

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1969
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12.12.2024

Illegal transfer of elephants

1969 SHRI PRAMOD TIWARI:

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

- (a) whether Government has received a number of representations and complaints regarding the illegal transfer and transport of elephants, sale and procurement of elephants;
- (b) if so, the steps taken to address this problem;
- (c) whether genetic profile of each elephant will be used for conservation; and
- (d) if so, the manner in which it is likely to be done?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) to (d) The Ministry receives representations and complaints regarding transfer, transport, sale and procurement of elephants. Such representations are forwarded to Chief Wildlife Wardens (CWLWs) of the States/UTs to take action as per provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and the Rules made thereunder.

To address the issues of captive elephant and their transfer or transportation, the Ministry in collaboration with Wildlife Institute of India, has developed a mobile application namely 'Gajah Suchana' for collection of biological samples from captive elephants across India for DNA profiling. The genetic database is intended to be comprehensive with information on genetic profile and corresponding morphological details along with ownership information for all the registered captive elephants in the country. The data serve as a centralized repository of all the registered captive elephants in India. The centralized database can be used to validate individual identity of elephants during transfers within and between states to filter out illegal transfers. The database can also assist in forensic procedures and prosecution in the courts of law to combat crime related to illegal transfer and possession of captive elephants.

Further, to address the issues of transfer, transport, sale and procurement of elephants and regulate the movement of captive elephants within and between states in India, the Government of India has notified "Captive Elephant (Transfer or Transport) Rules, 2024". Furthermore, a High Powered Committee to look into the matter related to transfer of captive elephants from one state to another has been constituted as per the order of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India vide its order dated 03/03/2023 in the Special Leave Petition (Civil) No. 12246 of 2022.
