

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:85

ANSWERED ON:05.08.2013

REGIONAL OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS

J Helen Davidson

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

- (a) whether the Ministry is a part of the rehabilitation and reconstruction process in the State of Uttarakhand being constituted by the Government;
- (b) if so, the various responsibilities/duties assigned and taken by the Ministry;
- (c) whether the Ministry has opened a regional office in Dehradun; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the functions and its performances so far?

Answer

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

(a) to (d) Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) received request to take appropriate measures to expedite grant of approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for use of forests land for rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts in flood affected areas in Uttarakhand. To facilitate restoration and strengthening of the communication network to ensure expeditious rehabilitation of flood affected areas in Uttarakhand, the MoEF has taken the following measures:

(i) Opened a Camp Office of its Regional Office (Central Zone), Lucknow, at Dehradun for a period of six months to expedite consideration and disposal of cases of diversion of forest land for non-forest use pertaining to the State of Uttarakhand. The Camp Office has started functioning with effect from 19th July 2013. Till 31 July 2013 approx. eighteen proposals have been processed by the said Camp Office.

(ii) Accorded general approval under section 2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, for a period of one year, for diversion of forest land, not more than one hectare in each case, for restoration/reconstruction including realignment, by the Government Departments, of roads/ bridges damaged in the recent floods and construction of helipads and ropeways in flood affected areas in Uttarakhand; and

(iii) Norms for providing land for creation of compensatory afforestation in respect of proposals seeking diversion of forest land above one hectare and upto five hectares in each case for restoration/reconstruction including realignment, by the Government Departments, of the roads/ bridges damaged in the recent floods have been relaxed by providing that in place of normal provisions, compensatory afforestation over degraded forest land equal in extent to the forest land proposed to be diverted, shall only be insisted. This relaxation shall be applicable subject to a maximum of total 50 (fifty) hectares of forest land for all such cases, during the next one year from 24th July 2013.