

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:829
ANSWERED ON:16.07.2014
RHINOCEROS
Gohain Shri Rajen

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

- (a) the total number of rhinoceros in the country, State and forest-wise, as on date;
- (b) the number of rhinoceros died naturally and killed by poachers in the last decade, year and State-wise;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to review the existing wildlife protection mechanism particularly in Assam;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard; and
- (e) the other measures taken by the Government for protection and conservation of Rhinoceros in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) The Rhinoceros are found in Assam, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The population of rhinoceros in these States, as per information available in the Ministry, is as below:

Name of the State	No. of Rhinoceros (year of census)
Assam	2505 (2012)
Uttar Pradesh	30
West Bengal	229 (2013)

(b) State-wise details of rhinoceros death, both naturally and killed by poachers in the last decade, as per the information received from the States, are as follows:

Name of the State	No. of Rhinoceros died
Assam	939 (2003 to 2012)
Uttar Pradesh	13
West Bengal	50

(c) & (d) No, sir. Presently there is proposal to review the existing wildlife protection mechanism particularly in Assam.

(e) The Government has taken following steps for protection of wild animals including Rhinoceros in the country:

i. 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. Most of the Rhino habitats are part of Tiger Reserves –Kaziranga Tiger Reserve, Manas Tiger Reserve, Dudhwa Tiger Reserve and Jaldapara Tiger Reserve.

ii. A specific component of "Recovery programmes for saving critically endangered species and habitats" is provided in the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats' for focused conservation action on selected critically endangered species. Rhinoceros in one of the identified species under this programme.

- iii. Legal protection has been provided to wild animals including rhinoceros against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
- iv. In addition to provision of stringent punishment for the offenders, the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that is used for committing wildlife offence(s).
- v. Financial and technical assistance is provided to the State/ Union Territory Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes for providing better protection to wildlife including endangered species 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 ensure co-ordination among various officers and State Governments in connection with 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.