

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2152  
ANSWERED ON:02.12.2009  
DIVERSION OF FOREST LAND FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES  
Owaisi Shri Asaduddin;Vinay Kumar Alias Vinnu Shri

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

- (a) whether the Union Government has decided not to permit diversion of forest land for public purposes without people's consent;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether his Ministry has sent a list of conditions to all the States to be followed meticulously;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether more powers have been given or proposed to be given to Gram Sabhas and tribal community for diversion of forest land;
- (f) if so, the details thereof including the steps taken by the Government in this regard; and
- (g) the steps taken or being taken by the Government for monitoring these guidelines in States?

**Answer**

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

(a) to(f) The Union Government permits diversion of forest land for public purposes under the provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 wherein opinions of the local people is ensured as per the guidelines mentioned in section-4 of Chapter-2 of the Hand book of the Ministry. This envisages that wherever any proposal for diversion of forest land is submitted, it should be accompanied by a resolution of the 'Aam Sabha' of the Gram Panchayat/ Local Body of the area endorsing the proposal that the project is in the interest of people living in and around the proposed forest land except in cases wherever consent of the local people in one form or another has been obtained by the State or the project proponents and the same is indicated in the proposal explicitly.

Further, the Union Government has also, vide letter no. 11-9/1998-FC (Pt) dated 03-08-2009, requested all the State/UT Governments to submit evidences ensuring compliance of the provisions of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, along with the project proposals for diversion of the forest land for non-forest purposes.

There is no pending proposal with the Union Government providing more powers to the Gram Sabhas and tribal community on the issue of diversion of forest land.

(g) The Union Government attaches adequate importance to the diversion projects where there is likelihood that the local people will be adversely impacted. The monitoring of compliance of the conditions is primarily done by the State/UT Governments. The Union Government also undertakes monitoring on sample basis through its six Regional Offices.