

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1858

TO BE ANSWERED ON 30.07.2021

Human-animal Conflicts

1858. SHRI P.C. MOHAN:
SHRIMATI NAVNEET RAVI RANA:
SHRI A. RAJA:
SHRI NALIN KUMAR KATEEL:
SHRIMATI SANDHYA RAY:
DR. KRISHNA PAL SINGH YADAV:

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

- (a) whether the cases of human-animal conflicts particularly human-elephant conflicts have increased in the country and if so, the details thereof, State/UT-wise including Tamil Nadu and Karnataka;
- (b) whether the Government has conducted any study to understand the causes of such conflicts and damage done to standing crops, farmers and environment;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the total number of death of humans and elephants/animals reported during the last three years and the current year indicating the provision for compensation for such losses;
- (d) the number of incidents of leopards entering human habitation reported during the said period along with the steps taken to minimize leopard-human conflicts in urban areas; and
- (e) whether the Government has issued any guidelines for the execution of development projects near wildlife habitat and if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to manage human-wildlife conflicts in a holistic manner and co-create the mitigation solutions with full engagement of all stakeholders?

ANSWER

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

(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

- (a), (b) and (c) The management of forest and wildlife is primarily the responsibility of concerned States/UTs. Incidences of human-animal conflicts have been reported to the Ministry. However, such reports do not indicate an increasing trend in the cases of human-animal conflicts in the country.

Assessments of human-wildlife conflicts indicate that the main causes of human-wildlife conflicts include habitat loss, growth of population of wild animals, changing cropping patterns that attract wild animals to farmlands, movement of wild animals from forests area to human dominated landscapes for food and fodder, movement of human beings to forests for illegal collection of forest produce, habitat degradation due to growth of invasive alien species, etc. Wild animals like elephants being long ranging animals sometimes move to human habitations and farmlands also and cause destruction to standing crops, houses and injuring/ death of human being. As per available reports in the Ministry, nearly 500 human deaths are reported in a year due to elephant attacks while nearly 100 human deaths are reported in a year due to Tiger attacks. Further, nearly 100 elephants die every year due to unnatural causes.

The Ministry, in the year 2018, has increased *ex-gratia* relief under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme in case of depredation by wild animals, which is as follows:

| S.No | Nature of damage caused by wild animals | Amount of <i>ex-gratia</i> relief |
|------|---|--|
| i. | Death or permanent incapacitation | Rs.5.00 lakhs |
| ii. | Grievous injury | Rs.2.00 lakhs |
| iii. | Minor injury | Cost of treatment up to Rs.25,000/- per person |
| iv. | Loss of property/crops | State/UT Government may adhere to the cost norms prescribed by them. |

Further, under the revised guidelines of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, States have been given option to consider providing add-on coverage for crop loss due to attack by wild animals.

- (d) and (e) Incidences of animal-leopard conflicts are not collated by the Ministry. Detailed Guidelines have been reiterated in the Ministry's letters F.No. 22-43/2018-IA.III dated 8.8.2019 and F.No. 6-60/2020 WL Part (1) dated 16.07.2020 regarding requirement of certain developmental projects falling within Eco-sensitive Zones to be considered by the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wild Life.

The important steps taken by the Government to address human-animal conflict including human-leopard conflicts, are as follows:

- i. The Ministry has issued an Advisory to deal with human wildlife conflict to States/UTs on 06.02.2021 which also provides for suitable portion of ex-gratia relief to be paid within 24 hours to the affected persons in the case of death and injury to persons.
- ii. The Ministry provides financial assistance to States/UTs under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes of 'Development of Wildlife Habitats', 'Project Tiger' and 'Project Elephant' for management of wildlife and its habitats in the country. The broad activities supported under these schemes include habitat enrichment, water augmentation.
- iii. Notification of the critical elephant habitats as "Elephant Reserves" for better management of wild elephants. So far 30 Elephant Reserves have been established in 14 main elephant States.
- iv. Ministry has requested all States/UTs that linear infrastructure project proposals for consideration of the Standing Committee of the National Board should be accompanied by animal passage plan prepared as per the guidance document, 'Eco-friendly Measures to Mitigate Impacts of Linear Infrastructure'.
- v. Extensive patrolling of human-elephant conflict prone areas by frontline field staff of the State Forest Departments is done to minimize losses.
- vi. The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 provides for stringent 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).
- vii. Periodic awareness campaigns to sensitize, guide and advise the general public on man-animal conflict, including dissemination of information through various forms of media.
