

#### **Environmental clearance of B - categories projects**

1561. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government intend to return power of environment clearance of B-categories projects in critically polluted area to respective State Environmental Appraisal Committee (SEAC); and Special Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA);

(b) if so, what is the time-frame; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATATRAJAN): (a) As per the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, dated 14th September, 2006, prior environmental clearance is mandatory from the Ministry of Environment and Forests for category 'A' projects and from the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) for category 'B' projects. Except for the building and construction sector projects and township and area development projects, any project or activity specified in category 'B' will be treated as category 'A' if it is located in whole or in part within 10 km radius from the boundary of the critically polluted areas.

(b) and (c) Does not arise, in view of the reply to part (a) above.

#### **Eco-tourism policy for conversion and promotion of forests**

†1562. MISS. ANUSUIYA UIKEY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an eco-tourism policy is being proposed by Government for the conservation and promotion of the forests;

(b) if so, by when it would be finalized; and

(c) if not, the reasons for not giving priority to this activity for conservation of the country's natural resources?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATATRAJAN): (a) to (c) Action has been taken to finalise the guidelines relating to forest and wildlife ecotourism.

#### **Areas under forest in the Country**

†1563. SHRI OM PRAKASH MATHUR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.