

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1942
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.12.2017

Poaching of Rhinoceros

1942. SHRI NABA KUMAR SARANIA:

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

- (a) whether poaching of Rhinoceros is still continuing in Assam and if so, the number of Rhinoceros poached during the last three years and the current year;
- (b) whether the Government has any special plan to control the same and if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether the Government has any plan to arm forest guards of Assam with latest weapons to prevent such incidents and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

- (a) As informed by the State Government, poaching of Rhinoceros has been noted in the State of Assam. Number of Rhinoceros poached during last the three years and the current year are as under:

Year	No. of rhinoceros poached
2014	32
2015	21
2016	22
2017	8 (as on 26.12.2017)

- (b) The steps taken by the State Government for preservation of Rhinoceros in Assam are as follows:
- i. The armed personnel in Kaziranga National Park have been deployed. Presently, 382 numbers of Assam Forest Protection Force personnel, 119-Armed Home Guards besides the regular Forest Staff have been deployed in Kaziranga National Park. 50 additional Home Guards have been deployed in Kaziranga National Park recently.
 - ii. Sophisticated weapons like INSAS Rifles and SLR has been procured by the State Government for use in Kaziranga National Park for anti poaching activities.
 - iii. For soliciting cooperation from fringe villagers around Kaziranga National Park and assist in curving Rhino poaching, 50 numbers of Eco-development Committees have been registered through which development works in the villages are being taken up.
 - iv. Arrangement has been made to keep 24 hours surveillance on the park through Electronic Eye Surveillance System and drones.
 - v. A Special Task Force (STF) headed by an Additional Director General of Police has been constituted by the Government of Assam to curve Rhino poaching in Kaziranga National Park.
 - vi. Number of anti-poaching camps have been increased in Kaziranga National Park to increase effective surveillance in and around the Park.
 - vii. Joint operation by Forest, Police and STF is also conducted regularly to nab the suspected poachers and joint patrolling is also carried out regularly.
- (c) During 2016-2017, under the programme “Modernization of Arms and Ammunitions” of Government of Assam, the department has procured modern arms like INSAS Rifle (272 Nos.), SLR (874 Nos.), 12 Bore Rifle (133 Nos.), Ghaatak Rifle (91 Nos.) and 9 MM Pistol (22 Nos.) for the field staff.
