

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1222
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27.07.2026

Illegal Tree Felling and Enforcement Mechanism

1222. SHRI CHAVAN RAVINDRA VASANTRAO:

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

- (a) whether the Government has conducted any assessment regarding increase in incidents of illegal tree felling in urban areas, forest areas and peri-urban regions during each of last five years;
- (b) if so, the details of such incidents, cases registered, prosecutions launched, convictions secured and estimated loss of tree cover during said period;
- (c) whether the Government has identified the major causes responsible for illegal tree felling, including urban expansion, infrastructure projects, encroachments, illegal mining and commercial activities and if so, details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has reviewed compliance with conditions imposed while granting permissions for tree felling under infrastructure, industrial, mining and real estate projects and, if so, the number of violations detected, action taken and penalties imposed during the said period; and
- (e) whether the Government proposes to strengthen legal framework, monitoring and enforcement mechanism to prevent illegal felling of trees and ensure greater accountability and if so, details thereof along with the timeline fixed for its implementation?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) to (e) Protection of trees and action against illegal felling in urban areas, forest areas and peri-urban areas are primarily the responsibility of the respective State Governments/Union Territory Administrations under the Indian Forest Act, 1927, the respective State Acts and the rules made thereunder. Accordingly, the details regarding the increase or decrease in the incidence of illegal tree felling is maintained by the respective State Governments/UT Administrations.

However, as per the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023, the forest and tree cover of the country is 8,27,356.95 square kilometre, which is 25.17% of the geographical area of the country. The forest and tree cover has increased by 1,445.81 square kilometre as compared to ISFR 2021. Further, there has been an overall increase of 37,378 square kilometre in forest and tree cover during the decade 2013-2023, indicating an increasing trend in the country's forest and tree cover.

In case of illegal felling of trees due to various reasons, the legal actions are taken by State Governments and Union Territory Administrations as per applicable Acts and rules made thereunder. Further, in case of diversion of forest land, the compensatory afforestation and other compliance measures are ensured under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. There are robust legal framework for protection and management of forest and tree resources under the provisions of the Indian Forest Act, 1927, the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, and the respective State Forest Acts, Tree Preservation Acts and Rules. The State Governments/UT Administrations take appropriate measures under these legal provisions to prevent illegal felling and protect forest and tree resources.
