

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2093  
ANSWERED ON:11.03.2013  
NORMS FOR PRISTINE FOREST AREAS  
Pangi Shri Jayaram

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

- (a) whether a Committee set up by the Government has suggested new parameters to pristine forest areas in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has received objections from certain quarters for relaxation of forest norms;and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the response of the Government thereto?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN)

(a) to (d) 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 inter alia 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. Accordingly, Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) constituted a Committee under Chairmanship of the Secretray, Ministry of Environment and Forests to formulate parameters for identification of such areas. The Committee recommended that identification of such areas be based on six parameters namely; forest cover, forest type, biological richness, landscape integrity, wildlife value and the hydrological value. A copy of the report of the said Committee has been placed on website of the MoEF for submission of comments by the stakeholders. Comments from the concerned Ministries/ Departments in the Central Government on the report of the said Committee have also been sought by the MoEF. The MoEF is receiving comments on the report of the said Committee.No new parameters have however, been suggested by the said Committee for identification of pristine forest areas. No relaxation of forest clearance norms have also been suggested by the said Committee.