

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1965
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12.12.2024

Forest fires

1965 SMT. PRIYANKA CHATURVEDI:

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

- (a) the number of forest fires taken place in the last five years, year-wise and State-wise;
- (b) whether it is a fact that the number and intensity of forest fires have increased over the last few years;
- (c) if so, whether Government has assessed the reason for the same; and
- (d) the measures taken to minimise dangers to humans, animals, and the environment due to forest fires?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) to (d) Seasonal forest fires occur every year due to various natural and anthropogenic reasons including the accumulation of inflammable materials on the forest floor such as dry leaves, twigs, pine needles, etc. The forest fire incidences in the country are detected by the Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun using satellite-mounted sensors. As per the data received from the FSI, Dehradun, the total forest fire incidences detected in the last forest fire season i.e., November 2023 to June 2024 were 2,03,544; which is less than the total number of forest fire detections reported in the previous forest fire season, i.e., 2,12,249. The total number of forest fire incidences detected in the country over the last five forest fire seasons is given in **Annexure I**. The number of forest fire incidences in the country varies from forest fire season to forest fire season, depending on the vulnerability of the forests to various forest fire risk factors.

Most of the forest fires in the country are attributed to anthropogenic reasons, in addition to other natural causal factors. However, the risk of forest fire is accentuated by persistent hotter and drier weather and heat wave conditions due to ongoing climate change.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has put in place a National Action Plan on Forest Fire-2018, which provides comprehensive measures to prevent forest fires, to improve the resilience of the forests against fire hazards, besides prescribing measures such as capacity building of communities in prevention and control of forest fire.

The forest fire prevention and its management is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Government / UT Administration. The State Governments/UT Administrations also prepare State Action Plans, in tandem with the National Action Plan to undertake State/UT-specific measures towards forest fire prevention and management.

The Ministry through the Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun provides one-week advance alerts based on the Fire Weather Index. In addition, Near Real Time (NRT) forest fire alerts using MODIS sensors are disseminated as SMS alerts to the registered subscribers

so that timely action can be taken on the field to combat forest fires and to reduce their impacts besides monitoring them live over the Van Agni Portal [https://vanagniportal.fsiforestfire.gov.in/fsi_fire/fire.html], maintained by the FSI, Dehradun.

The Ministry supports targeted efforts of the States / UTs in the prevention and control of forest fire through the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS)- Forest Fire Prevention and Management. The scheme supports various forest fire prevention and mitigation activities including, the creation and maintenance of fire lines, water conservation structures inside forest areas, procurement of firefighting equipment, incentivizing villages/communities for protection against forest fire, etc. Besides, through CSSs such as Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats, Project Tiger, and Elephant, as well as through the CAMPA funds, assistance is provided to undertake activities with outcomes on resilience and restoration of forests from forest fire risks and impacts.

Forest fires of disastrous proportions come under the purview of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the Disaster Management Authorities at the State and District levels. Institutional mechanisms for combating forest fires at the disaster scale have already been formalized for suitable incorporation in the National, State, and District level disaster management plans. In this regard, setting up of Crisis Management Groups for Forest Fires, mock drills with the involvement of the stakeholder agencies and local communities, escalation matrix to involve the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) in forest fire control, community awareness and capacity building for forest fire prevention and control, etc., are undertaken.

The Ministry in coordination with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), have trained three battalions of the NDRF, comprising 150 personnel to tackle Large Forest Fires. These battalions are deployed as per the requirements to control forest fires in various locations in the country as per the evolving requirements.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN THE REPLY TO PART (a)to (d) OF THE RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1965 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 12.12.2024 REGARDING FOREST FIRES ASKED BY SMT. PRIYANKA CHATURVEDI

State/UT-wise number of forest fires detected by Forest Survey of India using SNPP-VIIRS sensors over past five forest fire seasons (this includes large, continuous and repeated forest fires).

Sr. No	State/UTs	SNPP-VIIRS Detections in the forest fire season				
		Nov 2019 to Jun 2020	Nov 2020 to Jun 2021	Nov 2021 to Jun 2022	Nov 2022 to Jun 2023	Nov 2023 to Jun 2024
1	Andhra Pradesh	9,996	19,328	14,138	19,367	18,174
2	Arunachal Pradesh	1,786	3,914	3,449	2,447	2,053
3	Assam	8,924	10,718	8,158	9,830	7,639
4	Bihar	614	5,179	3,024	3,793	2,763
5	Chhattisgarh	6,360	38,106	25,792	20,306	18,950
6	Delhi	21	14	3	7	16
7	Goa	47	45	20	147	36
8	Gujarat	2,770	3,803	2,769	2,342	3,182
9	Haryana	68	152	135	82	166
10	Himachal Pradesh	536	4,110	5,280	704	10,136
11	Jharkhand	2,613	21,713	9,419	11,923	7,525
12	Karnataka	4,232	5,784	4,973	13,074	5,500
13	Kerala	864	296	504	1,550	1,110
14	Madhya Pradesh	9,537	47,795	32,728	17,142	15,878
15	Maharashtra	14,018	34,025	22,052	16,119	16,008
16	Manipur	8,800	10,457	5,544	10,127	4,498
17	Meghalaya	6,762	7,658	6,322	6,604	4,319
18	Mizoram	7,361	12,846	8,734	5,798	6,627
19	Nagaland	2,905	4,975	3,471	3,882	2,609
20	Odisha	10,602	51,968	22,014	33,461	20,973
21	Punjab	153	635	428	119	605
22	Rajasthan	3,461	3,402	2,703	2,059	4,352
23	Sikkim	47	63	26	49	101
24	Tamil Nadu	1,368	1,220	1,035	1,998	3,380
25	Telangana	12,132	18,237	13,737	13,117	13,479
26	Tripura	4,369	5,015	2,609	4,332	2,089
27	Uttar Pradesh	1,548	8,608	5,428	3,235	4,424
28	Uttarakhand	759	21,487	12,985	5,351	21,033
29	West Bengal	1,320	3,287	1,520	3,096	2,020
30	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	39	16	33	20	21
31	Chandigarh	2	0	0	1	1
32	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu	21	34	18	16	16
33	Jammu & Kashmir	438	1,098	4,255	131	3,829
34	Ladakh*			27	20	32
35	Lakshadweep	0	0	0	0	0
36	Puducherry	0	1	0	0	0
Total		124,473	3,45,989	2,23,333	2,12,249	2,03,544

* The number of forest fire detections in Ladakh are combined with the number of forest fire detections in Jammu & Kashmir for the fire season Nov 2019 to Jun 2020, Nov.2020 - June 2021.