

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 863
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 07.02.2022

Import of Cheetahs from Abroad

863. SHRI RAMALINGAM S.:
DR. T.R.PAARIVENDHAR:

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

- (a) whether the Union Government has recently launched an 'Action Plan for introduction of Cheetah in India' during the 19th meeting of National Tiger Conservation Authority;
- (b) whether as per the action plan, the Ministry has decided to import a cohort of around 12 to 14 Cheetahs from South Africa or Namibia and each of them will be fitted with a satellite GPS-very high frequency radio-collar and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the total number of Cheetahs presently living in various parks in the country as on date;
- (d) the time by which the proposed 12 to 14 Cheetahs to be imported and accommodated in a suitable habitat are likely; and
- (e) the reasons to import Cheetahs from abroad including the total expenditure incurred/estimated and for making suitable habitat for these Cheetahs?

ANSWER

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

(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

- (a) Yes Sir.
- (b) The Government of India is in the process of holding consultation meeting with African countries for bringing Cheetah. A total of 12-14 cheetahs are intended to be brought from South Africa/Namibia/Other African Countries over a period of five years as per the Action Plan. The such introduced cheetah would be fitted with Satellite/GSM-GPS-VHF radio-collars before their release in wild so as to enable monitoring remotely.
- (c) The cheetah was declared extinct from India in 1952, currently there are no cheetah in any National Park or Wildlife Sanctuary in India.
- (d) About 12-14 wild cheetahs (8-10 males and 4-6 females) from various parks/reserves/areas that are ideal (reproductive age group that is genetically diverse, disease free, behaviorally sound-e.g. not overly imprinted to humans but tolerant, predator wary, capable of hunting wild prey, and socially tolerant of each other) for establishing a new cheetah population would be imported as required from South Africa/Namibia/Other African Countries, as a founder stock for five years initially and then as may be required by the program.
- (e) Cheetah is the only large carnivore to have become extinct in Independent India. There are no cheetah left in wild in India, therefore, to introduce them in India they have to be brought from abroad. Cheetah has been an integral part of Indian ecosystems, a major evolutionary force, and an important cultural heritage. Their restoration will likely result in better conservation of open forest, grassland, and scrub ecosystems for which they will serve as a flagship species.

Rs. 38.70 crore under the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Project Tiger has been allocated to the cheetah introduction project for the years 2021-22 to 2025-26.
