

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3663
TO BE ANSWERED ON 08/08/2017

Plantation of Fruit Trees

3663. SHRI GANESH SINGH:

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken any steps to plant fruit trees like mango, jamun, guava, etc. on barren land road side of highways and on the sides of railway track and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has introduced any measures to combat degradation of forest and to achieve the target of 33 per cent forest cover out of the total geographical areas of the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has taken any initiatives to include tribal people or forest dwellers in afforestation; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the measures to reduce the forest fires at the national levels?

ANSWER

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(DR. HARSH VARDHAN)

(a) The MoEF&CC has issued an advisory to State Forest Departments for partnering with Railways and NHAI subject to the feasibility for taking up plantation of trees along the highway sides and vacant areas by the side of railway tracks.

As informed by Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, fruit trees are a part of the plantation schemes within the Right of Way of all National Highway projects. The guidelines of the Indian Road Congress as well as Green Highways (Plantation, Transplantation, Beautification & Maintenance) Policy, 2015 have adequate provisions for plantation of fruit trees along highway sides.

As per the Ministry of Railways, generally the fruit bearing trees are not planted along the tracks due to safety hazards to the travelling public as stoning is done to get the fruits by the local public. Such trees are only planted in colonies.

(b) & (c) The National Forest Policy (NFP), 1988 emphasizes for a massive need-based and time bound programme of afforestation and tree planting with particular emphasis on fuel-wood and fodder development, on all degraded and denuded lands in the country. The policy also mandates that about one-third of the total land area of the country should be under forest or tree cover.

In consonance with the NFP, this Ministry is implementing two major Tree Plantation/Afforestation schemes in the country *i.e.* National Afforestation Programme (NAP) scheme and National Mission for a Green India (GIM). While NAP is being implemented for afforestation of degraded forest lands, GIM aims at improving the quality of forest/increase in forest cover besides cross-sectoral activities on landscape basis. These Schemes are implemented in participatory mode under Joint Forest Management (JFM) approach involving forest dwellers and tribal people.

Besides, Tree Plantation/Afforestation activities are also taken up cross-sectorally by various Departments, NGOs, Civil Society, Corporate etc. under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes and also under different State Plan/Non Plan Schemes including Externally Aided Projects.

(d) Protection and management of forests from various threats including forest fire is primarily the responsibility of respective State/Union Territory Governments. The Ministry issues advisories to State /U.T. Governments for taking effective step for preventing and managing forest fires. Further, the Ministry supplements the efforts of State/Union Territory Governments to prevent and control forest fire by providing financial assistance under the Forest Fire Control and Management component of Centrally Sponsored Intensification of Forest Management Scheme. Funds under the Scheme are largely utilized for creation and maintenance of fire lines, construction of watch towers, engagement of firewatchers, assistance to Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs), construction of water storage structures, procurement of firefighting equipments, fire mapping and preparation of fire management plan and creation of awareness regarding forest fire, etc.

Further Forest Survey of India (FSI), a subordinate organization of this Ministry is disseminating alerts, since 2004, on forest fire location to all State /UT forest departments and other registered users using satellite based Remote Sensing technologies.
