

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 3898**  
**TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.04.2023**

**Deaths of elephants in Odisha**

3898. SMT. MAMATAMOHANTA:

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

- (a) whether Government is aware of the fact that a large number of elephants are dying in various parts and forest areas of Odisha due to various reasons;
- (b) if so, whether any data on the deaths of elephants is available and the number of elephants that have died during the last two years in Odisha;
- (c) whether Government has taken any steps to prevent the deaths/killings of elephants;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the number of elephants that have been killed/died due to unknown reasons in various States of the country during the last two years?

**ANSWER**

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

(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a)to(d) As per the information received from the State of Odisha, elephant casualties due to unnatural causes like train accident, electrocution, poaching and poisoning during the last two years, are as follows:

<b>Elephant Deaths in the State of Odisha</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>Train Accident</b>	<b>Electrocution</b>	<b>Poaching</b>	<b>Poisoning</b>
<b>2020-21</b>	4	8	2	0
<b>2021-22</b>	3	13	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>

The management of wildlife including mitigation and management of human-elephant conflict (HEC) is primarily the responsibility of State Governments/UTs Administration. The State Forest Departments are working with the local people to address the HEC issues through periodic awareness campaigns to sensitize, guide and advise the general public on HEC, including dissemination of information through various forms of media. Further, Forest Departments are engaging with local

communities as animal trackers to monitor the movement of elephants and also to caution local people to avoid HEC, prevent damage or loss of human life and elephants.

In addition, the following measures taken by Ministry also help in mitigation of human elephant conflict:-

- (i) The Ministry provides financial and technical assistance to States/UTs under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes 'Project Elephant' for protection and conservation of elephants and their habitats in the country.
- (ii) To inspect the recent death of elephants in the State of Jharkhand and Odisha a High Level committee was constituted by the Ministry to enquire the deaths and action taken by the State Forest Department. The High Level committee submitted its report to the Ministry with various recommendations for managing the problem and reducing the deaths of elephants in the state of Jharkhand and Odisha. The recommendations were forwarded to the State of Odisha for taking necessary action for implementation of the recommendations suggested by the High Level committee.
- (iii) To reduce human-elephant conflict and to avoid retaliatory killing of elephants, compensation is provided to local communities for loss of their property and life caused by wild elephants. The Ministry has notified enhancement of ex-gratia rates related to wildlife depredation vide letter No. 14-2/2011 WL-I (part) dated 9th February, 2018.
- (iv) Various other Centrally Sponsored schemes being implemented by this Ministry contribute to the improvement in the natural habitat of elephants by augmenting water sources, planting of fodder trees, regeneration of bamboo etc. Such schemes include Development of Wildlife Habitat and Project Tiger. The Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act 2016 and the Rules made there under also provide for use of the Fund for development of wildlife habitats, including for elephants, establishment of animal rescue centres, etc. which also contribute to reduction in HEC.
- (v) A guideline for Management of Human Elephant Conflict has been issued by the Ministry on 6.10.2017 and elephant range states have been requested for implementation of the same.
- (vi) Critical elephant habitats are notified as 'Elephant Reserve' for focus and synergy in elephant conservation and to reduce conflict. The notification is carried out with the approval of Steering Committee formed in the Ministry. So far 33 Elephant Reserves have been established in 14 major elephant States.
- (vii) A field manual for frontline staff to manage Human Elephant Conflict was released during the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Steering Committee on 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2022.
- (viii) A Capacity Building Workshop for Railway Officials Training the Trainers: A special online training programme for sensitizing officials of the Indian Railways' Training Institutes towards India's wildlife and rich biodiversity was conducted on 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2022.
- (ix) Regional coordination meeting for the Eastern Region to address Human-Elephant Conflict was conducted on 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2023 at Kolkata.

- (x) A Capacity Building Workshop on “Minimizing Railway-induced Elephant Mortalities for the Officers of the Indian Railways” was conducted on 1<sup>st</sup> -3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2023.
- (e) Information on elephant deaths due to unknown reasons are not collated in the Ministry.

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