

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.4301**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.03.2017

**Olive Ridley Turtle**

4301. SHRI R. PARTHIPAN:  
SHRI PONGULETI SRINIVASA REDDY:

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

- (a) whether the Hope Island in Andhra Pradesh has become the graveyard for Olive Ridley Turtles recently and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether mechanized fishing boats in the Bay of Bengal Coastline are causing the deaths of the Olive Ridley Turtles, if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether the eggs laid by the said turtles in Gahirmatha Sanctuary in Odisha are getting destroyed due to shrinking coastal space, if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor;
- (d) the steps being taken by the Government to increase the beach areas for nesting purpose of the Olive Ridley Turtles in Gahirmatha Sanctuary as well as in Visakhapatnam beach in Andhra Pradesh; and
- (e) the steps being taken for the protection and conservation of Olive Ridley Turtles and their habitats in the country?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
(SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE)

- (a)&(b) As informed by the State Government of Andhra Pradesh, during current season, 85 nos. of deaths of Olive Ridley Turtles were noticed in Hope Island in Andhra Pradesh due to such turtles getting caught in Trawler nets.

The State Government of Odisha has banned mechanised fishing in Gahirmatha Marine Wildlife Sanctuary and in other 3 restricted zones of Dhamara, Devi and Rushikulya river mouths for 7 months starting from 1<sup>st</sup> November every year to 31<sup>st</sup> May of next year commensurate with the turtle nesting season till 20 Km. from coast line. The State Government has imposed ban on mechanised fishing all around the year along the entire 480 Km. long coastline till 5 Km. from the coastline because of the possibility of death of marine turtles due to such activity.

The State Government has also taken steps to create awareness in this regard among Line departments like Fisheries Department, Fishing communities with

the help of NGOs, ban mechanized fishing trawlers to operate beyond 8 nautical miles, and, create awareness for use of Turtle Excluder Devices (TED) amongst the trawler fishermen boats in all Coastal Districts.

- (c) No study has been carried out by the State Government of Odisha to ascertain shrinking of coastal space and the eggs of sea turtles getting destroyed therein.
- (d) Erosion of the beaches at some locations and accretion in another site is a natural process that takes place throughout the year. There are no plans for carrying interventions for increasing the beach area at Gahirmatha Marine Wildlife Sanctuary.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh is implementing Community Based Conservation of Sea Turtles (CBCST) Programme every year during the season involving Fishermen and local tribal for the protection and conservation of Olive Ridley Turtles in Visakhapatnam beach.

- (e) Details of steps taken by the Government for protection and conservation of Olive Ridley Turtles and their habitats in the country are given at **Annexure**.

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## ANNEXURE

### **ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (e) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4301 REGARDING “OLIVE RIDLEY TURTLE” RAISED BY R. PARTHIPAN AND SHRI PONGULETI SRINIVASA REDDY DUE FOR REPLY ON 28.03.2017.**

Details of steps taken by the Government for protection and conservation of Olive Ridley Turtles and their habitats in the country are:

- i. Legal protection has been provided to wild animals including Olive Ridley Turtles against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
- ii. Protected Areas, viz., National Parks, Sanctuaries, Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves covering important wildlife habitats have been created all over the country under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to conserve wild animals including Olive Ridley Turtles and their habitats.
- iii. A specific component of “Recovery programmes for saving critically endangered species and habitats’ is provided in the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of ‘Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats’ for focused conservation action on selected critically endangered species. Marine turtles has been identified as one of the critically endangered species.
- iv. In addition to provision of stringent punishment for the offenders, the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that is used for committing wildlife offence(s).
- v. Financial and technical assistance is provided to the State/ Union Territory Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes for providing better protection to wildlife including Olive Ridley Turtles and improvement of its habitat.
- vi. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.
- vii. The concerned State Governments with the involvement of Line departments, Coast guards, Fishermen Communities, local tribes and NGOs are organising awareness programmes for protection and conservation of Olive Ridley Turtles.

