GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**RAJYA SABHA**
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2442**
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10.08.2023

**Man and elephant conflict in Assam**

2442. SHRI RWNGWRA NARZARY:

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

(a)  whether Government is aware of the incident of man and elephant conflict in Assam particularly in Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) in the last three years;

(b)  if so, the details of measures taken by Government to avoid men and elephant conflict; and

(c)  the details of the number of deceased persons in elephant attacks and compensation given to them?

**ANSWER**

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

(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a)&(b)As reported by the State of Assam, human elephant conflicts occur in the State including the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR). The Government of Assam has taken following measures for prevention of human elephant conflict:

(i)     At vulnerable locations, solar-powered electric fences have been erected to avoid the damage to human life and property by the wild elephants in the State.

(ii)    Kumki's are deployed time to time to monitor the movement of wild elephants and drive them away from human settlements to their natural habitats.

(iii)   Local villagers are sensitized by organizing awareness programmes regularly.

(iv)    Coordination committees, consisting of Departments; such as the District/Civil Administration, Police, Forest, Panchayat, Railway, PWD, Transport, APDCL (Electricity), NGOs, Panchayat representatives, etc., have been constituted in each District of the State of Assam to mitigate the human elephant conflict.

(v)     The State Headquarter has toll free phone to receive messages/complaints on elephant/other animal depredation problems, control room has been setup for 24x7 monitoring.

(vi)    Constructed watch towers in certain affected villages and to monitor the movement of elephants with night vision binocular.

(vii)   Mobile Anti Depredation Squads (MADS) and Field Anti Depredation Squads (FADS) are formed with the volunteers of fringe villages and frontline staff,

MADS are equipped with vehicle, smart phone, heavy duty torch etc. FADS are equipped with heavy duty torch, mobile phones, kerosene, crackers etc.

(viii) Customized anti-depredation vehicles for driving away the wild elephants are being started.

(ix) Ex-gratia payment for the loss of human lives and property are being paid regularly to reduce human elephant conflict in the state of Assam.

In addition, the following measures have been 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 Tiger and Elephant' for protection and conservation of species and their habitats in the country.

(ii) 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.

(iii) 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. 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.

(iv) 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.

(v) An advisory on dealing with human-wildlife conflict has been issued by the Ministry in February 2021. The advisory recommends coordinated interdepartmental action, identification of conflict hot spots, adherence to Standard Operating Procedures, establishment of rapid response teams, formation of State and District level committees to review the quantum of ex-gratia relief, issuing guidance/instructions for expedited payments, and provision of adequate funds for suitable portion of ex-gratia relief to be paid within 24 hours to the affected persons in the case of death and injury to persons.

(vi) Wildlife Institute of India in consultation with the Ministry of Environment Forest & Climate Change, National Highway Authority, National Tiger Conservation Authority and World Bank Group has published a document namely ' Eco-friendly Measures to Mitigate Impacts of Linear Infrastructure' to assist project agencies in designing linear infrastructure, including electric transmission lines, in a manner that reduces human-animal conflicts.

(vii) The Ministry has released a book titled "Best Practices of Human Elephant Conflict Management in India" for the benefit of States and other stakeholders.

(viii) A field manual for frontline staff to manage Human Elephant Conflict was released during the 16th meeting of the Steering Committee on 29th April, 2022. The manual was also released in Assamese version during the Gaj Utsav celebration at Kaziranga National Park, Assam.

(ix)    The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 provides regulatory functions for dealing with human wildlife conflict situations.

(x)    Capacity Building Workshops for Railway Officials, Forest officials, Frontline Staff and Mahouts are conducted regularly.

(c)  As per the information received from the State of Assam, the details of human casualties due to elephant attacks and compensation given thereof, are as follows:

| Details of elephant attack | | Compensation/Ex-gratia Payment | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Year | Number of deceased person | Compensation given to numbers of deceased person (including previous years pending cases) | Amount of Compensation given |
| 2020 | 77 | 00 | 00.00 |
| 2021 | 76 | 230 | 896.00 lakh |
| 2022 | 73 | 90 | 345.00 lakh |

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