

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2855
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12.03.2021

Preservation of the Western Ghats

2855. DR. SHASHI THAROOR:

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

- (a) whether the Government has reached a decision on the implementation of the Kasturirangan Panel Report on the preservation of the Western Ghats;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to extend the 31st December, 2020 deadline imposed by the National Green Tribunal for issuing a notification on the Kasturirangan Report and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has allowed the concerned States where the Western Ghats are located to decide on the extent of implementation and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has taken into account the presence of villagers and other populations while determining areas to be demarcated as 'ecologically sensitive areas' and if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Government has considered a stay on all developmental projects in the Western Ghats to preserve its ecology until a final decision is taken and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

- (a) to (d) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has been consistently making all efforts to bring the States on board for finalization of the Western Ghats Eco sensitive Area notification and for this purpose consultations have been held at various level. The suggestions and request of the State Governments are under consideration for finalization of the notification.

The Central Government have extended the period of validity of the draft notification on Western Ghats Ecological Sensitive Area till 30.06.2021 and have also informed the National Green Tribunal to this effect.

States falling in the Western Ghats region have made representations in respect of area and also certain activities proposed in the draft Western Ghats Eco sensitive Area notification published pursuant to the Kasturirangan Panel Report. The concerns of the States have been deliberated in the Ministry.

- (e) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change have issued directions under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, prohibiting five activities in the Western Ghats ESA area of 56,825.7 sq.km viz: (i) Mining, quarrying & sand mining; (ii) Thermal Power Plants; (iii) Building & construction projects > 20000 sq. m; (iv) Township & area development projects > 50 ha and / or with built up area > 150000 sq.m; and (v) Red category of industries. The said directions are still operative in the area.
