

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:466

ANSWERED ON:28.07.2010

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY

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

- (a) whether UN has declared 2010 as the "International year of Biodiversity".
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the measures being taken by the Government in coordination with UN in this regard; and
- (d) the funds allocated and spent for this purpose and the involvement of NGOs in this regard?

Answer

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

(a)&(b) The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has proclaimed 2010 as the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB), to create awareness about the understanding of threats to and the need for conservation of biodiversity. The UNGA has also designated the Secretariat of the international Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) as the focal point for IYB.

(c)&(d) The Government has undertaken a number of activities to create awareness about biodiversity issues during the celebration of IYB in 2010. The IYB was formally launched in India on 4th January, 2010, in which the Minister for Environment & Forests released a brochure on 'Achieving 2010 Biodiversity Target; India's Contributions', highlighting measure taken by India towards biodiversity conservation. A calendar for the year 2010 with 12 award-winning paintings by school children on the theme 'Our Rich Biodiversity', prepared by the National Museum of Natural History was also released on the occasion. A special session on 'Biodiversity and Sustainable Development' was organised on 7th January, 2010 during the 97th Indian Science Congress held in Thiruvananthapuram. A special event focussing on biodiversity was organised during the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit in February, 2010. A special article on 'Biodiversity: We cannot afford its loss' was brought in the March, 2010 issue of 'Namaskaar', the inflight magazine of the national carrier, Air India. A commemorative stamp and cover on Biodiversity was brought out by the Department of Posts, and was released on 5th June, 2010 to mark the World Environment Day, the theme for which this year was 'Biodiversity: Connecting with Nature'. Plantation drives are being taken up along the route of Queen's Baton Relay covering 20,000 km. in all 28 States and seven Union Territories for the Commonwealth Games being held in Delhi in October, 2010. The National Biodiversity Authority is supporting awareness creation activities through State Biodiversity Boards, and other stakeholders including NGOs.

The concerned Ministries in the Central Government, State Governments, Centres of Excellence and other organizations are also undertaking activities for celebration of IYB. The Press Information Bureau has issued seven exclusive press releases on biodiversity and uploaded three features and one backgrounder on their website.

Considering that there are a number of existing schemes and programmes relevant to biodiversity, no specific funds were allocated for celebration of IYB. The activities have been undertaken with the involvement of stakeholders, including NGOs by leveraging funds from the existing programmes.