

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2724**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.03.2020

**Hydrocarbon Project**

2724. SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN:

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

- (a) whether the Government has decided to issue environmental clearance to Hydrocarbon Projects without insisting on conducting public hearings till the stakeholders concerned are satisfied;
- (b) the impact of the said decision on the Hydrocarbon Project in Neduvasal village in Pudukkottai district, Tamil Nadu;
- (c) whether the Tamil Nadu Government or any public institutions have made any recommendation to such effect and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the State Government has communicated to the Union Government that the local stakeholders in Neduvasal have expressed apprehension with regard to the Hydrocarbon Project; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE**  
**(SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO)**

(a) The Government has only re-categorized the on-shore and off-shore oil and gas exploration projects or activities from Category 'A' to Category 'B2' vide notification number S.O. 236(E) dated the 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2020. However, on-shore and off-shore oil and gas development and production remain as Category 'A' and would require public hearing before grant of environmental clearance.

(b) At present any on-shore and off-shore oil and gas exploration project, has to obtain environmental clearance from the State Environmental Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA), which is setup in the State Environment Department, under the purview of the State Government. Therefore, the power to take the final decision, as to whether allow any particular project in any particular region would remain with the State Government. Further, such projects are also required to obtain consent under the Air and Water Acts from State Pollution Control Boards.

(c) to (e) Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu and Hon'ble Chief Minister of Pondicherry have raised the concern of the agricultural zone in the Cauvery belt. In the reply to the concerns, Ministry has informed that the requirement of environmental clearance still remains and only the procedure for grant of the environmental clearance has been modified. However, it has been informed that the State Government has the power to take the final decision whether to allow any particular project in any particular region.

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