excavation of iron ore and bauxite in Sindhudurg region of Western Ghats.

(b) The Maharashtra Government vide their letter dated October 19, 2010, has informed that they are having matter looked into.

(c) and (d) The Central Government has expressed concern over likely serious environmental threat on the ecology of Western Ghats. The Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel chaired by Dr. Madhav Gadgil has also been requested by the Ministry to examine this issue and make its recommendations soon.

Elephant deaths in Assam

†1263. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that five elephants have died due to falling into trenches dug near tea gardens in Assam during August-September, 2010; and

(b) the details thereof and the measures taken or being taken by Government to check such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) The Ministry has received information of four elephant deaths during the period including two deaths within Tea Estate. The State Government has constituted a one man Committee to probe the deaths including the cause of the deaths and to suggest corrective measures.

Curbing illegal mining

†1264. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the existing forest regulation machinery is not effective to curb illegal mining due to which the illegal mining is going on rapidly and is causing irreparable loss to environment; and

(b) what steps Government is taking to make it effective?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.