

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:143

ANSWERED ON:01.08.2011

ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE TO COAL PROJECTS

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

- (a) whether the Ministry has eased their stand on the "no-go" policy and clear coal blocks especially in three blocks of Chhattisgarh against the repeated recommendation of the Forest Advisory Committee;
- (b) if so, the details of the recommendations of the Forest Advisory Committee in this regard;
- (c) the details of the issues which were earlier objected/raised by the Ministry; and
- (d) the extent to which each of such issues were addressed by the concerned agencies?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SMT. JAYANTHI NATARAJAN)

- (a) The three coal blocks located in the Hasdeo-Arand forest regions which were earlier classified as Category A as per the joint study undertaken by the Ministry of Coal and Ministry of Environment and Forests were accorded approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. These coal blocks are located in the fringe of the Hasdeo-Arand area.
- (b) The recommendation of the Forest Advisory Committee is enclosed in the annexure.
- (c) The issues raised in the Tara Coal Block earlier relate to number of trees to be felled and conservation related issues.
- (d) The issues addressed by the agencies in Tara Coal block: (i) reduction in medium density forest area from about 2000 hectare to 778 hectares, (ii) reduction in total trees to be felled from about 8.5 lakh to about 1.2 lakh, (iii) the operation period of the mine is reduced from 45 years to 25 years (iv) all movement of coal from mine to power plant through overhead conveyor system.