

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2435
TO BE ANSWERED ON 18.12.2023

Social Forestry Scheme

2435. SHRI JANARDAN SINGH SIGRIWAL:

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken note that the green belt areas and number of trees in small towns are very less and if so, the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether the Government has any scheme to promote plantation in the small cities of the country through Non-Governmental Organisations under Social Forestry Schemes with in co-ordination State Governments;
- (c) if so, the details and salient features thereof; and
- (d) the details of various initiatives taken by the Government for conservation and development of forest and green areas in various small cities in the country?

ANSWER

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

- (a) Forest survey of India assess forest and tree cover of the country biennially and publish a report called Indian State of Forest Report. As per Indian State of Forest Report 2021, the total forest cover of the country has been estimated 7,13,789 sq. km. which has increased by 1,540 sq. km. as compared to the previous assessment of 2019. In addition, the total tree cover of the country has been estimated 95,748 sq. km. and there is an increase of 721 sq. km. in the extent of tree cover as compared to the previous assessment of 2019.
- (b) to (d) National Forest Policy 1988 aims for 33% of the geographical area of country under forest or tree cover. To increase the forest cover in the country, afforestation programmes are taken up under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes of the Ministry such as National Mission for a Green India, Nagar Van Yojana and School Nursery Yojana, etc.

Afforestation activities are also taken up under various programmes/funding sources such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme,

Compensatory Afforestation Funds under Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) are utilized for compensating the loss of forest and ecosystem services due to diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes as per the provision of the Forest (Conservation) Act 1980.

Nagar Van Yojana envisages creating 1000 Nagar Van / Nagar Vatika in Cities having Municipal Corporation/Municipal council/Municipality/Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) for providing wholesome healthy living environment for the residents and thus contributing to growth of clean, green, healthy and sustainable cities. Nagar Van is supported by CAMPA fund. The salient features of Nagar Van Yojana are:

- Creating green space and aesthetic environment in an urban set up.
- Creating awareness about plants and biodiversity and developing environment stewardship.
- Facilitating in-situ conservation of important flora of the region.
- Contributing to environmental improvement of cities by pollution mitigation, providing cleaner air, noise reduction, water harvesting and reduction of heat islands effect.
- Extending health benefits to residents of the city and
- Helping cities become climate resilient.

The Ministry is implementing National Mission for a Green India (GIM), under which, there is a specific sub-mission for enhancing tree cover in urban and peri-urban areas.

For preservation and protection of forest and wildlife, various laws including the Forest (Conservation) Act 1980 (*Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam*), Indian Forest Act, 1927, Wildlife Protection Act 1972, and other central/state laws as applicable to a State/UT, are implemented by the respective State Government /UT Administration.
