

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:675
ANSWERED ON:09.12.2013
CHECK ON FARMING ON FOREST LAND
Reddy Shri Modugula Venugopala

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of illegal cultivation flourishing due to encroachment on huge tracts of forest land in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has received any complaints about illegal cultivation on forest land;
- (d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government to check illegal farming on forest land in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN)

(a) to (d) Management and protection of forest area is primarily the responsibility of concerned State/UT Governments and action is taken to prevent /remove encroachment as per the existing rules and regulations by respective State/UT Governments. No specific information/complaint regarding illegal cultivation due to encroachment on huge tracts of forest land has been received in the Ministry. Forest areas do have encroachment and the State/UT wise details of the forest area under encroachments are given in Annexure. As reported by some States/UTs, the encroached areas in the forests are also being used for cultivation purposes.

(e) Action is taken by the concerned State/UT Governments to prevent/ evict encroachments as per the provisions of Indian Forest Act, 1927, Wild Life Protection Act, 1972, Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, and the Acts and Rules of various States Governments. This Ministry provides financial assistance to State/UT Governments under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes including the 'Intensification of Forest Management Scheme' (IFMS), for activities like strengthening of infrastructure viz. check posts, buildings for frontline staff, use of modern technology that includes wireless network, remote sensing, geographical information system, information technology, global positioning system (GPS) and differential GPS, improved mobility to the field staff by providing vehicles for patrolling, survey and demarcation of forest areas including digitization of recorded forest areas and construction of boundary pillars etc.

In addition to the above, the State/UT Governments take various steps for protection of the forest areas which include patrolling of forest areas, strengthening of the check posts/barriers, use of modern information technology for control of forest offences, fire alerts, demarcation of forest areas and digitization of the recorded forest areas, involvement of Joint Forest Management Committees in preventing encroachment on forest land.