

Question 4341 given in the Rajya Sabha on 31st August, 2001 and state:

(a) whether the amount of around one thousand million rupees, allocated to Uttaranchal under the bifurcated WB assisted UP Forestry Projects during 2000-2001 and 2001-2002, has been utilized during these two years; if so, the details of works accomplished there, under it; and

(b) whether public participation for development of forests has been ensured; if so, the details of the beneficiaries?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) An amount of Rs. 49.90 crore has been utilised under the bifurcated Uttar Pradesh-Uttaranchal Forestry Project during 2000-2001 and 2001- 2002. The remaining amount is proposed to be utilised during 2002-03 and 2003-04 as the Credit Closing date for the Uttar Pradesh-Uttaranchal Forestry Project has been extended till July 2003. The works carried out include raising of high productivity plantations, assisted natural regeneration of sal and oak, Joint Forest Management, Fire protection, habitat management, eco-development, studies and training programmes.

(b) Public participation has been ensured through the formation of 1217 Village Forest Committees. The members of these committees are the beneficiaries under the Project.

Illegal export of peacock feathers

2563. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been an increase in the number of cases of poaching for peacock feathers;

(b) if so, the quantity of peacock feathers seized during the last two years;

(c) the countries to which peacock feathers are being illegally exported; and

(d) the action being taken to check poaching of peacocks in the country?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Isolated cases of killing of peacocks for their meat have been detected in various States from time to time. But, there are no reports regarding killing of peacocks exclusively for obtaining feathers.

(b) Trade in peacock tail feathers is allowed within the country. However its export is prohibited as per the Export-Import (EXIM) policy. The quantity of peacock feathers seized, that were being attempted to export in violation of EXIM policy, during last two years was approximately 69 kgs.

(c) Destinations to which peacock feathers were consigned are: England, Taiwan, Hong Kong and USA.

(d) The steps taken to stop poaching of peacocks are as follows:

(1) Steps taken at the State level:

- (i) Legal protection has been provided against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- (ii) State level and District level coordination committees have been set up in several States to prevent poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.
- (iii) Wildlife authorities in the States carry out regular checking of the stocks of dealers in birds.

(2) Steps taken at National level

- (i) Government of India has set up Regional and Sub-regional Offices for wildlife preservation in major export and trade centres of the country to prevent smuggling of wild animals and their products.
- (ii) Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders. Anti-poaching efforts are being coordinated with INTERPOL.
- (iii) Export of wild animals and their derivatives is prohibited under EXIM policy.

(3) Steps taken at International level.

- (i) Government of India is a party to Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) for control of illegal trade in wildlife items.