

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3554
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10.08.2026

Protection and Monitoring of Saplings

3554. SHRI AJENDRA SINGH LODHI:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware that despite large-scale tree plantation drives in various States, the expected increase in forest cover is not being achieved due to tree felling and inadequate protection of saplings;
- (b) if so, the details of survival rate of saplings planted across the country during the last three years, State-wise;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to implement any new action plan for the protection and monitoring of saplings as well as for controlling illegal felling to ensure the effectiveness of tree plantation drives; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): The Government accords high priority to the conservation, protection, restoration and enhancement of forests and tree cover in the country, in accordance with the applicable legal and policy framework. Increase in forest and tree cover is a gradual ecological process influenced by several factors, including local climatic and edaphic conditions, species characteristics, genetic potential, silvicultural practices, protection from biotic and abiotic disturbances, and the age and growth stage of plantations. The outcomes of these afforestation and restoration interventions become evident gradually over time. As per the India State of Forest Report 2023, the total forest and tree cover of the country has increased by 1445.81 km² as compared to the last assessment of 2021.

Further, conservation of natural forests and restoration of degraded forest landscapes are undertaken through assisted natural regeneration, artificial regeneration, Compensatory Afforestation under the *Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980* and the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act, 2016, the Green India Mission, Nagar Van Yojana, MISHTI and other afforestation and restoration programmes. The approved operational guidelines of these programmes provide for site-specific species selection, plantation maintenance, protection measures during the prescribed maintenance period and periodic monitoring by the implementing agencies.

Protection of forests against illegal felling and other forest offences is primarily the responsibility of the respective State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. Action in this regard is taken by States/UTs under the provisions of the applicable forest and other relevant laws. Similarly the survival of plantations is monitored by the respective implementing agencies and State Governments as part of scheme implementation and project

monitoring. The State-wise database on the survival rate of saplings across all afforestation programmes is not maintained centrally by the Ministry.
