

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1042
TO BE ANSWERED ON 22.11.2019

Great Indian Bustard

1042. SHRI B.N. BACHE GOWDA:

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

- (a) whether the critically endangered Great Indian Bustard is nearing extinction;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government for conservation of the Great Indian Bustard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO)

- (a) and (b) The Critically Endangered Great Indian Bustard faces imminent risk of extinction. There has been a decline in population of Great Indian Bustard due to combination of anthropogenic factors, such as historical hunting, conversion of its habitat, grasslands to intensive agriculture, and emerging threats like mortality due to collision/ electrocution with the power lines in its habitat and nest/predation by dogs and other predators in its breeding sites. As per the estimation of Wildlife Institute of India, the current population of Great Indian Bustard is estimated to be about 130-150 birds with the majority of the population in Jaisalmer Rajasthan at about 120 birds, Gujarat with 6 female birds, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka combined about 15-25 birds.
- (c) Steps taken/being taken by the Government for conservation of Great Indian Bustards are as given below:
 - i. The Great Indian Bustard is listed in Schedule-I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, thereby, according them highest degree of legal protection from hunting.
 - ii. Important habitats of Great Indian Bustards are designated as National

Parks/ Sanctuaries for their better protection.

- iii. The species has been identified for conservation efforts under the component 'Species Recovery Programme' of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) - Development of Wildlife Habitat. Financial and technical assistance is provided to the State/ Union Territory Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Development of Wildlife Habitat for providing better protection to Great Indian Bustard and its habitat.
- iv. Ministry has taken up an initiative on conservation breeding of the Great Indian Bustard in collaboration with Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra Forest Departments and technical support from Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun. The Ministry with financial support from National Authority for Compensatory Afforestation Funds has sanctioned an outlay of Rs. 33.85 crores for the duration of five years for the programme titled 'Habitat Improvement and Conservation Breeding of Great Indian Bustard-an integrated approach'. The important objective of this programme is to build up captive population of Great Indian Bustard and to release the chicks in the wild for increasing the population and also to promote *in-situ* conservation of the species.
- v. In consultation with State Government, Wildlife Institute of India and international experts, a site for establishment of Conservation breeding Centre has been identified in Kota District, Rajasthan under the above mentioned project. Currently a facility with incubator, hatcher, chick rearing and housing for captive birds (upto 1 year age) has been set up at Sam, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan and is managed by WII Scientists, Rajasthan Forest Department with the technical assistance of the International Fund for Houbara Conservation and Reneco, Abu Dhabi who have a vast experience in breeding the related Houbara and Arabian Bustards in captivity.
- vi. Ministry has also constituted a Task Force for suggesting Eco-friendly measures to mitigate impacts of power transmission lines and other power transmission infrastructures on wildlife including the Great Indian Bustard.
- vii. Ministry has requested the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and Ministry of Power to direct the power supply agencies to implement the mitigation measures such as installation of bird diverters on power lines, undergrounding of power lines upto 33 KV, painting of vanes of wind turbines etc.
