

thousands of hectares flouting environment guidelines of the Ministry of Environment and Forests;

(b) the total area covered by open mines as on 31st March, 2011, State-wise;

(c) the area reclaimed, State-wise;

(d) the names of Open Cast Projects (OCPs) closed between 1980 and 2000, State-wise;

(e) the area covered by these OCPs, State-wise; and

(f) the quantum of land reclaimed, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI PRATIK PRAKASHBAPU PATIL): (a) Coal India Limited is not flouting the guidelines of the Environment Ministry and not wasting large tracts of land.

(b) and (c) the estimated details of total area covered by opencast mines as on March 2011 and the area reclaimed State wise are as under:

State	Total Area of Opencast Mines (excavated) as of March 2011 in HA	Total Area Reclaimed in HA
West Bengal	1345.79	1074.00
Jharkhand	8409.77	5170.92
Madhya Pradesh	4397.14	1708.38
Uttar Pradesh	1263.37	168.99
Chhattisgarh	4567.91	1693.59
Odisha	3458.03	1917.09
Maharastra	5170.00	532.13
Assam	119.62	19.80
	28731.63	12284.90

(d) to (f) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Monsoon predictions

1308. SHRI TARUN VIJAY: Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of dismal monsoon forecasts by certain foreign meteorological departments for 2012;

(b) whether the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) is aware of the same;

(c) if so, the details of preparatory steps being taken and if not, by when IMD's monsoon projections are expected to be ready;

(d) the details of monsoon related projections of IMD during the last three years and the corresponding actual figures;

(e) what is the statistically acceptable margin of error between the projections and actual observation and whether such a difference lies between those figures; and

(f) if not, whether Government plans to change the methodology of monsoon forecasting?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Government is aware of deficit monsoon seasonal rainfall forecast, for June-September, 2012, by certain foreign institutions/departments based on the simulations of dynamical models. As per the seasonal forecasts issued by the Frontier Research Institute, Japan in February 2012, India is expected to experience below normal rainfall during the coming monsoon season of 2012. However, forecasts from the United States National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP) and United Kingdom Meteorological Office (UKMO) suggest above normal rainfall during the monsoon season of 2012. The present skill of these dynamical models predicting Indian monsoon seasonal rainfall is not yet reached satisfactory levels.

(d) Monsoon projections of IMD for the Last three years are given in Statement. (*See below*)

(e) the present level of operational acceptability of error margin is of 5% for the forecasts of all-India seasonal monsoon rainfall. The forecast verification of last 3-years suggests that only during 2009 the error margin was higher than 5% due to persistence of warmer sea surface temperature anomaly over equatorial Pacific Ocean (El Nino) beyond the expected duration as envisaged at the time (April 2009) of finalizing Monsoon-2009 seasonal rainfall forecast.

(f) Currently, IMD uses a suite of statistical models for prediction of seasonal monsoon rainfall over india. Such a mechanism is continued to be used due to non-availability of a suitable coupled ocean-atmospheric model with a proven performance of capturing the realistic monsoon rain fall variability over India.

We are examining the performance of coupled ocean-atmospheric models of NCEP, USA and UKMO for their suitability for seasonal monsson rainfall predictions.

Statement*Monsoon projections of IMD for 2009, 2010, 2011*

Region	period	Issued on	Forecast (% of LPA)	Actual (% of LPA)
All India	June to	17 April, 2009	96 \pm 5	78
	September	24 June, 2009	93 \pm 4	
All India	June to September	23 April, 2010	98 \pm 5	102
All India	June to September	25 June, 2010	102 \pm 4	
All India	June to September	19 April, 2011	98 \pm 5	102
All India	June to September	21 June, 2011	95 \pm 4	

Freedom of press in Bihar

1309. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Chairman of Press of India has stated that there is violation of freedom of press in Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has constituted a three-member panel to probe complaints of journalists in the State; and

(d) if so, by when the panel would submit its report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI CHOUDHURY MOHAN JATUA): (a) and (b) The Chairman, Press Council of India (PCI) during his recent visit to Patna, received complaints that journalists in Bihar find it difficult to discharge their journalistic duties due to fear of harassment and of losing their job as the authorities put pressure on the proprietors to do so.

(c) and (d) The Press Council of India (PCI), an autonomous body has been set up under the Press Council Act, 1978 with one of its objectives of preserving the freedom of press. The PCI has constituted a three-member Fact Finding Team from among the members of the Council, headed by Shri Rajeev Ranjan Nag, to