

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1652
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10.03.2025

Joint Forest Management with Tribal Communities.

1652. SHRI RAMASAHAYAM RAGHURAM REDDY:

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

- (a) the number of Joint Forest Management Committees with active participation of SC/ST communities;
- (b) the total area of degraded forests restored with involvement of tribal communities under the National Afforestation Programme;
- (c) the details of the steps taken to address human-wildlife conflict in tribal areas; and
- (d) the number of SC/ST individuals employed as forest guards and other positions in the forest department?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

- (a) and (b) National Afforestation Programme (NAP) has been the flagship afforestation scheme of the Ministry, implemented since year 2000 on pan India basis, for afforestation in identified degraded forest areas with people's participation and decentralized forest governance. National Mission for a Green India (GIM) aims at protecting, restoring and enhancing India's forest cover through plantation activities in forest and non-forest areas and the activities were started in 2015-16. In order to achieve the targeted objectives of National Afforestation Programme, the Ministry has merged NAP into Green India Mission (GIM) so that the overall greening efforts are augmented.

The total area for restoration under National Afforestation Programme from 2001-2021 is 22,15,019 ha. The area taken up under Green India Mission from 2015 till date is 1,55,130 ha.

There are approximately 88,000 Joint Forest Management Committees across States/UTs.

- (c) to (d) The important steps taken by the Government to manage human-wildlife conflicts are as follows:

- i. The Ministry has issued an advisory on 06.02.2021 to all states/UTs to deal with human wildlife situations.
- ii. The Ministry has issued Guidelines to States/UTs on 03.06.2022 to manage Human Wildlife conflict including damage to crops.
- iii. The Ministry has released species-specific guidelines on 21.03.2023 for mitigation of Human Wildlife conflicts involving elephant, Gaur, Leopard, snake, Crocodile, rhesus Macaque, wild Pig, bear, Blue Bull and Blackbuck. The Ministry has also issued guidelines for cross cutting issues such as cooperation with media, occupational health and safety in human-wildlife conflict mitigation, crowd management and addressing health emergencies arising out of human-wildlife conflict situations.
- iv. The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 has been amended to provide statutory status to management plans of the protected areas, mandating consultations with the concerned Gram Sabha.
- v. The Ministry provides financial assistance to State and Union Territory Governments under the Centrally sponsored Schemes 'Development of Wildlife Habitats' and 'Project Tiger and Elephant' for management of wildlife and its habitat in the country. The activities supported include procurement of early warning systems, construction and erection of physical barriers such as barbed wire fence, solar, powered electric fence, bio-fencing, boundary walls etc. to prevent the entry of wild animals into crop fields.
- vi. Advance technology like radio collaring, digital sensor walls and E-surveillance are also used in human wildlife conflict mitigation.
- vii. The State Forest Departments organize periodic awareness campaigns to sensitize the general public on human-animal conflict. Further, Forest Departments are engaging with local communities as animal trackers to monitor the movement of elephants and to caution people in time.
- viii. Response Teams have been deployed across the States and Union Territories to mitigate Human-Wildlife Conflict.

The number of SC and ST individuals employed as forest guards and working at other positions in the State and UT forest departments are not collated at the level of Ministry.
