

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2365
ANSWERED ON:07.08.2000
NORTH-EASTERN FOREST POLICY
SAMAR CHOUDHURY

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the high level commission have suggested a suitable North Eastern Forest Policy within the frame work of the National Forest Policy that taken into account of the specific ethos, needs and socio political context of this region;
- (b) if so, the steps taken on approval to the proposal and the progress likely to be achieved with the implementation of the proposal; and
- (c) the views from the States of North East region including Sikkim on the commissions/recommendations?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI)

(a) to (c) Pursuant to the recommendations of High Level Commission constituted by the Planning Commission under the Chairmanship of Shri S.P. Shukla, the Ministry of Environment and Forests have constituted a Committee headed by Shri S.C. Dey, Addl. Inspector General of forests (Retd.) and Secretary General Global Tiger Forum to suggest a suitable Forest Policy for the North Eastern Region on 13.11.1998. The States being aware of the negative effects of shifting cultivation, wanted to have an integrated approach of development for controlling shifting cultivation with the objective of phasing it out to restore the productivity of degraded jhum lands. Besides, the issues relating to the protection of existing forests, their consolidation and sustainable development including the conservation of bio-diversity were raised by the State Governments of NE Region for Policy intervention. Implementable models for forestry extension to meet the need of various ethnic communities considering the inaccessibility and traditional dependence on forests including the assessment of rights and concessions of the local people and to improve financial investment in forestry sector both from State Plan, Centrally Sponsored Schemes and other sources also figured in the discussions with the State Representatives and other stakeholders.

The National Forest Policy, 1988 giving due regard to the symbiotic relationship of the tribal people with the forests, envisages that all agencies responsible for forest management, including the forest development corporations should associate the tribal people closely in the protection, regeneration and development of forests as well as to provide gainful employment to people living in and around the forests. The Government is also implementing a 100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme on 'Association of Scheduled Tribes and Rural Poor in Regeneration of Degraded Forests on Usufruct Sharing Basis' for rehabilitation of degraded forests land with the association of Scheduled Tribes and Rural Poor. The interests of the tribals living in the forests have been fully protected in the Forest Acts and are in National interests.

(c) The question does not arise in view of (a) & (b) above.