



REPORT NO.
392

**PARLIAMENT OF INDIA
RAJYA SABHA**

**DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE
ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND
CLIMATE CHANGE**

THREE HUNDRED NINETY SECOND REPORT

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2025-26) OF THE MINISTRY
OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(DEMAND No. 28)**

*(Presented to the Rajya Sabha on 25th March, 2025)
(Laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 25th March, 2025)*

भारतीय संसद, राज्य सभा



Parliament of India, Rajya Sabha

**Rajya Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi
March, 2025/ Phalguna, 1946 (Saka)**

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COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE
(2024-25)
(Constituted w.e.f. 26th September, 2024)

1. Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita - Chairman

RAJYA SABHA

2. Shri Narayanasa K. Bhandage
3. Shri Damodar Rao Divakonda
4. Ms. Indu Bala Goswami
5. Dr. Wanweiroy Kharlukhi
6. Shri Parimal Nathwani
7. Shri Sharad Pawar
8. Shri Jairam Ramesh
9. *Shri Sujeet Kumar
10. *Vacant*

LOK SABHA

11. Shrimati Sajda Ahmed
12. Shri Alfred Kanngam S. Arthur
13. Shri Pradyut Bordoloi
14. Shri Phani Bhusan Choudhury
15. Shri Biplab Kumar Deb
16. Shri Vamsi Krishna Gaddam
17. Shri Tapir Gao
18. Adv K. Francis George
19. Shri Eswarasamy K.
20. Shri Mahesh Kashyap
21. Dr. Anand Kumar
22. Shri Mohibbullah
23. Shri Jagdambika Pal
24. Shri Jashubhai Bhilubhai Rathva
25. Shri Trivendra Singh Rawat
26. Shrimati Himadri Singh
27. Shri Tejasvi Surya
28. Shri Durai Vaiko
29. Shri Yaduveer Wadiyar
30. Shri Balwant Baswant Wankhade
31. Shri Akhilesh Yadav

SECRETARIAT

Dr. K.S. Somashekhar, Additional Secretary

Smt. Kusum Sudhir, Joint Secretary

Shri Arun Kumar, Director

Shri Rajiv Saxena, Deputy Secretary

Shri Deepak Bhoria, Under Secretary

Shri Vaibhav Jain, Committee Officer

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change, having been authorised by the Committee, present this 'Three Hundred Ninety Second Report' on Demands for Grants (2025-26) of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

2. The Committee considered the Demands for Grants (2025-26) pertaining to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in its meeting held on the 19th February, 2025. It held detailed discussion with the Secretary and other officers of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

3. The Committee expresses its thanks to the officers of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for providing the material and information, to enable it to examine the Demands for Grants of the Ministry for the year 2025-26.

4. The Committee considered and adopted the Report in its meeting held on the 19th March, 2025.

NEW DELHI;
19th March, 2025
Phalgun 28, 1946 (Saka)

(BHUBANESWAR KALITA)
Chairman,
Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science
and Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change,
Rajya Sabha.

ACRONYMS

CAAQMS	Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations
DWH	Development of Wildlife Habitats
EEAT	Environment Education, Awareness and Training
EEP	Environmental Education Programme
EFC	Expenditure Finance Committee
ESZs	Eco-Sensitive Zones
MoEF&CC	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
NANMN	National Ambient Noise Monitoring Network
NAMP	National Air Quality Monitoring Programme
NAPCC	National Action Plan on Climate Change
NCAP	National Clean Air Programme
NCM	National Coastal Mission
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NEHP	National Environmental Health Profile
NGC	National Green Corps
NGT	National Green Tribunal
NTCA	National Tiger Conservation Authority
PA	Protected Area
PCCs	Pollution Control Committees
SAPCC	State Action Plan for Climate Change
SMRs	Small Modular Reactors
SPCBs	State Pollution Control Boards
UAs	Urban Agglomerations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UTs	Union Territories

REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) is the nodal agency in the administrative structure of the Central Government for planning, promoting, coordinating and overseeing environmental, ecological, forestry and wildlife policies and programmes. Its main activities include conservation and survey of natural resources including flora, fauna, forests, wildlife, aquatic bodies and water resources and eco-systems, prevention and control of pollution and management of hazardous substances, protection of the environment and forests, including their biodiversity, mitigation and adaptation to climate change through measures that include afforestation, regeneration of degraded areas, and adoption of cleaner technologies, and promoting sustainable development and better environmental governance while protecting human, plants and animals life, health and welfare.

1.2 These objectives are well supported by a set of legislative and regulatory measures, aimed at the preservation, conservation and protection of the environment. Besides the legislative measures, a National Conservation Strategy and Policy Statement on Environment and Development, 1992, National Forest Policy, 1988, a Policy Statement on Abatement of Pollution, 1992 and a National Environment Policy, 2006 also guide the Ministry's work.

1.3 The main tools used to discharge its mandate include, *inter alia*, conducting surveys; collecting, compiling and disseminating data and information; undertaking scientific research, extension services and analyses; carrying out impact assessment of developmental projects and programmes; regulating use of natural resources; undertaking regeneration programmes; extending technical, scientific, financial and administrative support to organisations and institutions in the subject fields; imparting education, training, building capacity and generating awareness among stakeholders and the public at large; and promoting international cooperation through bilateral, regional and multilateral initiatives in environment and ecology.

1.4 The institutional set up of the Ministry includes a number of Directorates and Divisions assembled around the main thematic sectors of environment and ecology, forestry and wildlife, afforestation and eco-development. The Ministry has 20 Regional Offices; ten Attached/Subordinate Offices (e.g. Botanical, Zoological and Forests Surveys of India, Directorate of Forestry Education, Indira Gandhi National Forestry Academy, National Green Tribunal, Wildlife Crime Control Bureau etc.); Boards and Authorities (e.g. Central Pollution Control Board, National Biodiversity Authority, National Tiger Conservation Authority, Central Zoo Authority) and Autonomous Institutions (e.g. Indian Council for Forestry Research and Education, Wildlife Institute of India etc.). Provision has been made in the Demand for Grants for the year 2025-26 for its attached/ subordinate/ autonomous organisations and other bodies.

FUNCTIONING AND ACTIVITIES OF THE MINISTRY

1.5 The Mission of Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change is to plan, promote, co-ordinate and oversee the implementation of India's environmental and forestry policies and programmes related to conservation of the country's natural resources including its lakes and rivers, its biodiversity, forests and wildlife, ensuring the welfare of animals, and the prevention and abatement of pollution. The Ministry seeks to ensure inclusive economic growth guided by the principles of sustainable development and enhancement of human well-being.

STRUCTURE OF BUDGETARY SUPPORT

1.6 Consequent upon the decision to do away with the practice of classifying expenditure as 'Plan' and 'Non-Plan' the focus of budgeting and expenditure classification has shifted to revenue and capital expenditure from financial year 2017-18. The entire budget has been classified into Schemes and Non-Schemes; Scheme component includes Central Sector Schemes and Centrally Sponsored Schemes; and Non-Scheme includes Establishment expenditure of Secretariat & Attached/Subordinate offices and Other Central Expenditure of Autonomous Bodies, Statutory/Regulatory Bodies and other Bodies. The revised structure of budgetary support for Schemes/Non-Schemes is as follows:

A. Schemes:

I. Central Sector Schemes:

1. Environmental Knowledge and Capacity Building
2. National Coastal Management Programme
3. Environment Education, Awareness, Research and Skill Development
4. Control of Pollution

II. Centrally Sponsored Schemes:

1. National Mission for a Green India
2. Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats
3. Conservation of Natural Resources and Ecosystems

B. Non-Schemes:

- I. **Establishment Expenditure** – Secretariat, Attached/Subordinate Offices
- II. **Other Central Expenditure** – Autonomous Bodies, Statutory & Regulatory Bodies and Other Bodies under the Ministry

1.7 The Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science & Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change considered the Demands for Grants 2025-26 of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in its meeting held on the 19th February 2025.

