

SHRI R. VELU: When we have taken up a survey, this its indicates that it is an assurance.

SHRI LALHMINGLIANA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to know from the Railway Minister whether there is any proposal for improvement of the Badarpur-Bairabi railway line. And, is there any proposal for extension of the said railway line up to Sairang?

SHRI R. VELU: Right now I don't have details. I will collect the same and furnish it to the hon. Member.

Environment clearance for urban projects

*166. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have issued a notification making it mandatory for urban projects to get environment clearance;

(b) whether the new projects relating to construction of new townships and settlement colonies, commercial complexes etc. have also come under the purview of Environment Impact Assessment;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Government are aware that several new townships are being developed around Butkal Lake and Surajkund Lake, Haryana;

(e) if so, whether the promoters have taken environment clearance; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (f) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (c) Government of India have amended EIA Notification, 1994 *vide* S.O. 801 (E) on 7th July, 2004 to bring construction of new townships, industrial townships, settlement colonies, commercial complexes, hotel complexes, hospitals and office complexes, anywhere in the country, for more than 1,000 persons or discharging sewage more than 50,000 litres per day or with an investment of more than Rs. 50 crores and new industrial estates having an area of more than 50 hectares and the

industrial estates irrespective of area, if their pollution potential is high, within its purview.

(d) As per information received from the Government of Haryana, Butkal Lake and Surajkund Lake are part of the Integrated Development Plan of Faridabad-Ballabhgarh controlled areas and Licences for setting up of residential colonies were granted by the State Government as per the provision of the development plan.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Environmental clearance for new construction projects has become mandatory with effect from 7th July, 2004.

SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Sir, I am satisfied with the answer given by the hon. Minister. It is a welcome step for the future. It is all right. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what steps the Government propose to take to ensure that townships and industrial areas which have already come up do conform to the new standards.

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, this Notification was issued on 7th of this month. The High Court of Chennai has already given a clear direction that it should not be retrospective and it can only be prospective. So far as constructions which have already come up are concerned, the Ministry is handicapped and helpless.

SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: It means, you cannot take any action against those constructions.

SHRI A. RAJA: Yes, we cannot take any action against those constructions which have already come up.

श्री सभापति: बागड़ोदिया जी, जब माननीय सदस्या मंत्री जी के उत्तर से संतुष्ट हैं, तो आप क्यों दखल दे रहे हैं। आप रहने दीजिए। ... (व्यवधान)...

श्री संतोष बागड़ोदिया: सर, मैंने सुना नहीं है, आपने क्या कहा है।

श्री सभापति: आपने सप्लीमेंट्री क्वेश्चन पूछने के लिए लिखा है। जब माननीय सदस्या स्वयं मंत्री जी के उत्तर से संतुष्ट हैं, तो आप क्यों दखल दे रहे हैं? मैं नेक्स्ट क्वेश्चन ले लेता हूँ।

श्री संतोष बागड़ोदिया: सर, आपने मेरा नाम लिया है।

श्री सभापति: मैं बड़े लोगों के नाम लेता ही हूँ। नेक्स्ट क्वेश्चन।

श्री संतोष बागड़ोदिया: सर, यह सीरियस बात है।

श्री संजय निरुपम: सर, यह बहुत महत्वपूर्ण क्वेश्चन है।

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, through you, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is any time-limit for giving environmental clearance for projects because sometimes they go on for years. I want to know from the hon. Minister whether the Ministry makes all queries in one go or it is like the repair of a car where every time a query is made, it is replied, and then another query is made, again it is replied. Will you please maintain this? The Ministry of Environment and Forests have no powers in this regard. For example, the river Princess could not be cleared in four years. Would you please look into this?

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, so far as environmental clearance for projects is concerned, we have a timeframe of 120 days. Within these 120 days, if any project is complete in accordance with the prescribed format issued by the Ministry, then, there will not be any delay in giving environmental clearance. The problem arises when there is insufficient information available in the document. In that case, we have to refer the document to the State Government or to the proponent. Due to this, environmental clearance is delayed. Definitely, I can assure the House that there will not be any delay on the part of the Ministry in giving environmental clearance.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, it is inevitable that we have to protect the environment not only for the present generation but also for the future generation. Sir, certain areas have to be taken on a different footing. For example, there is *Dandakaranya* where States like Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh are being covered. Most of the proposed irrigation projects have got ideal location only in forest areas. The people of those areas are so impoverished that they do not have any employment unless you construct some projects there. Many of the youths in those areas are being attracted to naxalism. Sir, this is an acute and rampant problem prevailing in those areas. So, the point on which I am trying to stress is, such areas have to be treated on a different footing. It is true that you have to protect the environment, but the survival of the human race is also very important. Could you strike a balance and see to it that areas like Chandrapur and Khammam can be considered on priority in awarding environmental clearance for construction of irrigation projects?

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, having enacted the law, I humbly submit before the house that we cannot give any assurance for dispensation of the law. No doubt, we are having two things. One, social obligation to promote industries does not mean environmental issues can be compromised. However, I would like to assure the House that if any suggestions are made to the Ministry, we can sit and discuss at length with the hon. Members.

श्री संजय निरुपम: सभापति जी, इसमें एक मुम्बई से जुड़ा हुआ बहुत महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्न है। ... (व्यवधान) ... सभापति जी, इसमें मुम्बई से जुड़ा हुआ एक प्रश्न है। ... (व्यवधान) ...

श्री सभापति: इसमें मुम्बई का कहीं जिक्र नहीं है। नेक्स्ट क्वेश्चन। श्रीमती सविता शारदा। ... (व्यवधान) ...

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Sir, I want to put one supplementary. (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The next question has been taken up. Please take your seat.

रेलवे की टेलीफोन पर पूछताछ सेवा

*167. श्रीमती सविता शारदा: क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि रेलगाड़ियों से संबंधित जानकारी लेने के लिए बड़ी संख्या में लोग रेलवे के पूछताछ नम्बरों पर फोन करते हैं और उन्हें आमतौर पर नम्बर न मिलने की शिकायत रहती है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या सरकार ने रेलवे की टेलीफोन पर पूछताछ सेवा में सुधार लाने के लिए कोई योजना तैयार की है; और

(ग) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है?

रेल मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री आर वेलू): (क) से (ग) एक विवरण सभा पटल पर रख दिया गया है।

विवरण

(क) यह सही है कि बड़ी संख्या में लोग गाड़ियों से संबंधित सूचना रेलवे पूछताछ सेवा से टेलीफोन पर प्राप्त करने के लिए टेलीफोन करते हैं। टेलीफोनों को न उठाने संबंधी शिकायतें भी ध्यान में आई हैं।