

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1123  
ANSWERED ON:28.07.2003  
LOSS TO CROPS BY ELEPHANTS ATTACK  
ANANTA NAYAK

**Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government are aware of the increasing destruction of paddy crops, small hamlets and dwelling units by elephants in various States including Orissa;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken to check such elephant menace?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JU DEV)

(a) & (b) The Government are aware of the damage being caused by elephants to agricultural crops and dwelling units in and around elephant habitats in various States. However, there is no definite trend of the damage as can be seen from the following details provided by some of the States including Orissa:

State    1999-2000    2000-01    2001-02

Andhra Pradesh	8.4 ha	2.4 ha	1 ha
Meghalaya	1290 ha + 139 huts	252 ha + 52 huts	372 ha + 158 huts
Nagaland	501 ha + 62 huts	1002 ha + 36 huts	1220 ha + 10 huts
Orissa	800 ha + 262 huts	1283 ha + 167 huts	1157 ha + 960 huts
Uttaranchal	68 ha	135 ha	88 ha
West Bengal	2721 ha + 1100 huts	2568 ha + 1000 huts	2820 ha + 1200 huts

As informed by the Chief Wildlife Warden, elephants were responsible for damage to 861 ha of crop and 725 houses in Orissa during the year 2002-03.

(c) The methods normally adopted by the State Forest Departments for dealing with the problem of depredation by elephants comprise the following :

1. Erecting barriers (trenches, electric fencing etc.) to stop straying of elephants into agricultural fields, villages and other sensitive areas.
2. Distributing crackers, search lights etc. among the villagers for chasing away elephants from agricultural fields.
3. Engaging special wildlife squads in strategic locations for helping people in driving elephants back into forests.
4. Identifying and eliminating `rogue` elephants.
5. Undertaking habitat-development works for elephants within forests.
6. Establishing and protecting elephant corridors.
7. Educating the people to live in harmony with elephants.
8. Undertaking eco-development works in villages situated on the fringe of forests for reducing their dependence on forests for firewood, fodder and grazing of cattle.
9. Paying ex-gratia relief to the affected people for loss of human life, crop and houses.

Government of India provides financial assistance to major elephant bearing States under Project Elephant for improvement of elephant habitat, mitigation of human-elephant conflict and payment of ex-gratia relief to the victims of elephant-depredation. During 2002-03, an amount of Rs. 939 lakh was provided to 14 States including Orissa, which included Rs. 260.50 lakh for the purpose of anti-depredation measures and Rs. 168.50 lakh for ex-gratia relief.