

envisages production and productivity improvement of horticulture crops including fruits crops through various interventions. Activities such as production of planting material, coverage of area with improved cultivars, rejuvenation of senile orchards are taken up for development of fruit crops. All States and UTs are covered under the scheme.

Char Dham project

858. SHRI M. V. SHREYAMS KUMAR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) the status of the construction of 12000 crore Char Dham project connecting four major pilgrim sites, Kedarnath, Badrinath, Gangotri and Yamunotri in Uttarakhand;
- (b) whether it is a fact that the mandatory Environment Impact Assessment(EIA) was avoided to fast track the project;
- (c) if so, the reason for fast tracking the project in a hilly and mountainous terrain; and
- (d) whether Government proposes to review the project considering the fragile Himalayan ecology?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) to (d) As per the extant provisions of the EIA Notification, 2006, as amended from time to time, there is a laid down schedule for requirements of prior Environmental Clearance, detailed Environment Impact Assessment studies, public consultations etc. for various categories of activities/projects. The requirement of a prior Environmental Clearance or otherwise to a particular project is governed by these provisions accordingly. The "Char Dham Programme" comprises of various individual road expansion projects being executed by different agencies.

This Ministry had constituted a High Level Committee *vide* O.M. No. 21-270/2008 –IA.III dated 11th December, 2012 to review the provisions of Environmental Impact Assessment Notification, 2006 relating to grant of Environmental Clearance for Roads, Buildings and Special Economic Zone projects. On the recommendations of the Committee, the Ministry *vide* its notification dated 22.08.2013 has exempted the projects related to expansion of National Highway upto 100 Kms., involving additional right of

way or land acquisition upto 40 meters on existing alignments and 60 meters on re-alignment or by passes from the preview of the notification.

In view of the above thresholds applicable to roads in 'Char Dham' projects, no project have been referred to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for appraisal.

Supreme Court's direction to Government on stubble burning

859. SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has taken cognizance of the Supreme Court's Order directing the Central and State Governments "to prepare a scheme for making available combine harvesters, happy seeders, hydraulically reversible MB plough, paddy straw chopper, mulcher, rotary slasher, zero till seed drill and rotavators and balers, especially to small and marginal farmers to either free of charge or on nominal rental basis";

(b) whether the Ministry has taken any steps to comply with the above decision; and

(c) if so, number of small and marginal farmers identified for this; if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) to (c) The Government of India and concerned State Governments have taken several steps towards prevention of burning of crop residues in agricultural fields which includes compliance to the direction issued by Hon'ble Supreme Court in the matter W P (c) 13029/1985. Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has launched a central sector scheme on 'Promotion of Agricultural Mechanization for *In-Situ* Management of Crop Residue in the States of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi. The following are the major steps taken in the scheme:—

- Farm Machinery Banks for Custom Hiring of *in-situ* crop residue management machinery with financial assistance of 80% of the project cost through Co-operative Societies of farmers, Farmers Producer Organization (FPOs), Self-Help Groups, registered Farmers Societies/farmers groups, Private Entrepreneurs, Group of women farmers or self-help groups for establishment