

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2073  
ANSWERED ON:11.03.2013  
NUMBER OF ASIATIC LIONS  
Jardosh Smt. Darshana Vikram

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

- (a) whether there has been increase in the number of Asiatic Lions in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has prepared any plan for providing funds for protection of Asiatic Lions in the Gir Forests which is the only habitat of Asiatic Lions in the State of Gujarat;
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the funds likely to be allocated in this regard;and
- (e) the other steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF THE STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN)

(a)&(b) Yes. Sir. The number of Asiatic Lions in the country has increased from 359 + 10 in 2005 to 411 in 2010.

(c)&(d) The Government of India is providing financial assistance annually to the State Government of Gujarat for conservation of Asiatic Lions in Gujarat under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats'. Further the State Government of Gujarat has submitted a focused project proposal titled 'Consolidating Long Term Conservation of Asiatic Lion in Greater Gir Region, Gujarat' for a period of five years amounting to Rs. 262.36 crores for financial assistance. The Ministry forwarded the project to the Planning Commission for its approval. The Planning Commission approved the project subject to compliance with the provisions of Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006. The Ministry released financial assistance amounting to Rs. 674.541 lakh during the financial year 2010-11 and Rs. 675.859 lakh during 2011-12 under the above scheme to the State Government of Gujarat for undertaking part of the activities under the project.

(e) The steps taken to conserve lions in the country includes:

- 1.Threatened species of wildlife are placed in the Schedules of the Wild Life (Protection), Act, 1972, thereby according them the highest degree of protection. Lion is included in Schedule I of the Act.
- 2.The Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972 has been amended from time to time and made more stringent against wildlife related offences.
3. The concept of Greater Gir has been adopted and additional suitable habitats for lion are being developed for the conservation of lion.
4. Beside Gir National Park and Sanctuary, Girnar, Pania and Mitiyala have been notified as sanctuaries to widen the protected area network and home of lion.
5. The manpower and infrastructure have been strengthened for intensive protection and conservation of lions and their habitats.
6. Habitat improvement measures like afforestation, creation and maintenance of fire-lines, construction of point, check dams, gully plugging etc have been undertaken by the State Government.
7. Modern information and communication technology has been introduced for the better protection of the Gir area.