

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4309
ANSWERED ON:21.04.2010
FELLING OF TREES
Rathwa Shri Ramsinhbhai Patalbhai

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that valuable forest wood is being felled and is being exported despite a ban on the same during the last few years which is adversely affecting environment;
- (b) if so, the guidelines laid down for conservation of forests and action taken for violation of such guidelines;
- (c) the quantum of wood exported during the last three years alongwith names of countries to which this wood has been exported; and
- (d) the steps taken to check the felling of forest wood and maintaining balance of environment in future?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

- (a) Though there are occasional reports of illegal felling of trees in the forests in certain States, however, there are no reports to link these felling to export of wood. This Ministry has not given any permission for export of any banned wood.
- (b) The forests are protected by the concerned State /UT governments in terms of the provisions of various Central Acts, (e.g. Indian Forest Act, Forest Conservation Act, Wildlife Protection Act) and State Acts. Violations are treated according to penal provisions of these Acts and there are no separate guidelines in this regard. Further, the forests are worked strictly in accordance with the prescriptions of the approved Working Plans and any reported deviation is dealt with in terms of the provisions of the relevant Acts and departmental disciplinary Rules.
- (c) This Ministry does not allow any export of timber nor maintains data in this regard. However, the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics, Ministry of Commerce, have provided data on export of various categories of wood items for last three years and for the period from April 2009 to November 2009 which is given at Annexure. The details of the countries to which these wood has been exported are not available.
- (d) Though protection of forests is primarily a responsibility of the concerned State/UT Governments, this Ministry provides financial assistance to the State Forest Departments under a Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Intensification of Forest Management' to strengthen their forest protection machinery by way of infrastructure development, use of modern technology, improved mobility by way of deployment of new field vehicles, improved communication and providing arms ammunition to the frontline forestry force. Further, the Central Government while approving the Working Plans of the States, ensures that underlying principle of these Working Plans is ecological stability and sustainability of ecological services of the forests.