

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1832

ANSWERED ON:16.12.2013

ENVIRONMENT AND FOREST CLEARANCES FOR NH PROJECTS

Bais Shri Ramesh;Jindal Shri Naveen;Thakor Shri Jagdish

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a large number of National Highway projects are held up due to pending environment and forest clearances;
- (b) if so, the details of such projects, State-wise;
- (c) whether any company/developer has terminated an agreement with National Highways Authority of India due to delay in environment and forest clearance;
- (d) if so, the details thereof, company and project-wise; and
- (e) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to expedite clearances of these projects?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI SARVEY SATHYANARAYANA)

- (a) and (b) There are only 4 (four) projects for which formal Environment Clearance are awaited. These have already been recommended by Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) of Ministry of Environment and Forests. There are total 16 (sixteen) projects for which Forest Clearances are at various levels of processing. Details of all these projects are placed at Annexure-I.
- (c) and (d) Details of projects for which concessionaires/developers have served termination notice to National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and projects already terminated due to delay in environment and forest clearance are placed at Annexure-II.
- (e) Vide their different orders, the Ministry of Environment & Forests has resolved most of the bottlenecks like requirement of special exemption or No Objection Certificate under the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006 in respect of strengthening and widening of the National Highways (NHs) projects specifically pertaining to diversion of protected forest land under the Forest Conservation Act, 1980. It has also de-linked the grant of Environment Clearance from the Forest Clearance for linear projects and treated the strengthening and widening of National Highways Infrastructure projects differently from the new projects and allowed the construction of the NHs in the Non-Forest areas in widening projects as expenditure does not become infructuous in such projects. Accordingly, the process for obtaining environment and forest clearances are relaxed significantly for all the existing and future road projects.