

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1893

ANSWERED ON:19.08.2013

CLEARANCES TO PROJECTS

Dhotre Shri Sanjay Shamrao;Mahtab Shri Bhartruhari

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

- (a) whether the Government has convened a joint meeting with the Ministry of Tribal Affairs to sort out differences for granting forest clearances to linear projects like roads, power etc. in the country;
- (b) if so, the outcome of the joint meeting;
- (c) whether the Government has accepted the recommendations of the committee headed by Pulok Chatterjee;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the salient features of the recommendations of the Committee; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

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

(a) to (e) Prime Minister's Office constituted a Committee with Shri Pulok Chatterjee, Principal Secretary to Prime Minister as Chairman; Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests and Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs as Members to make recommendations on issues relating to implementation of certain provisions of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006.

The Committee inter-alia recommended that a resolution of the Gram Sabha of the area, based on full and prior information of the project and a public hearing, endorsing that the project is in the interest of the people living on the forest land, use of which is proposed to be diverted for non-forest purposes may not be required for the projects like construction of roads, canals, laying of pipelines/optical fibers and transmission lines etc. where linear diversion of use of forest land in several villages are involved, unless recognised rights of Primitive Tribal Groups (PTG) and Pre-Agricultural Communities (PAC) are being affected.

The Ministry of Environment and Forests with consultation and concurrence of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs informed the all State/ Union Territory Governments that proposals seeking prior approval of Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for projects like construction of roads, canals, laying of pipelines/ optical fibers and transmission lines etc. where linear diversion of use of forest land in several villages is involved, unless recognised rights of PTG/ PAC are being affected, are exempted from the requirement of obtaining consent of the concerned Gram Sabha(s) as stipulated in clause (c) read with clause (b), (e) and (f) in second para of the MoEF's letter dated 3rd August 2009 wherein MoEF issued detailed guidelines on submission of evidences for having initiated and completed the process of settlement of rights under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 for proposals seeking prior approval of Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.