

(b) No such proposal has been received in the Ministry for felling of trees for building construction.

(c) Question doesn't arise.

Review of PCA Act

2328. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a need to review the provisions of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act, 1960, especially those pertaining to definitions of cruelty and the punitive measures prescribed;

(b) whether the Ministry intends to review the draft amendments to the Act, received in 2011;

(c) if so, the details thereof, including the timeline and the road map for the same; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE): (a) Government regularly reviews the implementation of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act, 1960 in order to strengthen its provisions including those relating to definition of cruelty and the punitive measures and achieve the objectives of the Act.

(b) and (c) Government has received proposal from the Animal Welfare Board of India for amendment of the PCA Act in this regard and has conducted consultations with various stakeholders on the necessity and scope of such amendments. Such consultations are at an advanced stage. Proposals for amendments are submitted to the legislature after such consultations are concluded. Hence, no time frame in this regard is available at present.

(d) Question does not arise.

Intensive plantation in Jharkhand

†2329. SHRI MAHESH PODDAR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the average area covered under all kinds of forests in Jharkhand remain 29 per cent of total geographical area of the State;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether it is also a fact that the intensive plantation would be beneficial in the dense forest area in the State with a view to conserve forests and wildlife and for maintaining environmental equilibrium; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by Government in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE): (a) Forest Survey of India, Dehradun is carrying out the assessment of forest cover of the country biennially and the findings are published in India State of Forest Report. The latest report in the series is India State of Forest Report, 2015. As per this report, the total forest cover in the State of Jharkhand is 23,478 square kilometers which is 29.45 per cent of the total geographical area of the State.

(b) and (c) As a management practice, intensive plantation is not carried out in dense forest area. Under various schemes, afforestation is being carried out in degraded forest and open forest land.

Biodiversity and ecosystem of Western Ghats

2330. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Madhav Gadgil Expert Panel on Western Ghats put Athirappilly and surrounding areas in the ecologically-sensitive list and clearly stated that impact of the hydel project there may be irreparable on the biodiversity and ecosystem and whether the Central Government has taken note of this Report;

(b) if so, what is the response by the Ministry regarding viability of this project;

(c) whether Kerala Government has sought environmental clearance from the Central Government for the project; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Followed by the Madhav Gadgil Expert Panel on Western Ghats (WGEEP) Report, the Ministry of Environment and Forests had set up a High Level Working Group (HLWG) on Western Ghats under the Chairmanship of Dr. K. Kasturirangan. The HLWG recommended that based on revaluation and collection of data on ecological flow, the Government of Kerala, could take forward the proposal, if it so desires.

(c) and (d) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has accorded Environmental Clearance to the Athirappally Hydropower Project in Kerala