2. **Budgetary Details for the Financial Year 2024-25 and Allocation for 2025-26**

2.1 The following table presents the overall budgetary details for the year 2024-25 and allocation made for the year 2025-26 in respect of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change:-

Sl. No.	Scheme / Organisation	2024-25			2025-26
		BE	RE	AE (as on 31.01.2025)	BE
A	Non Scheme	1542.63	1505.02	1125.33	1632.26
I	Establishment Expenditure	959.63	881.08	647.87	945.76
a	Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change	379.63	313.14	195.85	304.95
b	Attached/Subordinate Offices	595.00	575.94	452.02	640.81
1	Regional Offices	61.00	60.00	43.97	65.84
2	National Afforestation and Eco-Development Board	7.50	7.50	2.21	6.67
3	Forest Survey of India	46.00	51.93	41.78	54.13

4	Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy	71.00	76.00	55.65	83.80
5	State Forest Service and Rangers College	33.00	29.00	21.63	30.43
6	Wildlife Crime Control Bureau	13.50	12.50	10.64	13.86
7	Botanical Survey of India	127.00	115.47	91.79	136.06
8	Zoological Survey of India	124.00	120.00	99.46	129.35
9	National Museum of Natural History	21.00	21.00	16.68	23.67
10	National Green Tribunal (NGT)	53.00	44.00	32.07	52.68
11	National Zoological Park (including Gate Receipts)	38.00	38.54	36.14	54.32
	Less: Gate Receipts	-15.00	-8.00	0.00	-10.00
12	National Authority	463.25	463.25	286.76	463.25
	Less: Amount met from National Compensatory Afforestation Fund	-463.25	-463.25	-286.76	-463.25
II	Other Central Expenditure	583.00	623.94	477.46	686.50
a	Assistance to Autonomous Bodies	391.00	437.00	335.88	454.62
1	GB Pant Himalayan Institute of Environment and Development	35.00	38.50	31.75	38.00
2	Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education	300.00	337.50	243.17	354.00
3	Indian Institute of Forest Management	13.00	13.00	13.00	10.30
4	Wildlife Institute of India	43.00	48.00	47.96	52.32
b	Statutory and Regulatory Bodies	192.00	186.94	141.58	231.88
1	Central Pollution Control Board	113.00	112.00	83.28	126.00
2	Central Zoo Authority	12.00	11.85	9.20	13.20
3	National Biodiversity Authority	16.00	16.00	15.00	16.95
4	National Tiger Conservation Authority	35.00	30.86	19.55	36.75
5	Commission for Air Quality Management	16.00	16.23	14.55	38.98
B	SCHEME	1787.74	1620.94	587.15	1780.56
III	Central Sector Schemes	1074.24	1030.94	144.66	1060.56
a	Environmental Knowledge and Capacity Building	78.34	99.94	77.06	102.70
1	Forestry Training and Capacity Building	10.00	9.94	8.72	12.20
2	Eco-Task Force	68.34	90.00	68.34	90.50
b	National Coastal Management Programme	50.00	8.00	1.10	2.00

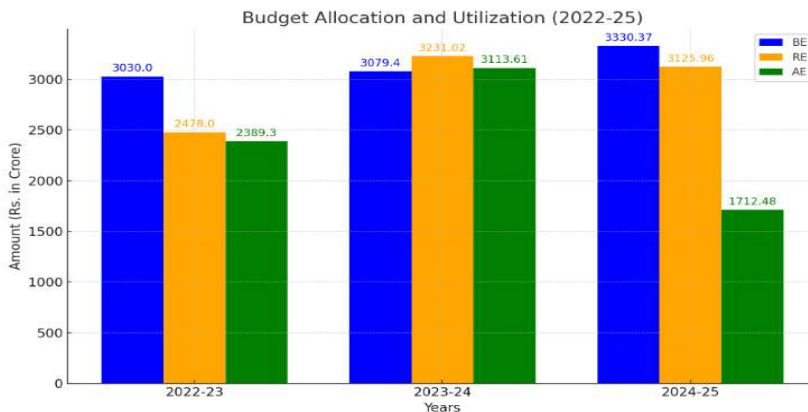
1	National Coastal Mission	50.00	8.00	1.10	2.00
c	Decision Support System for Environmental Awareness, Policy, Planning and Outcome Evaluation (Environment Education, Awareness, Research and Skill Development)	87.40	65.00	59.28	101.96
1	Environmental Education Programme	55.00	41.00	40.10	60.00
2	Swachhta Action Plan	4.50	3.26	0.00	4.50
3	Environmental Information, Awareness, Capacity Building and livelihood Programme	22.90	17.11	16.75	32.46
4	Environmental Research & Development	5.00	3.63	2.43	5.00
d	Control of Pollution	858.50	858.00	7.22	853.90
IV	Centrally Sponsored Schemes	713.50	590.00	442.49	720.00
a	National Mission for a Green India	220.00	160.00	124.85	220.00
1	Green India Mission-National Afforestation Programme	170.00	124.00	103.33	170.00
2	Forest Fire Prevention and Management	50.00	36.00	21.52	50.00
b	Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats	450.00	400.00	298.29	450.00
1	Project Tiger & Elephant	290.00	245.00	169.65	290.00
2	Development of Wildlife Habitats	160.00	155.00	128.64	160.00
c	Conservation of Natural Resources and Ecosystems	43.50	30.00	19.35	50.00
1	Conservation of Aquatic Ecosystems	38.50	26.50	17.82	40.00
2	Biodiversity Conservation (Biosphere Reserve)	5.00	3.50	1.53	10.00
V	Actual Recoveries	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	Grand Total	3330.37	3125.96	1712.48	3412.82

2.2 The Committee also sought information from the Ministry regarding budgetary allocations made to it during the financial years 2022-23 and 2023-24 and the actual utilization in these years. A comparative statement indicating the B.E., R.E. & Actual Utilisation during the years the years 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 along with a graphical representation is as under :-

(Rs. in crore)

Component	2022-23			2023-24			2024-25		
	BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE (up to 31.01.2025)

Scheme	1893.26	1369.45	1303.87	1707.56	1580.80	1560.60	1787.74	1620.94	587.15
Non-Scheme	1136.74	1108.55	1085.43	1371.84	1650.22	1553.01	1542.63	1505.02	1125.33
Total	3030.00	2478.00	2389.30	3079.40	3231.02	3113.61	3330.37	3125.96	1712.48
Expenditure % of RE			96.42			96.37			54.78



2.3 The Committee observes that the Ministry had been able to utilize more than 96% of the allocated funds during the year 2022-23 and 2023-24. In 2024-25, against the BE allocation of Rs.3330.00 crore, a reduced RE allocation of Rs.3125.96 was made to the Ministry. However, the Committee is constrained to note that the actual expenditure of the Ministry upto 31.1.2025 was only Rs.1712.48 crore which is merely 54.78% of the RE allocation. During the presentation made before the Committee on 19.2.2025, the Secretary of the Ministry further informed the Committee that the Ministry has utilized 69% of the funds as on that date. However, the Committee is of the view that the utilization of funds by the Ministry during 2024-25 is not satisfactory. With hardly 40 days left in the completion of the financial year, the Ministry is yet to make use of more than 30% of the funds allocated to it. This is in sharp contrast to the utilization of funds by the Ministry during the past two financial years when the Ministry was able to utilize more than 96% of the budgetary allocations. The Committee is of the view that the Ministry must make proactive efforts to optimally utilize the funds made available to it during the financial year 2024-25.

Bare Minimum Requirements in Budgetary Allocations for sustaining Key Programmes

2.4 During the meeting of the Committee held on 19th February 2025, the Secretary of Ministry highlighted certain challenges in the Budget allocation in key programmes of the Ministry. The Committee was informed about the allocations proposed by the Ministry in BE 2025-26 and the actual allocations made in some Centrally Sponsored schemes and Non-Scheme programmes during the year. In response to a query regarding the need for additional funds required by the Ministry for the above schemes/programmes, the Ministry also provided the justification for the bare minimum requirements in budgetary allocations projected by it for sustaining certain key programmes. The above details are as under:-

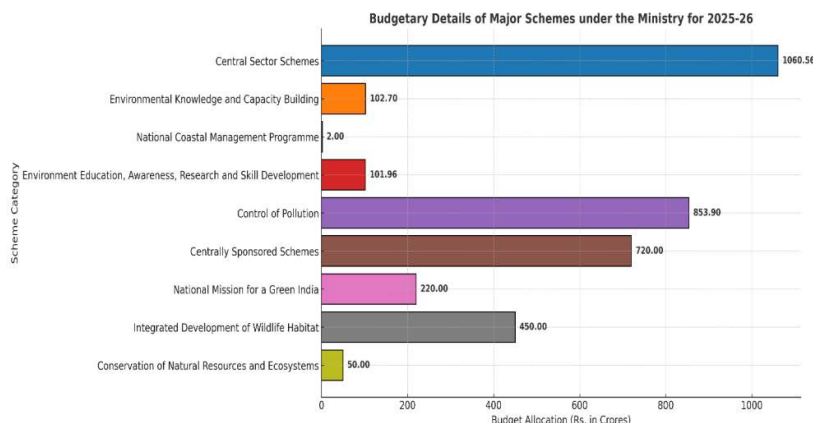
Sl. No.	Scheme/Organisation	BE 2025-26 (Proposed)	BE 2025-26 (Allocated)*	Difference [Allocated - Proposed]	Justification for the Bare minimum requirements
Centrally Sponsored Schemes					
1	Green India Mission – National Afforestation Programme	274.00	170.00	-104.00	As per the EFC Outlay.
2	Forest Fire Prevention and Management	61.61	50.00	-11.61	As per the EFC Outlay.
3	Project Tiger & Elephant	405.12	290.00	-115.12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on codified provisions of Wildlife (Protection) Act and NTCA guidelines. • Project Tiger - 57 Tiger Reserves + Two more likely + Project Cheetah sites. • Growing Human Tiger Conflicts + Increasing requirements for Compensation/ex-gratia to victims of wildlife attack.
4	Development of Wildlife Habitat	183.15	160.00	-23.15	• Management of Protected Areas (National Parks/ Wildlife Sanctuaries/ Community Reserved and Conservation Reserves).
Non-Scheme					
1.	Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy (IGNFA)	106.32	83.80	-22.52	New Hostel and New Academic Block.
2.	Botanical Survey of India (BSI)	251.05	136.06	-114.99	Construction of Directorate Administrative-cum-Auditorium Building and BGIR Landscaping Work.
3.	Zoological Survey of India (ZSI)	250.00	129.35	-120.65	For establishment of Aquatic Ecology Laboratory.
4.	National Green Tribunal (NGT)	168.61	52.68	-115.93	

