

please give notice and the hon. Minister will give the reply. The hon. Members are not reading the question and they are asking questions.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RATILAL VERMA: I would like to know from the hon. Minister that while preparing the proposal for surplus land.....Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know whether lease and time will be given to the people belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as per the provision made for these castes.

[*English*]

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: We have very clearly answered that it is a question of commercial exploitation. If they are competent, then we will consider them also.

[*Translation*]

Environmental Clearance of Development Projects



*104. SHRI GAYA PRASAD KORI:
DR. CHATTRAPAL SINGH:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the revised notification regarding environmental clearance of development projects issued on January 28, 1993 under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 has been gazetted;

(b) of so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether any assessment had been made in regard to the adverse impact likely to be caused by this notification on industries/development project;

(e) if so, the details thereof, and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (f). No, Sir. As per provision of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and Rules thereunder comments/objections were invited and hearings were held and this process was completed recently. The notification was issued only after a need was felt to harmonise development with environment care is being taken to ensure that there will be no adverse impact on sustainable and environmentally compatible development projects.

SHRI GAYA PRASAD KORI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the said notification under environment (Protection) Act, 1986 was to be issued on 28th January, 1993. It has not yet been issued. I would like to know as to when it would be issued?

Secondly, will the hon. Minister develop forest on the land lying along river banks in the country?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the notification issued during January 1993 the Government had invited suggestions, opinions and objections from the State Governments and industrial institutions. We have since received their replies. These have been considered and the State Governments and Industrial Institutions have been given hearing. The formalities have also been completed recently.

With regard to afforestation of land along river banks, the Government has included the Programme in the Ganga Action Plan Phase-2. It is being included in the National River Action Plan also. Besides, efforts are being made to afforest the land along river banks through State Governments and institutions.

SHRI GAYA PRASAD KORI : I would like to know the time by which this notification would be published in the Gazette?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: A number of pro-

posals have been received in this regard. Many people have offered their views on the subject. These would be given serious thought. If it is felt necessary, we would consult Industrial associations and complete the formalities. But it is not possible to give the exact date.

[English]

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ D. CHAVAN: Sir, as part of the new guidelines, all the States are required to form the State-level Advisory Committees. Part (a) of my question is: How many States have not formed these state Advisory Committees so far? If there are any, which are the States which have not formed the Committees? Part (b) of my question is: There are over 90 development projects from Maharashtra which have received Phase-I environmental clearance under the Forest Clearance Act.. But the final clearance has not been accorded primarily because the State Government have not completed the formalities under the Compensatory Afforestation Programme. They have not paid the money. I would like to know whether the Central Government has been in touch with the Maharashtra Government to get the formalities done; whether the Maharashtra Government are not completing the formalities. I would, therefore, like to know what is the exact position.

SHRI KAMAL NATH: With regard to part (a) of the question which States have not formed their State-level Advisory Committees, the point is that the Committees are required to be formed under the new rules of the Forest Conservation Act where certain Act where certain streamlining of the process was done.

Some States have formed it and some states have not formed it. I am unable to say right now which States have not formed it. I will forward it to the hon Member. But it is a fact that those States which have not formed it are unable to take advantage of the decentralisation. We have attempted to expedite the process and examination of clearances under the Forest Conservation Act. With regard to section part of his question

which relates to pending projects in Maharashtra, one of the requirements is that for compensatory afforestation, State Government is required to not only identify but physically transfer the non-forest land into forest land. Some of the state Governments have not done so, either they find it difficult to identify or to go through the formalities of transfer. This has been taken up from time to time with the Maharashtra State Government and this is an ongoing process. But this process is very essential because it is essential that whatever forest land is diverted, is compensated by the compensatory afforestation.

[Translation]

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to tell the hon. Minister that environmental problem and development are complementary to each other. Today environment has posed a big threat to the country as well as the whole world. Comments sought vide the notification would come gradually. There are already laws to protect the environment. But they remain ineffective while trees in the forests and those grown in the villages are being felled illegally. I had also drawn your attention to this earlier also. Taking a decision on this will take time. For the time being what steps are being taken to enforce the existing laws? Uttar Pradesh is being governed by the Central government. Will any special attention be given for the protection environment there?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: so far as notification is concerned, it was issued under the Environmental (Protection) Act. The hon. Member said that notification would be issued and comments would continue to come. But the point to which the hon. Member made a reference is about the Forest Conservation Act. It is a fact that the Government has received information in regard to felling of trees. We have discussed this matter with the State Governments from time to time. We have also tried to involve people in this cause. It is not feasible to protect the forests with the help of a Forest Guard and officials from the threat of orga-

nized gangs. We have tried to involve the general public in the work. Environmental forces have been set up particularly in those districts which are sensitive from environment point of view. In this regard discussions are being made with State Governments from time to time to strengthen the Forest Departments so as to enable them fight with the organised gangs.

[English]

Leakage from Bombay High Oil Pipeline

*105. SHRI RAM NAIK:
SHRI C. SREENIVAASAN:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the extent of damage caused to the marine wealth and environment due to leakage from Bombay high oil pipeline;

(b) whether the Government have reviewed the disaster management plan of ONGC;

(c) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(d) if not, the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Preliminary studies carried out by national Institute of Oceanography, Goa have indicated some adverse effects on zooplankton and photosynthetic production. No fish mortality was recorded though some fishes were reported to be tinted. Continuous monitoring along the western coast is in progress and the report is expected shortly.

(b) to (d). ONGC have prepared contingency plans for below out, fire, oil spills, etc., which are general in nature. They have been asked to submit a comprehensive Disaster Management Plan which is awaited.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Six thousand tonnes

of crude oil has spilled not the Arabian Sea on 17th May. Now it is very difficult to believe the contention of the Minister when he says that zooplankton- the meaning of this word is floating and drifting and drifting animal life-has been adversely affected.

And, at the same time, he said that there is no fish mortality. These are two contradictory observations. I have visited the site and it is my personal knowledge, my constituency is on the western coast, that number of fish died in big way. So, I do not agree with the contention, since this is my personal knowledge.

The Minister on the 1st of June, had issued a notice to the ONGC which says that they may kindly submit their explanation for non-compliance of the stipulated conditions within period of two weeks from the date of receipt of that letter, failing which they will be constrained to take legal action under the provisions of Environmental Act.

Now, I want to know, whether they got the reply from them and why no legal action has been taken against the ONGC?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Sir, while the hon. Member has said that he has personal knowledge, I wish to state that I also did visit the site several days after this incident took place. I had discussions with the ONGC officials and officials of the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board.

The National Institute of Oceanography had given a report. While it is true that 6,000 tonnes of oil did spill, the immediate action taken by the Coast Guard was commendable and that had saved a very major disaster.

Sir, some fish died, according to some finding of the hon. Member. But, from all reports available with me, no damage, as such, had been reported. In fact, there is no fish mortality as such; by fish mortality. I mean, the damage that can be assessed.

Sir, on the other hand, ONGC was served with a notice for non-compliance not