

Environment clearances for minor minerals

531. SHRI VINAY DINU TENDULKAR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether district level authorities have been involved in the process of granting environmental clearances in minor mineral based cases;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that some State Governments have raised questions on the ambiguity of the role of district level authorities and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether the Central Government is contemplating to make necessary changes in the National Mineral Policy to clear the doubts of the State Governments and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) to (d) Environmental clearance is granted as per the provisions of the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006 as amended from time to time. The Ministry, vide Notification dated 15.01.2016, for the first time, has delegated the Authority of Environmental Clearance up to 5 hectares of individual mining lease of minor minerals and 25 hectares in clusters to the District Environment Impact Assessment Authority (DEIAA) headed by the District Magistrate/District Collector. A District Expert Appraisal Committee (DEAC) has also been constituted. The Ministry has also notified the constitution of DEIAA and DEAC, vide Notification SO No. 190 (E) dated 20.01.2016. The Ministry has further clarified the provisions of the EIA Notification, 2006 and issued the amendments in the EIA Notification, 2006 on 01.07.2016 for mining of minor minerals, related to large number of leases or quarry licenses of very small size in contiguous area. Changes to various policies are considered from time to time and is an ongoing process, including National Mineral Policy.

Blue Flag Standards for beaches

532. DR. BANDA PRAKASH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has started a pilot project to develop the Indian beaches according to the Blue Flag Standards;

(b) whether beaches from the coastal States had been chosen for the Blue Flag certification under the project; and