

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO: 1014
TO BE ANSWERED ON 15.12.2022

Target for increasing forest cover of the country

1014. SHRI B. PARTHASARADHI REDDY:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the State of Telangana showed the second-highest increase in forest cover in the country during the last two years;
- (b) the details of steps taken by Government to highlight and disseminate the best practices adopted by Telangana to increase the forest cover across the country; and
- (c) the details of the timelines set to achieve the target of 33 per cent forest cover as per National Forest Policy and steps taken by Government in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) The Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun, an organization under the Ministry carries out the assessment of forest cover of the country biennially since 1987 and the findings are published in India State of Forest Report (ISFR). As per latest ISFR 2021, Telangana is having the forest cover of 21,214 square kilometre which shows an increase of 632 square kilometre between ISFR 2019 and ISFR 2021 which is second highest increase in forest cover in the country.

(b) Various best practices under afforestation, agroforestry, soil and moisture conservation works, forest fire prevention measures, and wild life habitat management are being adopted by the States under Centrally Sponsored Schemes namely National Mission for a Green India, Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitat, Nagar Van Yojana, CAMPA fund, and under State Plan to increase the forest cover in the state. These best practices of any State are highlighted and disseminated across the country through conducting national workshops and regional workshops on afforestation, forest fire management and on various forest and environment conservation related themes, and through distribution of pamphlets, and presentations on suitable occasions, and by conducting field visit of officers of other States.

(c) The National Forest Policy, 1988 provides that a minimum of one-third of the total land area of the country should be under forest or tree cover. In the hills and in mountainous region, the aim should be to maintain two-third of the area under such cover in order to prevent erosion and land degradation and to ensure the stability of the fragile eco-system. However, there is no timeline set under the Policy to achieve these targets. The Ministry is undertaking various afforestation and tree plantation programmes such as National Mission for a Green India (GIM), Nagar Van Yojana, CAMPA etc. and also various afforestation

activities are being taken up under various programmes/ schemes of line Ministries such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, National Bamboo Mission, Sub-Mission on Agroforestry etc. and under various schemes of State Government /UT Administration, and by various departments, Non-Government Organizations, Civil Society, Corporate bodies etc. to achieve the target set under the policy. The multi departmental efforts have yielded good results in conserving forest and environment by addressing the problem of deforestation, besides keeping the pace of development, which is evident from the fact that the forest cover has stabilized and has been constantly increasing over the years. As per the latest ISFR 2021, the total forest cover of the country has increased by 12,294 square kilometres in the last seven years (ISFR 2015 to ISFR 2021).
