

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
RAJYA SABHA
QUESTION NO 06.12.2010
ANSWERED ON
PROTECTION OF HASDEO ARAND IN CHHATTISGARH .

2820

Shri Vijay Jawaharlal Darda

Will the Minister of COALENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether Hasdeo Arand in Chhattisgarh has been declared as unfragmented forest of great bio-diversity being one of its kind left in the country;
- (b) if so, whether protection of this forest area from being shaved off for coal mining is being strictly enforced; and
- (c) whether its enforcement would be comprehensively done by the State Government or its constant monitoring would be undertaken by the Central Government?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS

(SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) to (c) The Ministry of Environment and Forests through Forest Survey of India (FSI) and the Ministry of Coal through Central Mine Planning Design Institute Limited & (CMPDI) have jointly prepared a map overlaying the forest cover map on the coal block boundaries of Hasdeo Arand coalfield of Chhattisgarh and identified various coal blocks as category 'A' (No-Go) and Category 'B' (Go). As per this exercise, 20 coal blocks covering about 34,418 ha forest land have been categorized as category 'A' as more than 75% of its area is covered by high density forest. These coal blocks (except Chotia being on the periphery) form part of unbroken forest landscape with very good Sal forest with high density of trees varying from 227 to 380 trees per hectare having records of elephants movement. Keeping this in view, the Forest Advisory Committee (FAC), a statutory body under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, did not recommend 4 coal blocks proposal, received so far, for forest clearance.

The protection and conservation of forest areas is primarily the responsibility of the State Government under different Acts, Rules and Regulations. The Central Government also assists the State Government in its efforts through various Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS). However, prior approval of Central Government is required for use of forest land for non-forest purpose under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.