

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1103
ANSWERED ON:12.08.2013
CHECK ON DEATHS OF LEOPARDS
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the number of deaths of wild animals in protected areas and sanctuaries has been on the rise in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years and the current year, sanctuary-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has assessed the reasons for their untimely and unnatural deaths, including poaching;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the action taken by the Government to protect them and to punish the poachers?

Answer

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

(a) to (d) The management and protection of wild animals in National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries in the country is looked after by the concerned State/Union Territory Governments. Year-wise and State-wise details of death of wild animals in Wildlife Sanctuaries are not collated in the Ministry. The major reasons for death of animals in Wildlife Sanctuaries include natural deaths, predation, infighting among competing individuals of the same species, accidental deaths, poaching etc.

(e) The Central Government has taken the following steps for protection of wild animals in such sanctuaries:

- i. Legal protection has been provided to wild animals against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
- ii. The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 has been amended and made more stringent. The punishment for offences under the Act have been enhanced. The Act also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that is used for committing wildlife offence(s).
- iii. 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.
- iv. 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.
- v. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.
- vi. The State/Union Territory Governments have been requested to strengthen the field formations and intensify patrolling in and around the Protected Areas.
- vii. 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.
- viii. Strict vigil is maintained by the officials of State Departments of Forests and Wildlife.