

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:719
ANSWERED ON:05.03.2007
FOREST ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Pallani Shamy Shri K.C .

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

- (a) whether the Government has constituted 'Forest Advisory Committee';
- (b) if so, the details alongwith the functions thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to protect the forest resources of the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(a) to (c) Yes, Sir.

Vide order dated 12.12.2006, the Ministry of Environment and Forests constituted the Forest Advisory Committee with the following Members –

- (i) Director General of Forests, Ministry of Environment and Forests – Chairman
- (ii) Additional Director General of Forests, Ministry of Environment and Forests – Member
- (iii) Additional Commissioner (Soil Conservation), Ministry of Agriculture – Member
- (iv) Prof. Emeritus J.S. Singh, Banaras Hindu University – Member
- (v) Shri M. Kamal Naidu, Retired Chief Wildlife Warden – Member
- (vi) Dr. A.S. Dogra, Retired Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Punjab – Member
- (vii) Inspector General of Forests (Forest Conservation), Ministry of Environment and Forests – Member Secretary

However, the above order of the Ministry of Environment and Forests was stayed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India on 15.12.2006, and the matter is still under consideration of the Hon'ble Court. According to Section 3 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, the Central Government may constitute a Committee consisting of such number of persons as it may deem fit to advise the Government with regard to –

- (i) the grant of approval under Section 2; and
- (ii) any other matter connected with the conservation of forests which may be referred to it by the Central Government.

The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 has been enacted by the Parliament of India to regulate the use of forest land for non-forestry purposes, with a view to strike a balance between development and conservation. The Forest Advisory Committee, constituted under the Act, examines the proposals for diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes, and advises the Central Government with regard to grant of approval, subject to certain conditions to minimize any adverse impact of the proposal on forests and environment. As the Forest Advisory Committee, at present, is not in existence due to the stay imposed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, diversion of forest land is not taking place under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. The process of examination of proposals for diversion of forest land shall start only after the Hon'ble Court delivers final judgement in the above mentioned case.