

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 809
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23.07.2021

Amendment in Environment Laws

809. SHRI A. RAJA:

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

- (a) whether there is any proposal in the Ministry to streamline environmental clearance processes by amending various Environment laws like Forest Conservation, Wild Life Protection, Environment Protection etc;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has made any provisions to expedite forest clearance for critical infrastructure and Defence projects and security related projects and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether any opposition/objections have been raised from the public, activists and NGOs in this regard; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government to minimize resources conflicts and conserve environment?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

- (a) & (b) Legislative reform is a continuous process and environmental laws also need amendment from time to time to address extant weaknesses, topical needs and better alignment with the policies. In this regard, feedbacks have been received from various stakeholders on different provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, and based on the same the Ministry has consulted other Ministries also. Similarly, various suggestions/feedback have also been received with respect to amending the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
- (c) In order to expedite the forest clearance for critical infrastructure, defence and security related projects, the Ministry has issued guidelines wherein it has been provided that the Integrated Regional Offices (IROs) of the Ministry will consider and take decision on proposals concerning all such critical public infrastructure projects by Government agencies in LWE districts and defence and security related infrastructure in the border areas. Further, the Regional Empowered Committee (REC) meetings will be, if needed, conducted twice each month in each IRO.

- (d) No amendment proposal for an environmental law implemented by this Ministry is presently put up for public consultation. So questions do not arise.
- (e) The Rules, Guidelines and Notifications framed under various environmental laws by the Government are aimed at full compliance of the respective legislations and to ensure that forest, wildlife and environment are protected and the effects of developmental project on these are kept at the minimum. The same principle shall also apply in case of the amended provisions of laws.
