

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 4056
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.01.2019

Forest Fire

4056. DR. RAMESH POKHRIYAL "NISHANK":
SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH:
SHRI R. DHRUVA NARAYANA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has any data regarding the number of forest fires in the country during the last decade, if so, the details thereof, year and forest-wise;
- (b) whether the Government has sought help from the foreign experts/ agencies to control forest fires and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has taken appropriate steps to check the incidents of the forest fire especially in the leaves of pine trees in Himalayan States, if so, the losses caused by forest fire during the last five years;
- (d) whether the Government has made any efforts to check the incidents of forest fires by holding awareness campaign/ competition on local community level, if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) whether the Government proposes to promote the pine leaves based industries in the Himalayan region and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

- (a) Forest Fires occur every year during summer due to various natural and anthropogenic reasons including accumulation of inflammable materials such as dry leaves, twigs, pine needles etc. Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun, disseminates the satellite based forest fire alerts to the State Forest Departments and other registered users whenever forest fires are detected. The details of forest fire alerts issued to all State/ Union Territory Forest Departments during the last three years is given in Annexure-I.
- (b) The Ministry has not hired any foreign experts/ agencies to control forest fires. However, the Ministry in collaboration with the World Bank has conducted a study on Situation Analysis of Forest Fire and released a study report titled "Strengthening Forest Fire Management in India" which contains various recommendations regarding fire prevention, detection, suppression, post-fire management, engaging with communities, coordination with other agencies etc.

The inputs from the study were also used by the Ministry in preparation of National Action Plan on Forest Fire which was issued in April 2018. Since forests belongs to the States, the responsibility of forest fire prevention and management lies primarily with the respective State/UT Governments.

- (c) Pine tree forests are more vulnerable to forest fires, as the leaves/needles of pine trees are highly inflammable due to its resin content. The State Government of Uttarakhand is making efforts to put the chir-pine needles to alternative use like making of briquettes, vegetative check dams, as bio-fuel in gasifiers etc. The transportation of pine needles has been exempted from the control of Forest Produce Transit Rules by the State Government to facilitate its hassle free transportation across the state.

The Forest Department of Uttarakhand has stopped plantations of chir-pine species in all its plantation programmes since 2005. As per the Uttarakhand Plantation Policy, 2005, multipurpose plantations are being done in the chir-pine areas of Middle Himalayan region. The main purpose is to gradually replace the pine trees with suitable broad-leaved tree species. The data regarding loss due to forest fire is not maintained in this Ministry.

- (d) The Ministry has issued National Action Plan on Forest Fire in April 2018 and circulated to all State/UT Governments for taking appropriate action for effective prevention and management of forest fire accordingly.

The Ministry supports the efforts of State/Union Territory Governments in prevention and control of forest fire by providing financial assistance for various forest fire prevention and management measures. For prevention of forest fire, awareness camps are organized and adequate publicity is done by the State Forest Department as per the plan. Other prevention and control measures includes creation and maintenance of fire lines in forest areas, engagement of fire watchers, creation of water storage structures in forest areas, strengthening of forest infrastructure, procurement of fire fighting equipments, Soil and Moisture Conservation works in high risk areas, incentivizing villages/communities for protection against forest fire etc. under the Centrally Sponsored Forest Fire Prevention and Management Scheme.

The details of fund released to State/ UT Governments for various forest protection measures including forest fire prevention and management under the erstwhile Intensification of Forest Management Scheme and the ongoing Forest Fire Prevention and Management Scheme during the last three years (as on 31.12.2018) is given in Annexure-II.

- (e) The State Governments has formulated schemes to promote pine leaves based industries. The State-wise details are as follows:

(i) Himachal Pradesh: Efforts are made to establish linkage and mobilize support of Forest Department, Panchayati Raj Institutions and local communities in this endeavor for effective collection of Pine Needles. Ambuja Cement Factory and Associated Cement Company Factories are involved in Pine needle collection through local communities. The local communities are being paid Rs. 1.65 to Rs.

1.75 per kg for Pine Needles collected.

(ii) Jammu & Kashmir: The Forest Department of Jammu & Kashmir is exploring the possibility of using pine needles for making briquettes which can be used as an alternative energy source for local communities.

(iii) Uttarakhand: The Government of Uttarakhand has incentivized pine needle collection by local communities and encourages setting up of briquetting plants based on chir pine needles.

The Ministry supports the setting up of pine needle based industries as removal of pine needles from forests reduces the risk of forest fire.

