

Special courts for atrocities

†2325. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government proposes to set up special courts for ensuring speedy justice in the cases pertaining to atrocities against the Dalits;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the State-wise details of the progress made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) to (c) In accordance with Section 14 of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) {PoA} Act, 1989, the State Government with the concurrence of the Chief Justice of the High Court, specify for each district, a Court of Session to be a Special Court for the purpose of speedy trial of offences under the Act. Accordingly, as per the information available, State Governments and Union Territory Administrations of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, National Capital Territory of Delhi and Puducherry have designated District Session Courts as Special Courts. Further, to accelerate the pace of trial of cases under the PoA Act, 198 exclusive Special Courts have also been set up by the States namely Andhra Pradesh (23), Bihar (11), Chhattisgarh (6), Gujarat (25), Karnataka (8), Kerala (2), Madhya Pradesh (43), Rajasthan (25), Tamil Nadu (4), Uttar Pradesh (40) and Uttarakhand (2).

National Wetland Inventory Atlas

2326. SHRI K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the Space Applications Centre (SAC), Ahmedabad has prepared the National Wetland Inventory Atlas mapping wetlands in the country; and
- (b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) At the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

behest of the Ministry, the Space Applications Centre (SAC), Ahmedabad has prepared the National Wetland Inventory Atlas on 1:50,000 scale using Indian Remote Sensing Satellite LISS III data of pre and post-monsoon seasons during the year 2006-2011. As per the Atlas, there are a total of 7,57,060 wetlands covering an estimated area of 15.26 million hectare, that is around 4.63% of the geographic area of the country.

National policy on reducing emissions

2327. SHRI A.W. RABI BERNARD: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has come out with a draft National policy on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that the present level of forest cover of 69.20 million hectares in India neutralises 11 per cent of the country's green house emissions, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the country's forest cover is around 21.05 per cent of its geographical area and added merely three million hectares of forest between 1997 and 2007; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to add more forest cover area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) Yes, a National Policy and Strategy on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation is under preparation.

(b) As per India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2013 the forest cover which defined as "all lands, one hectares and more in area, with a tree canopy density of 10% or more irrespective of ownership and legal status" of the country is 21.23% of its geographical area *i.e.* 69.79 million hectares. As per the Second National Communication to UNFCCC forests neutralizes 17.1% of the country's green house gas emission.

(c) As per India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2013 the forest cover of the country is 21.23 per cent of its geographical area. As per the ISFR 2009, the increase in forest cover between State Forest Report (SFR) 1997 (data period 1993-95) and ISFR 2009 (data period 2006) is 3.13 million hectares.

(d) To increase the forests cover area Government of India has initiated the National Mission for a Green India, as one of the eight Missions under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC). The objectives of the Mission are to increase forest/tree cover on 5 m ha of forest/non-forest lands and improved quality of forest cover on another 5 m ha (a total of 10 m. ha.).