

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3414
TO BE ANSWERED ON 26.03.2018

Conservation of Asiatic lions

3414. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

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

- (a) the number of deaths of Asiatic lions in the country, particularly in and around Gir Sanctuary, during the last two years and in the current year, year-wise;
- (b) the number of unnatural deaths and the reasons behind it;
- (c) the measures being taken to prevent unnatural deaths of wild animals;
- (d) the details of action taken for smooth translocation of lions from Gir forest to Kuno-Palpur forest in Madhya Pradesh; and
- (e) the details of efforts being made to conserve the endangered animal in the country?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

- (a) Asiatic lions in wild are found only in the State of Gujarat. Details of death of Asiatic lions in and around Gir Sanctuary during the last two years and the current year, as informed by the State Government, is as given below:

S.No.	Year	Total no. of death of Asiatic lions
1	2015-16	85
2.	2016-17	99
3.	2017-18	69

- (b) The number and reasons of unnatural death of Asiatic lions is given below:

S.No.	Reasons for unnatural death of Asiatic lions	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
1.	Train accident	3	1	2
2.	Electric shock	0	6	3
3.	Falling in wells	5	3	5
4.	Poisoning	0	0	1

5.	In fighting	0	5	7
6.	Road accident	1	1	0
7.	Drowning in water	3	2	0
8.	Snake bite	1	0	0
9.	Poaching	0	1	0
	Total	13	19	18

(c) The steps taken to prevent unnatural death of wild animals include;

- i. A general advisory has been issued jointly to all the railway zones and relevant States Governments suggesting measures to prevent collision of trains with wild elephants. Some of the important recommendations are given below:
 - (a) Clearance of vegetation on the sides of railway tracks.
 - (b) Underpasses/overpasses/girder bridges across vulnerable stretches of railway tracks to allow safe passage elephants.
 - (c) Signage boards at selected points to alert train drivers.
 - (d) Sensitization programmes for Train Drivers/Guards/Station Masters.
 - (e) Engagement of elephant trackers and communication with Station Masters.
 - (f) To keep Railway tracks free from food wastes, that attracts elephants.
- ii. A permanent coordination committee has been constituted jointly by the Ministry of Railways and the Ministry of Environment and Forests to share information and monitor the implementation of the advisory.
- iii. The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) is funding a project to the Wildlife Institute of India to assess and mitigate impacts of linear infrastructure in 3 landscapes viz. North Eastern, Central Indian and Western Ghats to refine strategies for mitigation.
- iv. Sensitization workshops are periodically arranged for linear infrastructure developers.
- v. Establishment of Rescue Centres and Rescue Teams having veterinary doctors and skilled manpower as well as vehicles, machinery and equipment for timely rescue of wild animals.
- vi. The Standing Committee of NBWL recommends the proposals for developmental project for construction/repair of roads passing through Wildlife sanctuaries, National Parks, buffer zones along with mitigation measures on a case to case basis.

- (d) The Ministry, following the directions given by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in its judgement dated 15.4.2013 for the smooth translocation of lions from Gir forest to Kuno-Palpur forest in Madhya Pradesh has constituted an Expert Committee for planning and implementation of translocation of Asiatic lions from Gir, Gujarat to Kuno, Madhya Pradesh. The group includes representatives of Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat.
- (e) The measures taken by the Government for conservation of endangered wild animals includes:
- i. The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 provides for punishment for violation of its provisions. The Act also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that is used for committing wildlife offence(s).
 - ii. Law enforcement authorities in the States maintain strict vigil against poaching of wild animals.
 - iii. Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has been set up to gather intelligence about poaching and unlawful trade in wild animals and animal articles and to achieve inter-state and trans-boundary coordination in enforcement of wildlife laws.
 - iv. The State/Union Territory Governments have been requested to strengthen the field formations and intensify patrolling in and around Protected Areas.
 - v. 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.
 - vi. Financial 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 habitat.
 - vii. Financial assistance is also provided to the State/UT Governments for the recovery of critically endangered species under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats'.
