hundred kilometers. After careful consideration of the matter, this Ministry *vide* OM No. 11015/200/2008-IA.II(M) dated 19.03.2013 conveyed the decision that pending grant of Stage-I FC, EC to linear projects may be issued subject to certain stipulations contained therein.

This Ministry *vide* OM No.J-11013/41/2006-IA.II(I) dated 19.04.2012, had also linked the issuance of EC of thermal power projects with Stage-I FC for the linked coal mine. Based on request received from the Ministry of Power, this Ministry *vide* OM of even number dated 30.12.2013 provided exemption from this requirement in respect of Ultra Mega Power Projects (UMPPs) linked to captive coal blocks subject to certain stipulations as stated therein.

The aforesaid relaxations/dispensations have been given in public interest with a view to facilitating execution of such projects without compromising integrity of the environment.

(c) Diversion of forest land for non-forest purpose requires prior approval of Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. Approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of forest land for non-forest purpose is accorded only after examining all feasible alternatives and after Central Government is satisfied that diversion of forest land is unavoidable and bare minimum. Central Government while according approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of such forest land stipulates appropriate conditions to mitigate impact of diversion of forest land. These conditions *inter alia* include transfer and mutation of equivalent non-forest land for compensatory afforestation and realization of funds from the user agency for raising compensatory afforestation, NPV, implementation of wildlife conservation plan, catchment area treatment plan, etc.

Maharashtra request for environmental clearance

†1701. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Government has received any request from the State Government of Maharashtra regarding grant of environmental clearance to the proposals of dam construction in the State, if so, the details thereof as on date, the latest status of this proposal; and

(b) by when this proposal is proposed to be finalised along with the reasons for delay?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) Three (3) irrigation project proposals namely, Lendi Major Irrigation (Interstate) Project in Nanded District of Maharashtra having command in Nizamabad District of Andhra Pradesh, Lower Tapi Lift Irrigation Scheme in Jalagaon District and Krishna Marathwada Lift Irrigation Project in Osmanabad District have been received from Government of Maharashtra for environmental clearance (EC). These projects were considered, by the designated Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC). Expert Appraisal Committee has sought additional information/clarifications from the project proponents. All the projects are being appraised for consideration of environmental clearance within stipulated time of Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006.

Relaxation from environmental clearance

†1702. DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the demand for giving relaxation from the environmental clearance for the mines with an area of less than five hectare of secondary minerals in Madhya Pradesh will be met to fulfil the employment and construction related needs of the people; and

(b) if so, the action taken so far along with the status of the clearance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) The Supreme Court *vide* its judgment dated 27.02.2014 in IA. Nos.12-13 of 2011 in Special Leave Petition (C) No. 19628-19629 of 2009 titled Deepak Kumar etc. Vs. State of Haryana & Ors. etc. *inter alia* ordered that leases of minor mineral including their renewal for an area of less than 5 ha will be granted by the States/Union Territories only after getting environment clearance (EC) from this Ministry. This Ministry has since delegated the function for grant of EC of minor mineral mining projects of area less than 5 ha to the concerned State level Environment Impact Assessment Authorities.

The aforesaid court order had also directed the State Governments and Union Territories to take immediate steps to frame necessary rules under section 15 of the Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act) taking into consideration the recommendations of MoEF in its report of March 2010 and model guidelines framed by the Ministry of Mines, Government of India.

The Government of Madhya Pradesh has represented that since they have framed necessary rules under the MMDR Act, as per directions of the Supreme Court, the minor

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.