2.5 The Committee takes note of the challenges projected by the Ministry in Budget allocation in Key programmes and the bare minimum budgetary requirements projected by it for sustaining certain key programmes. Though the Committee is in agreement with the requirements projected by the Ministry, the utilization of funds by the Ministry in 2024-25 are not encouraging enough for the Committee to make any positive recommendations in this regard. The Committee would, however, like to recommend that in 2025-26, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change should make proactive efforts to ensure that the physical targets of the Ministry in

respect of the above schemes/programmes are on schedule and the allocation made at BE is utilised to the maximum so that it is on a firm ground to seek additional funds at the Supplementary and RE stage in respect of the schemes/programmes stated above.

MAJOR THRUST AREAS

2.6 The major thrust areas are categorized under several Central Sector Schemes and Centrally Sponsored Schemes. The budgetary details of Major Schemes under this Ministry for 2025-26 are as under:-



CENTRAL SECTOR SCHEMES

3. ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION, AWARENESS, RESEARCH AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

3.1 In BE 2025-26, an allocation of Rs.101.96 crore has been made under the Environment Education, Awareness, Research and Skill Development, which is one of the Central Sector Schemes of the Ministry. Environmental Education Programme (EEP) is one of the components of scheme. The objective of 'Environment Education Programme (EEP)' is to sensitize children/ youth on issues related to environment and to motivate them to adopt sustainable lifestyle through varied pedagogical initiatives like workshops, projects, exhibitions, campaigns, competitions, nature camps, summer vacation programmes, etc. This programme leverages on the Eco-clubs already formed under National Green Corps (NGC) programme of earlier Environment Education, Awareness and Training (EEAT) scheme, in addition to targeting Youth Clubs and other such clubs/ units/ groups formed under various programmes/ schemes of the Government. The programme aims to supplement the knowledge that the children and young generation gain from classrooms with experience from nature and hands-on activities so that they are motivated to think critically and form their habits in such a way as to live in harmony with nature.

3.2 The physical and financial performance under the scheme is as under :-

Performance Review – Physical

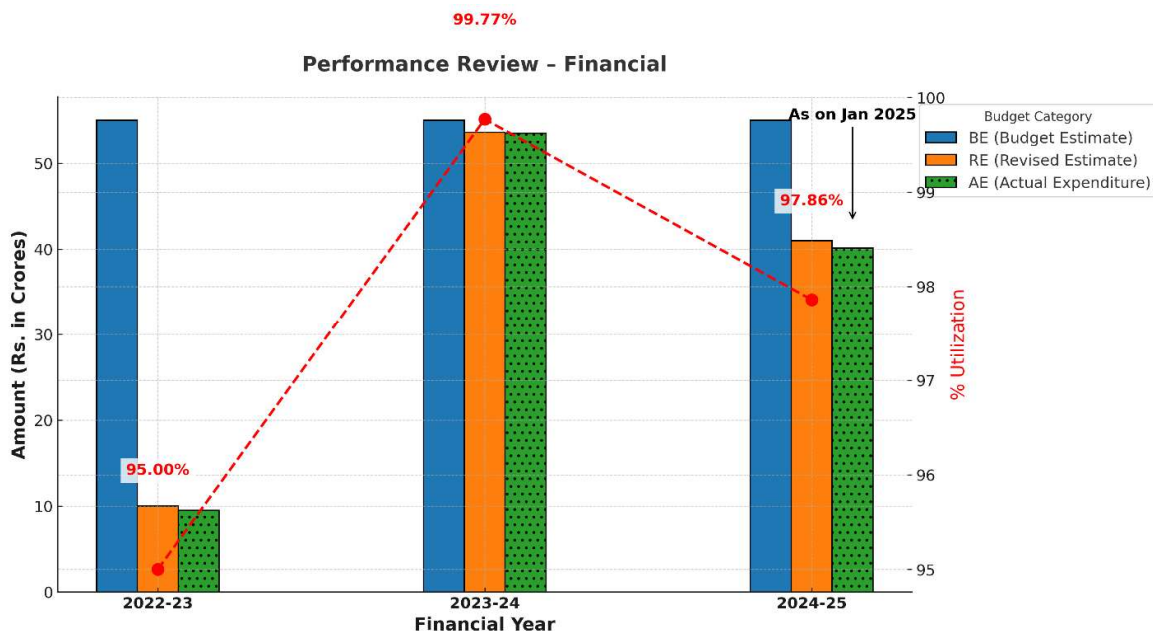
Year	Objectives/ Outcomes	Targets	Achievements
2024-25	To sensitize children/ youth, on issues related to environment and to motivate them to adopt sustainable lifestyle, through varied	Organization of 300 workshops/ projects /exhibitions/ campaigns/ competitions for Eco-club children across	As on 15.01.2025, a total of 11,397 activities (workshops, exhibitions, campaigns, competitions, nature camps, etc.) were organized by IAs for Eco-

Year	Objectives/ Outcomes	Targets	Achievements
	pedagogical initiatives like workshops, projects, exhibitions, campaigns, competitions, nature camps, summer vacation programmes, etc.	<p>various State/UTs.</p> <p>Participation of 30,000 children and youth through various initiatives for the promotion of sustainable lifestyle.</p> <p>Number of States/ UTs covered – 20</p>	<p>clubs in their respective States/UTs.</p> <p>As on 15.01.2025, participation of 11,15,541 children/ youth were reported through the EEP portal. Besides under <i>Ek Ped Maake Naam</i> campaign plantation of 2,22,591 saplings were conducted through Eco-clubs and 4,11,711 students participated in the <i>Eco-Creativity and Innovation Hackathon</i> with 1,90,033 ideas submission.</p> <p>As on 15.01.2025, EEP 2024-25 was implemented in 20 States/ UTs. The cumulative number States/UTs covered under EEP, since its launch, were extended to 21.</p>

Performance Review – Financial

(Rs. in crore)

Financial Year	BE	RE	Actual Expenditure	% Utilization
2022-23	55	10	9.50	95.00%
2023-24	55	53.60	53.48	99.77%
2024-25	55	41	40.12 (<i>sanctioned as on January 2025</i>)	97.86%



3.3 During the meeting of the Committee, the Committee was informed that on 5th June, 2024, on the occasion of World Environment Day 2024, a campaign 'एकपेड़माँकेनाम' (Plant4Mother) was launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister. The campaign aimed to restore degraded land, combat desertification and enhance resilience to drought. It involved planting of indigenous species to improve the survival of trees and build a resilient ecosystem. The Committee was informed that the target was to plant 140 crore trees by 31st March, 2025 and that 118 crore had been planted as on 19th February 2025.

3.4 The Committee is of the opinion that the launching of the campaign to plant trees on the occasion of World Environment Day is indeed laudable. The Committee feels that the campaign to plant a tree in honour of a mother would certainly create a lasting legacy that nurtures both the environment and a greener, prosperous future. The Committee notes that 118 crore had already been planted as on 19th February 2025 and hopes that the Ministry would be able to achieve its target of planting 140 crore trees by 31st March 2025.

3.5 The Committee would, however, like to point out that although a number of plantation activities are undertaken on various occasions, the mortality rate of such plants is very high. There is a need not only to plant the trees but also to ensure that once planted, they are looked after well and continue to survive and grow. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Ministry should not only undertake plantation activities but should also ensure that the survival rate of these plants remains high so that they continue to contribute to the environment and the society. This also needs to be emphasized to the youth/children etc. when organizing workshops, exhibitions, campaigns, competitions etc. by the concerned Central/State/UT authorities. There is also a need for audit of the plantation activities, so that the allocations made in this regard are utilized optimally.

3.6 The Committee is also of the view that Centrally-funded schemes are crucial because they provide funds to other States for improving their systems. Facilitating research and development and investing for the same are extremely important for the development of any nation and for a developing country like India, the critical importance of environmental education, awareness, Research and Development cannot be overemphasized, as education and awareness only can help finding practical solutions to problems of environmental protection and management and for developing policies, strategies, action plans and in better management and conservation of natural resources. The Committee feels that the allocation of Rs. 101.96 crore allocated for

‘Environment Education, Awareness, Research and Skill Development’ is not adequate and the Ministry should consider allocating additional funds to this head.

