

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2313
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.08.2026

Increasing Deforestation

2313. SHRI MANICKAM TAGORE B:

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

- (a) whether Government is aware of increasing deforestation across the country, if so, the details thereof, along with the forest cover trends in recent years and the steps taken to prevent further degradation;
- (b) whether diversion of forest land for industrial and infrastructure projects has increased, if so, the details thereof and assessment of its impact on biodiversity and ecological balance;
- (c) whether compensatory afforestation programmes have effectively restored lost forest cover, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons for failure and corrective measures taken;
- (d) whether illegal logging and encroachments continue to threaten forests, if so, the details thereof and enforcement actions taken to curb such activities; and
- (e) whether the Government has strengthened monitoring mechanisms using technology for forest conservation, if so, the details thereof and the outcomes achieved in preventing deforestation?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (e) There is an increasing trend in forest and tree cover in the country over the last decade. As per the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023, the total forest and tree cover is 8,27,357.95 sq km, which is 25.17% of the geographical area of the country. This represents an increase of 1,445.81 sq km over ISFR 2021. Further, between ISFR 2013 and ISFR 2023, India's forest and tree cover registered a net increase of 37,378 sq km.

Diversion of forest land is regulated under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. During 01.04.2021 to 31.03.2026, approvals for diversion of 105594.32 hectares of forest land were accorded after following the prescribed procedure and subject to mitigation measures such as compensatory afforestation and wildlife conservation safeguards.

In compliance of the conditions stipulated under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, the compensatory afforestation is taken up by the concerned State/UT. As per the reports received from the States/UTs, the compensatory afforestation over an area of 1,78,261.52 hectares has been carried out during the last five years. The survival percentage of these plantations have been reported between 40% to 100%.

In addition, 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.

The Ministry issues advisories to States/UTs to protect forests and trees, and mitigation of deforestation as per the provisions of the law including prevention of illegal logging and encroachments. Measures taken include survey and demarcation of forest land, boundary pillars, regular patrolling, legal action under applicable laws and community participation through Joint Forest Management Committees.
