

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOKSABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO: 1973
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12.02.2021

Death of Forest Guards

1973. SHRI NITESH GANGA DEB:
SHRI SYED IMTIAZ JALEEL:
SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI:

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

- (a) whether as per a study thirty one percent of fatal accidents of forest rangers between 2012-2017 occurred in India;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the total number of deaths of forest guards recorded across the country during each of the last three years and the current year, State/UT-wise;
- (c) whether unarmed forest officials are most vulnerable in guarding forest and animals from poachers who are equipped with high quality arms and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether some States are providing arms to certain forest officials in accordance to their rank;
- (e) if so, whether the Hon'ble Supreme Court has urged the Union Government and the State Governments to equip forest officials on ground duty with arms and bullet proof jackets; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken or being taken by Government in consultation with States in this regard?

ANSWER

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

- (a) No such official report is available with the Ministry.
There is a non-official global forum namely International Ranger Federation which publishes Roll of Honour every year enlisting deaths of Rangers naturally or otherwise. This report has not been authenticated/verified by the Government.
- (b) As reported by States and Union Territories, number of forest officials who lost their lives in previous years is given in Annexure 1.
- (c) Yes sir. The frontline forest officers and staff fearlessly protect our forest and wildlife and fight with wildlife poachers, timber smugglers and encroachers. It is true that in this commendable effort to protect our forest and wild life they have laid down their lives. Their martyrdom and efforts have been acknowledged for the first time at the national level and 25 forest staff have been given the certificate of recognition posthumously on the Forest Martyrs Day on 11 September 2020.
- (d) As per information received from the States and Union Territories (UTs), the State/UT of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal

have provided arms to different levels of frontline staff including Forest Guards and Forest Rangers Officers. In the State of Manipur, procurement of arms is under process.

- (e) & (f) In the order by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in I.A. No. 941/2021 and Interlocutory Application Nos. 94310, 94313 and 94317/2020 dated 08.01.2021, the Hon'ble Supreme Court has directed the Home Secretary of the respective States/Union Territories to submit report within a period of four weeks on the prayers made in the Interlocutory Application.

ANNEXURE-I

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1973 DUE FOR 12.02.2021 REGARDING DEATH OF FOREST GUARDS ASKED BY SHRI NITESH GANGA DEB, SHRI SYED IMTIAZ JALEEL AND SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI

S. No	State/UT	Death of Forest Officials in previous years
1	Andhra Pradesh	19
2	Bihar	9
3	Madhya Pradesh	4
4	Maharashtra	4
5	Manipur	3
6	Mizoram	1
7	Telangana	21
8	Tripura	1