

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1556
ANSWERED ON:06.03.2000
SHISHAM TREE
NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY

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

- (a) whether the Shisham trees are parching in Bihar at present;
- (b) if so, the details in this regard; (
- (c) whether the State Government of Bihar has sought any assistance to save the Shisham trees from the Union Government;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the concrete steps taken/propose to be taken by the Union Government to prevent dwindling of Shisham trees?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS

(SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Reports have been received about large scale mortality/parching of shisham trees (*Dalbergia sissoo*) in the older plantations in North Bihar mostly on farm lands.

(c) (d) & (e): On receipt of the information about the mortality of shisham trees and the request from the Bihar Government, the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) was requested to study the problem in depth in the field. Accordingly, a team of ICFRE scientists was deputed to visit the affected areas in North Bihar. During investigation, it was observed that the roots of dead and drying shisham trees, irrespective of age, invariably showed rotting of tap and lateral feeding roots on account of attack of fusarium fungus. This was due to poor drainage and prolonged waterlogging conditions during rains. In stiff and clayey soils under moist conditions, the roots are prone to be attacked by fusarium pathogens which may ultimately kill the tree.

The follow-up remedial measures taken/proposed to be taken to save the shisham tree from parching are as under :-

- (i) The dead and drying trees should be felled without delay to avoid further harbouring of pathogens and insects.
- (ii) Debarking of trees on road sides and canals side plantation should be stopped.
- (iii) Shisham monoculture plantation should not be encouraged. The trees which are suitable for planting in mixed crop with *sissoo* in North Bihar are identified as arjun, gutel, jamun, poplar and eucalyptus.
- (iv) Shisham trees should be planted on suitable sites only, especially well drained sites.
- (v) ICFRE to take up a coordinated research project on tree mortality for investigating the causes of mortality and to recommend the remedial measures.