

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3487

ANSWERED ON:03.09.2012

DECLARATION OF WILDLIFE SANCTUARY AS A TIGER RESERVE

Ramasubbu Shri S.

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

(a) whether Madhumalai Wildlife Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu has been declared as tiger reserve in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any census has been conducted on the tiger population in Madhumalai;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether there is also highest concentration of elephants in Madhumalai; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government to conserve wild animals including tigers and elephants in Madhumalai sanctuary?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN)

(a) & (b) Yes Sir. The State Government of Tamil Nadu has notified the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve in the year 2008-09 under section 38V of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

(c) & (d) As per the recent all India tiger estimation (2010), the tiger population in the Nagarhole-Mudumalai-Waynad landscape is 382 with a lower limit of 354 and upper limit of 411.

(e) & (f) As reported by the Elephant Task Force (2010), the Brahmagiri-Nilgiri-Eastern Ghat Landscape, inter alia, including Mudumalai Tiger Reserve has the largest population of elephants in the country. The milestone initiatives taken for conservation of wild animals including tigers and elephants are at Annexure-I.

Annexure-I

ANNEXURE REFERRED IN REPLY TO PARTS (e) & (f) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3487 ON DECLARATION OF WILDLIFE SANCTUARY AS A TIGER RESERVE DUE FOR REPLY ON 03.09.2012.

Milestone initiatives taken by the Government of India for conservation of wild animals including tigers and elephants

Legal steps

1. Amendment of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 for providing enabling provisions towards constituting the National Tiger Conservation Authority and the Tiger and Other Endangered Species Crime Control Bureau.

2. Enhancement of punishment in cases of offence relating to a tiger reserve or its core area.

Administrative steps

3. Strengthening of antipoaching activities, including special strategy for monsoon patrolling, by providing funding support to Tiger Reserve States, as proposed by them, for deployment of antipoaching squads involving ex-army personnel / home guards, apart from workforce comprising of local people, in addition to strengthening of communication / wireless facilities.

4. Constitution of the National Tiger Conservation Authority with effect from 4.09.2006, for strengthening tiger conservation by, inter alia, ensuring normative standards in tiger reserve management, preparation of reserve specific tiger conservation plan, laying down annual audit report before Parliament, constituting State level Steering Committees under the Chairmanship of Chief Ministers and establishment of Tiger Conservation Foundation.

5. Constitution of a multidisciplinary Tiger and Other Endangered Species Crime Control Bureau (Wildlife Crime Control Bureau) with effect from 6.6.2007 to effectively control illegal trade in wildlife.

6. The in-principle approval has been accorded by the National Tiger Conservation Authority for creation of five new tiger reserves, and the sites are: Pilibhit (Uttar Pradesh), Ratapani (Madhya Pradesh), Sunabeda (Orissa), Mukundara Hills (including Darrah, Jawahar Sagar and Chambal Wildlife Sanctuaries) (Rajasthan) and Sathyamangalam (Tamil Nadu). Final approval has been accorded to Kudremukh (Karnataka) for declaring as a Tiger Reserve. Besides, the States have been advised to send proposals for declaring the following areas as Tiger Reserves: (i) Bor (Maharashtra), (ii) Suhelwa (Uttar Pradesh), (iii) Nagzira-Navegaon (Maharashtra), (iv) Guru Ghasidas National Park (Chhattisgarh), (v) Mhadei Sanctuary (Goa) and (vi) Srivilliputhur Grizzled Giant Squirrel / Megamalai Wildlife Sanctuaries / Varushanadu Valley (Tamil Nadu).

7. The revised Project Tiger guidelines have been issued to States for strengthening tiger conservation, which apart from ongoing activities, inter alia, include funding support to States for enhanced village relocation/rehabilitation package for people living in core or critical tiger habitats (from Rs. 1 lakh/family to Rs. 10 lakhs/family), rehabilitation/resettlement of communities involved in traditional hunting, mainstreaming livelihood and wildlife concerns in forests outside tiger reserves and fostering corridor conservation through restorative strategy to arrest habitat fragmentation.

8. A scientific methodology for estimating tiger (including co-predators, prey animals and assessment of habitat status) has been evolved and mainstreamed. The findings of this estimation/ assessment are bench marks for future tiger conservation strategy.

9. An area of 35123.9547 sq. km. has been notified by 17 Tiger States as core or critical tiger habitat under section 38V of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, as amended in 2006.

Financial steps

10. Financial and technical help is provided to the States under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, viz. Project Tiger and Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats for enhancing the capacity and infrastructure of the States for providing effective protection to wild animals.

