

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3286
ANSWERED ON:17.03.2015
FELLING OF RED SANDERS
Senguttuvan Shri Balasubramaniam

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

- (a) whether any foreign country/international mafia/organised gangs are involved in the large-scale felling of red sanders trees in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh during the last three years and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether any uniformity in pattern has emerged from the manner and method of red sanders tree smuggling by the offenders and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the total number of criminal case registered during the last three years in regard to illegal felling and illegal transportation of red-sanders trees in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh;
- (d) the areas including the extent of forest cover depleted by such wanton acts of red sanders smuggling; and
- (e) the details of the steps taken by the Government to curb the menace of red sanders smuggling including advisories issued in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE. (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a)& (b) As per the report of Government of Andhra Pradesh, the Red Sanders (*Pterocarpus santalinus*) is endemic to the forests of Seshachalam, Veligonda, Lankamala and Palakonda hill ranges of Andhra Pradesh. Due to heavy demand for Red Sanders in China, Japan and other countries, the wood is prone to smuggling. The traders/middlemen generally engage the locals for the illicit felling and storage operations.

(c) The details of cases booked and material seized In Andhra Pradesh during the last five years is as below:-

Year	No. of cases	Red Sanders wood seized (in tons)	No. of Vehicles seized	No. of persons arrested
2009-10	880	922.070	384	650
2010-11	1373	1250.210	772	1591
2011-12	1556	1437.179	985	2658
2012-13	1488	1389.583	1002	3139
2013-14	2058	1889.206	1566	4345

(d) Red Sanders grows in natural forests in association with number of other species and forms only around 10-15% of crop composition. Due to smuggling of scattered red sanders trees there is no depletion of forest cover as such. Red Sanders being a strong coppicer, rejuvenates quite fast.

(e) Some of the important initiatives taken by the State Government of Andhra Pradesh for protection of Red Sanders are as under:-

- (i) Setting up of Base Camps and Strike Forces.
- (ii) Setting up of Armed Mobile parties for patrolling, apprehending notorious smugglers and conducting raids.
- (iii) Setting up of Dog Squads.
- (iv) Formation of Red Sanders Anti –Smuggling Task Force (RSASTF)
- (v) Providing arms and mobility to forest staff.

In addition, the Government of India has also taken number of steps to prevent smuggling of Red Sanders including inspection of flora and fauna consignments at exit points to detect violations of provisions of Wildlife Protection Act, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) etc, sensitization of various agencies and trade regulation as per Export-

Import (Exim) Policy.