

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:464
ANSWERED ON:26.11.2014
DIVERSION OF FOREST LAND FOR ROADS
Venugopal Dr. Ponnusamy

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

- (a) whether the Government has extended general approval under the Forest Conservation Act of 1980 for diversion of forest land for construction of certain categories of public roads, except those falling in the protected areas to fight Maoists;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has approved the laying of underground optical fibre cables, telephone lines etc. through forest areas; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change vide letter dated 4th July 2014 extended the general approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of upto 5 hectares of forest land for construction of all categories of public roads by Government Departments in 117 LWE affected districts to projects involving diversion of forest land, not located within the protected areas, for construction of two lane public roads by Government Departments in these 117 left wing extremism (LWE) affected districts irrespective of the area of forest land involved in such projects.

(c) & (d) Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change vide letter dated 16th October 2000 accorded general approval under Section-2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for underground laying of optical fibre cables, telephone lines and drinking water supply pipelines along the roads within existing right of way not falling in National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries, without felling of trees, where the maximum size of the trench is not more than 2.00 meter depth and 1.00 meter width. The said general approval has been extended from time to time and is still in force.

Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change vide letter dated 7th November 2014 extended the said general approval to underground laying of CNG/ PNG pipelines along the roads within existing right of way not falling in National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries, without felling of trees, where the maximum size of the trench is not more than 2.00 meter depth and 1.00 meter width.