

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:579

ANSWERED ON:05.05.2010

ILLEGAL FELLING OF TREES

Gawali Patil Smt. Bhavana Pundlikrao ;Laguri Shri Yashbant Narayan Singh

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

- (a) the broad policy framed regarding felling of trees in the country and the various laws enacted thereon by the Union Government;
- (b) whether a number of trees are being felled illegally in the country despite several laws being in force in this regard;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (d) the number of cases which have come to light or brought to the notice of the Government during the last three years and the current year, State-wise and year-wise; and
- (e) the remedial steps taken by the Government thereon?

Answer

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

(a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) to (e) of the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 579 due for reply on 5.5.2010 regarding Illegal Felling of Trees.

(a) The National Forest Policy of 1988 prescribes broad principles of forest management in the country and there is no separate policy governing felling of trees. This Policy emphasises on ensuring environmental stability and maintenance of ecological balance as the superior aim over derivation of direct economic benefits from forests. The Indian Forest Act, 1927, The Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 and the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, though promulgated prior to this Policy, broadly confirm to and provide facilitating provisions for implementing above policy objective. No separate Act governing tree felling has been promulgated since adoption of National Forest Policy, 1988.

(b)&(c) Despite enforcement of the forest laws and constant vigilance by the forestry frontline force, there are occasional reports of illegal felling of trees from different parts of the country. Such illegal felling can be attributed, primarily, to the requirements of the local people for fire-wood, constructional timber material, and for livelihood. Illegal felling of trees reportedly also take place for clearing of forest-lands for encroachment, Jhoom cultivation and to meet the high demands of timber in distant areas.

(d) The number of cases brought to the notice of this Ministry during last three years and the current year, state-wise and year-wise, is given at Annexure.

(e) Though protection of forests is primarily a responsibility of the concerned State Governments, the Government of India through its Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Intensification of Forest Management provides financial assistance to the State/UT Governments for strengthening their forest protection machinery by way of infrastructure development, improvement in communication, induction of improved technology for field surveillance and reporting, improved mobility and for arms and ammunition. In addition, local people are involved in a big way through Joint Forest Management for protection and management of forests on 'care and share' basis. The Central Government while approving the Working Plans for management of forests ensures that the broad objective of maintenance of ecological balance and sustainable flow of its ecological services is central to its prescriptions.