

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4786
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23.03.2018

Conservation of Rhinoceros

4786. DR. SANJAY JAISWAL:

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

- (a) whether the Government has carried out any exercise to determine the number of Rhinoceros in the country;
- (b) if so, the number of Rhinoceros during each of the last three years and the current year, State/UT-wise;
- (c) whether effective steps have been taken/proposed to be taken for conservation of Rhinoceros; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

- (a)and (b) Rhinoceros in wild are found only in three States viz, Assam, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Census of Rhinoceros is undertaken at the State-level by the respective State Governments periodically. As per the information received from the above three state Governments, the estimation of rhinoceros population in 2015 is given in the **Annexure**. No census has been carried out during the current year.
- (c)and(d) The steps taken by the Government for the conservation of wild animals including rhinoceros and their habitats include:
- i. The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 provides for punishment for violation of its provisions. The Act also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that is used for committing wildlife offence(s).
 - ii. New rhino habitat has been created at Patlakhawa, West Bengal for conservation of rhino.
 - iii. Rhinoceros is one of the seventeen species identified for Recovery programme for critically endangered species, a component under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of 'Integrated Development of

Wildlife Habitats'. Under this scheme Central assistance is provided for the recovery and protection of this species.

- iv. Most of the rhino habitats in three states are covered under Tiger Reserves. The funds provided under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of 'Project Tiger' for protection and conservation of tigers in these states also provides protection and conservation to other animals including one-horned Rhinoceros. For other Protected Areas having rhino population, financial assistance is provided under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats'.
- v. Arrangement has been made to keep 24 hours surveillance on the parks through Electronic Eye Surveillance System and drones.
- vi. Number of anti-poaching camps have been increased to effective surveillance in and around rhino bearing areas.
- vii. Joint operation by Forest, Police and STF is also conducted regularly to nab the suspected poachers and joint patrolling is carried out regularly.
- viii. Sophisticated weapons like INSAS Rifles and SLR has been procured by the State Government for use in Kaziranga National Park in Assam for anti poaching activities.
- ix. For soliciting cooperation from fringe villagers around Park and assist in curbing Rhino poaching, Eco-development Committees have been registered through which development works in the villages are being taken up.

ANNEXURE

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) AND (b) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4786 REGARDING 'CONSERVATION OF RHINOCEROS' BY DR. SANJAY JAISWAL DUE FOR REPLY ON 23.03.2018.

Estimation of rhinoceros population as per the information received from the State Governments

| Name of the State | Year | Name of the Protected Area | Estimated population |
|--------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Assam | 2015 | Kaziranga National Park | 2401 |
| | 2015 | Manas National Park | 30 |
| | 2012 (no census was done during 2015) | Orang National Park | 100 |
| | 2012 (no census was done during 2015) | Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary | 93 |
| West Bengal | 2015 | Jaldapara National Park | 204 |
| | 2015 | Gorumara National Park | 49+2 (Darjeeling WL Division) |
| Uttar Pradesh | | Dudhwa National Park | 34 |