

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:842  
ANSWERED ON:16.07.2014  
FOREST CONSERVATION IN NAXAL AREAS  
Mullappally Shri Ramachandran

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

(a) whether the Government proposes to give relaxation in forest conservation laws in naxal affected areas for speeding up development works; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the nature of relaxation proposed?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) & (b) To expedite creation of public utility infrastructure in 60 Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected districts identified by the Planning Commission for implementation of Integrated Action Plan (IAP) Scheme, Central Government vide letter dated 13th May 2011 accorded general approval under section 2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of forest land for creation of critical public utility infrastructure of 13 categories, specified in this Ministry's said letter dated 13th May 2011, by Government Departments involving not more than 5.00 hectares of forest land, in each case.

The 13 categories of projects covered under the said general approval are – schools, dispensaries/hospitals, electric and telecommunication lines, drinking water projects, water/rainwater harvesting structures, minor irrigation canals, non-conventional sources of energy, skill up-gradation/ vocational training centres, power sub-stations, rural roads, communication posts, police establishments like police stations /outposts/ border outposts /watch towers, in sensitive areas identified by the Ministry of Home Affairs, and underground laying of optical fibre cables, telephone lines & drinking water supply lines.

Central Government vide letter dated 16th June 2011 exempted the diversion of forest land in accordance with the said general approval from the requirement of compensatory afforestation.

Central Government vide letter dated 10th December 2012 extended the said general approval to additional 22 districts identified by the Planning Commission for implementation of the IAP Scheme.

The Central Government vide letter dated 1st February 2013 extended the said general approval to all category of public roads and quarrying of materials used in construction of public roads.

Central Government vide letter dated 17th May 2013 extended the said general approval to 35 LWE affected districts, from among the 106 districts selected under the Security Related Expenditure (SRE) Scheme being implemented by the Ministry of Home Affairs, which have so far not been selected for implementation of the IAP Scheme.

Central Government vide letter dated 4th July 2014 extended the said general approval to projects involving diversion of forest land, not located within the protected areas, for construction of two lane public roads by Government Departments in 117 Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected districts, as per details given in the Central Government's said letters dated 13th May 2011, 10th December 2012 and 17th May 2013, irrespective of the area of forest land involved in such projects.