GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO: 543
TO BE ANSWERED ON 07.12.2023

Decline in forest cover in hilly States

543.   DR. C. M. RAMESH:

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

(a)   whether due to natural calamities and indiscriminate forest felling, forest cover has declined in the hilly States over the years, the details thereof; and
(b)   the steps taken by Government to increase the forest cover and for encouraging local people to come forward and to improve ecology in those States, the details thereof?

<u>**ANSWER**</u>

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

(a) Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun, an organization under the Ministry carries out the assessment of forest cover of the country biennially since 1987 and the findings are published in India State of Forest Report (ISFR). As per ISFR 2021, the forest cover in the hilly States of the country has declined by 902 square kilometre between ISFR 2019 and ISFR 2021.The details are given in **Annexure-I**. The decline in the forest cover in the hilly States of the country may be attributed mainly to natural calamities, anthropogenic pressure and developmental activities.

(b) The Ministry provides technical and financial assistance to States and UTs under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes namely, Green India Mission, Forest Fire Prevention and Management Scheme, CAMPA, Nagar Van Yojana to increase the forest and tree cover of the country including hilly States.

Green India Mission, initiated during 2015-16, aims to protect, restore and enhance India's forest cover by restoration of degraded forest lands and undertaking afforestation activities in the forest and non-forest areas, by involving local communities.

The Ministry is implementing the Nagar Van Yojana which envisages creation of 600 Nagar Vans and 400 Nagar Vatikas in the country during the period 2020-21 to 2026-27. The Nagar Van Yojana aims at enhancing the green cover in the urban and peri-urban areas and augmenting biological diversity.

The Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAMPA) is being utilized by States/UTs as per provisions of Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act, 2016 (CAF Act) and CAF Rules, 2018,

for taking up compensatory afforestation for compensating the loss of forest & tree cover undergone due to the diversion of forest land for developmental projects.

Afforestation activities are also taken up under various programmes and schemes of line Ministries such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, National Bamboo Mission, Sub-Mission on Agroforestry etc, and under schemes of State Government/UT Administration through different departments, Non-Government Organizations, Civil Societies, Corporate bodies etc. The multi departmental efforts have yielded good results in conserving and enhancing forest cover in the country.

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Annexure referred to in reply to part (a) of the Rajya Sabha Question No. 543 due for answer on 07.12.2023 regarding 'Decline in forest cover in hilly States'

(Area in Square Kilometer)

S. No.	State	Geo-graphical Area	Forest Cover as per ISFR 2019 (a)	Forest Cover as per ISFR 2021 (b)	Change in forest cover from ISFR 2019 to ISFR 2021 (b)- (a)
1	ArunachalPradesh	83,743	66,688	66,431	-257
2	Assam	19,295	13,007	12,900	-107
3	Himachal Pradesh	55,673	15,434	15,443	9
4	Karnataka	48,353	23,816	23,858	42
5	Kerala	29,552	16,845	16,958	113
6	Maharashtra	69,905	15,832	15,846	14
7	Manipur	22,327	16,847	16,598	-249
8	Meghalaya	22,429	17,119	17,046	-73
9	Mizoram	21,081	18,006	17,820	-186
10	Nagaland	16,579	12486	12,251	-235
11	Sikkim	7,096	3342	3,341	-1
12	Tamil Nadu	19,384	6575	6,576	1
13	Tripura	10,486	7726	7,722	-4
14	Uttarakhand	53,483	24,303	24,305	2
15	West Bengal	3,149	2368	2,350	-18
16	Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh	2,22,236	23612	23,659	47
	Total	**7,04,771**	**284006**	**2,83,104**	**-902**