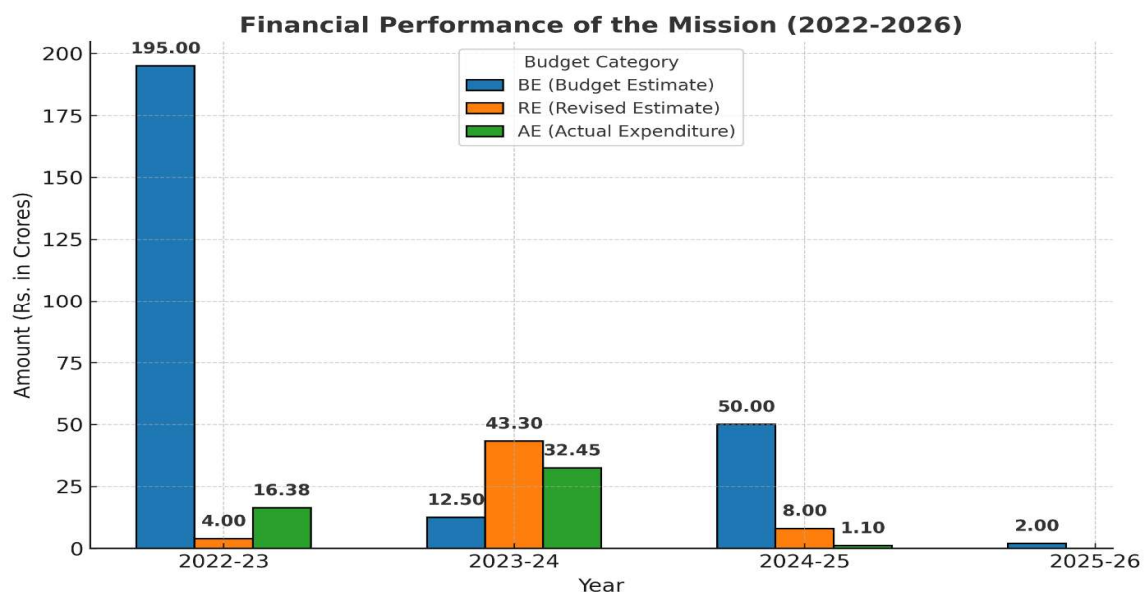
4. NATIONAL COASTAL MISSION

4.1 National Coastal Mission, under the National Coastal Management Programme, aims to conserve, protect and manage coastal living and non-living resources, safeguarding coastal communities by reducing climate induced-risks and vulnerabilities through a combination of the adaptation and mitigation measures. National Coastal Mission is an ongoing scheme for the period till 2026. The Ministry informed that the Upscaling of the ongoing national Scheme is under consideration.

4.2 The financial performance of the Mission during the last three years is as under:

(Rs. in crore)

2022-23			2023-24			2024-25			2025-26
BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE (as on 31.01.2025)	BE
195.00	4.00	16.38	12.50	43.30	32.45	50.00	8.00	1.10	2.00



4.3 The Committee noted that the budgetary allocation under National Coastal Mission has shown inconsistencies over the last few years. The allocation for this Mission has decreased drastically from Rs.50.00 crore in BE 2024-25 to Rs.8.00 crore in RE 2024-25. The Ministry has been able to utilize only Rs.1.10 crore by 31st January 2025. The Committee desired to know the reasons for this reduction and how the reduction will impact the ongoing coastal management projects? In response, the Committee was informed by the Ministry that the ongoing National Coastal Mission (NCM) had a sanction outlay of Rs. 87.00 crore for the period 2021-26. The allocation of FY 2025-26 is to meet the balance refund of the activities under progress. The upscaling of NCM is proposed for Rs. 1900.00 crore for 5 years period with financial support in form of loan from World Bank. Cabinet note in this regard is under submission. Rs.50.00 crore was allocated in FY 2024-25 to meet the requirement arising from the proposed upscaling of NCM scheme. However, due to General Election, the proposal could not be considered and to maintain financial prudence, at RE stage, Rs. 42.00 crore was surrendered. The RE allocation for FY 2024-25 was only Rs. 8.00

crore. Upon approval of the proposed extension of NCM, additional fund under supplementary grant will be solicited.

4.4 The Committee is not convinced with the reply furnished by the Ministry with regard to the allocations made to the National Coastal Mission during the last few years. The allocation was reduced from Rs.196.00 crore (BE) to Rs.4.00 crore (RE) in 2022-23. In 2023-24, the allocation was increased from Rs.12.50 crore (BE) to Rs.43.30 crore (RE). In 2024-25, the allocation was again reduced from Rs.50.00 crore (BE) to Rs. 8.00 crore (RE), out of which the Ministry has been able to spend only 13.8% i.e. Rs.1.10 crore upto 31.1.2025. These figures amply bring out that the funds under this scheme are being allocated and utilized in an adhoc and unplanned manner. The Committee is of the view that, keeping in view the importance of the Mission, the Ministry should holistically plan the execution of the scheme and ensure that the funds are suitably allocated and optimally utilized.

5. CONTROL OF POLLUTION

5.1 The Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change administers the Central Sector Scheme-‘Control of Pollution’ to curb environmental pollution since 2018-19. For the FY 2025-26, the total budget (under BE) of the scheme is Rs.853.9 crore. The main objective of the Control of Pollution scheme is to monitor air quality across the country and take appropriate air pollution mitigation measures, besides monitoring water quality and noise levels in the country. The components under the scheme are as under:

- (a) Assistance for Abatement of Pollution to weaker SPCBs/PCCs-Under this component State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/Pollution Control Committee (PCCs) are supported to meet the expenditure requirements for taking pollution abatement activity including pollution assessment (Source monitoring, monitoring of ambient air, water and noise), technical studies for R&D, survey and documentation for creation of environmental database and consultation in the area of pollution abatement of air, water & noise, scientific research and studies on issues of waste management, inventorisation of wastes, training and mass awareness, education, seminars/workshops/conference, lab upgradation/procurement of equipment, E- Governance and IT applications including online consent management, online emission/effluent monitoring systems, development of IT infrastructure.
- (b) National Clean Air Programme (NCAP): The National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) was launched by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in January 2019 with an aim to improve air quality in 130 cities (Non-Attainment cities and Million-Plus cities) in 24 States/Union Territories (UTs) by engaging all stakeholders. The NCAP envisages reduction by 20-30% in PM₁₀ concentrations by 2024-25 over baseline in the year 2017-18. Target has been revised to achieve reduction in PM₁₀ level up to 40% over baseline in the year 2019-20 or achievement of national ambient air quality standards (60 microgram/cubic meter) by 2025-26. Annual PM₁₀ reduction target of 4-15% has been assigned to each city to improve air quality through implementation of City Action Plans. The Ministry has issued guidelines for release and utilization of funds under the sub-component. Further, in case of 48 Million-Plus cities /Urban Agglomerations funded under 15th Finance Commission Air Quality Grant, 15% reduction in PM₁₀ concentrations and 15% improvement in good days (Air Quality Index<200) w.r.t. previous year have been considered.
- (c) Following Components come under **Environmental Monitoring Network Programme:-**

- i. Operation and Maintenance of National Air Quality Monitoring Programme (NAMP) stations
 - ii. Operation and Maintenance of Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS)
 - iii. National Ambient Noise Monitoring Network (NANMN) – strengthening and establishment of New Stations in Million Plus Cities
 - iv. National Water Monitoring Programme (NWMP)
- (d) Research and Outreach Programmes - The Ministry is providing funds to the projects which have impact for prevention and control of pollution. Under this component of the scheme, the Ministry proposes to provide funds to the Research and Development (R&D) projects, which can advance emerging technologies and solutions in control and prevention of pollution and implementing decision support systems. This component also includes developing indigenous facilities for certification, testing and calibration of air quality monitoring equipment, and National Environmental Health Profile (NEHP) study. NEHP study aims to assess impact of air pollution on human health in selected cities across the country.

5.2 The financial performance of the Scheme during the last three years is as under:

(Rs. in crore)

2022-23			2023-24			2024-25			2025-26
BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE (as on 31.01.2025)	BE
460.00	600.00	599.91	756.00	847.50	845.37	858.50	858.00	7.22	853.90

5.3 The Committee was surprised to observe that out of the RE 2024-25 allocation of Rs.858.00 crore for ‘Control of Pollution’, only an amount of Rs.7.22 crore was spent upto 31.1.2025. The Committee desired to know the reasons therefor from the Ministry. In their reply, the Ministry informed that the utilisation of majority of the funds in the scheme for the financial year 2024-25 could not be made till now as the approval for the continuation of the ‘Control of Pollution’ scheme till FY 2025-26 is awaited. Planning for disbursement and utilization of the funds are already in place and will be executed as soon as approval is received. Further, the Ministry intends to spend the budget of Rs.853.00 crore for FY 2025-26 under Control of Pollution Scheme under various components of the scheme as per the approval.

