

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:865

ANSWERED ON:08.12.2003

IV MUMBAI (MIDDLE VAITARNA) WATER SUPPLY PROJECT

CHANDRAKANT BHAURAO KHAIRE;DR. KIRIT SOMAIYA

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

- (a) whether Maharashtra has submitted any proposal to the Union Government for environmental clearance of IV Mumbai (Middle-Vaitarna) Water Supply Project;
- (b) if so, whether the Union Government have expressed their inability to approve the proposal;
- (c) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether Maharashtra has since clarified or removed the objections and World Bank has indicated willingness to provide assistance for this project;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the original estimated cost of the project as per original report of the Tata Consulting Engineers of 1992 and the cost escalation suffered thereby so far?

Answer

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS (SHRI. T. R. BAALU)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) & (c) The proposal for Forestry clearance has been rejected on the grounds that the area is part of ecologically fragile and sensitive area of Western Ghats, which supports very rich bio-diversity and many endangered medicinal plants and the reservoir will fragment the habitat of the wild animals. Moreover, felling of more than 2.50 lakh trees will cause ecological disturbances and loss of precious bio-diversity. However, further discussions have been held between the officials of the Ministry and State Government/ Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai. A site visit has also been done. In case of Environmental clearance, some information has been sought from the user agency.

(d) & (e) Action taken report/ additional information/ modified proposal has not been received from the State Government/user agency. There is no information about any willingness indicated by the World Bank to provide assistance on this project.

(f) According to the information given in the proposal submitted by the user agency for forestry clearance, total cost of the project was Rs. 285 crores at 1996 price level. The anticipated cost as per the year 2002 is about Rs. 1250 crores.