

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1673

ANSWERED ON:07.03.2011

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AUTHORITY

Deora Shri Milind Murl;Rane Dr. Nilesh Narayan;Singh Shri Rajiv Ranjan (Lalan);Vardhan Shri Harsh

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

- (a) whether the Government has proposed a National Environmental Protection Authority;
- (b) if so, the objectives behind the setting up of the proposed authority and its mandate;
- (c) the details of the areas of engagement between the Government and the World Bank towards handling environmental challenges;
- (d) the time by which it is likely to be set up;
- (e) whether the Government has any plan on the issue of Deforestation vs. development in the country;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) to (d): A proposal to establish a National Environment Assessment and Monitoring Authority (NEAMA) to strengthen the regulatory framework and to improve the environmental governance in the country particularly in the fields of environment impact assessment and coastal zone management is in a conceptual stage. The earlier National Environment Protection Authority (NEPA) has been rechristened as NEAMA in line with its proposed mandate. The details and time schedule for setting up of the Authority are yet to be formalized. No engagement is proposed between the Government and the World Bank towards establishment of the proposed NEAMA.

(e) to (g): There is a provision under the Forest (Conservation) Act to compensate the loss of forest land diverted for non-forest purposes by including non-forest land or by enriching degraded forest land by way of compensatory afforestation, additional compensatory afforestation, penal compensatory afforestation and Catchment Area Treatment Plan etc. Consistent efforts have been made by the Central Government to optimize the use of forest land for non-forest purposes. As a result, the rate of diversion, which used to be about 1.43 lakh hectare/annual prior to the enactment of the Act, has been reduced to about 31,000 hectare/annual in the post-1980 era.