5.4 The Committee is of the view that pollution, whether it be air, water or noise, has gone beyond permissible limits during the last few years and has serious consequences for the health and well being of the citizens of the country. Air pollution has assumed gigantic proportions and has become a national issue. Although Delhi has been in the news because of its ever-deteriorating air quality, other cities in the country are also not left behind and are experiencing high AQI levels. In such a scenario, the Committee is shocked to note that amount to the tune of Rs. 858.00 crore allocated for ‘Control of Pollution’, which is 27.44% of the annual RE allocation of the Ministry, remains unutilized since the approval for continuation of Control of Pollution Scheme till 2025-26, is awaited, even at the fag end of the financial year. The rising environmental pollution in the country not only results into a number of pollution related human diseases and health conditions but negatively impact our ecology too. The scenario of air pollution in the country is indeed very grim and has been affecting

one and all. At a time when the Ministry is required to address the grave and critical challenge of deteriorating air quality, the Ministry has not been able to decide the continuation of the concerned scheme, as a result of which not even 1% of the funds allocated for the scheme have been utilized so far. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Ministry needs to introspect and take a serious note of the reasons for this gross underutilization.

CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEMES

6. Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats

6.1 Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats comprises of two Sub-Schemes namely 'Development of Wildlife Habitats' and 'Project Tiger and Elephant'. The financial performance of the Scheme during the last three years is as under:

(Rs. in crore)

Financial Year	BE	RE	Actual Expenditure	% Utilization
2022-23	510.00	305.00	247.16	81%
2023-24	491.80	350.00	349.96	99.99%
2024-25	450.00	400.00	298.29 (as on 31.01.2025)	74.57%
2025-26	450.00	--	--	--

6.2 The Committee notes that the financial performance of the Ministry under this scheme had been satisfactory during the last three years. The Ministry was able to spend 81% and 99.99% of the allocated funds during 2022-23 and 2023-24. During 2024-25, the Ministry has been able to spend nearly 75% of the funds upto 31st January 2025. The Committee hopes that the Ministry would be able to fully utilize the allocations under this head by the end of the financial year.

Development of Wildlife Habitats

6.3 The 'Development of Wildlife Habitats' (DWH) is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme. The overall objective of the scheme is conservation and management of PAs, recovery of endangered species, mitigating man-animal conflict, and voluntary relocation of families for creating inviolate space for wild animals, healthier ecosystem and repository as source for gene pool. The Protected Area (PA) network in country comprises of 106 National Parks, 573 Wildlife Sanctuaries, 123 Conservation Reserves and 220 community reserves extending over an area of 1,78,640.69 sq.km., which is 5.43% of the geographical area of the country. The components of the scheme are (i) Support to Protected areas, (ii) Protection of Wildlife outside Protected Areas and (iii) Recovery Programmes for saving Critically Endangered Species and habitats.

Project Tiger & Elephant

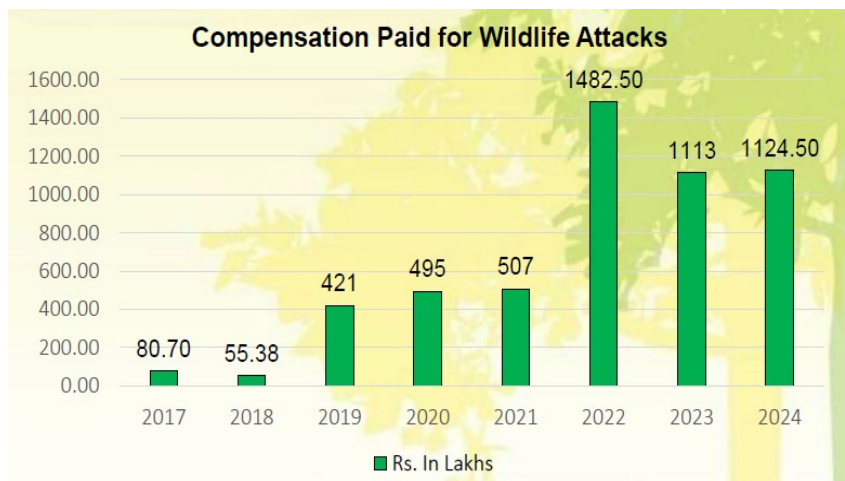
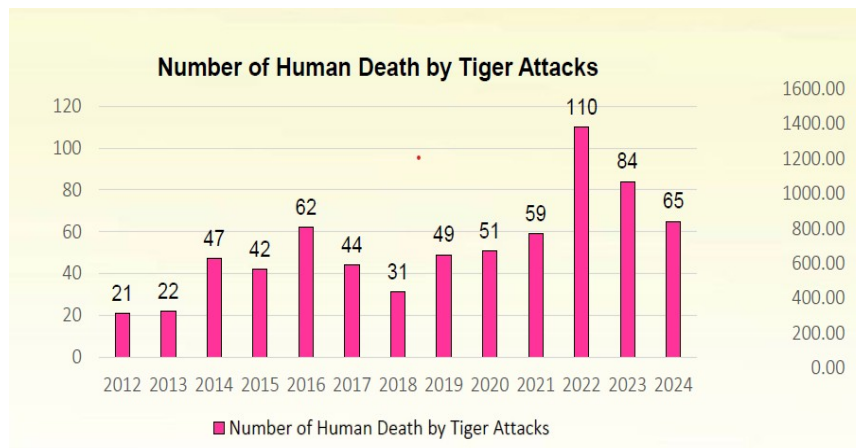
6.4 The Ministry provides financial assistance to the States/UTs under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme Project Tiger & Elephant for the protection of elephants, their habitats & corridors, welfare of captive elephant and mitigation of human elephant conflict.

6.5 The Committee observes that state governments receive funds under centrally sponsored schemes such as Project Tiger and Elephant and the scheme for Development of Wildlife Habitats for the maintenance of protected areas notified

under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. The Committee is of the view that such protected areas are integral to conservation activities and recommends that the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change must impress upon that all the state governments to take immediate action to notify Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs) around all protected areas under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to ensure that habitats are protected in a holistic manner.

Human-Animal Conflict

6.6 During the meeting held on 19th February 2025, the Additional Secretary of the Ministry, while making presentation, informed the Committee regarding the number of Tigers, Tiger Reserves, funds allocated for conservation of Tigers, number of human death by Tiger attacks and compensation paid for Wildlife attacks. The following charts indicates the number of human death by Tiger attacks and compensation paid for Wildlife attacks:



6.7 The Ministry brought out that the man-animal conflict was increasing day by day. Although the Ministry had been making efforts very assiduously to reduce such cases, yet they were falling short of the funds in terms of compensation for wildlife attacks and that the Ministry required additional funds to the tune of Rs.70 to 80 crore for that purpose.

6.8 In the note submitted to the Committee also, the Ministry brought out that the Budget Estimate (2024-25) of Project Tiger & Elephant has been reduced from ₹290.00 crore to ₹245.00 crore at R.E.. Therefore, financial assistance has not been given to many major States which impacted elephant conservation immensely. It is important to note that there is considerable challenge due to human-elephant conflict. On an average 500 humans and 100 elephant casualties are reported annually due to human-elephant conflict. Sufficient budget is required for Human elephant conflict management and mitigation including

payment of ex-gratia compensation for loss of life and property. Critical elephant habitats are notified as 'Elephant Reserve' for focus and synergy in elephant conservation and to reduce conflict. So far 33 Elephant Reserves have been established in 14 major elephant States. 150 elephant corridors have been identified and ground validated in 15 States.

