

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3034
ANSWERED ON:10.02.2014
PROTECTION OF BIRDS
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has any proposal for protection of endangered animals/birds such as 'Great Indian Bustard', 'the Tragopan', the 'Hangul' and 'the Pygmy Hog' in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (Dr. M. VEERAPPA MOILY)

(a) and (b) The Great Indian Bustard, the Tragopans, the Hangul and the Pygmy hog have been listed under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 granting them the highest degree of protection. Further, the Union Government provides financial and technical assistance to the State/Union Territory Governments for protection and conservation of wildlife including Great Indian Bustards, Tragopan, Hangul and Pygmy hog and its habitats in the country under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', which inter alia includes a component "Recovery Programmes for Critically Endangered Species". The Great Indian Bustard and Hangul are among 16 critically endangered species that have been identified for financial support under this component. In addition, the State Government of Assam has also started conservation breeding program for Pygmy Hog in Assam.

(c) The important steps taken by the Government for protection of endangered animals and birds in the country include:

- 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 provides stringent punishment for offences under the Act. 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. In order to provide specific focus on the conservation of tiger and elephant, Project Tiger and Project Elephant are functional in the respective Range States.
- 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 Scheme "Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats" also has a component on recovery of identified endangered species and protection of wildlife outside Protected Area.
- vii. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.
- viii. The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has been set up to strengthen the intelligence gathering and 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.