

CLEARANCE OF IRRIGATION PROJECTS IN MADHYA PRADESH

*39. SHRI S. B. SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have cleared Sutia medium and Amdania Diversion projects in the district of Rajnandgaon in Madhya Pradesh from forest angle;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which the projects are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (c) For non-furnishing of essential information by the State Government of Madhya Pradesh, the Sutiapat Reservoir projects stands rejected. Amdania Project has been approved, under the Forests Conservation Act 1980 subject to transfer and mutation of non-forest land and depositing fund in favour of State Forest Department for raising compensatory afforestation.

FORESTS COVER IN KERALA

*40. SHRI V. S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the area covered by natural forests in Kerala;

(b) whether the Union Government are aware of large scale deforestation in the State; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken to check mass destruction of forests in Kerala?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH):

(a) The total extent of natural forests in Kerala is 7870 Sq. Kms.

(b) No large scale destruction of forests has been reported by the State Government. Illicit fellings as and when detected have been booked.

(c) The Government of Kerala have taken following steps to control illicit fellings:—

(i) Reorganisation of beats and sections into 24 hours fully staffed and equipped forest stations.

(ii) Consolidation and demarcation of boundaries started in 1980. So far 6250 Kms. consolidated. Works in about 250 kms. in progress.

(iii) Patrolling in vulnerable area intensified.

NEWS ITEM "U.S. CONGRESS MAN REPORTS INDIA ON THE BRINK OF AN AIDS CATASTROPHE"

56. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to refer to the news item captioned "US Congressman reports India on the brink of an AIDS catastrophe" appearing in the Indian Express, New Delhi dated 10 June, 1991 and State:

(a) the facts of the case as ascertained by the Government; and

(b) the steps being taken to control the epidemic?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D. K. THARA DEVI): (a) and (b) A US Congressman who visited India in April, 1991 has estimated that one million persons may be infected. He has based his estimation on the prevalence of infection among prostitutes and spread of infection to their clients in Bombay. Also reckoning the spread of HIV infection through contaminated blood and through sharing of needles by intravenous drug users, the Congressman has estimated that one million may be infected.

Government of India with the help of WHO assistance has formulated an action plan for undertaking prevention and control measures in the most affected States. Viz: Maharashtra, Tamilnadu, West Benal, Delhi and Manipur. The control measures relate to:—

— Information, education and communication.

— Sexually Transmittde diseases.

— Blood Safety.

— Clinical Management.

— Programme Management.

The World Health Organization has agreed to provide assistance for financing