

(b) whether there is any proposal to change the definition of reserved forest area, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) Any proposal related to industrialisation and developmental activities in a forest area including those classified as reserved forests requires prior permission of the Central Government as per provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

(b) There is no such proposal to change the definition of reserved forests.

Clearance to developmental projects

†1698. SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the developmental projects held up due to lack of clearance by the previous Government will be cleared;

(b) the policy to be adopted to give clearance to the developmental projects; and

(c) whether development will be given priority or environmental balance will be our concern while giving clearance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) This Ministry considers the project proposals of various sectors for grant of Environment Clearance (EC) as per provisions of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006, as amended from time to time. The Notification also provides time-lines for various stages of clearance process. Some times, delay occurs essentially on account of delay in receipt of requisite information from the Project Proponents and delay in conduct of Public Hearing by the concerned District level authorities.

The Ministry has taken a number of initiatives for expediting the decision making in Environment Clearance process which include, (i) Online submission of applications for grant of Term of Reference/Environment Clearance, (ii) Regular and longer duration meetings of Expert Appraisal Committees for consideration of projects in different sectors, (iii) regular monitoring of the status of the pending projects, (iv) Constitution of State /Union Territory level Environment Impact Assessment Authorities (SEIAAs) in 27 States/UTs to deal with the Category 'B' projects, (v) Guidelines for Categorization of B Category projects into B1 & B2 Category etc..

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) The EC process under the EIA Notification, 2006, as amended, aims at mainstreaming environmental issues in developmental process. Various streamlining decisions taken by the Government from time to time are with a view to facilitating timely and objective decision making without compromising the integrity of the environment.

Poaching of wildlife around National Parks

1699. SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that large scale poaching of wildlife is going on in and around the National Parks and zoos in the country during the last two years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof year-wise, category-wise, national park-wise; and
- (c) the action being taken to protect wildlife and to punish the guilty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) The management and protection of wild animals in and around the National Parks in the country is carried out by the concerned State/Union Territory Governments. National Park-wise details of poaching of wild animals are not collated in the Ministry. Further as per information available in the Ministry there has been no poaching of wildlife in the zoos of the country for the last two years except one incident at the Biological Park, Itanagar on 24th September 2012 wherein killing of one female Bengal Tiger was reported.

(c) The State Government of Arunachal Pradesh has recommended the said case to Special Investigation Team of Police. Further, the Central Zoo Authority has issued an alert to all Zoos in the country to keep necessary vigil regarding any such attempts.

In addition, the important steps taken by the Government for protection of wild animals in the country includes:

- (i.) Endangered species of animals including Tiger, Elephants, Lion, Rhino, etc are listed under Schedule-I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 thereby according them highest degree of protection.
- (ii.) Legal protection has been provided to wild animals against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
- (iii.) The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, has been amended and made more stringent. The punishments for offences have been enhanced. The Act also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that is used for committing wildlife offence(s).