

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 763

To be answered on
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QUESTION

Strengthen Agro-forestry and Bamboo based Economic Clusters in NER

†763. **Shri Dilip Saikia:**

Shri Amarsing Tisso:

Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the measures taken by the Government to strengthen agro-forestry and bamboo based economic clusters in North Eastern Region (NER), especially in Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao districts of Assam;
- (b) the progress made in terms of project sanctioning, investor engagement, export promotion and enterprise development; and
- (c) the details of achievements recorded in terms of economic growth, value-addition, employment and market access for producers and artisans in the region?

ANSWER

**The Minister of State of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region
[Dr. Sukanta Majumdar]**

(a), (b) & (c): Promotion of agroforestry and bamboo sectors are mainly undertaken by State Governments. However, Government of India through Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) also supplements the efforts of the States by providing support to specific projects in these sectors.

As per Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, to promote agroforestry, the Government has been implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme under Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PMRKVY) since 2023-24. The scheme focuses on establishing and strengthening nurseries and supplying Quality Planting Material including seeds, seedlings, clones, hybrids, and improved varieties to farmers for increasing tree cover on farmlands. It is implemented by States/UTs across the country, including those in the North Eastern Region. In Assam, assistance has been provided for nursery creation, training, and free sapling distribution including those in Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao districts.

The scheme operates through Annual Action Plans submitted by States/UTs and supports activities such as nurseries and agroforestry demonstration plots. Assam was allocated Rs. 4.50 crore during 2023-24 to 2024-25, of which Rs. 4.09 crore was released, leading to establishment of 35 new nurseries. In FY 2025-26 so far, Rs. 5.20 crore has been released, and 51 new nurseries have been established.

Since its launch in 2023-24, PMRKVY-Agroforestry in Assam is now in its third year. Preliminary findings show contributions to income diversification and livelihood support through tree-based farming systems, including bamboo agroforestry. Emphasis is placed on promoting intercrops with tree plantations, enabling farmers to earn short-term returns during the gestation period of tree crops, thereby improving economic viability and reducing risk.

Further, the Assam State Bamboo Mission (ASBM) has also implemented extensive bamboo plantation initiatives, especially in Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao districts, covering approximately 1,585 hectare from 2019 to 2026. They have established nurseries, conducted awareness programs, and trained around 300 farmers in scientific bamboo cultivation. A study showed substantial bamboo resources in both districts, facilitating cluster development planning. The mission has engaged in enterprise development through events like the Assam Bamboo Conclave and has supported a Bamboo Incense Stick Making Cluster with significant financial backing. Economic impacts include planting of 6 lakh saplings and distribution of high-yielding varieties of bamboo, creating livelihood opportunities. Skill development trainings have benefited over 400 participants. Additionally, 1,022 toolkits were distributed, and processed bamboo products were incorporated into the Assam PWD Schedule of Rates, enhancing market accessibility and employment for bamboo artisans.

To harness bamboo-based economic clusters in NER, the Ministry of DoNER has recently sanctioned two projects for strengthening traditional bamboo artisan clusters through market access, product modernization, and integration with digital/retail ecosystems as well as promotion of engineered bamboo products through cluster strengthening and export facilitation, covering Karbi Anglong (Assam) and Mokokchung (Nagaland). It includes state-of-the-art processing units, certified bamboo plantations, and training for youth and artisans in advanced technologies.

NECBDC has signed MoUs with leading e-Commerce partners to enable bamboo products from the North East reach national and international markets to position North East Bamboo product on the global stage.

Over the last ten years, under NEC Schemes, 42 projects related to the agroforestry and bamboo sector worth Rs. 230.31 crore have been supported.
