

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2405
TO BE ANSWERED ON 18.12.2023

Involvement of Tribal Communities in Forest Development

2405. SHRI MAGUNTA SREENIVASULU REDDY:
SHRIMATI CHINTA ANURADHA:

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

- (a) whether the 21.9 per cent population living under the poverty line and nearly 275 million people including local tribals depend on the forest for subsistence;
- (b) if so, the steps taken to preserve the indigenous laws of the tribal communities;
- (c) whether the Government has considered involvement of tribal communities in the protection and development of forests to ensure permanent restoration; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

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

- (a) As per the Census 2011, there are about 6,50,000 villages in the country, out of which nearly 1,70,000 villages are located in the proximity of forest areas, often referred as forest fringe villages. As per India State of Forest Report-2019, published by Forest Survey of India, approximately 300 million people are dependent on forests.
- (b) Fifth Schedule of the Constitution of India provides special provisions for administration and control of Scheduled areas and Scheduled Tribes.
- (c) & (d) In line with the National Forest Policy, 1988 Joint Forest Management Committees and Village Eco-Development Committees have been established, through participatory approaches, at the village levels involving local communities, predominantly tribal communities in forest protection, conservation, and management of forests.

Further the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (FRA, 2006) recognizes the rights of the forest dwelling tribal communities and other traditional forest dwellers to forest resources, on which these communities were dependent for a variety of needs, including livelihood, habitation and other socio-cultural needs.

The Act encompasses rights of self-cultivation and habitation, community rights as well as recognition of traditional customary rights and right to protect, regenerate or conserve or manage any community forest resource for sustainable use.
