

**Plan for plantation of trees**

†1705. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that water enrichment is being affected due to chir, poplar and eucalyptus trees in the country;

(b) if so, whether Government would consider to make any action plan for plantation of trees saving water in place of chir trees in hilly areas and poplar and eucalyptus trees in plain areas so that the effect on water enrichment may be ended; and

(c) if not, the mode and steps which Government is going to take for reducing the spread of chir, poplar and eucalyptus, so that depletion of ground water may be contained?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) Forest and tree cover help in arresting excessive run off and thus improving water percolation. Soil moisture distribution profile under plantations of different tree species reveals that soil moisture under plantations of chir, eucalyptus etc. is at par with plantations of other species like teak and khair. There are no specific reports on the adverse impact of chir, poplar and eucalyptus plantations on water regime of surrounding areas.

(b) and (c) In view of the reply to part (a) above, reply to parts (b) and (c) do not arise.

**New haats on Bangladesh Meghalaya border**

1706. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has firmed up agreements with Bangladesh, during the recent visit of India's External Affairs Minister to Dhaka, on opening up four new haats on the Bangladesh-Meghalaya border;

(b) whether agreements were reached to commence Bus Service from Dhaka and other cities in Bangladesh to Shillong in Meghalaya and Guwahati in Assam; and

(c) if so, the details of the agreements and the time-frame set for implementation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) to (c) No agreements on border haats were

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.