

ESTS (SHRI Z.R. ANSARI): (a) There is no clear scientific evidence to aver that the monsoon and the climate of the country are being adversely affected due to indiscriminate cutting of trees.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d). The extent of forests that can be saved and the extra expenditure required to purchase steel or iron in place of timber, will *inter alia* depend upon the pace of wood substitution efforts, utilisation pattern of timber, availability of steel and other substitutes material, including imported timber and the acceptability of wood-substitutes by the users.

Afforestation Programme

4913. SHRI K. PRADHANI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the forest is vanishing at much higher rate than afforestation is done;

(b) if so, the steps taken to stop illegal felling;

(c) whether forest corporations are partly responsible for depletion of forests; and

(d) if so, whether Government propose to instruct forest corporations to stop further felling of trees to conserve the forest wealth?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z.R. ANSARI): (a) According to studies of satellite imagery by the National Remote Sensing Agency, the average annual rate of depletion of forest cover during the period 1972-75 to 1980-82 was approximately 1.3 million hectares, whereas the

rate of afforestation during the year 1985-86 and 1986-87 has been 1.51 million hectares and 1.76 million hectares respectively. It cannot, therefore, be surmised that forest are vanishing at a much higher rate than brought under afforestation.

(b) To curb the tendency for illicit fellings, guidelines have been issued to the State Governments/UTs to:

- i) Check illicit felling of trees and removal of forest produce.
- ii) Strictly enforce the provisions of the Indian Forest Act.
- iii) Provide deterrent punishment to the offenders.
- iv) Exercise control on saw and veneer mills along the periphery of forests.
- v) Set up well organised system of depots to meet requirement of fuelwood and fodder for the population living near the forests through government agencies/Corporations/Co-operatives.

In addition the Central Government have introduced a centrally sponsored scheme for development of infrastructure for protection of forests from biotic interference and thereby prevent illegal exploitation of forests.

(c) No, Sir. The Forest Development Corporations are engaged in raising of forest plantations and/trade of timber and minor forest produce according to the management plans prepared on silvicultural principles.

(d) The following guidelines have been issued to the State/UT Governments to restrict felling of the trees in order to further

conserve forest wealth:-

- i) to avoid clear felling of natural forests and where such fellings are inevitable for restoration of crop or other silvicultural considerations, it should be restricted to areas not exceeding 10 hectares in the hills and 25 hectares in the plains.
- ii) to consider banning of fellings in the hills above 100 metres, at least for some years.
- iii) to identify critical areas in the hills and mountains which require protection from felling of forests and need immediate vigorous afforestation.
- iv) to set apart 4% of the geographical area as protection areas like wildlife sanctuaries, natural parks, biosphere reserves etc.

The Forest Development Corporations would also be governed by these and no separate instructions are proposed to be issued.

Special Central Assistance for Primitive Tribes In Orissa

4914. SHRI RADHAKANTA DIGAL: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of Special Central Assistance allocated for the development of primitive tribes in Orissa during Seventh Plan so far;

(b) the various schemes introduced for the upliftment of those primitive tribes;

(c) whether the review has been made on the implementation of welfare schemes

introduced for the primitive tribes; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF WELFARE (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) The amount of SCA released to Orissa for development of primitive tribes during the first two years of 7th Plan is Rs. 130.90 lakhs and the tentative allocation for 1987-88 is Rs. 76.06 lakhs.

(b) The major schemes taken up for the development of primitive tribes included enforcement of protective measures relating to alienation of land, business of money-lending, excise, credit and marketing and developmental programmes such as provision of drinking water, educational facilities, horticulture, soil conservation, development of hill slopes, land reclamation, supply of animals like bullocks, goats, supply of beehives, implements and tools, training in crafts and development of communication.

(c) and (d). The review of the tribal development programmes including those for primitive tribes is made in the annual Tribal Sub-Plan meeting was held in the Ministry with the State officials. A meeting held in the Ministry with the State representatives in June, 1987 to review developmental programmes for primitive tribal groups, during which following measures were suggested. Appropriate steps for motivating and attracting personnel to work in primitive tribal group areas should be taken. At the State level, the programmes for primitive tribal groups should be reviewed on regular basis at frequent intervals. The award of Finance Commission for compensatory allowance, staff quarters and development of villages should be first utilised in the primitive tribe areas. The project reports for each group should be updated and an annual action plan be prepared.