International Cooperation

11. India has a bilateral understanding with Nepal on controlling trans-boundary illegal trade in wildlife and conservation, apart from a protocol on tiger conservation with China.

12. A protocol has been signed in September, 2011 with Bangladesh for conservation of the Royal Bengal Tiger of the Sunderban.

13. A sub-group on tiger/leopard conservation has been constituted for cooperation with the Russian Federation.

14. A Global Tiger Forum of Tiger Range Countries has been created for addressing international issues related to tiger conservation.

15. During the 14th meeting of the Conference of Parties to CITES, which was held from 3rd to 15th June, 2007 at The Hague, India introduced a resolution along with China, Nepal and the Russian Federation, with directions to Parties with operations breeding tigers on a commercial scale, for restricting such captive populations to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers. The resolution was adopted as a decision with minor amendments. Further, India made an intervention appealing to China to phase out tiger farming, and eliminate stockpiles of Asian big cats body parts and derivatives. The importance of continuing the ban on trade of body parts of tigers was emphasized.

16. Based on India's strong intervention during the 58th meeting of the Standing Committee of the CITES at Geneva from 6th to 10th July, 2009, the CITES Secretariat has issued a notification to Parties to submit reports relating to compliance of Decisions 14.69 and 14.65 within 90 days with effect from 20.10.2009 (Progress made on restricting captive breeding operations of tigers etc.).

Reintroduction of Tigers

17. As a part of active management to rebuild Sariska and Panna Tiger Reserves where tigers have become locally extinct, reintroduction of tigers / tigresses have been done.

18. Special advisories issued for in-situ build up of prey base and tiger population through active management in tiger reserves having low population status of tiger and its prey.

Creation of Special Tiger Protection Force (STPF)

19. The policy initiatives announced by the Finance Minister in his Budget Speech of 29.2.2008, inter alia, contains action points relating to tiger protection. Based on the one time grant of Rs. 50.00 crore provided to the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) for raising, arming and deploying a Special Tiger Protection Force, the proposal for the said force has been approved by the competent authority for 13 tiger reserves. Rs. 93 lakhs each has been released to Corbett, Ranthambhore & Dudhwa Tiger Reserve for creation of STPF during 2008-09. Since then, the guidelines of the STPF have been revised for deploying forest personnel in place of Police as an option-II, with scope for involving local people like the Van Gujjars. During the year 2010-11 and 2011-12, an amount of Rs. 270 lakhs has been provided to the Similipal Tiger Reserve for raising, arming and deploying the STPF. The States of Karnataka and Maharashtra have already deployed the STPF.

20. In collaboration with TRAFFIC-INDIA, an online tiger crime data base has been launched, and Generic Guidelines for preparation of reserve specific Security Plan has been evolved.

Recent initiatives

1. Implementing a tripartite MOU with tiger States, linked to fund flows for effective implementation of tiger conservation initiatives.
2. Rapid assessment of tiger reserves done.
3. Special crack teams sent to tiger reserves affected by left wing extremism and low population status of tiger and its prey.
4. Chief Ministers of States having tiger reserves affected by left wing extremism and low population status of tiger and its prey addressed for taking special initiatives.
5. Steps taken for modernizing the infrastructure and field protection, besides launching 'M-STriPES' for effective field patrolling and monitoring.
6. Steps taken for involvement of Non-Governmental Experts in the ongoing all India tiger estimation.
7. Initiatives taken for improving the field delivery through capacity building of field officials, apart from providing incentives.
8. Action initiated for using Information Technology to strengthen surveillance in tiger reserves.
9. The second round of country level tiger status assessment completed in 2010, with the findings indicating an increase with a tiger population estimate of 1706, lower and upper limits being 1520 and 1909 respectively, as compared to the last country level estimation of 2006, with an estimate of 1411, lower and upper limits being 1165 and 1657 respectively.
10. The second round of independent assessment of Management Effectiveness Evaluation of Tiger Reserves done in 2010-11 for 39 tiger reserves based on globally used framework.
11. Increase in the allocation for Project Tiger with additional components.
12. Providing special assistance for mitigation of human-tiger conflicts in problematic areas.
13. As an outcome of the fourth Trans-border Consultative Group Meeting held in New Delhi, a joint resolution has been signed with Nepal for biodiversity / tiger conservation.
14. Regional Offices of the National Tiger Conservation Authority sanctioned at Nagpur, Bengaluru and Guwahati.
15. Launching of Phase-IV tiger reserve level monitoring.