

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 937**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 18.09.2020

**Snake Charmers**

937. SHRI HIBI EDEN:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that catching of snakes owning them or exploiting them for commercial purposes by snake charmers is a crime under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has taken note of an incident involving the death of girl by a snake bite in Kerala recently, if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the steps proposed by the Government to do away the illegal practice of owning, breeding and sale of snakes by unauthorised persons?

**ANSWER**

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

- (a) &(b) Yes, Sir. Snakes are protected under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 and are listed under Schedule I, Part II of Schedule II and Schedule IV of this Act. According to Wild Life (Protection) Act, capturing, coursing, trapping the snakes and even disturbing the eggs or nest of the snakes amounts to hunting which is prohibited under Section 9 of the Act. Further, according to Section 42 of the Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972, no person shall keep in his custody or possession, sell or otherwise transport any animal mentioned in Schedule I or Part II of Schedule II, except with previous permission of Chief Wildlife Warden.  
  
Chapter VA prohibits the trade, commerce of animal articles derived from an animal including species of snakes listed in Schedule I or Part II of Schedule II of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
- (c) Recently, on 21.11.2019, Shehana Sherin, 10 years old, d/o Aziz. N.V, Notten Veedu, Puthamkunnu, P.O. Wayand, a 5<sup>th</sup> Std Students in Government Sarvajana High School, Sulthan Bathery, Waynad was bitten by a snake in her class room. She was first taken to Taluk Hospital, Sulthan Bathery from where she was transferred to Kozhikode Medical College Hospital for better treatment. On her way, her condition worsened and she was admitted to Good Shepherd Hospital, Vythiri. She died in the Hospital on the same day.

- (d) Forest Department, Kerala has issued guidelines for scientific rescue and release of the snakes. A Mobile application called “SARPA” (Snake Awareness, Rescue and Protection Application) has been developed for systemic tracking of rescue and release of snakes from human habitations. Further, to prevent capture and rescue of snakes by unauthorized person, and the possibility of misusing them in illegal activities, Kerala Forest Department has trained about 318 frontline staff of the Forest Department to engage them in scientific rescue of snakes. Rapid Response Teams have been deployed in each district which are also involved in rescue of snakes. Flying Squad Division and other territorial divisions are active in detection of offences related to illegal catching and trading of snakes. Several cases are registered against illegal sale of snakes in different parts of Kerala.

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