ANNEXURE-I

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 4056 DUE FOR 04.01.2019 REGARDING FOREST FIRE ASKED BY DR. RAMESH POKHRIYAL "NISHANK", SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH and SHRI R. DHRUVA NARAYANA

S. No.	States/UTs	2015	2016	2017
1	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	1	24	8
2	Andhra Pradesh	1,075	1,699	1877
3	Arunachal Pradesh	358	293	733
4	Assam	1,656	1,766	1877
5	Bihar	45	321	272
6	Chandigarh	0	-	1
7	Chhattisgarh	1,272	2,808	4373
8	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0	0	0
9	Daman & Diu	0	0	0
10	Delhi	0	2	5
11	Goa	0	10	32
12	Gujarat	117	262	574
13	Haryana	6	43	185
14	Himachal Pradesh	22	199	170
15	Jammu & Kashmir	13	217	113
16	Jharkhand	457	740	1133
17	Karnataka	295	831	1333
18	Kerala	91	165	456
19	Lakshadweep	0	0	0
20	Madhya Pradesh	294	2,675	4781
21	Maharashtra	721	1,874	3487
22	Manipur	1,286	1,105	1094
23	Meghalaya	1,373	966	1454
24	Mizoram	2,468	1,318	1587
25	Nagaland	722	678	930
26	Odisha	1,467	2,763	4416
27	Puducherry	0	0	9
28	Punjab	7	45	320
29	Rajasthan	90	66	260
30	Sikkim	3	0	8
31	Tamil Nadu	95	113	301
32	Telangana *	1,052	1,154	1748
33	Tripura	476	346	431
34	Uttar Pradesh	130	691	1170
35	Uttarakhand	207	1,501	376
36	West Bengal	138	142	364
	Grand Total	15,937	24,817	35,888

ANNEXURE-II

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (d) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 4056 DUE FOR 04.01.2019 REGARDING FOREST FIRE ASKED BY DR. RAMESH POKHRIYAL "NISHANK", SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH and SHRI R. DHRUVA NARAYANA

(Rs. in lakhs)

S. No.	States	2015-16 Released	2016-17 Released	2017-18 Released	2018-19 Released (As on 31.12.2018)
Other States					
1	Andhra Pradesh	0.00	0.00	0.00	260.06
2	Bihar	59.09	88.59	75.00	57.17
3	Chhattisgarh	120.75	211.04	168.00	104.60
4	Gujarat	179.99	122.26	75.00	92.16
5	Goa	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
6	Haryana	77.86	93.91	75.00	0.00
7	Himachal Pradesh	302.16	331.36	276.70	0.00
8	Jammu & Kashmir	193.93	95.61	75.00	0.00
9	Jharkhand	83.62	199.63	105.00	107.84
10	Karnataka	228.19	203.27	105.00	148.36
11	Kerala	86.00	163.65	234.53	220.83
12	Madhya Pradesh	420.00	281.15	168.00	572.08
13	Maharashtra	447.32	372.58	321.58	629.76
14	Orissa	136.00	266.14	168.00	348.01
15	Punjab	77.00	0.00	75.00	0.00
16	Rajasthan	112.54	174.22	105.00	98.82
17	Tamil Nadu	203.02	74.29	105.00	0.00
18	Telangana	0.00	0.00	105.00	0.00
19	Uttar Pradesh	156.15	139.72	75.00	100.61
20	Uttarakhand	356.83	304.03	168.00	438.38
21	West Bengal	0.00	92.83	75.00	54.14
	Total	3240.45	3214.28	2554.81	3232.82
NE & Sikkim					
1	Assam	0	0	0.00	93.23
2	Arunachal Pradesh	85.07	181.34	102.00	0.00
3	Manipur	240.76	125.02	219.88	181.73
4	Meghalaya	180.26	126.57	104.63	113.53
5	Mizoram	153.17	131.29	90.59	88.37
6	Nagaland	122.6	170.01	92.56	66.49
7	Sikkim	150	119.73	148.59	0.00
8	Tripura	147.19	190.76	66.00	65.40
	Total	1079.05	1044.72	824.25	608.75
Union Territories					
1	A & N Islands	28.00	56.23	9.00	0.00
2	Chandigarh	36.99	74.52	8.00	0.00
3	D&N Haveli	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4	Daman & Diu	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5	Lakshadweep	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
6	New Delhi	0.00	50.00	30.00	0.00
7	Pondicherry	0.00	0.00	30.00	0.00
	Total	64.99	180.75	77.00	0.00
	Grand Total	4384.49	4439.75	3456.06	3841.57