

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**LOK SABHA**  
**STARRED QUESTION NO. 266\***  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05.01.2018

**Depleting Forest Coverage**

\*266. SHRI CHANDRA PRAKASH JOSHI:  
SHRI BAIJAYANT JAY PANDA:

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

- (a) whether the forest coverage of the country has been drastically and constantly depleting;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor along with the steps taken by the Government to address the issue;
- (c) whether the Government has any plan to involve the private sector to increase the forest coverage by encouraging private participation in preservation and conservation of forests and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) whether the Government also intends to give tax exemptions and compensation to those people who propose to raise forests in their land under the said plan and if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

**(DR. HARSH VARDHAN)**

(a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

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**Statement referred to in reply to part (a) to (d) of Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 266 by Shri Chandra Prakash Joshi and Shri Baijayant Jay Panda due for reply on 05.01.2018**

- (a)&(b) Forest Survey of India, Dehradun, a subordinate organization under Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, has been carrying out the assessment of forest cover of the country biennially. The findings of the assessment are published in India State of Forest Report. As per the latest report of India State of Forest Report 2015, the total forest cover of the country is 7,01,673 square kilometers which is 21.34% of the total geographical area of the country. There is a net increase of 3775 square kilometers in the forest cover of the country as compared with India State of Forest Report-2013. The detailed list showing forest cover and change in forest cover States/UTs wise is **Annexed**.

According to India State of Forest Reports published by Forest Survey of India, Forest cover of the country is showing increasing trend. The forest cover reported in last three India State of forest Reports (ISFR) since 2011 is as follows:-

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Total Forest Cover in square kilometer</b> | <b>Percentage of forest cover to the total geographical area.</b> | <b>Percentage increase in respect of the previous report</b> |
|-------------|---|---|--|
| 2011        | 692,027                                       | 21.05%  | -  |
| 2013        | 697,898                                       | 21.23%  | 0.18%  |
| 2015        | 701,673                                       | 21.34%  | 0.11%  |

- (c) & (d) As on date there is no mechanism for involving the private sector to increase the forest coverage by encouraging private participation in preservation and conservation of forests and also for giving tax exemptions to people who propose to raise forest in their land.

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**Annexure**

**Annexure referred to in reply to part (b) of the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 266 due for answer on 05.01.2018 regarding 'Depleting Forest Coverage'**

**Change in Forest Cover in States/UTs as per India State of Forest Report (ISFR)- 2015**

**(Area in square Kilometers)**

| States/UTs           | Geographical Area | Total Forest Cover 2015 | Total Forest Cover 2013 | Change in Forest Cover | Change Percent |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| Andhra Pradesh       | 1,60,204          | 24,424                  | 24,357                  | 67                     | 0.27           |
| Arunachal Pradesh    | 83,743            | 67,248                  | 67321                   | -73                    | -0.11          |
| Assam                | 78,438            | 27,623                  | 27671                   | -48                    | -0.17          |
| Bihar                | 94,163            | 7,288                   | 7291                    | -3                     | -0.04          |
| Chhattisgarh         | 1,35,191          | 55,586                  | 55621                   | -35                    | -0.06          |
| Delhi                | 1,483             | 189                     | 180                     | 9                      | 4.75           |
| Goa                  | 3,702             | 2,224                   | 2219                    | 5                      | 0.22           |
| Gujarat              | 1,96,022          | 14,660                  | 14653                   | 7                      | 0.05           |
| Haryana              | 44,212            | 1,584                   | 1586                    | -2                     | -0.13          |
| Himachal Pradesh     | 55,673            | 14,696                  | 14683                   | 13                     | 0.09           |
| Jammu & Kashmir      | 2,22,236          | 22,988                  | 22538                   | 450                    | 1.96           |
| Jharkhand            | 79,714            | 23,478                  | 23473                   | 5                      | 0.02           |
| Karnataka            | 1,91,791          | 36,421                  | 36132                   | 289                    | 0.79           |
| Kerala               | 38,863            | 19,239                  | 17922                   | 1317                   | 6.85           |
| Madhya Pradesh       | 3,08,245          | 77,462                  | 77522                   | -60                    | -0.08          |
| Maharashtra          | 3,07,713          | 50,628                  | 50632                   | -4                     | -0.01          |
| Manipur              | 22,327            | 16,994                  | 16990                   | 4                      | 0.02           |
| Meghalaya            | 22,429            | 17,217                  | 17288                   | -71                    | -0.41          |
| Mizoram              | 21,081            | 18,748                  | 19054                   | -306                   | -1.63          |
| Nagaland             | 16,579            | 12,966                  | 13044                   | -78                    | -0.60          |
| Odisha               | 1,55,707          | 50,354                  | 50347                   | 7                      | 0.01           |
| Punjab               | 50,362            | 1,771                   | 1772                    | -1                     | -0.06          |
| Rajasthan            | 3,42,239          | 16,171                  | 16086                   | 85                     | 0.53           |
| Sikkim               | 7,096             | 3,357                   | 3358                    | -1                     | -0.03          |
| Tamil Nadu           | 1,30,058          | 26,345                  | 23844                   | 2501                   | 9.49           |
| Telangana            | 114,865           | 21,591                  | 21759                   | -168                   | -0.78          |
| Tripura              | 10,486            | 7,811                   | 7866                    | -55                    | -0.70          |
| Uttar Pradesh        | 2,40,928          | 14,461                  | 14349                   | 112                    | 0.77           |
| Uttarakhand          | 53,483            | 24,240                  | 24508                   | -268                   | -1.11          |
| West Bengal          | 88,752            | 16,828                  | 16805                   | 23                     | 0.14           |
| A&N Islands          | 8,249             | 6,751                   | 6711                    | 40                     | 0.59           |
| Chandigarh           | 114               | 22,03                   | 17.26                   | 4.77                   | 21.65          |
| Dadra & Nagar Haveli | 491               | 206                     | 213                     | -7                     | -3.40          |
| Daman & Diu          | 112               | 19.61                   | 9                       | 10.61                  | 52.73          |
| Lakshadweep          | 32                | 27.06                   | 27.06                   | 0                      | 0.00           |
| Puducherry           | 480               | 55.38                   | 50.06                   | 5.32                   | 9.61           |
| <b>Grand Total</b>   | <b>32,87,263</b>  | <b>701,673</b>          | <b>697898</b>           | <b>3775</b>            | <b>0.54</b>    |

