

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:315

ANSWERED ON:30.07.2014

BIO DIVERSITY

Mohan Shri P. C.;Thakur Shri Anurag Singh

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

- (a) whether the Government has conducted any survey of the biological diversity of the country and made inventory of its flora and fauna resources;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including the number of plants and animal species documented in the country;
- (c) whether the Government has any legislative framework for protecting bio-diversity in the country, if so, the details including the salient features thereof and the mechanism put in place by the Government for its effective implementation;
- (d) the details of the campaigns/ programmes conducted by the Government to increase the understanding and awareness about bio-diversity issues on the International Day for Biological Diversity; and
- (e) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to address the challenges posed to the bio-diversity of the country?

Answer

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

(a)To (e) : A statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) to (e) of Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 315 for reply on 30.07.2014 raised by Shri P.C Mohan and Shri Anurag Singh Thakur regarding Bio-Diversity

(a) & (b) Botanical Survey of India(BSI) and Zoological Survey of India(ZSI) have been mandated for survey of flora and fauna in the country and their documentation since 1890 and 1916 respectively. BSI has a repository of about three million national reference collections of plant specimens with more than 19500 type specimens. Out of these 47513 species of plants comprising virus/bacteria (1036), Algae (7284), Fungi (14883), Lichens (2401), Bryophytes (2423), Pteridophytes (1268), Gymnosperms (75) and Angiosperms (18043) have already been identified and classified. ZSI and other research organizations have documented 96373 faunal species. These include Protozoa-3500, Invertebrates including insects-87327, Fishes-3022, Amphibia-342, Reptiles- 526, Birds-1233 and Mammals-423.

(c) A number of legal measures are in place to protect biodiversity of the country. These include: Indian Forest Act, 1927; Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972; Forest (Conservation) Act 1980 and Biological Diversity Act 2002. The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 has been enacted for protection of wild life in the country. This Act provides for the protection of wild animals, birds and plants with a view to ensuring the ecological and environmental security of the country.

The Indian Forest Act, 1927 inter alia, provides for notifying Reserved Forests and Protected Forests rich in biodiversity. The Act also provides for protection to such forests. On the other hand, Forest Conservation Act, 1980 inter-alia prohibits diversion of forest land for any other use without prior approval of Central Government.

The implementation of the provisions of these Acts is primary responsibility of the respective State/Union Territory Governments. The Act provides for appointment of Chief Wildlife Wardens in the State/UT Governments and also empowering other Forest and Police Officers to implement various provisions of the Act. Besides, Ministry has created a Wildlife Crime Control Bureau to complement the existing state machinery for dealing with wildlife crime having ramifications beyond state and national boundaries.

The Biological Diversity Act, 2002 provides for conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of its components, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of biological resources. The Act is implemented through a three tier institutional structure, namely National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) at the national level, State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs) at the State level, and Biodiversity Management Committees at the local level.

(d) May 22 has been declared as the International Day for Biological Diversity (IBD) to commemorate the adoption of the Convention on Biological Diversity on this day in 1992. Various activities are undertaken every year to commemorate the Day for increasing understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues. The theme for IBD for the year 2014 is 'Islands and Biodiversity'. To coincide with the theme, the Day was celebrated through the NBA on 22 May 2014 at Port Blair, Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Several SBBs

also celebrated the Day by organizing events such as painting and photography competitions for school children, etc.

Further, Ministry has launched 'Science Express Biodiversity Special'(SEBS) train that houses an exhibition primarily addressing the Biodiversity theme. More than 45 lakh visitors have visited the Train during its run in two phases till date. The state of the art exhibits aboard SEBS aim to create awareness on the unique biodiversity of India, climate change, water and energy conservation and other related issues. The phase-III of the SEBS train starting on 28th July, 2014 shall cover 57 locations though out the country. 'Green Haat' is another initiative of the Ministry to show case different products made by various NGOs, artisans and State Forest Development Corporations/ Federations and provide support to Biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods.

(e) Several measures have been undertaken to conserve the biological diversity of the Country. Some important steps taken by the Government for conservation of biodiversity inter-alia include survey and inventorisation of floral and faunal resources, assessment of forest cover to develop an accurate database for planning and monitoring, establishment of 670 Protected Area networks of National Parks(102), Wildlife Sanctuaries(517), Conservation Reserves(47) and Community Reserves(4), designating Biosphere Reserves for conservation of representative ecosystems, conservation of ecologically fragile areas such as mangroves, wetlands and coral reefs, implementing species-oriented conservation programmes such as Project Tiger and Project Elephant, ex-situ conservation through setting up of botanic gardens, zoos, gene banks and enactment of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.