

[1 August, 2003]

RAJYA SABHA

cultivating the forest land in the country. Even otherwise the unauthorized occupation of the forest land is treated as encroachment under Indian Forest Act, 1927 and various other State Acts and Rules for the time being in force and therefore, the State/Union Territory Governments have been requested to evict such ineligible encroaches from the forest land.

Forest Area in Kerala and Karnataka

1373. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the total forest area of the States of Kerala and Karnataka during the period 1981-2001, separately;

(b) whether it is a fact that large scale depletion of forest area is taking place in these States;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken to protect the forest land from further depletion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV): (a) The assessment of forest cover is done by Forest Survey of India on biennial basis. The first assessment report of the year 1987 and the last one is that of 2001. The figures are as under:

	Areas in Sq. Km.	
State	1987	2001
Kerala	11218	11221
Karnataka	38645	38724

(b) No, Sir. There has been an increase in the forest cover of both the States during the period 1987—2001.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Some of the steps taken by the Government to protect the forests from depletion:

- i) Forest (Conservation) Act 1980, has been enacted to regulate the diversion of forest land for non forestry purposes.
- ii) Cooperation of local people is being solicited through Joint Forest Management Committees to manage and protect the forests.
- iii) Number of Schemes are being implemented to protect and manage the existing forests.
- iv) Management of forest area under the control of State Forest Department is done according to the prescriptions of the Working Plans.

Danger to environment due to garbage of vam organics

†1374. SHRI D.P. YADAV: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government are aware of the fact that discharge being released from the vam organics (Jubilant Chemicals) Gajraula, Uttar Pradesh is destroying the standing crops of the farmers and damaging the trees in the surrounding areas and thereby causing a serious danger to the environment; and

(b) if so, the action taken by Government and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV): (a) and (b) A complaint relating to effect of gaseous emissions from M/s Vam Organics (now known as M/s Jubilant Organics), Gajraula, Uttar Pradesh, on mango orchard and crops was received. M/s Vam organics have now installed scrubbers in its sulphuric acid plant for control of sulphur dioxide emissions.

Loss due to forest fire

1375. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of report that 'Half of forest area fire-prone' which appeared in the media recently;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.