

(b) whether their production has registered phenomenal increase;

(c) whether plastic trash is also being dumped in India;

(d) whether Government would consider banning the production, import and use of plastics since they constitute a threat to health and ecology;

(e) if so, by when; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SIS RAM OLA):

(a) Plastic bags, packaging materials etc. are not eco-hostile. On the contrary these are eco-friendly.

(b) The production of these materials have increased over the years. However, consumption of plastics is still below the world average.

(c) to (f) Government is conscious about potential hazards associated with import of plastic waste/scrap. Vide Public Notice No. 392(PN)/92-97 dated 1.1.97 issued by DGFT, only factory level waste/scrap (which is not put to any use whatsoever and as such can be termed as virgin or new material) will be allowed to be imported for further processing/use by domestic industries and it will be subjected to strict inspection. Other types of waste like municipal waste, post consumer discards etc. will not be allowed to imported. It will neither be possible nor desirable to ban the production and use of plastics as this wonderful materials is both supplementing the range of materials available to meet daily needs of common man at affordable prices with acceptable quality as also substituting natural materials like timber and metals thereby contributing to the preservation of ecology and environment. The increasing use of plastics in the medical services/ procession disproves the theory that plastics are a threat to health.

Working Conditions of Forest Labourers in the country

2923. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any existing machinery at the Central level to monitor the deployment of forest labourers in the country, their working conditions and related matters;

(b) whether any assessment has been made by Government in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Forest cover in the Country and World Bank sponsored afforestation schemes

2924. SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of forest cover, State-wise, of the country as on date;

(b) whether it is a fact that World Bank sponsored afforestation programmes are operational in the country;

(c) if so, the details of such programmes;

(d) whether Government propose to set up forest farmer cooperatives in the country to ensure that timber prices are determined by the farmers; and

(e) if so, by when a decision to that effect is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) Percentage of forest cover, State-wise of the country is given in Statement-I (See below)

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Details of World Bank sponsored afforestation programmes operational in

the country are given in statement-II (See below)

(d) Central Government have no proposal to set up forest farmer cooperatives.

(e) Does not arise.

Statement I

Statement showing State-wise percentage of forest cover as per the State of Forest Report, 1995

Sl. No.	State/UT	% of Actual forest cover to Geographical Area
1.	Andhra Pradesh	17.1
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	81.9
3.	Assam	30.7
4.	Bihar	15.3
5.	Delhi	1.7
6.	Goa, Daman & Diu	32.8
7.	Gujarat	6.3
8.	Haryana	1.4

9.	Himachal Pradesh	22.4
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	9.2
11.	Karnataka	16.9
12.	Kerala	26.6
13.	Madhya Pradesh	30.5
14.	Maharashtra	14.2
15.	Manipur	78.6
16.	Meghalaya	70.1
17.	Mizoram	88.1
18.	Nagaland	86.2
19.	Orissa	30.3
20.	Punjab	2.7
21.	Rajasthan	3.9
22.	Sikkim	44.1
23.	Tamil Nadu	13.7
24.	Tripura	52.8
25.	Uttar Pradesh	11.5
26.	West Bengal	9.3
27.	A & N Island	92.3
28.	Chandigarh	6.1
29.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	41.5
30.	Lakshadweep	—
31.	Pondicherry	—
TOTAL		19.46

Statement II

State showing details of World Bank Aided Forestry Sector Projects Operational in the country

Sl. No.	Name of the State	Project Period	Project cost (Rs. Crores)	Area treatment Targets including Afforestation (Thousand Hectares)
1.	Forest Development Project, West Bengal	1992-93 to 1996-97	114.70	228
2.	Forestry Sector Project, Maharashtra	1992-93 to 1997-98	431.51	369
3.	Forestry Project, Andhra Pradesh	1994-95 to 1999-2000	353.92	355
4.	Madhya Pradesh Forestry Project,	1995-96 to 1998-99	245.94	235