

Preservation of wild animals in A.P. Zoological Parks

2172. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is proper preservation of wild animals at zoological parks in Hyderabad, Vishakhapatnam and Tirupati;
- (b) whether there is any plan to launch any scheme for adoption of zoological animals;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) if not, what are Government's plans to improve their preservation conditions?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Zoological Parks at Hyderabad, Vishakhapatnam and Tirupati are amongst the best managed zoos in the country.

(b) and (c) During the year 2000, the Government of Andhra Pradesh decided to involve the Industrialists, Philanthropists and Naturalists to sponsor the maintenance of the animals and garden areas of their choice. It was followed by orders of State Government permitting the 'Animal Adoption Scheme' to mobilize resources for better management and upkeep of the zoos. Wide publicity has been given for the scheme by the State Government. The sponsorship amount realised is deposited in Civil Deposits and utilised for the maintenance and development of the concerned Zoological Park.

(d) Does not arise.

Conversion of forest area of Dibrugarh and Tinsukia into sanctuary

2173. SHRI KA. RA. SUBBIAN:

PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM:

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

- (a) whether there is any proposal to convert 500 sq.km. of forests in Dibrugarh and Tinsukia districts in Assam into a sanctuary;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, whether there is a threat/danger that Hoolock Gibbon, a rare specie of ape in the area, may soon disappear;

(d) if so, the action taken so far in this regard; and

(e) whether any step has been taken to implement a section of the rules of the Zoological Survey of India that habitats of the Hoolock Gibbon must be converted into sanctuary to ensure their protection?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) The issue of Hoolock Gibbon, the only ape in India, facing threat of extinction due to inadequate protection and the need for notifying the forests in Dibrugarh and Tinsukia districts in Assam as sanctuary has been highlighted by one non-governmental organisation. Since the power to declare any area as wildlife sanctuary vests with the concerned State Government, the proposal has been sent to Government of Assam for appropriate action in the matter.

(d) and (e) The steps taken by the Government to protect Hoolock Gibbon and its habitat include:

1. The State Government have already declared Gibbon Sanctuary and Padumoni-Borjan-Bharjan Sanctuaries in 1997 and 1999 respectively for protection of Hoolock Gibbon. Besides this, part of Kaziranga National Park also harbors this species.
2. Hoolock Gibbon is placed in Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, which provides it the highest degree of protection.
3. The Government of India provides financial assistance under Centrally sponsored scheme Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries for the above mentioned sanctuaries.