

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4490

ANSWERED ON:22.04.2013

CLEARANCES TO ROAD PROJECTS

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

- (a) whether the various road projects of the country are to be given environment and forest clearances in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether a number of projects in the country including Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are being delayed for the last three years due to environment clearances not sanctioned;
- (d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;
- (e) the reasons for delay in granting environment clearance in view of cost overrun;and
- (f) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) New National Highways, expansion of National Highways of more than 30 km. length with additional 20 meters Right of Way and New State Highways, expansion of State Highways in eco- sensitive areas or in hilly terrain of above 1000 meters Mean Sea Level require prior environmental clearance under Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006. In case the project involves forest land, prior approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 is also required for diversion of forest land.

(c) to (f) Environmental clearances for 25 numbers of highway projects which involved diversion of forest land were pending for want of Stage-I Forest Clearance. These included 1 project from Bihar, 4 from Uttar Pradesh, 7 from Rajasthan, 3 from Maharashtra, 2 each from Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh, 1 each from Meghalaya and Himachal Pradesh and 4 projects passing through more than one State (2 in Rajasthan-Gujarat and 1 each in Karnataka-Andhra Pradesh and Punjab- Himachal Pradesh). However, in view of the recent decision to delink environment and forest clearances for linear projects, including highway projects, these 25 projects were granted environmental clearance on 21.03.2013.