

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 684
TO BE ANSWERED ON 17.12.2018

Diversion of Forest Land

684. SHRI K.C. RAMAMURTHY:

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

- (a) when was the request from Karnataka Government received in the Ministry for diversion of 595 hectares of forest land in Karwar, Yellapura and Dharwad division for Hubli-Ankola Railway Project;
- (b) whether it is a fact that Regional Empowered Committee (REC) has cleared the proposal and is now before the Standing Committee of National Board of Wildlife; and
- (c) if so, the present status of the issue and by when the Ministry will give its final clearance to start the work on the above line?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

- (a) The Government of Karnataka vide their letter dated 24.10.2016 submitted the proposal for diversion of 595.64 ha. of forest land in Karwar, Yellapura and Dharwad Divisions for Hubli-Ankola Railway project for seeking prior approval under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.
- (b) and (c) The said proposal was considered in the Regional Empowered Committee (REC) meetings held on 05/05/2017, 10/07/2017 and 29/08/2017. The REC in its meeting held on 29/08/2017 observed that the User Agency has already submitted a proposal for Wildlife clearance. The REC opined that as the project is located in the Western Ghat Region, an important Bio-diversity hotspot, a critical appraisal of the project from the Wildlife perspective needs to be done. Therefore, it advised the State Government to obtain the clearance from the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife (NBWL).

Further, the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) in its 48th meeting held on 27th March 2018 considered the proposals and decided to refer back to the State Government along with the reports of the NTCA and Site Inspection Committee with an advice to get the issue examined by the State Board for Wildlife (SBWL) and submit the recommendations of the SBWL for further necessary action.
