

Government projects created 1.64 lakh jobs

In a first ever attempt to track the number of jobs created from new projects, the Union environment ministry on Tuesday released data of the last two years, claiming that as many as 239 public utility projects worth over Rs 5 lakh crores which were approved had the capacity of generating more than 1.64 lakh jobs.

Sources in the ministry said such data might help the government defend growing discourse on escalating employment deficit in the country.

The data disclosed by the environment ministry comprises state-wise figures of projects, like mining, airports, ports and defence approved in each state from May 2014 to April 2016. Maharashtra, as per the data, tops the chart as the ministry gave clearance to 35 projects worth Rs 1,35,634 crore in the state with a potential of creating over 11,00 jobs followed by Andhra Pradesh, where 11 new projects worth almost Rs 93,739 crore started in the past two years, which as per the ministry, is capable of providing jobs to 9,758 persons. In Gujarat, 19 public utility projects worth Rs 42,373.1 crore were cleared. More than 4,500 jobs are estimated to be created in the country's western state through them.

The ministry sources said that the data revealed is in line with environment minister Prakash Javadekar's promise to come out with a state-wise list of jobs created by the Narendra Modi government through the projects approved by them.

"A discourse that the Modi government did not perform on job creation front is being witnessed," said a ministry source, adding, "The data which has been released, to some extent, aims to confront such arguments in the future when the exact numbers are available."

The ministry sources said: “The data is limited only to cost of the projects and their potential to create jobs. However, it does not give details of wildlife and forest clearances approved by the ministry.”