

The MoEF *vide* letter dated 5th February 2013 informed the all State/UT Governments that proposals seeking prior approval of Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for projects like construction of roads, canals, laying of pipelines/optical fibers and transmission lines etc. where linear diversion of use of forest land in several villages are involved, unless recognised rights of PTG/ PAC are being affected, are exempted from the requirement of obtaining consent of the concerned Gram Sabha(s) as stipulated in clause (c) read with clause (b), (e) and (f) in second para of this Ministry's said letter dated 3rd August 2009.

Sub-section (2) of section 3(2) of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 provides that notwithstanding anything contained in the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, the Central Government shall provides for diversion of forest land, for facilities, as per details given in the said sub-section, managed by the Government which involves felling of trees not exceeding seventy-five trees per hectare. The said sub-section further provides that such diversion of forest land shall be allowed only if, the forest land to be diverted for the purpose mentioned in this sub-section is less than one hectare in each case; and the clearance of such developmental projects shall be subject to the condition that the same is recommended by the Gram Sabha.

Decision on proposals seeking prior approval of Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of forest land is taken on merit of each case. Obtaining consent of Gram Sabha or Gram Sabhas, wherever required, is one of the requirements for grant of approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of forest land for non-forest purpose.

#### **Concern over fast depleting green cover**

2830. SHRI BHARATSINH PRABHATSINH PARMAR : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether environment activists have voiced concerns over the fast depleting green cover in the Himalayas and demanded steps to protect it from both ecological and tourism point of view; and

(b) if so, response of Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI M. VEERAPPA MOILY) : (a) The Ministry has not received any such reports. Forest Survey of India has been mapping and assessing biennially the Country's forest cover using remote sensing technology since 1987. As per the India State of Forest Report-2011, Arunachal Pradesh is the only Himalayan State in which a decline of 74 Square kilometer of forest cover, as compared to the last assessment of 2009, has been reported.

(b) Ministry provides financial assistance to State/Union Territory Governments for afforestation as well as protection of existing forest under various Schemes. Afforestation in the country is taken up under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP), National Bamboo Mission (NBM), 13th Finance Commission and also under different State Plan/Non-Plan Schemes including externally aided projects. National Afforestation Programme (NAP) of the Ministry of Environment and Forests is a 100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme for afforestation and tree plantation and eco-restoration of degraded forests and adjoining areas in the country. The Scheme is being implemented through a decentralized mechanism of State Forest Development Agency (SFDA) at State level, Forest Development Agency (FDA) at Forest Division level and Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) at Village levels. An amount of Rs. 2500 crores has been approved for NAP in the Twelfth Five Year Plan. In addition funds are also provided for forest protection under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme-Intensification of Forest Management.

**Representations by State Governments on CRZ notifications**

2831. SHRI BHARATSINH PRABHATSINH PARMAR : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether any representations were made by State Governments to Central Government on CRZ Notification 2011 for the Ports and Harbour;
- (b) if so, the response of Government of India thereon; and
- (c) whether concerns of State Governments have been addressed by Government?