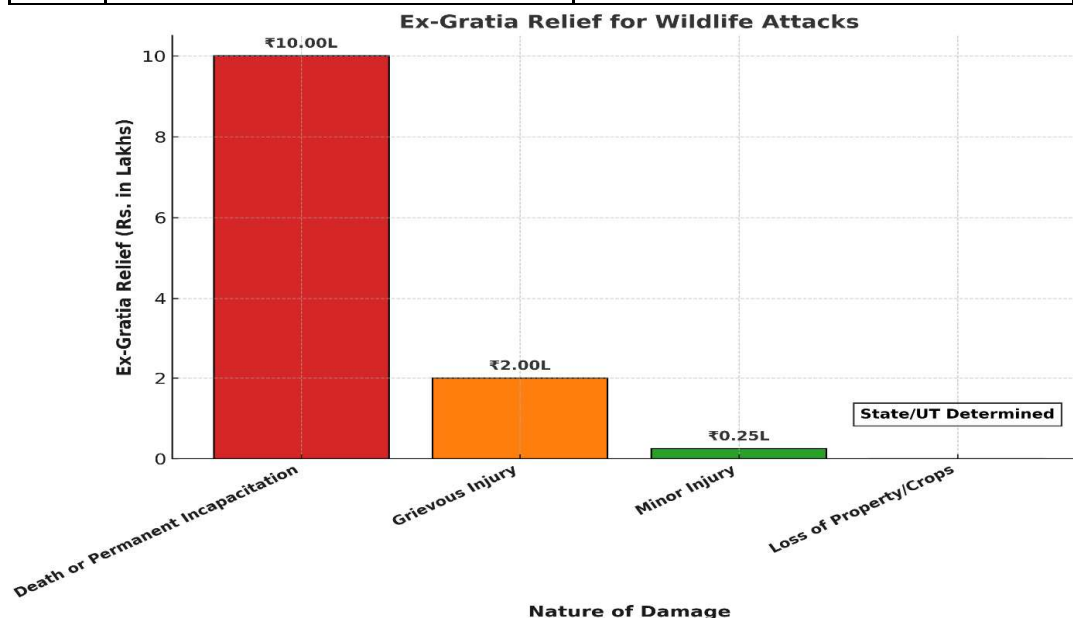
6.9 The Committee sought information from the Ministry regarding the measures taken by the Ministry towards managing the issue of man- animal conflict; what are the major reasons for increasing cases of man-animal conflict and the compensation amount paid to victims of animal attacks. In response, the Committee was informed by the Ministry about the important steps taken to manage and mitigate human-animal conflict in the country, which included:

- (i) Ministry has issued holistic advisories and guidelines to the States and Union Territory Governments to deal with human-wildlife conflict situations dated 6.2.2021 and 3.6.2022.
- (ii) Species specific guidelines for mitigation of conflicts arising from various wild animals namely Elephant, Gaur, Leopard, Snake, Crocodile, Rhesus Macaque, Wild Pig, Bear, Blue Bull and Blackbuck on 21.03.2023.
- (iii) Guidelines for cross cutting issues such as cooperation between the forest and media sector; occupational health and safety in the context of human-wildlife conflict mitigation; crowd management in human-wildlife conflict related situations and addressing health emergencies and potential health risks arising out of human-wildlife conflict situations on 21.03.2023.
- (iv) Financial assistance is provided by the Ministry to the States/UTs under the Centrally Sponsored schemes – 'Development of Wildlife Habitats', 'Project Tiger and Elephant' for various interventions including animal proof fencing, anti-depredation squads, rapid response teams, ex-gratia relief, technology based animal tracking etc.
- (v) Advance technology like radio collaring, E-surveillance are also used in human wildlife conflict mitigation.
- (vi) The local communities are involved in conservation measures through eco-development activities, which help the forest departments in protection of wildlife.
- (vii) The Ministry provides support to State Governments to organize awareness generation, training and capacity building programmes on human-wildlife conflict.
- (viii) The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 provides regulatory functions for dealing with human wildlife conflict situations.

6.10 The Ministry has enhanced the amount of ex-gratia relief in case of death or permanent incapacitation due to attacks by wild animals including leopards during December 2023. At present, the amount of ex-gratia relief payable under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes – 'Development of Wildlife Habitats', 'Project Tiger and Elephant' is as follows:

Sl.No.	Nature of damage caused by wild animals	Amount of ex-gratia relief
i.	Death or permanent incapacitation	Rs.10.00 lakh
ii.	Grievous injury	Rs.2.00 lakh
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.
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6.11 The Committee was further informed that Protection and management of wildlife is primarily the responsibility of State Governments/UT Administrations. The data regarding crop damage incidents and compensation claims due to human-wildlife conflicts are collated at the state level. The Committee was also provided the details of the three pronged strategy to manage human-wildlife negative interactions, as advocated by National Tiger Conservation Authority.

6.12 The Committee observes that the Ministry has highlighted the requirement of additional funds for compensation to the victims of wildlife attacks. The Committee would like to bring to the notice of the Ministry the increasing number of attacks by wild animals and consequential human deaths. The increasing number of attacks by wild animals has made it difficult for the people, especially farmers and tribal population, to live in the forest fringe areas of Kerala. The Committee pointed out that when the said issue was raised in the Parliament, it was informed that all the powers in this regard vest with the State Chief Wildlife Wardens. However, when such incidents are brought to the notice of the concerned officers of the State Forest Department, they express their inability to take action citing the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

6.13 The Committee observes that the cases of attacks on humans by wild animals and consequential severe injuries/ death of human beings are increasing too. The Committee is of the view that no amount of compensation can compensate the loss of a human life. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the focus of the Ministry should be on minimizing and mitigating the human-animal conflict rather than merely providing adequate compensation to the victims of the conflict. The Committee further recommends that the Ministry should impress upon all the State Governments to take necessary action in this regard so that the loss of human lives / injuries due to the attack by wild animals is reduced to the minimum. There is also a need to clarify/reiterate the role of the State Forest Officials in such cases so that the required necessary action is taken immediately by the concerned authorities.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE

7.1 In the presentation made before the Committee, the Ministry informed that India's Climate Action is multifaceted and cuts across various sectors. National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) comprises of nine missions in the areas of (i) Solar Energy, (ii)

Energy Efficiency, (iii) Water, (iv) Human Health and Climate Change, (v) Sustainable Agriculture, (vi) Himalayan Eco-system, (vii) Sustainable Habitat, (viii) Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change. Missions are institutionalized and implemented by their respective Nodal Ministries/Departments-MOEFCC@Green India Mission. Commitments are fulfilled through several programmes and schemes; mostly financed through annual budget of Government of India. 34 States/Union Territories (UTs) prepared State Action Plan for Climate Change (SAPCC); and 12 States and UTs updated in line with NAPCC. The Committee was further informed that on 30th December, 2024, India submitted its 4th Biennial Update Report to the UNFCCC. The Ministry also provided the following information on India’s quantitative NDCs and NDC Update:

NDC	Target 2021-30	Achievements
Reduce emissions intensity of GDP	45% over 2005 level	36% between 2005 and 2020*
Non-Fossil electric installed capacity	50% cumulative	47.10% (Dec. 2024)
Creation of additional carbon sink	2.5 - 3.0 billion tons	2.29 billion tonnes of CO2 between 2005 and 2020

* As per India’s fourth Biennial Update Report submitted to UNFCCC in December 2024;

7.2 It was informed that India is on track to meet its global commitments towards global collective efforts to combat climate change and that some of the Targets under India first NDC, submitted in 2015, have been achieved ahead of stipulated timeline (2021-30).

7.3 The Committee desired to know from the Ministry that given the commitments under India’s Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the Paris Agreement, how does this budget support India’s goal of achieving a 45% reduction in emissions intensity by 2030? In response, the Committee was informed that India is a Party to three treaties governing the International Climate Regime; namely the United Nations Framework Convention on the Climate Change (UNFCCC), its Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement. Under the Paris Agreement of the UNFCCC, India has submitted and subsequently updated its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the UNFCCC. India’s current NDC is for the period of 2021-2030. In addition, India has also submitted its Long-Term Low Carbon Development Strategy to reach net-zero by 2070.

7.4 The Government earlier committed to finance India’s climate action, which cuts across various sectors important for our economy, through annual budget exercise. On these lines, and like the previous budgets, Union Budget 2025-26 has provisioned series of measures including those for energy sector reforms, nuclear energy development, clean technology manufacturing, lithium-ion battery production, and increase in budgetary allocations for the Ministry of Power and the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy from the previous year and for enhancing climate resilience. Some of the salient announcements are as under:

- (a) A “National Manufacturing Mission” to cover small, medium, and large industries is announced. Recognizing our commitment to climate-friendly development, the Mission will also support Clean Tech manufacturing. The aim is to improve domestic value addition and build our ecosystem for solar PV cells, EV batteries, motors, and controllers, electrolyzers, wind turbines, very high voltage transmission equipment and grid scale batteries.
- (b) Nuclear Energy Mission for Viksit Bharat: -The Budget recognizes the importance of nuclear energy in reaching to net-zero. Towards this, the Budget has provisioned

development of at least 100 GW of nuclear energy by 2047. It is essential for our energy transition efforts. For an active partnership with the private sector towards this goal, amendments to the Atomic Energy Act and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act have been proposed. A Nuclear Energy Mission for research & development of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) with an outlay of Rs. 20,000 crore is proposed through which at least 5 indigenously developed SMRs will be operationalized by 2033.

- (c) The budget also emphasizes expanding the electric vehicle ecosystem, strengthening domestic battery manufacturing, supporting startups, and enhancing green financing for EV adoption and energy storage solutions. In the context of battery manufacturing; the Budget has announced Mining sector reforms, including those for minor minerals, including a policy for recovery of critical minerals from tailings. The Budget has also proposed to add to the list of exempted capital goods, 35 additional capital goods for EV battery manufacturing, and 28 additional capital goods for mobile phone battery manufacturing. This is to boost domestic manufacture of lithium-ion battery, including those required for electric vehicles.
- (d) For enhancing the resilience of agriculture sector, the Budget has proposed Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana; 6-year Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses; Comprehensive Programme for Vegetables & Fruits; National Mission on High Yielding Seeds; and Mission for Cotton Productivity. The Budget also proposes a framework for sustainable harnessing of fisheries from Indian Exclusive Economic Zone and High Seas.
- (e) To further enhance India's action towards adapting to the climate change in water sector, the Budget has announced the extension of the Jal Jeevan Mission until 2028 with an enhanced total outlay.

