

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action Government has taken on this letter against RIL for not co-operating with the Government auditor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI M. VEERAPPA MOILY): (a) to (c) No, Sir. CAG has not asked Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas to withhold approvals to RIL. However, CAG has recommended that pending complete submission of all supporting records by the operators of Panna-Mukta and Tapti (PMT) and KG-D6 relating to expenditure for previous years upto 2011-12 and comprehensive and detailed scrutiny thereof to verify that Government's financial interests have not been adversely affected in any way, the Ministry may examine all relevant issues closely and carefully before considering the desirability of any further approvals of capital expenditure through the Annual Work Programme and Budget, Development Plans or otherwise, except those of an emergent nature. Government have directed the Contractor to provide access to all records, accounts, documents of the block to CAG as per Production Sharing Contract (PSC) and extant legal framework. RIL has agreed to audit by CAG for block KG-DWN-98/3 for the years 2008-09 to 2011-12 without prejudice to the rights and contentions of the contractor under the contractual provisions.

Environmental clearance for Navi Mumbai Airport

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the development project of Navi Mumbai International Airport, a green field project is pending as required scientific study has not been conducted by the Ministry;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the current status of the project;

(c) if not, the concrete steps Ministry has proposed to complete the required scientific study at the earliest; and

(d) by when, the approval will be accorded for the Navi Mumbai International Airport?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) and (b) The proposal of Navi Mumbai International Airport at Maharashtra has been accorded Environment and

Coastal Regulation Zone clearance on 22nd November, 2010 with necessary conditions on environmental safeguards, after following due procedure of Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006 and Coastal Regulation Zone Notification, 1991.

(c) and (d) Does not arise in view of the reply given to parts (a) and (b) above.

Study on impact of sand mining on ecology

*251. DR. PRABHAKAR KORE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state: :

(a) whether Government is aware that sand mining is rampant in the country;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that over-extraction of sand would badly impact on ecology;

(c) if so, whether Government is taking any measures to study the impact of sand mining on the ecology;

(d) whether Government has received any suggestion to conduct such a study/research; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) and (b) Sand mining is regulated in terms of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and the rules framed therein. All mining activities of minor minerals, including sand, require prior environment clearance. This is with a view to ensuring that the mining is done in a scientific and sustainable manner.

(c) to (e) The Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) had constituted on 24.03.2009 a group under the Chairmanship of the Secretary (Environment and Forests) to look into the environmental aspects associated with mining of minor minerals. The group submitted its report in March 2010 and made several recommendations relating to definition of minor mineral, size of mine lease, period of mine lease, cluster of mine approach for small sized mines, requirement of mine plan for minor minerals, river bed mining etc. MoEF have asked the States to examine the