

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION (DR. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN): (a) to (c) The matter is *sub-judice* in the Hon'ble NGT.

Development and conservation of forest cover

†1309. SHRI SANJAY SETH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government has taken or proposes to take any steps to formulate an appropriate programme for proper development and conservation of forest cover in the country and for the development of forest based industries and people working therein;

(b) if so, the details thereof, as on date; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE): (a) to (c) Development and conservation of forests and development of forest based industries is primarily the responsibility of State/Union Territory Governments. However, the Central Government supports the efforts of State/Union Territory Governments to develop, conserve and manage the forests. To increase the forest cover in the country, afforestation programme is taken up under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as National Afforestation Programme, Green India Mission, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), the Watershed Development Component of the "Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)" and Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA). Further, financial assistance is provided to States and Union Territories for various forest conservation and protection measures under Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as Intensification of Forest Management Scheme, Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitat, Project Tiger etc. No specific guidelines for the development of forest based industries have been issued. However, the Ministry has issued detailed guidelines on Wood Based Industries (establishment and regulation) guidelines, 2016 *vide* letter no. 3-3/2015-SU (Vol. III) dated 23rd September, 2016.

Restoration of river Jhelum

1310. SHRI NAZIR AHMED LAWAY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has a plan to bring river Jhelum under the National

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

River Conservation Plan (NRCP) for its restoration especially after September, 2014 floods in valley which has led to the threat of its massive degradation; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE): (a) No proposal has been received from the Government of Jammu and Kashmir for restoration of river Jhelum under the National River Conservation Plan.

(b) In view of para (a) above, question does not arise.

Environmental clearance to projects

1311. PROF. M.V. RAJEEV GOWDA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of projects, out of the total number of applications received, which got environmental clearance from the Ministry during the last two years and such percentage during 2009 to 2014;

(b) whether the speedy clearances of development projects may compromise the ecological security;

(c) if so, what steps Government intends to take to ensure that ecological security is not compromised; and

(d) if not, the details of manners in which it would not be compromised?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE): (a) The percentage of projects, out of the total number of applications received, which got environmental clearance from the Ministry during the last two years are 53.86% in 2014 and 90.70% in 2015. Average percentage of such projects for the period from 2009 to 2014 is 87.79%.

(b) to (d) The Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006 under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 governs the process of grant of prior Environmental Clearance for activities mentioned in the schedule of the Notification. The process of prior Environmental Clearance includes screening, scoping, public consultation and appraisal. The process includes prescription of Terms of Reference, collection of data, preparation of draft EIA/EMP report, public consultation, finalisation of EIA/EMP report, appraisal by the Expert Appraisal Committee and examination in the Ministry for grant of Environmental Clearance. The statutory provisions laid down for carrying out the process of grant of prior Environmental Clearance ensures that ecological security is not compromised.