

Relaxation for project clearances

2052. SHRI P. RAJEEVE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of projects that have been cleared by the Ministry during the last three years;

(b) the area of tribal land included in these projects; and

(c) whether the Ministry has relaxed any of the provisions in PESA or Forest Act while giving clearances to these projects and if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, since the year 2012, has granted approvals to 3543 projects under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 involving 99,104 ha of forest land which includes the forest land in tribal areas.

The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change has not issued any Guidelines relaxing any provision in PESA or Forest Act while giving clearance to these projects.

Overhauling of existing environmental framework

2053. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN:

SHRI D. RAJA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has completely overhauled the existing environmental governance framework to make it easier to set up industrial or infrastructural projects and also to ensure tougher penalty for those who flout the pollution norms and violate green laws; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) The improvement in systems and rationalization of policy and procedure is an ongoing process. However, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change has taken initiatives from time to time to simplify and rationalize the environment

clearance process with a view to facilitating timely and objective decision making. The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change constituted High Level Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri T.S.R. Subramanian, former Cabinet Secretary to Government of India to review various Acts administered by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, namely (i) Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, (ii) Forests Conservation Act, 1980, (iii) Indian Forests Act, 1927, (iv) Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, (v) Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and (vi) Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981. Based on the comments received from Central Government, State Governments, Civil Societies etc. the report has been finalised and submitted to the Government and is now in the public domain.

Set up of Committee to review the environment laws

2054. PROF. M.V. RAJEEV GOWDA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a Committee been set up to review the five main environment laws of the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the objective of such an exercise and time frame by which the consultation would conclude;
- (c) the details of invitees that have provided inputs to the study over the past few months; and
- (d) whether there is a plan to remove all criminal liability for violation of provisions, enumerated in the above mentioned Acts and replace them with civil penalties, and if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change *vide* Office Order No.22-15/2014-IA.III dated 29th August, 2014 has constituted High Level Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri T.S.R. Subramanian, former Cabinet Secretary to Government of India to review various Acts administered by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, namely (i) Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, (ii) Forests Conservation Act, 1980, (iii) Indian Forests Act, 1927, (iv) Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, (v) Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and (vi) Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 with following Terms of Reference.