

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4434

ANSWERED ON:25.04.2005

DECLINE IN VULTURE POPULATION

Adhalrao Patil Shri Shivaji;Badi Shri Rajendra Kumar;Kharventhan Shri Salarapatty Kuppusamy;Manvendra Singh Shri ;Satpathy Shri Tathagata;Verma Shri Ravi Prakash;Yadav Shri Baleshwar

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

- (a) whether the Union Government is aware of a study conducted by the International Researchers on decline in the Vulture population in the Indian sub-continent;
- (b) if so, the findings thereof;
- (c) the corrective action taken by the Union Government in this regard;
- (d) whether there has been any delay in taking action on the recommendations made in the study; and
- (e) if so, the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a) & (b) A survey conducted by the Bombay Natural History Society under a special project sponsored in the year 2000 by the Ministry of Environment and Forests revealed that there has been more than 90 per cent decline in the populations of three species of vultures viz., White Backed, Long Billed and Slender Billed in many parts of the country. Subsequently, post mortem and diagnostic tests revealed that this drastic decline was due to consumption of veterinary diclofenac by the vultures who fed on carcasses of livestock. Veterinary diclofenac caused deposition of uric acid in the visceral organs leading to sudden death.

(c) The steps taken by the Government are as follows –

- i. Protection status of White backed, Long Billed and Slender Billed Vultures has been upgraded from Schedule IV to Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
- ii. Two workshops were organized in New Delhi in September, 2000 and April, 2004 to work out a comprehensive strategy for conservation of vultures.
- iii. The State Governments have been asked to workout a comprehensive plan for effective conservation of vultures.
- iv. Bombay Natural History Society in collaboration with the Haryana State Forest Department has taken up a project on conservation of vultures. A 'Vulture Captive Care facility has been established at Panchkula.
- v. The Ministry of Health has been requested to replace the use of drug diclofenac with suitable alternative drugs.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.