

(d) Yes, Sir.

[*Translation*]

**Forest Lands in Possession of Adivasis of Gujarat**

7696. SHRI CHANDUBHAI DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the total area of forest-land in possession of adivasis in Gujarat at present;

(b) whether Government propose to shift them;

(c) whether Government had enacted any legislation in 1978-79 for giving ownership rights to those who are in possession of the forest land prior to 1971; and

(d) if so, the policy of Government in regard to such cases?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NILAMANI ROUTRAY): (a) to (d). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[*English*]

**Felling of Trees in Andaman and Nicobar**

7697. SHRI SHIKIHO SEMA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether felling of trees in the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands has been resumed by the Forests Department/Corporations recently; if so, the reasons therefor; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to spell out its policy on deforestation vis-a-

vis industrialisation in the Union Territory?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NILAMANI ROUTRAY): (a) The extraction of timber by Andaman and Nicobar Islands Forests Deptt. and Forest Development Corporation is being done on the basis of sanctioned Working Plans.

(b) (i) Steps taken to check deforestation are given below:

1. The National Forests Policy, 1988 lays more emphasis on environmental stability and ecological restoration and on conserving the natural heritage by preserving remaining natural forests and meeting the requirements of basic needs of fuelwood, fodder, minor forests products and small timber of rural and tribal population, increasing the productivity of forests, etc. There are specific provisions for protection of forests from grazing, fires and encroachments.
2. Forest (Conservation) Act was enacted in 1980 to check diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes. The act has been made more stringent by an amendment of 1988.
3. A Centrally Sponsored Scheme is under implementation to help the State to develop infrastructure for protection of forests.
4. Wood is substituted by alternative materials in packaging, railway sleepers, building construction, furniture, etc.
5. Import policy for timber has been