

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3588
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.08.2025

Afforestation Projects in Jalpaiguri

3588. DR. JAYANTA KUMAR ROY:

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

- (a) whether the Government is planning to launch any afforestation or eco-restoration projects in degraded forest zones of Jalpaiguri; and
- (b) whether the Government is monitoring the ecological impact of growing tourism in protected areas of Jalpaiguri and if so, the findings thereof?

ANSWER

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

- (a) The Ministry is undertaking afforestation and reforestation work through ongoing schemes such as the National Mission for a Green India (GIM), Nagar Van Yojana (NVY), and the Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitat and Tangible Benefits (MISHTI), among others. Afforestation activities are also being carried out through the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA). The Ministry also promotes mass plantation drives on occasions such as International Day of Forests, World Environment Day, *Van Mahotsav*, Wildlife Week, etc., and raises awareness through campaigns. The '*Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam*' campaign, launched on 5th June 2024, encourages citizens to plant trees in honour of one's mother. As per the information provided by the State of West Bengal, afforestation works over an area of 74.19 ha in degraded forest land has carried out in Jalpaiguri District in the current financial year 2025-26.
- (b) As per the information provided by the State of West Bengal, the ecological impact of growing tourism in the protected areas of Jalpaiguri District is being actively monitored by the State. The district hosts three designated protected areas: Gorumara National Park, Chapramari Wildlife Sanctuary, and a portion of Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary that falls within its boundaries. Tourism in these areas is regulated in accordance with the carrying capacity determined by the guidelines of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India, and the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA). To reduce ecological pressure, tourism activities such as car safaris and other eco-tourism ventures are suspended annually from June 15th to September 15th, aligning with the monsoon season to allow for ecological recovery. Furthermore, all protected areas remain closed one day each week to minimize human interference. Gorumara National Park experiences the highest tourist footfall, especially during peak seasons; however, visitor numbers

remain within the permissible carrying capacity. In contrast, Chapramari Wildlife Sanctuary and the portion of Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary located within the district receive considerably fewer visitors, resulting in minimal ecological impact. To ensure further protection, Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs) have been formally notified for all three protected areas through Gazette Notifications. Eco-tourism activities within these ESZs are stringently monitored as per the respective guidelines and are overseen by a designated Monitoring Committee.
