

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1120

ANSWERED ON:04.03.2013

CHECK ON POACHING ACTIVITIES

Gaddigoudar Shri P.C.;Punia Shri P.L. ;Raghavendra Shri B. Y.;Rao Shri Nama Nageswara;Satpathy Shri Tathagata;Singh Shri Dushyant

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken any steps to curb poaching in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the number of animals killed from poaching in the country;
- (c) whether the Government has sought assistance from the World Bank to check poaching in and around national parks and sanctuaries and the deaths of elephants from electrocution and poaching across the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the conditionalities laid down by the World Bank in extending such assistance to the Government; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government to check poaching and deaths of elephants in the country?

Answer

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

(a) to (e) The details of number of animals killed due to poaching in the country are not collated at the level of Central Government. However, the State-wise details of mortality of tiger, elephant, lion and rhino during the last three years as per the information available in the Ministry, are at Annexures-I(a), I(b), I(c) & I(d) respectively.

The important steps taken by the Government to curb poaching of wild animals including elephants in the country include:

- i. Endangered species of animals including Tiger, Elephants, Lion, Rhino, etc are listed under Schedule -I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 thereby according them highest degree of protection.
- ii. Legal protection has been provided to wild animals against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
- iii. The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, has been amended and made more stringent. The punishments for offences have been enhanced. The Act also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that is used for committing wildlife offence(s).
- iv. Protected Areas, viz., National Parks, Sanctuaries, Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves covering important wildlife habitats have been created all over the country under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to conserve wild animals and their habitats.
- v. Financial and technical assistance is provided to the State/ Union Territory Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', 'Project Tiger' and 'Project Elephant' for providing better protection to wildlife, and improvement of its habitat.
- vi. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.
- vii. The State/Union Territory Governments have been requested to strengthen the field formations and intensify patrolling in and around the Protected Areas.
- viii. The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has been set up to strengthen the enforcement of law for control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife and its products.
- ix. Strict vigil is maintained by the officials of State Departments of Forests and Wildlife.

The Central Government has not sought assistance from the World Bank to check poaching in and around national parks and sanctuaries and the deaths of elephants from electrocution and poaching across the country. However, a project entitled "Strengthening Regional Cooperation for Wildlife Protection in Asia" with the following components has been proposed for credit of

US\$ 30 Million from World Bank under Third Phase of adaptable Program Lending:

(i) Capacity building for wildlife conservation and cooperation for addressing the illegal trans-boundary wildlife trade (US\$ 20.52 million): This component aims to bring about regional harmonization and collaboration in cross-border wildlife conservation and management, combating wildlife crime through strengthened legislative and regulatory frameworks, well-equipped specialized agencies and systems, as well as relevant training and awareness programs for staff across the range of agencies that contribute to the enforcement of wildlife laws and regulations namely the Wildlife Division in the Ministry of Environment and Forests and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau.

(ii) Promoting Wildlife Conservation in Asia (US\$2.95 million): The objective of this component is to generate and share knowledge as well as technical expertise by promoting research and innovative approaches on emerging challenges in wildlife conservation.

(iii) Project coordination and communication (US\$5.04 million): Under this component expenditure of US\$ 0.76 million is estimated for project management and monitoring. The remaining amount is to be spent on project communications, wherein a multi-pronged approach will be adopted to communications in order to meet regional and local challenges.

However, the credit agreement has not been signed with the World Bank and negotiations have not been held so far.