

hour and any birds in the area can be extremely hazardous to aircraft. This firing range was being sparingly used since 1989 and due to this lot of wild bushes have grown in the area. In 1997, it was decided to reactivate it for practising weapon firing by both helicopters and fighter aircraft. Since the range was not in use for last many years, a large number of wild growth of kikker bushes and small trees had grown over this area and there were a number of unauthorised encroachments. With the help of civil courts and district authorities the area was cleared of encroachments in 1997. To make it fit for practising weapon firing it was cleared of wild vegetation.

Since land in question belong to the Ministry of Defence no permission of Ministry of Environment & Forests is necessary for clearing the wild growth of bushes and trees on such lands. The matter regarding use of Tilpat firing range falls within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Defence.

(c) and (d) Question does not arise in view of (b) above.

#### **Central Schemes for Conservation of Forests in the North-Eastern States**

1073. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the schemes taken up by the Union Government for the conservation of forests, wildlife and environment in North-Eastern States during 1996-97 and 1997-98;

(b) the amount provided by Government for this during the said period project-wise;

(c) the achievements made under each project during the said period; and

(d) the budgetary allocation made for these projects during the Interim Budget for 1998-99?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI): (a) to (d) The Ministry of Environment and Forests implements a number of Centrally Sponsored Schemes for conservation of forests, wildlife and environment in the North-Eastern States. The details of such schemes State-wise alongwith financial assistance provided and achievement made during 1996-97 and 1997-98 and outlays for 1998-99 are given at Annexure. [See *Appendix 184, Annexure No. 37*].

#### **Tiger Population in the Country**

1074. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:

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

(a) whether the Silver Jubilee year celebration of the Project Tiger witnessed a steady decline in the tiger population in the country;

(b) how the population graph of Indian tiger moved over the period of operation of the project;

(c) the major steps taken to preserve and promote tiger population during the period and the success achieved thereby; and

(d) what further steps are contemplated to promote and preserve the Indian Tiger?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) No, Sir. on the contrary there was a steady increase in tiger population of the country till 1989 from 1973 when Project Tiger was launched. However, there was a decline in tiger population during 1989-93. The details of tiger population in the country

over the past successive estimations are as follows:—

Year	1972	1979	1984	1989	1993
Tiger Population	1827	3015	4005	4334	3750

The reports of All India Tiger Estimation—1997 are still awaited from most of the tiger range States.

(c) The various measures taken by the Government to conserve the country's tiger population are enlisted in statement (*See below*). As a result of these measures, the Tiger Reserves have shown habitat resurrection, improvement in prey biomass, strengthening in protection network and increased detection of tiger poaching and other wildlife offence cases.

(d) Certain new initiatives are contemplated to promote and conserve the Indian Tiger during IXth Plan which are as follows:—

- (i) Creation of new Tiger Reserves.
- (ii) Speedy and adequate settlement of compensation claims for life and property damage caused by the wildlife especially tiger.
- (iii) Continuous monitoring of the tiger population in tiger range States.
- (iv) Provision of adequate budget and to ensure smooth flow of funds to the Tiger Reserves.

#### Statement

#### *Steps Taken by the Government of India to Project Tiger*

1. The State Governments have been advised to strengthen vigilance and intensify patrolling.
2. Training and Workshops of various enforcement agencies for effective intelligence gathering and law enforcement.
3. Setting up of a national Coordination Committee to control poaching and illegal trade in wildlife with enforcement agencies like Customs, Revenue Intelligence, Indo-Tibetan

Border Police, Boarder Security Force, Central Reserve Police Force, Coast Guards, State Police, Deputy Director, Wildlife Preservation & Scientific Organisations like Zoological and Botanical Survey of India.

4. To control transboundary trade, a protocol has been signed with People's Republic of China and a MOU with his Majesty's Government of Nepal.
5. Initiated creation of a Forum of Tiger Range Countries, i.e. Global Tiger Forum for addressing international issues related to tiger conservation.
6. Launching of public awareness programme to involve Non-Governmental Organisations and others for supporting the Government in its efforts towards wildlife conservation.
7. Supporting programmes of Institutions and NGOs in exploring tiger trade routes and developing a forensic identification reference Manual for tiger parts and products.
8. Funds are being provided to the State Governments for the eco-development of the areas to reduce the biotic pressure thereon.
9. Steps are being initiated to set up sitespecific "Special Strike Force" in the Project Tiger areas.

#### **Steps for Preservation of Forests in the North-Eastern Region**

1075. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of steps taken/initiated by the Union Government to preserve