

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3085
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27.03.2025

Human-elephant conflicts

3085. DR. M. THAMBIDURAI:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that there has been increasing incidents of human-elephant conflicts in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) the measures proposed by Government to prevent the loss of human life and property and to safeguard the crops etc. due to such incidents; and
- (d) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

ANSWER

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

- (a)&(b) The details of human casualties due to elephant attacks and elephant casualties due to various reasons like train hit, electrocution, poaching and poisoning, during the last three years, as per the information received from State governments and UT administrations, are enclosed as **Annexure**.
- (c)&(d) 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 human-animal conflict including dissemination of information through various forms of media. Further, State Forest Departments are engaging with local communities to monitor the movement of elephants and to caution local people to avoid human-animal conflict, prevent damage or loss of human life, property and elephants. Further, the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 provides regulatory functions for dealing with human-wildlife situations.

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

- (i) The Ministry is providing financial and technical assistance to States/UTs under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme Project Tiger & Elephant for protection of elephants, their habitat and corridors, to address issues of man-elephant conflict and welfare of captive elephants in the country.
- (ii) Other various Centrally Sponsored Schemes including Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitat 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.

- (iii) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, in coordination with the State Forest Departments, have ground-validated 150 elephant corridors across 15 elephant range states (i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal) in India and informed the State Governments/UT Administrations to take necessary steps to protect and conserve the elephant corridors.
- (iv) 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.
- (v) A permanent Co-ordination Committee has been constituted between Ministry of Railways and Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for preventing elephant death in train accident.
- (vi) Inter-ministerial meeting convened regularly with the Ministry of Railways and Ministry of Power to holistically address the issue of accidental death of elephant due to train hit and electrocution.
- (vii) A general advisory has been issued jointly by Ministry of Railways and Ministry of Environment and Forests on 30th March, 2010 to the General Managers of North Frontier (NF), East Cost and Southern Railways for protection of elephants from train accidents.
- (viii) The Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun in consultation with the Ministry of Environment Forest, and 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' (2016) to assist project agencies in designing linear infrastructure, including railways lines, in a manner that reduces human-animal conflicts.
- (ix) An advisory on dealing with human-wildlife conflict has been issued by the Ministry in February, 2021. The advisory recommends coordinated inter-departmental 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.
- (x) 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. Further, the manual has been translated in local languages including Odia.
- (xi) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has also issued Guidelines to States/UTs on 3rd June, 2022 on managing Human Wildlife conflicts including damage to crops. It includes promotion of crops in forest fringe areas which are unpalatable to wild animals, agro forestry models which include cash crops like chillies, lemon grass, khus grass etc. suitably mixed with tree/shrub species. It also includes preparation and implementation of comprehensive long-term plan for alternate cropping by the state Agriculture/Horticulture Department under different schemes in vulnerable areas.

- (xii) Advisory on implementation of measures to mitigate the impact of power transmission lines and other power infrastructure on elephant and other wildlife issued by Ministry of Power to all DISCOMs and TRANSCOs has been circulated to all States/UTS on 16th September, 2022.
- (xiii) Ministry also released a Guidelines for Human-Elephant Conflict Mitigation-Taking a Harmonious Coexistence Approach (2023) for addressing human-elephant conflicts.
- (xiv) A Capacity Building Workshop on “Mainstreaming Management of The Elephant Reserves” was conducted on 13 -15th March, 2023 at Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun.
- (xv) A Capacity Building Workshop on “Minimizing the Impact of the Railway on Elephants and Other Wildlife” for the officials of Indian Railways was conducted on 23-25th November, 2023 at Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun.
- (xvi) A Capacity Building Workshop on “Mainstreaming Management of The Elephant Reserves was conducted on 28- 29th November, 2023 at Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun.
- (xvii) To reduce man-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. WL-21/4/2023 WL dated 22nd December, 2023, which includes increase in ex-gratia from ₹5lakh to ₹10 lakh in case of death by wild animals under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, Project Tiger & Elephant.
- (xviii) A Capacity Building Workshop on “Exploring solution for minimizing electrocution risk and promoting wildlife safety across power infrastructure in India” was conducted on 11- 13th January, 2024 at Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun.
- (xix) A Recommended Operating Procedure for capture and translocation of elephants in distress and conflicts was released during the World Elephant Day 2024.
- (xx) A capacity building workshops on "Minimizing Electrocution Risks and Promoting Wildlife Safety Across Power Infrastructure in India" and "Minimizing the Impact of the Railway on Elephants and Other Wildlife" was organized from 20 - 22nd November, 2024 at Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun.

ANNEXURE

REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) & (b) OF THE RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3085 RAISED BY DR. M. THAMBIDURAI REGARDING 'HUMAN-ELEPHANT CONFLICTS' DUE FOR REPLY ON 27.03.2025.

Human casualties due to elephant attack

| Year | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
|-------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| No. of human casualties | 561 | 605 | 629 |

Elephant casualties due to train hit, electrocution, poaching and poisoning

| Year | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Train hit | 21 | 15 | 17 |
| Electrocution | 63 | 100 | 94 |
| Poaching | 4 | 14 | 9 |
| Poisoning | 6 | 4 | 1 |