7.5 The Committee is of the view that Climate change is a global concern and India, being amongst the most populous countries, needs to be concerned about that. Our National Action Plan for Climate Change (NAPCC) has missions in areas like solar energy, energy efficiency, water, human health, sustainable agriculture, Himalayan ecosystem, sustainable habitat, and strategic knowledge of climate change. We must cooperate with other countries globally, as climate summits, after the Paris Agreement, have shown slow progress. While taking progressive steps, India must correlate her efforts with other countries. The Committee notes that the new U.S. administration's withdrawal from climate funding is a matter of concern, as they had committed to contributing \$100 billion to the climate fund under the Paris Agreement. Not only have they backed out, but even the international organizations, like, the WHO has shown its reservations. Under these circumstances, India, being a large country and being a major player in climate change mitigation, must take responsibility and work towards achieving its goals.

7.6 During the meeting, the Committee also drew attention of the Ministry to the reports that in view of the recent climatic trends, the coming months of the year 2025-26 are likely to see temperatures soaring to 1-3°C higher than the average temperatures recorded in the past across various cities and terrains of the country, especially Delhi where the temperature may be abnormally high during the summer season of 2026. The Committee is extremely concerned over such alarming reports. The Committee is of the view that, if this happens, it will have devastating consequences for human habitats, birds, animals, and the environment. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change should immediately formulate and implement a national-level Heat Action Plan (HAP) to mitigate the heatwave conditions that the citizens of India are likely to face in the coming months.

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS-AT A GLANCE

BUDGETARY DETAILS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2024-25 AND ALLOCATION FOR 2025-26

The Committee observes that the Ministry had been able to utilize more than 96% of the allocated funds during the year 2022-23 and 2023-24. In 2024-25, against the BE allocation of Rs.3330.00 crore, a reduced RE allocation of Rs.3125.96 was made to the Ministry. However, the Committee is constrained to note that the actual expenditure of the Ministry upto 31.1.2025 was only Rs.1712.48 crore which is merely 54.78% of the RE allocation. During the presentation made before the Committee on 19.2.2025, the Secretary of the Ministry further informed the Committee that the Ministry has utilized 69% of the funds as on that date. However, the Committee is of the view that the utilization of funds by the Ministry during 2024-25 is not satisfactory. With hardly 40 days left in the completion of the financial year, the Ministry is yet to make use of more than 30% of the funds allocated to it. This is in sharp contrast to the utilization of funds by the Ministry during the past two financial years when the Ministry was able to utilize more than 96% of the budgetary allocations. The Committee is of the view that the Ministry must make proactive efforts to optimally utilize the funds made available to it during the financial year 2024-25. (Para 2.3)

BARE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS IN BUDGETARY ALLOCATIONS FOR SUSTAINING KEY PROGRAMMES

The Committee takes note of the challenges projected by the Ministry in Budget allocation in Key programmes and the bare minimum budgetary requirements projected by it for sustaining certain key programmes. Though the Committee is in agreement with the requirements projected by the Ministry, the utilization of funds by the Ministry in 2024-25 are not encouraging enough for the Committee to make any positive recommendations in this regard. The Committee would, however, like to recommend that in 2025-26, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change should make proactive efforts to ensure that the physical targets of the Ministry in respect of the above schemes/programmes are on schedule and the allocation made at BE is utilised to the maximum so that it is on a firm ground to seek additional funds at the Supplementary and RE stage in respect of the schemes/programmes stated above.

(Para 2.5)

MAJOR THRUST AREAS

The Committee is of the opinion that the launching of the campaign to plant trees on the occasion of World Environment Day is indeed laudable. The Committee feels that the campaign to plant a tree in honour of a mother would certainly create a lasting legacy that nurtures both the environment and a greener, prosperous future. The Committee notes that 118 crore had already been planted as on 19th February 2025 and hopes that the Ministry would be able to achieve its target of planting 140 crore trees by 31st March 2025. (Para 3.4)

The Committee would, however, like to point out that although a number of plantation activities are undertaken on various occasions, the mortality rate of such plants is very high. There is a need not only to plant the trees but also to ensure that once planted, they are looked after well and continue to survive and grow. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Ministry should not only undertake plantation activities but should also ensure that the survival rate of these plants remains high so that they continue to contribute to the environment and the society. This also needs to be emphasized to the youth/children etc. when organizing workshops, exhibitions, campaigns, competitions etc. by the concerned

Central/State/UT authorities. There is also a need for audit of the plantation activities, so that the allocations made in this regard are utilized optimally. (Para 3.5)

The Committee is also of the view that Centrally-funded schemes are crucial because they provide funds to other States for improving their systems. Facilitating research and development and investing for the same are extremely important for the development of any nation and for a developing country like India, the critical importance of environmental education, awareness, Research and Development cannot be overemphasized, as education and awareness only can help finding practical solutions to problems of environmental protection and management and for developing policies, strategies, action plans and in better management and conservation of natural resources. The Committee feels that the allocation of Rs. 101.96 crore allocated for 'Environment Education, Awareness, Research and Skill Development' is not adequate and the Ministry should consider allocating additional funds to this head. (Para 3.6)

NATIONAL COASTAL MISSION

The Committee is not convinced with the reply furnished by the Ministry with regard to the allocations made to the National Coastal Mission during the last few years. The allocation was reduced from Rs.196.00 crore (BE) to Rs.4.00 crore (RE) in 2022-23. In 2023-24, the allocation was increased from Rs.12.50 crore (BE) to Rs.43.30 crore (RE). In 2024-25, the allocation was again reduced from Rs.50.00 crore (BE) to Rs.8.00 crore (RE), out of which the Ministry has been able to spend only 13.8% i.e. Rs.1.10 crore upto 31.1.2025. These figures amply bring out that the funds under this scheme are being allocated and utilized in an adhoc and unplanned manner. The Committee is of the view that, keeping in view the importance of the Mission, the Ministry should holistically plan the execution of the scheme and ensure that the funds are suitably allocated and optimally utilized. (Para 4.4)

CONTROL OF POLLUTION

The Committee is of the view that pollution, whether it be air, water or noise, has gone beyond permissible limits during the last few years and has serious consequences for the health and well being of the citizens of the country. Air pollution has assumed gigantic proportions and has become a national issue. Although Delhi has been in the news because of its ever-deteriorating air quality, other cities in the country are also not left behind and are experiencing high AQI levels. In such a scenario, the Committee is shocked to note that amount to the tune of Rs.858.00 crore allocated for 'Control of Pollution', which is 27.44% of the annual RE allocation of the Ministry, remains unutilized since the approval for continuation of Control of Pollution Scheme till 2025-26, is awaited, even at the fag end of the financial year. The rising environmental pollution in the country not only results into a number of pollution related human diseases and health conditions but negatively impact our ecology too. The scenario of air pollution in the country is indeed very grim and has been affecting one and all. At a time when the Ministry is required to address the grave and critical challenge of deteriorating air quality, the Ministry has not been able to decide the continuation of the concerned scheme, as a result of which not even 1% of the funds allocated for the scheme have been utilized so far. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Ministry needs to introspect and take a serious note of the reasons for this gross underutilization. (Para 5.4)

CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEMES

The Committee notes that the financial performance of the Ministry under this scheme had been satisfactory during the last three years. The Ministry was able to spend 81% and 99.99% of the allocated funds during 2022-23 and 2023-24. During 2024-25, the Ministry has been able to spend nearly 75% of the funds upto 31st

January 2025. The Committee hopes that the Ministry would be able to fully utilize the allocations under this head by the end of the financial year. (Para 6.2)

INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT OF WILDLIFE HABITATS

The Committee observes that state governments receive funds under centrally sponsored schemes such as Project Tiger and Elephant and the scheme for Development of Wildlife Habitats for the maintenance of protected areas notified under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. The Committee is of the view that such protected areas are integral to conservation activities and recommends that the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change must impress upon that all the state governments to take immediate action to notify Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs) around all protected areas under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to ensure that habitats are protected in a holistic manner. (Para 6.5)

HUMAN-ANIMAL CONFLICT

The Committee observes that the cases of attacks on humans by wild animals and consequential severe injuries/ death of human beings are increasing too. The Committee is of the view that no amount of compensation can compensate the loss of a human life. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the focus of the Ministry should be on minimizing and mitigating the human-animal conflict rather than merely providing adequate compensation to the victims of the conflict. The Committee further recommends that the Ministry should impress upon all the State Governments to take necessary action in this regard so that the loss of human lives / injuries due to the attack by wild animals is reduced to the minimum. There is also a need to clarify/reiterate the role of the State Forest Officials in such cases so that the required necessary action is taken immediately by the concerned authorities. (Para 6.13)

