

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:582
ANSWERED ON:08.05.2000
SALVAGING OF SAL TREES
MADHAVRAO SCINDIA;SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE

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

- (a) whether Madhya Pradesh and other State Governments have submitted any schemes for restoration and revival of the Sal forests;
- (b) if so, the details and cost of such schemes;
- (c) whether 30 lacs Sal trees in the Sal forests of Madhya Pradesh and other States have fallen prey to climatic changes and are dying;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps being taken to Salvage the Sal forests in States?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS

(SHRI T.R. BAALU)

(a), (b), (c), (d) & (e) Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT IN RESPECT OF PART (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.582 FOR 8.5.2000 REGARD SALVAGING OF SAL TREES

(a) No Sir.

(b) Question does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) & (d) There is no report or evidence that the Sal trees are dying in Madhya Pradesh and other states due to climatic changes. However, it has been reported that during 1995-96 to 1997-98, 41.82 lakh Sal trees were affected in Madhya Pradesh by the Sal borer attack over an area of 4591 sq.km. During 1999, Sal borer attack was also noticed in the Sal forests of Uttar Pradesh in Rajaji National Park and Dehra Dun Forest Division and in Poanta Valley in Himachal Pradesh. Sal borer is a beetle biologically known as *Hoplocerambyx spinicornis* which is endemic in the Sal forests. Sal borer attack was first noticed in 1899 in India and since then has been assuming epidemic form at frequent regular intervals. After some time, it reverts back to endemic form. It has been noticed that due to favourable climatic conditions when the humidity level is more than 90% and temperature is around 26 degree Celsius, it multiplies rapidly and assumes epidemic form.

During the past few years due to favourable climatic conditions and on account of the favourable combination of humidity and temperature, the Sal borer attack assumed epidemic proportion in the Sal forests of Madhya Pradesh and to a lesser extent in the Sal forests of Dehra Dun in Uttar Pradesh and Poanta Sahib in Himachal Pradesh.

(e) As per the established research prescriptions and expert opinion, the dead and dying trees were removed and 'trap tree operations' was carried out to check the spread of borer attack. In Madhya Pradesh, 13.92 lakh affected trees had to be cut and removed from the forests and 6.38 crore beetles were trapped and killed to save the healthy Sal trees. This has controlled the Sal borer attack to a large extent in Madhya Pradesh and other affected localities.