

3.43 lakh ha forestland diverted

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New Delhi, May 7:

More than 3.43 lakh hectares of forestland was diverted for development projects across the country between 2004 and 2013, the government said today. Minister of Environment, Forests and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar, in a written reply to Rajya Sabha, said 3,43,909 hectares of forestland was diverted for 13,891 development projects during the period.

Felling of trees

In the national capital, over 14,254 trees were felled in the past two years for different projects, of which 8,196 were cut in 2013-14 and 6,058 in 2014-15, he said while replying to a question on felling of trees for infrastructure projects. “The Central government considers proposals for non-forest use of forestland on the request of State governments and accord approval as per rules and guidelines framed under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 stipulating mitigative measures in the form of general, standard and specific conditions including raising of compensatory afforestation,” the Minister said. Javadekar said a web portal for online submission and monitoring of forest clearance proposals, which was launched by the Ministry in July last year, has received 2,724 proposals till May 5, 2015.

Forest cover

Quoting the Indian State of Forest Report-2013, he said there is an overall net increase of 5,871 sq km in forest cover of the country against the report for 2011. “The Ministry has launched ‘National Mission for a Green India’ aimed at increasing the forest and tree cover by five million hectares and raising the quality of the existing forest cover,” he said. Under the ‘National Mission for a Green India’, the Ministry has released ₹4,994.55 lakh and ₹1,265.50 lakh to States in 2012-13 and 2013-14 for undertaking activities including institutional strengthening, training, and identification of landscapes, the Minister added.

Source:

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/policy/343-lakh-ha-forestland-diverted/article7181456.ece>