

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:90  
ANSWERED ON:25.11.2009  
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY  
Dhruvanarayana Shri R. ;Jeyadural Shri S. R.

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

- (a) whether a Conference of the State Ministers of Environment and Forests was held recently in Delhi;
- (b) if so, the issues discussed therein and the outcome thereof;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to set up a National Environment Protection Authority (NEPA) for grant of environmental clearances and enforce environmental laws and standards;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether some of the State Governments have objected to the setting up of such a body;
- (f) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (g) whether the Government also proposes to modernize and revamp the environmental clearances and regulatory compliance; and
- (h) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

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

(a) to (h) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (h) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION No. 90 FOR 25.11.2009 REGARDING NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY RAISED BY SHRI DHRUVA NARAYANA AND SHRI S.R. JEYADURAI

- (a) Yes, Sir. The Conference of State Ministers of Environment and Forests was held in New Delhi on 18.8.2009.
- (b) The issues discussed during the Conference were centered around 6 agenda items. The agenda items related to:
  - (i) Monitoring compliance with environmental and forestry related laws and regulations and the road map for institution-building;
  - (ii) Improving our approach to river cleaning using innovative models and enhanced coordination between Centre, State and Local Bodies;
  - (iii) Strategies for increasing forest cover and enhancing synergies between 'Green India Mission', National Afforestation Programme and CAMPA funds;
  - (iv) Strengthening of State Forest Departments by Modernisation, Infrastructure development & Capacity building of forest officials;
  - (v) Protection of Forests in the context of the implementation of the " The Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers" (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 ;
  - (vi) Wildlife management including tiger conservation and issues related to man-animal conflict.
- (c)&(d): The Government is considering setting up of a National Environment Protection Authority (NEPA) and the proposal is in a conceptual stage. The configuration and scope of the proposed NEPA is yet to be finalised. A discussion paper has been circulated and has also been uploaded in the Ministry's website for comments.
- (e)&(f): The Government of Madhya Pradesh has responded that the establishment of a new body has to be viewed carefully in the context of the existence of State Pollution Control Boards and the Central Pollution Control Board as the constitution of NEPA may cause intervention in the rights of the States and may create dispute for smooth environmental governance.
- (g) &(h): This Ministry had issued a draft notification dated 19.1.2009 to amend the Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006 inviting comments. The comments received have been examined by a Committee whose recommendations have been accepted by the Ministry. The recommendations inter-alia include exemption of bio-mass based power plants up to 15 MW, and retaining the threshold limit of 20,000 sq.m. for construction projects.