

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 700
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05.02.2026

Population of Asiatic Lions in Gir forests

700. SHRI A. D. SINGH:

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

- (a) whether Government is aware of rising population of Asiatic lions, particularly in the Gir forests and surrounding areas;
- (b) if so, whether this increase has raised concerns regarding habitat saturation, human-wildlife conflict and disease vulnerability;
- (c) the steps being taken to ensure scientific management of lion populations, including translocation plans, expansion of protected areas and mitigation of human-animal conflicts; and
- (d) the current status of conservation strategies and timelines for establishing additional lion habitats?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d) The population of Asiatic Lion in the country has increased from 674 in 2020 to 891 in 2025. As per the information received from the State of Gujarat, Lion population has inhabited new areas like notified forest areas, river corridors as well as revenue wastelands. The State has taken up various measures to manage human-wildlife conflicts and disease vulnerability by strengthening veterinary facilities. The following are the important steps taken in this regard:

- (i) A comprehensive satellite telemetry study carried out to generate scientific data on lion ecology, spatial distribution, corridor use, movement of satellite populations, seasonal patterns, land-use preferences, and key management zones.
- (ii) *Vanya Prani Mitras* and trackers are engaged to sensitize the nearby population regarding wild animal movement in the area.
- (iii) Improvement and restoration of grasslands, prey base augmentation, and habitat improvement across Gir and Greater Gir Lion landscape.
- (iv) Management of satellite populations in Greater Gir Landscape and strengthening of protection.
- (v) Delineation, habitat improvement and protection of key corridors and lion movement routes.
- (vi) Provision for *Machans* (elevated platforms) to farmers for guarding crops at night.

- (vii) Augmentation of water resources to reduce animal movement toward human dominated areas.
- (viii) Eco-development activities, community participation, nature education camps and other outreach programmes.
- (ix) SOP for protection of lions around railway tracks developed, speed restrictions of trains in hotspot areas and monitoring and patrolling of the area around railway tracks.

Barda Wildlife Sanctuary has been developed as a second home for lion population and corridor management initiatives have facilitated safe movement between sub-populations, for natural expansion into new habitats.

In addition, habitat improvement initiatives are also taken up in the newer areas inhabited by lion population. A Hi-Tech Monitoring Unit has been established at Sasan-Gir in 2019 for real-time tracking of lions using radio telemetry.
