

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) As a special initiative, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Ministry of Railways and Department of Science and Technology have jointly flagged off a Science Express Climate Action Special (SECAS) train on 15th October, 2015 to increase the understanding of the science of Climate Change among the general public especially students and teachers, which shall supplement the other ongoing awareness activities.

This innovative mobile science exhibition mounted on a 16 coach AC train will travel across the country, covering about 19,500 km during eight months, halting at 64 locations in 20 States.

(c) An amount of ₹ 14.53 Crore has been allocated for the running of the Science Express Climate Action Special Train.

#### **Clearance for diversion of forest land for coal mining**

1635. SHRI AVINASH PANDE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of requests for providing clearances for diversion of forest land for coal mining operations received by the Central Government since 2010;

(b) the number of such proposals approved by Government, year-wise and State-wise; and

(c) the details of measures taken for monitoring and enforcing the conditions stipulated in these clearances for the conduct of sustainable mining operations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) to (c) The Government of India grants prior approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 to use forest land for the purpose for various development projects. During the period of last six years *i.e.* 2010-2015, the Central Government has received 237 proposals of mining Seeking prior approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 including proposals for coal mining. The Central Government, during the year 2010 has accorded approval over 12,681 ha of forest land in 94 cases, in 2011 over 8,207 ha in 68 cases, in 2012 over 3,866 ha in 30 cases, in 2013 over 8,451 ha in 42 cases, in 2014 over 13,043 ha in 58 cases and 4,889 ha in 35 cases during the year 2015 for mining including coal.

On the request of the State Government, the Central Government considers various proposals for non-forest use of forest land and accords prior approval as per the Rules and Guidelines framed under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 stipulating mitigative measures in the form of general, standard and specific conditions including conditions of compensatory afforestation, imposition of Net Present Value (NPV) to reduce the adverse impact of the diversion of forest land. The Central Government has stipulated an elaborate mechanism both at Central and State Government level for monitoring and enforcing the conditions stipulated in the approvals. The regular monitoring of the forest areas, after approval by the Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for carrying out mining activities, is conducted by the State Governments and concerned Regional Office of the Ministry to ensure that no violations occur and conditions mandated in the approval are complied with. Besides this, user agencies are also required to submit the annual self-compliance of conditions stipulated in the approvals accorded by the Central Government. The compensatory afforestation works are also monitored through regular inspections, quarterly progress reports, third party monitoring and e-green watch programme launched under the supervision of the Forest Survey of India, Dehradun.

#### **Study on melting of glaciers**

†1636. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has conducted or proposes to conduct any study with regard to melting of glaciers;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the details of policy and action-plan adopted by Indian scientists to control the melting of glaciers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) In a collaborative project with Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has carried out mapping of Himalayan glaciers covering Indus, Ganga and Brahmaputra basins using Indian satellite data during 2004 to 2011. The study shows that there are 34,919 glaciers spread over 75,779 sq. km. glaciated area in the entire Himalayas. Further, ISRO has monitored the glacier advance and retreat of 2018 glaciers, across the Himalayan region using satellite data of 2000-

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.