

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2141**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 09.12.2024

**Death of Elephants**

2141 SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:  
MS SAYANI GHOSH:

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

- (a) whether the population of the elephants has become almost double in the country over the three decades and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether it is true that elephants in various sanctuaries and forests across the country are not getting sufficient food due to their increased population and primarily due to indiscriminate cutting of bamboo grass and other grasses by human being due to their high demand in the market, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the scarcity of food due to indiscriminate cutting of bamboo and other grasses by human beings has led to increase in human elephant conflict near their habitat, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether some elephants have died recently in Bandhavgarh National Park of Madhya Pradesh and if so, the details thereof along with the reasons identified therefor;
- (e) whether the Government has taken cognizance of reports regarding poisoning due to fungal contamination in Kodo millet seeds, which could pose a significant risk to wildlife and livestock in the future, if so, the measures undertaken to incentivise the farmers so that the cultivation of such crops in the vicinity of the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve be discouraged; and
- (f) whether the Government has initiated any comprehensive assessment or survey to evaluate the risks posed to wildlife by the cultivation of specific crops in areas surrounding Protected Areas and Tiger Reserves and if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

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

(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

- (a) to (c) To protect and conserve the elephant in the country, the Project Elephant was started in the year 1992 with objective of habitat management and reduction in human elephant conflicts. Since then the interventions for the improvement of elephant habitats are being made in 33 elephant reserves notified across the elephant range states. Further, there has been no report with regard to scarcity of food or indiscriminate cutting of bamboo and

other grasses in the elephant habitats. The details of elephant population estimation in the country over the years are as follows:

<b>Year</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2017</b>
Elephant Population	25569	25842	26373	27669-27719	29391-30711	29964

- (d)to(f) According to the preliminary report received from Chief Wildlife Warden, Madhya Pradesh, the reason for death of ten elephants in Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve has been inferred therein due to consuming excessive quantities of fungus infected Kodo millet crops as per the toxicological analysis conducted by the Center for Wildlife Conservation, Management, and Disease Surveillance (ICAR-Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Izatnagar, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh). Sensitization of field officials and stakeholders have been made in this regard.

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