

(c) and (d) The measures being taken by Government to check the declining trend of forest cover and bio-diversity are:

- (i) Survey and inventorisation of floral and faunal resources of the country by Botanical Survey of India and Zoological Survey of India respectively.
- (ii) In-situ conservation through Protected Area network consisting of National Parks, Wild life Sanctuaries and Biosphere Reserves.
- (iii) Species specific conservation programmes, such as Project Elephant, Project Tiger and Project Rhino.
- (iv) Ex-situ conservation through Botanic Gardens and Zoological Parks.
- (v) Afforestation programmes are undertaken by State/UT Government from their own resources, with financial assistance from Government of India and through external aid.
- (vi) Guidelines to all State/UT Governments to involve village communities in protection and regeneration of degraded forests.
- (vii) Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 has been enacted to regulate the diversion of forest lands.
- (viii) Ministry has prepared a National Forestry Action Plan to enhance the contribution of forestry and tree resources for ecological stability and people centered development through improvement in investment for conservation and development of forest resources.

Conservation of Flora

†1729. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government propose to set up an authority for conservation of flora as well as the protection of traditional rights of the farmers of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the authority is likely to be set up?

†Original Notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Environment and Forests is formulating a legislation on biodiversity. The Broad objectives of this proposed legislation are conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of biological resources. This legislation, *inter alia*, provides for setting up of a National Biodiversity Authority. Further action for finalising the legislation at the earliest is underway.

The Department of Agriculture & Cooperation is formulating a legislation on a Sui generis system for Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights. In this legislation, there is a provision for setting up a Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority.

Spread of Brain-Fever, Kala-azar and Malaria

1730. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government are aware of the increase in the incidence of brain fever, Kala-azar and Malaria in several States in the country;
- (b) if so, the States where such incidents have taken place;
- (c) the number of people killed during this year due to such fevers; and
- (d) the details of steps taken to provide proper treatment to people suffering from these diseases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) and (b) Whereas there is a decline in Kala-azar cases, increased incidence of Japanese Encephalitis (J.E.) (Brain fever) has been recorded from the States of Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Haryana, Manipur, Karnataka and U.P. Similarly, rising trend of Malaria has been reported from the States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, West Bengal and U.T. of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.