

**Degradation of land due to unsustainable practices**

2122. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that approximately 45 per cent of India's land is degraded primarily due to deforestation, unsustainable agricultural practices, mining and excessive ground water extraction;

(b) if so, how much of this could be regenerated by planting trees; and

(c) how much land have been regenerated, so far till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE): (a) As per the information received from Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, out of the total geographical area of the country, about 120.40 million hectare (37%) is affected by various kinds of land degradation. This includes water and wind erosion (94.87 million hectare), water logging (0.91 million hectare), Soil alkalinity/Sodicity (3.71 million hectare), soil acidity (17.93 million hectare), soil salinity (2.73 million hectare) and mining and industrial waste (0.26 million hectare).

(b) and (c) The Government is taking up various measures including planting of trees for treatment of the degraded lands. The Ministry is implementing the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National Afforestation Programme (NAP) for regeneration of degraded forests and adjoining areas in this country. Under this Scheme an area of 21.38 lakh hectares has been treated since inception of this programme in 2000-02.

To prevent soil erosion, land degradation and to improve the productivity of degraded lands in the country, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India is implementing integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) which is now subsumed under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY).

**Protection of Khejri trees in Rajasthan**

†2123. SHRI RAM NARAIN DUDI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the existence of Khejri, the State tree of Rajasthan is in danger and if so, the action plan formulated by the Central Government to increase the number of Khejri trees and to protect these trees; and

(b) when the last survey was conducted to ascertain the number of Khejri trees, the details of survey report thereof?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE): (a) As per the information received from Rajasthan Forest Department, there is no such report to the effect that existence of Khejri tree is in danger. However, the department is not only taking measures for protection of the tree, but also promoting Khejri through planting and distribution of seedlings to villagers every year. In the year 2016-17 approximately 10 lakhs Khejri seedlings were planted on forest private lands through distribution of seedlings. Protection of Khejri is being regulated through provisions contained in Rajasthan Forest Act-1953 and Rajasthan Forest (Produce Transit) Rules-1957.

(b) No survey of Khejri trees was conducted by Rajasthan Forest Department.

#### **Air pollution of the world**

2124. SHRI KIRANMAY NANDA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that 92 per cent population of the world are breathing with polluted air;

(b) if so, the details of average air pollution during the last two years, country-wise;

(c) whether Government has done any city-wise survey of air pollution in the country and if so, the details thereof;

(d) the number of deaths in the country due to air pollution noted during the last three years, State-wise; and

(e) the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE): (a) A report was bought out by the World Health Organisation in May 2016 claiming that 92 per cent of the world's population lives in places where air quality levels exceed WHO limits.

(b) and (c) The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in association with State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) / Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) monitors air pollution levels across the country under National Air Quality Monitoring Programme (NAMP). Details of city-wise air pollution level monitored by CPCB for the last two years and current year are given in the Statement (*See below*).

(d) and (e) No credible and scientifically reviewed evidence has been established to quantify number of deaths directly as a result of air pollution. The major actions taken by