

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3636
ANSWERED ON:23.08.2004
ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION AND DEPLETION OF FOREST COVER
Sarman Dr. Arun Kumar

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the severe threat to the ecology of NER due to excessive siltation by sandy disposal from hills and consequent depletion of green cover as well as change of river course;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the extent of environmental degradation as well as depletion of forest cover; and
- (c) the action taken so far to deal with the situation both at national and international level ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

- (a) There is no report of depletion of forest cover due to siltation of rivers. In fact the forest cover of North-Eastern Region (NER), according to State of Forest Report 2001, published by Forest Survey of India, has increased by 2374 square kilometres as compared to previous report of 1999. Siltation and change in course of such rivers which have large catchment areas in hills with high rainfall is to some extent a natural phenomenon also.
- (b) Does not arise.
- (c) The action taken so far include the following:
 - (i) Financial assistance is provided by this Ministry to the State Governments for forest protection under Integrated Forest Protection Scheme, Management of National Park and Sanctuaries, Project Tiger and Project Elephant.
 - (ii) Financial assistance is provided under National Afforestation Programme of the Ministry for conservation of forests & plantations.
 - (iii) Peoples` cooperation is sought for conservation and management of forests through Joint Forest Management Committees.
 - (iv) Financial assistance is also provided by other Ministries like Agriculture and Rural Development for watershed management and plantations etc.