Amendment of Indian forest Act

Why in news?

\n\n

Lok Sabha amended Section 2(7) of the Indian Forest Act, 1927 which had led to bamboo being seen as timber.

\n\n

What are the provisions of earlier forest acts on bamboo?

\n\n

\n
- Bamboo is woody and can grow up to towering heights, but taxonomically, it’s a grass.
\n
- The law dating back to the colonial era classified the plant as a tree, but the colonial-era definition of bamboo had an economic logic.
\n
- Forests had to be protected because they were repositories of timber, Bamboo was slotted as a “forest produce” and placed in the same category as palm and other trees.
\n
- After Independence, bamboo being a tree was under the control of the forest department and it found its way to markets largely through auctions held by the department.
\n

\n\n

Why this amendment is significant?

\n\n

\n
- In 1996, the Supreme Court ruled that “felled bamboo” was not timber and the Forests Rights Act (FRA), 2006 also classified bamboo as a “non-timber forest produce”.
\n
- But both the apex court and the FRA stopped short of aligning bamboo with

its taxonomic classification.
\n
- Section 2(7) of the 1927 Act was never amended and this created confusion in implementing the court ruling and the FRA.
\n
- The recent amendment has removed bamboo from the category of “timber” under colonial-era law and it enlisted under the category of grass.
\n
- It will remove the forest department’s hold over the natural resource and will reduce dependence on bamboo imports.
\n

\n\n

Why bamboo is economically important?

\n\n

\n
- India has nearly 14 million hectares of bamboo forests, and it has 30 per cent of the world’s bamboo resources.
\n
- Bamboo can fully regenerate in three to five months, while other commercially-important woody plants take about five years to mature.
\n
- Bamboo has a big role in the agarbatti industry, India produces 3,000 tonnes of them creating employment around north eastern states.
\n
- New form of fibre is being derived from bamboo to weave clothes which provide employment to tribal population of Central India.
\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: Indian Express

\n

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering