

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3663
ANSWERED ON:03.09.2012
BAN ON CLEARANCE FOR MINING IN INVIOATE AREAS
Das Shri Khagen;Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

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

- (a) whether the Government has categorised certain coalfields as `invioate areas` for granting environmental clearances in the country;
- (b) if so, the details of coalfields categorised along with the salient features of the `invioate areas`;
- (c) the details of the recommendations made by the BK Chaturvedi Committee in this regard, and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (d) whether the Government has any proposal to amend the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

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

(a) to (e): The B. K. Chaturvedi Committee recommended that coal bearing blocks should normally be taken for mining and clearances given for it except where there is a strong case for rejection due to extremely dense forests and other ecological and environment consideration of serious nature. The Group of Ministers (GoM) constituted to consider the environmental and developmental issues relating to coal mining and other development projects in its fifth meeting held on 20th September, 2011 after examination of the said recommendation, recognized the importance of dense forests and suggested that identified pristine forest areas where any mining activity would lead to irreversible damage to the forests should be barred from any kind of non-forest activity. The GoM further recommended that all such forests which can never be regenerated to the desired quality should be protected and suggested that a committee comprising of experts in the field can be constituted to identify such forests. Further, a Committee constituted under Chairmanship of the Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests has formulated parameters for identification of such areas.