

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 546**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.12.2025

**Removal of Gram Sabha consent for diversion for forest land**

546. SHRI MOHAMMED NADIMUL HAQUE:

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

- (a) whether the Forest (Conservation) Rules, 2022 allows the Central Government to grant final approval for diversion or de-reservation of forest land before settlement of rights under the Forest Rights Act, 2006;
- (b) whether the said Rules omit the requirement of obtaining Gram Sabha consent prior to in-principle approval, as mandated under the Ministry's 2009 guidelines;
- (c) whether the Ministry has withdrawn or superseded the 2009 guidelines mandating such consent; and
- (d) if not, the manner in which the Ministry justifies issuing the said Rules inconsistent with its own guidelines and the Forest Rights Act, 2006?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) to (d) The Forest (Conservation) Rules, 2022 does not infringe the provisions of Forest Rights Act, 2006, rather these rules mandate the compliance of Forest Rights Act, 2006 without encroaching or undermining the powers of Gram Sabha. Provisions of Rule 9(6) (b) (ii) of the Forest (Conservation) Rules, 2022 specifically provide that “*the State Government or Union territory Administration, as the case may be, after receiving the ‘Final’ approval of the Central Government under Section 2 of the Act, and after fulfilment and compliance of the provisions of all other Acts and rules made thereunder, as applicable including ensuring settlement of rights under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (No. 2 of 2007), shall issue order for diversion, assignment of lease or dereservation, as the case may be*”.

The Forest (Conservation) Rules, 2022 were promulgated to implement the provisions of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. Concurrent action can be initiated under Forest Rights Act, 2006, the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, etc by respective implementing agencies.

Furthermore, the approval of the Central Government granted under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of forest land constitutes only a prior approval. The process reaches its conclusion only upon the issuance of a final diversion order by the concerned State Government or UT Administration which authorizes use of forest land for intended purposes and transfer of forest land to the user agency.

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