

- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the steps being taken to correct the situation in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) to (c) The country level tiger estimation using the refined methodology is done once in every four years for an assessment of the status of tiger, co-predators, prey animals and habitat. Some criticism has come to light on the fact that the recent 2010 country level assessment of tiger has reported a 20% increase in tiger numbers, despite a 12.6% decline in tiger occupancy. However, this criticism is not well founded, since the increase in tiger numbers is due to the fact that tiger populations have shown an increase in Uttarakhand, Maharashtra, some portions of North East, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, besides the inclusion of Sundarbans. The loss of occupancy is primarily from low density peripheral forests in some States.

Constitution of Environment Committees by States

170. SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether all the States in the country have constituted 'Environmental Committees apropos the Environmental Protection Act and Rules 1994;
- (b) whether Government has taken any steps to prevent Lavasa like incidents in future; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) The State/UT level Environmental Impact Assessment Authorities and the State/UT level Expert Appraisal Committees are required to be constituted under the provisions of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification 2006 under the Environment (Protection) Act, 2006. The State/UT level Environmental Impact Assessment Authorities and State/UT level Expert Appraisal Committees have been constituted for 26 States and UTs, since 14th September, 2006 when the EIA Notification 2006 came into effect.

(b) and (c) All developmental projects which come under the ambit of the EIA Notification 2006 and other environmental regulations such as the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification

1991 and its amendments are required to obtain prior clearance before starting the projects. The Ministry of Environment & Forests has brought out Sector-specific EIA Manuals, which serve as guidance Manuals for setting up projects requiring prior environmental clearance and has also issued a number of Office Memorandums for facilitating all stakeholders to ensure that developmental projects come up in line with the environmental regulations.

Uniformity in environmental clearance to highway projects

171. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of objections raised on environment clearance by Government as regards the National Highway connecting Raipur and Nagpur;

(b) whether a uniform policy is being followed for the entire country in such matters;

(c) whether it is a fact that Government has State-specific policies rather than a uniform National policy for environment all over the country;

(d) the measures proposed to evolve uniformity and transparency in all such reviews and policy interpretations by Government; and

(e) whether Government has been unable to develop firm yardsticks and standards for the NHAI to follow so as to obtain environmental clearances in time bound schedule?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) A proposal from the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) for four laning of a Section of NH-6, which connects Raipur and Nagpur, was considered in accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment Notification (EIA), 2006 and Office Memorandum issued by the Ministry, particularly the Office Memorandum dated 31.03.2011 regarding 'Consideration of projects for grant of environmental clearance under the EIA Notification, 2006 which involve forestland.'

(b) and (c) The appraisal of projects is done uniformly for the entire Country under the Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006.

(d) and (e) Does not arise in view of the reply to Part (b) & (c) above.