



Government of Jammu and Kashmir
Department of Forest, Environment & Ecology
Civil Secretariat

Calling Attention Notice:
Mr. Qaiser Jamsheed Lone, Hon'ble MLC,

"To call the attention of the government towards a matter of urgent public importance namely the situation that has arisen due to cultivation of charas on forest land at Lolab on top hills of Bandipora- Lolab and the steps taken by the Government to arrest this cultivation.

Reply

The Bung (Charas) crop grows naturally in degraded forest areas as an obnoxious weed, along the upper reaches of Bandipora-South Lolab Range, Kandi Range and parts of Kupwara Range in the District Kupwara. The bung growing area is inaccessible and located along high altitude degraded forest slopes and grasslands. The area is devoid of any permanent settlements except the traditional behaks.

The local inhabitants and shepherds of the Trumkhan, Dewar and Lolab villages migrate to their "behaks" in the upper reaches of the forest ranges during summer which is an age old practice in the State. As per the reports received, in the grazing lands on top portion of compartment 28/k, 35-36/SL, top portion of Rajpora regions and Compartments 40-41/SL, top portion of Trumkhan, Bumal regions, some of these migrants resort to cultivation of potatoes in some areas illegally. Alongwith potatoes, Charas, as a weed is naturally growing in these areas.


The operation to eradicate Bung(Charas) crop was carried out in the upper reaches within the forest area of the village Trumkhan, Dewar and Lolab area of South Lolab Forest Range, other forest areas in Kandi and Kupwara Range in July, August & October, 2015 simultaneously. The encroached forest area of more than one hundred kanal with Bung crop was cleared from the Bung cultivation and encroached forest land was retrieved. During the first week of Oct,

2015, FIR was registered against nine (09) culprits who indulged in such illegal practices in Kandi Range.

In May 2016, a team was constituted by CF North, which visited these areas. It was found that the area was under snow and no encroachment was noticed. Further, the forest area is under vigil of the Department. The assistance of the Forest Protection Force, District Administration and Police is also sought, wherever necessary.

Sd/-

Minister Incharge Forests,


Deputy Secretary to Government
Department of Forests, Env, & Ecology