

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1349
TO BE ANSWERED ON 30.07.2026

Felling of trees

1349. DR. SYED NASEER HUSSAIN:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that over 28 lakh trees on forest land were approved for felling or recorded as felled between July, 2023 and May, 2026, as per the minutes of the Advisory Committee of the Ministry under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam; and
- (b) whether it is also a fact that over 80 per cent of the forest diversion proposals, considered during this period, were approved?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (b): During the period from July, 2023 to May 2026, the Advisory Committee, constituted under Section 3 of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, considered 775 proposals seeking prior approval of the Central Government for use of forest land for non-forest purposes under the provisions of the Adhiniyam. Of these, 378 proposals, constituting 48.77% of the total proposals considered during the aforesaid period, were recommended by the Advisory Committee for grant of 'in-principle'/Stage-I approval of the Central Government under the Adhiniyam. Further, the information relating to the number of trees felled under each project is maintained by the respective State/ UT Governments.

Diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes is governed in accordance with the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and the rules made thereunder. Wherever diversion of forest land is unavoidable, prior approval of Central Government for use of such forest land is subject to various conditions and mitigation measures. These include undertaking Compensatory Afforestation (CA) in lieu of the forest land being diverted, payment of Net Present Value (NPV), Soil and Moisture Conservation measures, Wildlife Management Plans, and Catchment Area Treatment (CAT) Plans as applicable. The Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAF) Act, 2016 and its Rules, 2018, aim toward mitigating the loss of forest cover and associated ecosystem services resulting from the diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes. Afforestation activities are implemented in accordance with the approved Annual Plan of Operations (APO), duly conforming to the provisions of the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act, 2016 and the CAF Rules, 2018, as well as the guidelines issued under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.
