

(a) whether Government proposes to appoint a National Regulator and open its offices across the country for assessment of projects, implementation of environment standards for approval and to impose a penalty on polluters in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when it is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) to (c) No Sir. The Government has opined that the existing system of appraising projects for environmental clearance may be continued. Alongside, several measures to improve transparency, efficiency and enhance ease of doing business are also being taken.

**Rehabilitation of families displaced due to  
Kharak dam project**

1616. SHRI BINOY VISWAM: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that around 300 families in Madhya Pradesh displaced due to Kharak dam project are still awaiting rehabilitation since 2011;

(b) if so, the reasons for the delay in rehabilitation; and

(c) the details of rehabilitation given to tribals under the Forest Rights Act?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) to (c) No Sir, no family has been displaced in the minor irrigation dam project constructed in the Khargone District of Madhya Pradesh. However, in the submergence area of this project only private, encroached revenue and forest land have been occupied by leaseholder and under the Private Land Acquisition Act, a total of ₹663.68 lakhs has been provided to 123 leaseholders during 2012 to 2016.

**Restoration of degraded land**

1617. SHRI T. RATHINAVEL : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a 2016 report by the Indian Space Research Organization has found that about 29 per cent of India's land is degraded;

(b) If so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that India had committed to restore 13 million hectares of degraded and deforested land by the year 2020;and

(d) if so, the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) and (b) As per the text of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), „land degradation‰ means reduction or loss, in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, of the biological or economic productivity and complexity of rainfed cropland, irrigated cropland, or range, pasture, forest and woodlands resulting from land uses or from a process or combination of processes, including processes arising-from human activities and habitation patterns, such as soil erosion caused by wind and/or water; deterioration of the physical, chemical and biological or economic properties of soil; and long-term loss of natural vegetation.

Yes, it is a fact that a 2016 report by the Indian Space Research Organisation found that about 29 per cent of India's land was degraded. A project entitled, „Desertification status Mapping‰, under the National Natural Resources Management System(NNRMS) Scheme, funded by Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change has been completed by Space Applications Centre, Indian Space Research Organisation(ISRO). The important outcome of the project was the „Desertification and Land Degradation Atlas of India‰. The Atlas was prepared at 1:500,000 scale for 2011-13 and 2003-05 time frame and presents Desertification/ Land Degradation Status maps depicting land use, process of degradation and severity level along with area statistics consolidated for entire country. The analysis revealed that 96.4 million hectares of the country is undergoing process of land degradation *i.e.*, 29.23 per cent of the total geographical area of the country during 2011-13.

(c) and (d) Bonn Challenge is a global goal to bring into restoration 150 million hectares of degraded and deforested lands by 2020 and additional 200 million hectares by 2030. India also joined the voluntary Bonn Challenge pledge, to bring into restoration 13 million hectares of degraded and deforested land by the year 2020, and additional 8 million hectares by 2030. India's pledge is the largest from Asia.

This Ministry implements National Afforestation Programme(NAP) for afforestation and eco-restoration of degraded forests in the country through people's participation involving Joint Forest Management Committees(JFMCs) at village level. An amount of ₹ 572,68 crores has been released to the all states during last five years(2014-15 to 2018-19) to carry out afforestation and ancillary activities under the scheme.

Besides, MoEF&CC fixes afforestation targets under 20 point Programme annually to each State/UTs. Tree Plantation/Afforestation activities, being the multi departmental effort, are taken up cross-sectorally by various Departments, NGOs, Civil Societies, Corporate bodies etc. under various Central and State Plan/Non Plan Schemes.

**Radiation from cellphone towers harming birds,  
insects and plants**

1618. SHRIMATI SHANTA CHHETRI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Ministry is aware that European Union (EU) funded review body EKLIPSE has concluded that radiation from cellphone towers, phone masts, WiFi and broadcast transmitters is a potential risk to insect and bird orientation and plant health;
- (b) whether the Ministry has taken cognisance of the fact that the report found that the magnetic orientation of birds mammals and invertebrates such as insects and spiders could be disrupted by Electromagnetic Radiation (EMR); and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has not received report from EU funded review body EKLIPSE regarding radiation from cellphone towers, phone masts, WiFi and broadcast transmitters being potential risk to insect and bird orientation and plant health.

- (c) Does not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

**Curbing pollution in Delhi**

1619. SHRI VIJAY GOEL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Delhi has become the most polluted city in the world;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) steps taken by Government in curbing the pollution in Delhi;
- (d) whether Government has received any proposal from Government of NCT Delhi with regard to curbing air pollution;
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the response of the Ministry thereto; and