

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2140
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.08.2026

Progress of Project Lion

2140. DR. ASHOK KUMAR MITTAL:

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

- (a) the current progress of Project Lion in securing the habitat and mitigating the disease vulnerability of Asiatic lions;
- (b) the number of cheetahs successfully acclimatized and actively breeding following their intercontinental translocation and reintroduction;
- (c) whether Government is developing specialized radio-collar tracking technologies to monitor the movement of these apex predators;
- (d) the details of financial outlays utilized for relocating human settlements away from critical wildlife corridors; and
- (e) the measures implemented to train local forest guards in specialized veterinary care?

ANSWER

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

(a): The Project Lion envisages a landscape-level, multi-stakeholder approach to the long-term conservation of the Asiatic lion. The 16th Lion population estimation (May 2025), recorded an increase in the Asiatic Lion population to 891 individuals, with a growth of 32% since 2020.

Project Lion has contributed to the expansion and securing of Asiatic lion habitats beyond Gir National Park and Gir Wildlife Sanctuary to Paniya Wildlife Sanctuary, Mitiyala Wildlife Sanctuary and Girnar Wildlife Sanctuary, as well as their surrounding landscapes. This expansion has supported the establishment of multiple satellite populations of lions, thereby reducing the risks associated with concentration of the entire population in a single habitat, including vulnerability to disease outbreaks. Further, Barda Wildlife Sanctuary in Porbandar district has been identified and developed as an additional home for Asiatic lions, strengthening the long-term conservation and ecological security of the species.

(b): Since the inception of the Cheetah Project, 20 founder cheetahs amongst 29 translocated to India have successfully acclimatized in Kuno National Park and Gandhi Sagar Sanctuary. Further, seven female cheetahs have successfully bred in India.

(c) to (e): The management of wildlife is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. The Ministry provides financial assistance to States and Union Territories under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats' based on the Annual Plans of Operation (APOs) submitted by them.

Assistance under the scheme is provided for activities such as use of modern technologies including camera traps, drones and radio collaring, strengthening of wildlife veterinary care and diagnostic facilities, procurement of equipment and medicines, engagement of veterinary and research

personnel, and capacity building and training of frontline staff for effective wildlife conservation and habitat management.

The Scheme also supports voluntary relocation of villages from National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries and Critical Tiger Habitats of Tiger. The financial assistance for voluntary relocation has been enhanced from ₹10 lakh to ₹15 lakh per family. The implementation of village relocation is undertaken by the respective State Governments and Union Territory Administrations in accordance with the prescribed guidelines, and District Level Committees are constituted by the concerned States and Union Territories to facilitate effective implementation.
