

- (b) if so, the particulars of such systems, and if not, the reasons for the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) The National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) have been notified by the Government of India with 12 pollutants including two parameter concerning particulate matter namely, PM<sub>10</sub> (particulate having size less than or equal to 10 micron) and PM<sub>2.5</sub> (particulate having size less than or equal to 2.5 micron) in November, 2009. The limits/norms for PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> have been prescribed while taking into account WHO guidelines, best practices at global level, health criteria, etc.

The Indian Institute of Tropical Metrology provides information on air quality considering five/six pollutants for real time and its forecast for 24 hours through its webpage and electronic display board at select locations in Delhi and Pune.

**Chief Ministers views on the recommendations of HLWG**

3093. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether Government had requested all the Chief Ministers of six States in the Western Ghats region seeking their views on the recommendations of High Level Working Group (HLWG) constituted to assess the kind of activities that could be permitted in the Ecologically Sensitive Area of Western Ghats;

- (b) if so, whether those State Governments have submitted their views; and

- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) to (c) The Ministry had written on 16th January, 2014 to the Chief Ministers of all six States in the Western Ghats region seeking their views on the High Level Working Group (HLWG) recommendations, especially on concerns which might not have been addressed in the OM of the Ministry dated 20th December, 2013. The views of the State Government were sought within one month. The Ministry had received comments/views from the State Governments of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Goa. The State Governments had *inter-alia* raised concerns about the extent of the proposed Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA) as identified by HLWG and the proposed regulation/prohibition of certain activities therein. The State Government of Kerala had also conducted demarcation of ESA by physical verification within their jurisdiction post HLWG report.

Later, the Ministry issued a draft notification for declaring Ecologically Sensitive Area under the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 in the Gazette of India *vide* S.O. No. 733 (E) dated 10th March, 2014 inviting suggestions and objections from stakeholders on the proposals contained in the draft notification. While responding to the draft notification, some of the State Governments in the Western Ghats region conveyed

that they would like to undertake the exercise of demarcating ESA by physical verification as has been already done by the State of Kerala.

This Ministry has decided to give an opportunity to State Governments of Western Ghats region for undertaking demarcation of ESA by physical verification within their jurisdiction, if they so desire, except for Kerala State which has already undertaken such an exercise, and submit their proposals to the Ministry by 9th August 2014.

**Dilution of green norms to help fast track infra projects**

3094. SHRI KALPATARU DAS: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether it is proposed to dilute green norms to help fast-track infra projects in the tribal hot bed forests in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the details of road projects that are proposed to be executed in the regions that are proposed to be executed under relaxed norms in Odisha region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) Central Government *vide* letter dated 4th July, 2014 accorded general approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of forest land, not located within the protected areas, for construction of two lane public roads by Government Departments in 117 Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected districts, **irrespective of the area of forest land involved in such projects.**

(c) As per the information provided by the Nodal Officer, the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 in the Government of Odisha, a proposal seeking prior approval of Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of forest land required for construction of a road from Jamkhar to Mahanpali village in the LWE affected district of Bargarh has been forwarded to the Divisional Forest Officer, Bargarh Forest Division by his office on 8th August, 2013 for processing. The said proposal will now be considered by the Government of Odisha for approval as per the said general approval accorded by the Central Government *vide* letter dated 4th July, 2014.

**India's rank in UNs Environmental Performance Index**

3095. SHRI A.W. RABI BERNARD: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the United Nations (UNs) Environmental Performance Index (EPI) has ranked India at a low 155th position among 178 countries on how well they perform on high priority environmental issues;