

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3569
ANSWERED ON:15.05.2006
FOREST COVER
Gandhi Smt. Maneka

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

- (a) the percentage of the total area of Sikkim which is under forest cover;
- (b) whether during the past few months, wild fires have ravaged large areas of grassland in the North District and the army had to be called in to assist; and
- (c) if so, the measures that have been taken to prevent the fires from spreading to the reserved forest areas of the State?

Answer

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

- (a) As per the State of Forest Report, 2003, 45.97% of the area is under forest cover.
- (b) Wild fires had broken out in some rocky cliff grassland areas of North Sikkim in the month of January-February, 2006. Assistance of the Army, Border Roads Organization, Indo Tibetan Border Police, Sikkim Police, Sikkim Fire Service, Joint Forest Management Committees and public was obtained in order to control the fires from spreading into other forested areas.
- (c) The following measures had been taken to prevent the fires from spreading to Reserve Forest areas:
 - i) Fire lines have been created.
 - ii) Deployment of Fire Brigade and man power to control fires.
 - iii) Intensification of patrolling in fire prone areas.