

VEGETATION OF SANTHALPARGANA

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ABSTRACT

This region, Santhal parganas was once known for its thick and extensive forests is now bereft of much of its jungle wealth. There has been large-scale destruction of forests in the past few years. Jungles on plains have almost been cleared and hills also have become naked except in the Damin-i-Koh area and tops of high hills near Massanjore and Tieur, where also they are getting thinner.

The most common tree of the district is sal (shorea (robusta). Some teak of inferior variety is also found. Other trees found are jack-fruit muga, simal, bamboo, asanand satsal. Sal and simal logs and jack-fruit are exported in large quantities to the neighbouring districts and to places outside Bihar. Satsal has become rare like teak and murga wood is consumed locally for furniture making.

Bears are seen in the Dumka Damin area and other hilly areas where the forests are deep. Bears are greatly found of Mahua flowers and there are good chance of spotting them under Mahua trees during the season in the forest areas

KEYWORDS: *Santhalpargana, Vegetation*

INTRODUCTION

Bihar is the eighth most forested state in India. It has currently 16.8 percent of its total area under forest and wood lands. The ideal area under forest cover in a country is estimated to be 25 percent.

VEGETATION

This region, Santhalparganas was once known for its thick and extensive forests is now bereft of much of its jungle wealth. There has been large-scale destruction of forests in the past few years. Jungles on plains have almost been cleared and hills also have become naked except in the Damin-i-Koh area and tops of high hills near Massanjore and Tieur, where also they are getting thinner. The area of land under forest was only 803.77 sq.miles in 1960-61, forming 14.72 percent of the area of the region. This is less than even half of the standard set under the National forest Policy i.e., 33%. The forest Department have undertaken a forestation; trees have been planted over about five thousand acres and small shrubs are rising at many places.

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Among the forest products of consequence are lac, sabai grass and tassar silk cocoons. Lac is found on Palas, bair and pipal trees and is manufactured into shellac at Pakur. Tassar silk cocoons are found mostly on asan trees. The Industries Department have opened centres for supply of tassar seeds and for promotion of the industry.

The santhalparganas was sanctuary of wild animals upto the 19th Century. Wild elephants and rhinoceros were seen in the Rajmahal hills at the time of the visit of Francis Buchanan to that area in 1810-11. He estimated the strength of wild elephants at 100, but rhinoceros were rarely seen.

Tigers have vanished. The last pair with a cub was seen in 1930. Among other carnivoras, leopards are met with sometimes. Their habitation is not restricted to any particular part of the region and their number has considerably dwindled in recent years.

Bears are seen in the DumkaDamin area and other hilly areas where the forests are deep. Bears are greatly found of Mahua flowers and there are good chance of spotting them under Mahua trees during the season in the forest areas. Hyaenas, chital and barking dear are rare in the region. Monkeys are found in Gumro hills and leopards there live upon them.

CONCLUSIONS

Vegetation cover is of utmost importance for landscape. Besides making the environment pleasant they increase the moisture and humidity in the atmosphere and decrease run off, erosion and evaporation and reduce wind velocity. Thus, sincere effort should be made to take proper care and development of our ancient heritage-the forest and it is our national demand to preserve and develop the forests for ecological balance of the environment. The duty of the people is to help the Government for the success of its schemes which are especially for the development of the State.

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