

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3707
TO BE ANSWERED ON 16.03.2026

Degradation of Assam's Mahamaya Forest Belt

3707. SHRI PRADYUT BORDOLOI:

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

- (a) whether there has been illegal encroachment in Assam's Mahamaya forest belt and if so, the details thereof including the area of land encroached;
- (b) the details of the encroachers and whether any action has been taken against them, if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) the details of the steps taken by the Government to secure the forest boundary, remove encroachments and restore the Mahamaya Forest area;
- (d) the details regarding the steps taken by the Government for afforestation, boundary demarcation and community engagement in the area; and
- (e) whether the Government has reviewed the effectiveness of enforcement actions undertaken against encroachment in Mahamaya forest, if so, the findings thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

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

(a) and (b) The Protection and management of forests is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Government/UT Administration. To prevent the encroachment, appropriate legal provisions are there in the Indian Forest Act 1927, the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and the Local Forest Acts/Rules. The State Governments /UT Administrations take appropriate actions to protect forest and tree resources under the provisions made under these Acts/ Rules.

As reported by the State Forest Department of Assam, there is an encroachment of 2578.49 Ha by the households, rubber plantations, fisheries, tea-garden, dwelling area and agriculture in Parbatjhora Division of Assam.

(c) to (e) The Ministry issues advisories to State Governments/UT Administrations to remove encroachments on forest lands as per the provisions of the law and to ensure that further encroachments do not occur. Further, in order to prevent encroachments, various measures are taken by the State Forest Departments, which include survey and demarcation of forest areas, fixing of pillars along forest boundary and regular patrolling by field staff. The State Forest Departments also use a range of modern technologies such as Geographical Information System, Remote sensing and Global Positioning System to check encroachments in the forest areas. The Joint Forest Management committees have also been established at village levels involving local communities for protection, conservation and management of forests.

The Ministry provides technical and financial support to the States and Union Territories through various schemes and programmes of the Central Government for increasing forest and tree cover, including protection, conservation and sustainable management of forests in the country. These include, inter alia, the National Mission for a Green India (GIM), Nagar Van Yojana (NVY), Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes (MISHTI), Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA), Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats, and forest fire prevention and management schemes. In addition, States and Union Territories implement State-specific afforestation, reforestation and forest conservation schemes in accordance with their ecological, climatic and geographic conditions.

Further, a plantation campaign “एक पेड़ माँ के नाम #Plant4Mother” has also been launched on the occasion of World Environment Day 2024 and in the current year also to undertake plantation activities across the country. This campaign follows the “Whole of Government” and “Whole of Society” approach with participation of all stakeholders for increasing the green cover in the country. The campaign has contributed to large scale plantation aiding the enhancement of green cover in the country.
