

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2894
ANSWERED ON:11.08.2010
CLEARANCE TO MGNREGA PROJECTS
Singh Shri Dushyant

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

- (a) whether several projects under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) are pending for want of environment and forestry clearance;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government has constituted any independent body exclusively for clearing of these projects;
- (d) if so, the details thereof, and other steps taken for early clearance of these pending projects;
- (e) whether the Government has any authority to check that the forests and biodiversity is not spoiled during the implementation of MGNREGA projects; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a)&(b) As per records maintained in the ministry of Environment and Forests, no projects are pending under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) for want of environment and forestry clearance.

(c)&(d) Under the provisions of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, the Central Government has not constituted any independent body exclusively for clearing of MGNREGA projects. However, the Central Government has taken steps for speedy disposal of proposals by making provisions of general approval for diversion of forest land up to 1 ha for developmental purposes. The Central Government has delegated powers to its Regional Offices, located at Chandigarh, Lucknow, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Shillong, and Bangalore, to decide proposals involving less than 5 ha of forest land except for mining and de-reservation. Proposals involving forest land up to 40 ha are processed by the concerned Regional Office through the State Advisory Group. Only proposals involving more than 40 ha are processed in the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

(e)&(f) The Central Government from time to time issues guidelines/directions to the State Governments and project proponents to minimize felling of trees while implementing various developmental projects besides planting of more trees. Further, stipulations prescribed in the approval orders to mitigate adverse impact of diversion of forest land are monitored by the State as well as Central Government.