The following further action has been taken by Odisha Government in this regard:

1. There is statutory ban on fishing in the Gahirmatha Marine Wildlife Sanctuary area and in restricted fishing zones which is being enforced for seven months starting from 1<sup>st</sup> November each year to 31<sup>st</sup> May of next year, commensurate with the nesting season.
2. Strict vigil on all important nesting beaches have been made by establishing on shore monitoring and surveillance camps. This year i.e. 2016-17, 55 onshore and

- 5 offshore camps have been established for protection and monitoring of Olive Ridley sea turtles.
3. Off shore patrolling and surveillance camps have been set up near mass breeding and congregation areas in the sea. Patrolling squads, each under a forest Ranger, have been pressed into service from the off-shore camps for this purpose, and each squad is provided with a hired / Departmental trawler and a support patrol boat for patrolling around the turtle congregation zones in the sea. Coast Guard, Paradip have also been patrolling in the Marine Sanctuary area. ITR/ DRDO authorities have suitably instructed their concerned officers to check that fishing vessels do not enter inside the Marine Sanctuary from the neighbouring States and Country.
  4. APR force are provided every year by the State Police head Quarters at the disposal of DFOs of coastal Forest Divisions (Balasore, Bhadrak, Rajngar, Puri, Chilika and Berhampur) to maintain law and order situation and strict vigil through round the clock sea patrolling.
  5. Berthing facilities with provision for safety and security have been built up at Barunei, Gupti, Sasanapeta and Krushnapriyapur by the Wildlife Division, Rajnagar for boats seized within Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary. Paradip Port Trust authorities have allowed parking of seized vessels in the fishing harbour at Paradeep.
  6. Monthly meetings are regularly held for close rapport building amongst the officials of Forest, Fisheries and the Police Departments as also the Coast Guard.
  7. VHF communication directly with Coast Guard ship has been arranged to apprehend outlaws.
  8. Range Officers of coastal Forest Divisions have been declared as authorised officers under the OMFR Act to seized illegal fishing vessels entering in to the prohibited fishing zones in the Odisha coastal waters.
  9. Govt. in Law department (vide No. V-LR-1/05/2630/ dated 22.2.2005 & No. 13130 dated 23.8.2005) have appointed six numbers of Special Public Prosecutors for six coastal districts (viz. Kendrapara, Puri, Ganjam, Balesore, Bhadrak and Jagatsinghpur districts) to conduct the prosecution cases relating to sea turtles.
  10. Co-ordination meetings are organised with local fishing communities regularly to ensure their support in protection of Olive Ridley Turtles.
  11. Hoardings have been installed at important fishing bases like places like Paradeep, Madanpur, Gupti, Chandanipal, Karanjamal, Fishing Jetty, Jamboo, Talchua, Devi-nasi, Gangadevi, Jahaniapira, Nuagarh (Astaranga), Gundalva, Chandrabhaga, Purunabanda, Gokharkuda and Kantiagada for public awareness.
  12. Steps are taken to mobilize and motivate the users (sources of residential and industrial light sources influencing sea turtles) to suitably dim the lights during the mass nesting and emergence of turtle hatchlings. ITR/DRDO base at outer Wheeler islands has been requested to suitably dim the lights during the turtle

season as well as for adopting “blackout” practices during the mass nesting and emergence of turtle hatchlings.

13. Turtle carcasses floating ashore and nesting activities are being meticulously counted by the camp personnel each day and are being carried away from nesting beaches and buried to prevent littering of beaches and to check spread of diseases.
14. A High Level Committee has been constituted by the State Government under the Chairmanship of the Chief Secretary, Odisha for reviewing the sea turtle protection activities from time to time for coordinating among various Departments of Odisha Government, Indian Coast Guard, IRT/DRDO, Port Authorities and Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun. The committee sits every year before nesting season and takes stock of the different activities to be executed for the forthcoming nesting season.
15. A state level meeting on protection and conservation of Olive Ridley sea turtles is being conducted every year regarding protection and conservation of Olive Ridley Sea turtles, with various stake holders comprising NGOs / CBOs of the sea turtle nesting area to obtain their feedback and seek their support in sea turtle conservation.
16. A web portal for monitoring sporadic nesting and mortality of Olive Ridley sea turtles ([manage.odishawildlife.org](http://manage.odishawildlife.org)) is in place to monitor sporadic nesting and turtle mortality on real time basis based on field reporting.
17. The Fisheries and ARD Department, Government of Odisha have issued one time notification vide Fisheries and ARD Department Notification No.12312/FARD / Dated 12.11.2014 for prohibition of fishing by motorized vessels, trawlers and mechanized fishing techniques within 20 Kms. from the following specified coast of the sea comprising the sea turtle congregation area and their buffer zones in the vicinity of the following three river mouths of the Odisha coast for the period from 1st November to 31<sup>st</sup> May (both days inclusive) every year.
  - (a) Dhamara river mouth
  - (b) Devi river mouth
  - (c) Rushikulya river mouth
18. Artificial hatchery is being also set up involving local NGOs in the nesting areas of Olive Ridley sea turtles.
19. Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore has been permitted and is conducting long term monitoring of Olive Ridley sea turtles in Rushikulya river mouth area of Odisha to assess the population dynamics, threat and efficacy of steps being taken to conserve the population of Olive Ridleys.

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