

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3133
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.08.2021

Forest Fires in Telangana

3133. SHRI ANUMULA REVANTH REDDY:

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

- (a) whether the instances of forest fires in Telangana have increased due to which several hectares of forest land has been burnt down;
- (b) if so, the details of forest fires in the State during the last five years;
- (c) whether there have been several reports of fires in the Amrabad Tiger Reserve in the last five years thus endangering the flora and fauna of the area including the national animal of the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government to curb incidents of forest fire in Telangana especially in Amrabad Tiger Reserve?

ANSWER

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

- (a) to (d) The number of incidences of forest fire in the country varies from year to year depending on various natural and anthropogenic reasons. Forest fires do occur every year during summer due to various natural and anthropogenic reasons including accumulation of inflammable materials such as dry leaves, twigs, pine needles etc. These factors have also been highlighted in a joint study by Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change and the World Bank. Most of the forest fires in the country are ground fires in which ground vegetation, etc. get burnt. The Forest Survey of India (FSI) sends forest fire alerts to all registered users on this alert system. The number of forest fire alerts sent by FSI during last five fire seasons in the State of Telangana is given in **Annexure-I**, and forest fire alerts for Amrabad Tiger Reserve, Telangana is given in **Annexure-II**.

As per the report received from the Government of Telangana, ground fire was observed with no damage to existing flora and fauna including the National Animal i.e. Tiger in Amrabad Tiger Reserve.

- (e) The responsibility of forest fire prevention and management lies primarily with the respective State/UT. The Ministry supports the efforts of the States/ UTs in prevention and control of forest fire by providing financial assistance for various

forest fire prevention and management measures such as modern tools for fire extinguishing, use of communication and information technology, etc creation and maintenance of fire lines in forest areas, engagement of fire watchers, creation of water storage structures in forest areas, strengthening of forest infrastructure, procurement of firefighting equipment, soil and moisture conservation works in high risk areas, awareness creation, incentivizing villages/communities for protection against forest fire etc. under the Centrally Sponsored Forest Fire Prevention and Management Scheme. In addition, the FSI has taken following steps to improve the forest fire alert system:-

- (i) FSI has pursued with States/UTs to increase the number of registered users of its alert system. Now, the number of such registered users has increased to around 1.30 lakh.
- (ii) FSI also generates and disseminates “Weekly Early-Warning Alerts” of forest fire to concerned States/UTs.
- (iii) FSI has also initiated an innovative “Large Forest Fire Monitoring” programme in January 2019 which aims at improving tactical as well as strategic response to large forest fires by the respective States/UTs.

In addition to above initiatives by FSI, the Government has constituted a national level committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary of the Ministry that oversees the issues arising out of forest fire. The committee has advised all states to take several measures including constituting State-level Monitoring Committee on Forest Fire, preparing State Action Plan on Forest Fire, and Fire Risk Zonation mapping.

As per the report received from the Government of Telangana, the following steps have been taken by the State Government to combat forest fire incidents, including Amrabad Tiger Reserve:-

- a. Around 11000 km of Cattle Proof Trench (CPT) has been taken up throughout the state in the last five years which not only helps in protection and improvement of soil moisture regime but also acts as a fire break. In case of Amrabad Tiger Reserve (TR), 732 kms. of Cattle Proof Trench (CPT) has been dug up.
- b. The field officers were provided the list of fire vulnerable forest areas obtained through spatial analysis to effectively plan creation and maintenance of the fire lines and also to take up other mitigative measures. Around 15000 km Fire lines has been completed till 2020-21 throughout the State, and total 1200 km of fire lines with five meter width have been created and maintained in the Amrabad Tiger Reserve.
- c. Apart from the existing base camp watchers and strike force members, additional fire watchers & 45 Quick response teams were engaged in the highly vulnerable areas for four months in hired vehicles as per need for faster movement, apart from carrying out awareness campaign in the villages.
- d. A total of 52 numbers of watch towers have been constructed at vantage points to locate and monitor forest fires throughout the State and 12 numbers watch towers have been constructed for Amrabad Tiger Reserve.

ANNEXURE-I

ANNEXURE REFFERED TO PART (a) to (d) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3133 DUE FOR REPLY ON 06.08.2021 REGARDING FOREST FIRES IN TELANGANA.

Number of forest fire alerts in Telangana by FSI using SNPP-VIIRS sensors (This includes large, continuous and repeated forest fires) during last five years

State	Jan 2017 to June 2017	Jan 2018 to June 2018	Nov 2018 to June 2019	Nov 2019 to June 2020	Nov 2020 to June 2021
Telangana	12927	13721	15262	12132	18237

ANNEXURE-II

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO PART (a), (b) & (c) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3133 DUE FOR REPLY ON 06.08.2021 REGARDING FOREST FIRES IN TELANGANA.

Number of forest fire alerts in Amrabad Tiger Reserve Circle (Boundary provided by Telangana Forest Department) by FSI using SNPP-VIIRS sensors (This includes large, continuous and repeated forest fires) during last five years

Amrabad Tiger Reserve Circle	SNPP-VIIRS Alerts				
	Jan 2017 to June 2017	Jan 2018 to June 2018	Nov 2018 to June 2019	Nov 2019 to June 2020	Nov 2020 to June 2021
	390	861	930	888	1423
