

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1710
TO BE ANSWERED ON 08.03.2016

Special Tiger Protection Force

1710. SHRI RAJU SHETTY:

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

- (a) whether the Government proposes to make amendments in the guidelines of Special Tiger Protection Force (STPF) for deployment of personnel from forest department instead of local police;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of funds released to National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) for strengthening STPF by equipping them with arms; and
- (d) the other steps taken by the Government to check illegal trade of wild life?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

- (a) No Sir. There is no proposal to make amendments in the existing guidelines of Special Tiger Protection Force (STPF) since both options either of Police personnel (option-I) or of forest personnel (option-II) is available.
- (b) Question does not arise.
- (c) Annual budgetary allocation for the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Project Tiger provides funding support to tiger reserves for various activities, which *inter alia*, includes funding for raising, arming and deploying of STPF also.
- (d) The steps taken by the Government of India to check illegal trade of wildlife is at **Annexure-I**.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (d) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1710 ON SPECIAL TIGER PROTECTION FORCE DUE FOR REPLY ON 08.03.2016

Measures taken by Government to protect wild animals from Hunting and Illegal Trade

Legal protection under section 9 read with 51 against hunting – Hunting of wild animals is prohibited but for exceptional circumstances.

The Wildlife Act prescribes stringent punishment for Hunting and Illegal trade. These are as follows:

i) For hunting and illegal trade in wild animals belonging to Schedule I and Part II of Schedule II – Minimum 3 years imprisonment extendable to 7 years and a minimum fine of Rs. 10,000/-

ii) For hunting and illegal trade in wild animals belonging to other Schedules – Imprisonment upto 3 years or a fine upto Rs. 25,000/- or both. Such offences can also be compounded, the amount not exceeding Rs.25,000/-.

iii) For offences in relation to zoos, the punishment prescribed is imprisonment for up to six months or a fine of up to Rs. 2,000/- or with both.

iv) In addition to the above punishments, the court trying the offence may also order the forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon to the State Govt., cancel any wildlife licence or permit held by the person, as well as cancel the Arms licence and debar for an Arms licence for a period of 5 years.

v) There is also a provision for **Forfeiture of Property** of offenders who are awarded sentence of 3 years or more of imprisonment.

vi) *As per the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act, 2006, punishment for offences relating to core areas of tiger reserves has been made more stringent:-*

(a) Under Section 51 (1C), any person, who commits an offence in relation to the core area of a tiger reserve or where the offence relate to hunting in the tiger reserve or altering the boundaries of the tiger reserve, such offence shall be punishable on first conviction with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than three years but may extend to seven years, and also with fine which shall not be less than fifty thousand rupees but may extend to two lakh rupees; and in the event of a second or subsequent conviction with imprisonment for a term of not less than seven years and also with fine which shall not be less than five lakh rupees but may extend to fifty lakh rupees.

(b) Whoever abets any offence punishable under sub-section (1C) shall, if the act abetted is committed in consequence of the abetment, be punishable with the punishment provided for that offence.

Penalties under Custom Act, 1962

Section 3(2) of the Imports and Exports (Control) Act, 1947 provides that all items (including fauna and flora) covered in the Import-Export Policy will be deemed to be covered under Section 11 of the Customs Act, 1962. As a consequence, all cases of violation of the Import-Export Policy in general, and CITES in particular, constitute an offence under the Customs Act and are dealt with by the Custom Officials.