

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1883
ANSWERED ON:19.08.2013
DECLINE IN POPULATION OF ASIAN ELEPHANTS
Kurup Shri N.Peethambara

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

- (a) whether the population of Asian elephants has been declining in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, especially in North-Eastern States and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether a large number of elephants have reportedly been killed in various parts of the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the action taken by the Government to protect and conserve the elephants?

Answer

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

(a)&(b) The estimates of population of elephants in the country over a period of time does not indicate a declining trend. Following are the estimates of population of elephants in the country.

YEAR	1997	2002	2007	2012
Elephant Population	25842	26373	27669-27719	29391-30711

(c)&(d) The details of mortality of elephants during the last three year and the current year, as per information available in the Ministry is given at Annexure.

(e) 1. The Central Government provides financial assistance to the states for protection and conservation of elephants in the country under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Project Elephant '. The Elephant range states identify the elephant habitats as "Elephant Reserves" under the project for better management of Wild Elephants. So far 28 Elephant Reserves have been established by 14 states. Various activities are planned and taken up under the scheme to mitigate Man-Elephant conflict, improvement of Elephant Habitats, restoration of Elephant Corridors and various awareness programmes. Some of the activities are as follows:

- i. Habitat improvements and restoration of Elephant Corridors in PE Range states under PE Scheme (CSS)
- ii. Infrastructure improvement in Elephant Reserves for effective management of elephant population.
- iii. Anti depredation squads, anti poaching squads and trekkers are engaged for protection of elephants.
- iv. To restrict menace of elephants to human habitations, solar fencing, trenches and stone walling are being provided in the depredation prone localities.
- v. Studies on various issues such as man animal conflict, carrying capacity of elephant habitat are encouraged.
- vi. Awareness programme among the local villagers are taken to minimize the loss of life of the wild elephants.

2. To secure the future of the elephants in India, the Ministry of Environment and Forests has constituted an Elephant Task Force which has submitted its report "Gajah" to the Ministry in 2010.

3. As per one of the decisions in the 6th meeting of National Board of Wild Life, a committee for strengthening of Elephant Reserves and elephant corridors has been constituted in January, 2013.

4. Joint advisories have been issued by Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) and Ministry of Railways (MoR) to all the concerned states to avoid deaths of elephants by speeding trains.