CLIMATE CHANGE

The Committee is of the view that Climate change is a global concern and India, being amongst the most populous countries, needs to be concerned about that. Our National Action Plan for Climate Change (NAPCC) has missions in areas like solar energy, energy efficiency, water, human health, sustainable agriculture, Himalayan ecosystem, sustainable habitat, and strategic knowledge of climate change. We must cooperate with other countries globally, as climate summits, after the Paris Agreement, have shown slow progress. While taking progressive steps, India must correlate her efforts with other countries. The Committee notes that the new U.S. administration's withdrawal from climate funding is a matter of concern, as they had committed to contributing \$100 billion to the climate fund under the Paris Agreement. Not only have they backed out, but even the international organizations, like, the WHO has shown its reservations. Under these circumstances, India, being a large country and being a major player in climate change mitigation, must take responsibility and work towards achieving its goals. (Para 7.5)

During the meeting, the Committee also drew attention of the Ministry to the reports that in view of the recent climatic trends, the coming months of the year 2025-26 are likely to see temperatures soaring to 1-3°C higher than the average temperatures recorded in the past across various cities and terrains of the country, especially Delhi where the temperature may be abnormally high during the summer season of 2026. The Committee is extremely concerned over such alarming reports. The Committee is of the view that, if this happens, it will have devastating consequences for human habitats, birds, animals, and the environment. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change should immediately formulate and implement a national-level Heat Action Plan (HAP) to mitigate the heatwave conditions that the citizens of India are likely to face in the coming months. (Para 7.6)

MINUTES

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEPARTMENT-RELATED
PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY, ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (2024-25)**

VI

SIXTH MEETING

The Committee met at 10:30 A.M. on Wednesday, the 19th February 2025 in Committee Room '4', Parliament House Annexe Extension Building, New Delhi.

MEMBERS PRESENT

1. **Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita - Chairman**

RAJYA SABHA

2. Shri Sharad Pawar
3. Shri Sujeet Kumar

LOK SABHA

4. Shri Alfred Kanngam S. Arthur
5. Shri Pradyut Bordoloi
6. Shri Vamsi Krishna Gaddam
7. Adv K. Francis George
8. Dr. Anand Kumar
9. Shri Jagdambika Pal
10. Shri Jashubhai Bhilubhai Rathva
11. Shri Trivendra Singh Rawat
12. Shrimati Himadri Singh
13. Shri Durai Vaiko
14. Shri Balwant Baswant Wankhade

SECRETARIAT

Dr. K. S. Somashekhar, Additional Secretary
Smt. Kusum Sudhir, Joint Secretary
Shri Arun Kumar, Director
Shri Rajiv Saxena, Deputy Secretary
Shri Deepak Bhorla, Under Secretary
Shri Vaibhav Jain, Committee Officer

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the Members of the Committee. He apprised the Members that in this meeting, the Committee will deliberate on the Demands for Grants for the Financial Year 2025-26, focusing on the Department of Science and Technology, followed by presentations from the Department of Atomic Energy and the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change.

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13. The following representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change then appeared before the Committee:

1. Shri Tanmay Kumar, Secretary;
2. Shri Pravir Pandey, AS & FA;
3. Shri Sushil Kumar Awasthi, DGF & SS ;
4. Shri Anoop Singh, DG, FSI;
5. Shri Jagmohan Sharma, Director, IGNFA;
6. Shri Gobind Sagar Bhardwaj, ADG;
7. Shri Anjan Kumar Mohanty, ADG;
8. Shri Amandeep Garg, AS;
9. Shri Satyajit Mishra, JS;
10. Shri Ramesh Kumar Pandey, IGF; and
11. Shri Sakesh Prakash Singh, Chief Controller of Accounts

14. The Chairman welcomed the Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change and his team of officers and asked them to give a brief presentation on the Demands for Grants (2025-26). The Additional Secretary & FA made the presentation by highlighting the Ministry's achievements, including the pledge taken on World Environment Day 2024 to plant 140 crore trees by March 2025. He informed the Committee that 118 crore trees had already been planted, and a video presentation was shown to illustrate the efforts made in this regard. He outlined the Ministry's four broad sectors of work: (1) conservation and scientific management of natural resources, including forests, wildlife, and biodiversity; (2) prevention and control of pollution and management of hazardous substances; (3) climate change mitigation and adaptation through afforestation and cleaner technologies; and (4) implementation of environmental regulations, including the issuance of clearances for projects. He also detailed the various Acts administered by the Ministry, such as the Indian Forest Act, 1927, the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, and the Environment Protection Act, 1986, among others. The presentation covered the budgetary allocations for 2025-26, highlighting the shortfalls in both non-scheme and scheme components. In the non-scheme category, the Ministry faced a reduction of Rs. 521 crore in establishment expenditure and Rs. 197 crore in other central expenditures. In the scheme category, while the Central Sector Schemes received the requested allocation, the Centrally Sponsored Schemes saw a reduction of Rs. 270 crore. The Ministry provided a detailed breakup of the allocations for various schemes, including the Green India Mission, Forest Fire Prevention and Management, Project Tiger, and Project Elephant. The challenges posed by the reduced allocations, particularly for flagship programs like the Green India Mission, Project Tiger and Elephant which could affect wildlife conservation efforts, were also highlighted. The Ministry also discussed the expenditure profile over the last five years, noting that the utilization rate had been above 95% annually. However, for the current financial year, expenditure was initially slow due to the Vote on Account and issues with fund flow mechanisms through State Nodal Agencies, which have since been resolved.

15. Thereafter, the Chairman and Members of the Committee raised several queries such as alarming levels of AQI all over the country, low allocation to environmental awareness and education, man-animal conflict, utilization of funds allocated to Northeastern region, State-wise clean air funds with a performance-linked disbursement mechanism, Sovereign Green Fund, smuggling of timber from Bangladesh and Myanmar into India, CAMPA funds, third party audit of *Ek Ped Maa ke Naam* scheme, manpower shortage in the Ministry, using Artificial Intelligence for managing man-animal conflict, forest fires and

combating poaching, reasons for not signing signed the Global Methane Pledge and budget allocations for afforestation, etc.

16. The Secretary and other representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, while presenting their views, also responded to some of the queries raised by the Chairman and Members of the Committee. The Chairman also directed the Secretary to furnish written replies to other queries/points/issues raised by him and other Members of the Committee, which could not be replied during the meeting, to the Secretariat.

17. A verbatim record of the proceedings was kept.

18. The meeting of the Committee adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

****Relate to other matters.

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEPARTMENT-RELATED
PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY, ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (2024-25)**

VIII

EIGHTH MEETING

The Committee met at 3:30 P.M. on Wednesday, the 19th March, 2025 in Committee Room No. 4, First Floor, 'A' Block, PHA Extension, New Delhi.

MEMBERS PRESENT

1. **Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita – Chairman**

RAJYA SABHA

2. Shri Narayanas K. Bhandage
3. Ms. Indu Bala Goswami
4. Shri Jairam Ramesh
5. Shri Sujeet Kumar

LOK SABHA

6. Shri Pradyut Bordoloi
7. Shri Phani Bhusan Choudhury
8. Shri Biplab Kumar Deb
9. Shri Vamsi Krishna Gaddam
10. Shri Tapir Gao
11. Adv K. Francis George
12. Shri Mahesh Kashyap
13. Dr. Anand Kumar
14. Shri Mohibbullah
15. Shri Jagdambika Pal
16. Shri Jashubhai Bhilubhai Rathva
17. Shri Trivendra Singh Rawat
18. Shrimati Himadri Singh
19. Shri Balwant Baswant Wankhade

SECRETARIAT

1. Dr. K.S. Somashekhar, Additional Secretary
2. Smt. Kusum Sudhir, Joint Secretary
3. Shri Arun Kumar, Director
4. Shri Rajiv Saxena, Deputy Secretary
5. Shri Deepak Bhoria, Under Secretary
6. Shri Vaibhav Jain, Committee Officer

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the Members to the meeting of the Committee. The Committee then took up consideration of the draft 387th, 388th, 389th, 390th, 391st, 392nd and 393rd Reports of the Committee on the Demands for Grants 2025-26, of the Ministries/Departments of Atomic Energy; Biotechnology; Scientific and Industrial Research; Science & Technology; Space; Environment, Forest and Climate Change; and Earth Sciences, respectively and adopted the same after some deliberations. The Chairman requested all the Members to give their suggestions/amendments/recommendations to be incorporated in the draft Reports by 5.00 p.m. of 20th March, 2025.

3. The Committee decided to present/lay the above mentioned Reports in both the Houses of Parliament on the 25th March, 2025.

4. * * * * *

5. The meeting of the Committee adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

**** Relate to other matters.