

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1296**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.06.2019

**Land Covered with Forests**

1296. SHRI RAMPRIT MANDAL:

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

- (a) whether forests are absolutely necessary to keep the environment of the country clean and healthy; and
- (b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the percentage of the land covered with forest *vis-à-vis* the total land area of India?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE**  
**(SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO)**

- (a) & (b) Yes, Sir. Forests are necessary to keep the environment of the country clean and healthy. Forests provide various environmental benefits and services. Trees purify the polluted air by absorbing large amount pollutants like carbon dioxide, sulphur dioxide by their leaves and releasing oxygen. Trees produce a healthy urban environment by providing clean air, water and soil. Trees, especially broad leaves trap aerosols and small particles and acts as dust filters. Tree covers absorb rain water and allow the drained water to percolate into the soil thus maintaining ground water table and reduces runoff.

Forest Survey of India, Dehradun, a subordinate organization under the Ministry carries out the assessment of forest cover of the country biennially and the findings are published in India State of Forest Report (ISFR). As per the latest report i.e. ISFR- 2017, the total forest and tree cover in the country is 8, 02, 088 square kilometer (forest cover 7,08,273 square kilometer, tree cover 93,815 square kilometer) which is 24.39% of the geographical area of the country. There is an increase of 8021 square kilometer (forest cover 6778 square kilometer, tree cover 1243 square kilometer) of total forest and tree cover compared to that of ISFR-2015.

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