

[English]

Land under National Parks, Sanctuaries etc.

*279. SHRI GURUDAS KUMAT :

SHRI SURENDRA PAL PATHAK :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS to be pleased to state:

(a) whether the area of land under National Parks, Tiger Reserves and Sanctuaries has been declining for the last several years;

(b) if so, the area of land under National Parks, Tiger Reserves and Sanctuaries at present out of the total land area in the country;

(c) the reasons for decline in the area of such protected lands;

(d) whether the Government propose to launch a campaign for the conservation of Water, Energy and Environment under the present circumstances;

(e) if so, the details thereof, and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) The total area under national parks and sanctuaries including tiger reserves is 148,849.03 Sq. Kms. This constitutes 4.52% of the total geographical area of the country.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) to (f). A National River Conservation Plan for polluted stretches of 18 rivers in 10 States has been approved, in addition to the on-going action plans for Ganga, Yamuna and Gomti rivers. A National Lake Conservation Plan is also being launched. For conservation of wood energy, fuelwood plantations are being raised and use of fuel-efficient stoves, bio-gas and gohar-gas is being encouraged. There are several projects and schemes in operation to encourage, fuel and fodder plantations and to promote afforestation. Several project including awareness and education programme are also under implementation for conservation of environment.

Growth of Cash Crops

*280. SHRI MANORANJAN SURI : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government's attention has been drawn to the recent trend, in the Agriculture sector in the country allowing unfettered growth of cash crops promoted by large industrial houses and MNCs at the cost of food crops such as Wheat and Rice; and

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR) : (a) and (b). There is no discernible decline in area under Rice and Wheat in 1994-95, as compared to that in 1991-92 and 1992-93. Some diversion of area to cash crops is part of the policy of the Government to diversify agriculture in order to promote the income and employment in the sector. Promotion of diversification in agriculture and cash crops is not at the cost of Rice and Wheat whose area in fact in 1994-95 together was placed at 67.12 million hectares as against 66.37 million hectares in 1992-93 and 65.91 million hectares in 1991-92.

Railway Crossing over N.H.

2628. SHRI UDAYSINGRAO GAIKWAD: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Railway Crossings on the National Highway No.24;

(b) whether there is a Railway Crossing near Rampur/Kashipur Tihara Chowk near Muradabad;

(c) whether there is a heavy rush of traffic on this National Highway;

(d) whether the Government propose to construct a flyover on the crossing at Rampur/Kashipur, Tihara Chowk; and

(e) if, so the details thereof and if not, the remedial measures taken to avoid frequent traffic jams at that place?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND HOLDING ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) 20.