

- (c) whether Government is taking steps to address the challenges of climate change; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) The long-term mean onset date of monsoon in India is 1st June with a standard deviation of about 8 days. During last century, multi-decadal fluctuations with early/late onset by a few days over and above the long-term mean are not uncommon. However, such year to year variations in the onset or the propagation are part of the natural variability and cannot be attributed to climate change. Climate Model studies carried out by Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) show no significant impact on change in the mean onset of monsoon in India.

(c) and (d) Government is aware of the challenges posed by climate change and has taken steps in this regard. The National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) was released on 30th June 2008 to outline India's strategy to meet the challenge of Climate Change. The National Action Plan outlines steps that will enable the country to adapt to climate change and enhance the ecological sustainability of India's development path. A dedicated Centre for climate change research at IITM, Pune has been set-up to undertake focused research on the science aspects of climate change.

#### Tiger Population

901. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the tiger population in some of the National Reserve Forests has depleted completely;
- (b) if so, the details and the status thereof;
- (c) whether Government is contemplating action to check the same and to restore the tiger population; and
- (d) if so, the policy and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) As per the findings of the recent All India tiger estimation in 2008 using the refined methodology, the total country-level population of tiger is 1411 (mid value); the lower and upper limits being 1165 and 1657 respectively, as indicated in the statement-I (See below). The new findings are based on spatial occupancy of tigers and sampling such forests using camera traps in a statistical framework, which is not comparable to the earlier total count using pugmarks. The said findings indicate a poor status of tiger population in areas outside tiger reserves and protected areas. The tiger population, by and large, in tiger reserves and protected areas of the 17 tiger States are viable, while requiring ongoing conservation efforts. In the recent past, tigers have become locally extinct in Sariska and Panna Tiger Reserves mainly due to poaching. While a CBI investigation was done in the case of Sariska, a Special Investigating Team (SIT) was constituted by

the Ministry with an independent expert and members drawn from the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, Wildlife Institute of India and the National Tiger Conservation Authority for investigating the causative factors for tiger extinction in Panna. The SIT has recently submitted its report, which has been sent to the State Government (Madhya Pradesh) for needful administrative and ecological actions. The status of tiger is low in some tiger reserves due to extremist disturbances or ecological factors.

(c) and (d) The milestone initiatives taken by the Government of India for tiger conservation are given in the statement-II.

**Statement-I**

*Forest occupancy and population estimates of tiger as per the refined methodology*

State	Tiger km <sup>2</sup>	Tiger No.	Tiger Numbers	
			Lower limit	Upper limit
1	2	3	4	5
<b>Shivalik-Gangetic Plain Landscape Complex</b>				
Uttarakhand	1901	178	161	195
Uttar Pradesh	2766	109	91	127
Bihar	510	10	7	13
Shivalik-Gangetic	5177	297	269	335
<b>Central Indian Landscape Complex and Eastern Ghats Landscape Complex</b>				
Andhra Pradesh	14126	95	84	107
Chhattisgarh	3609	26	23	28
Madhya Pradesh	15614	300	236	364
Maharashtra	4273	103	76	131
Orissa	9144	45	37	53
Rajasthan	356	32	30	35
Jharkhand**	1488		Not Assessed	
Central Indian	48610	601	486	718
<b>Western Ghats Landscape Complex</b>				
Karnataka	18715	290	241	339
Kerala	6168	46	39	53
Tamil Nadu	9211	76	56	95
Western Ghats	34094	412	336	487

1	2	3	4	5
<b><i>North East Hills and Brahmaputra Flood Plains</i></b>				
Assam*	1164	70	60	80
Arunachal Pradesh*	1685	14	12	18
Mizoram*	785	6	4	8
Northern	596	10	8	12
West Bengal*				
North East Hills, and Brahmaputra	4230	100	84	118
Sunderbars	1586		Not Assessed	
<b>TOTAL TIGER POPULATION</b>		1411	1165	1657

\* Population estimates are based on possible density of tiger occupied landscape in the area, not assessed by double sampling.

\*\* Data was not amenable to population estimation of tiger. However, available information about the landscape indicates low densities of tiger in the area ranging from 0.5 to 1.5 per 100 km<sup>2</sup>.

#### ***Statement-II***

*Milestone initiatives taken by the Government of India for protection/ conservation of tigers and other wild animals*

#### **Legal steps**

1. Amendment of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 for providing enabling provisions for constitution of the National Tiger Conservation Authority and the Tiger and Other Endangered Species Crime Control Bureau.
2. Enhancement of punishment in cases of offence relating to a tiger reserve or its core area.

#### **Administrative steps**

3. Strengthening of antipoaching activities, including special strategy for monsoon patrolling, by providing funding support to Tiger Reserve States, as proposed by them, for deployment of antipoaching squads involving ex-army personnel / home guards, apart from workforce comprising of local people, in addition to strengthening of communication/wireless facilities.
4. Constitution of the **National Tiger Conservation Authority with effect from 4.09.2006**, for strengthening tiger conservation by, *inter-alia*, ensuring normative standards in tiger reserve management, preparation of reserve specific tiger conservation plan, laying down annual audit report before Parliament, constituting State level Steering Committees under the Chairmanship of Chief Ministers and establishment of Tiger Conservation Foundation.

5. Constitution of a multidisciplinary Tiger and Other Endangered Species Crime Control Bureau (**Wildlife Crime Control Bureau**) with effect from 6.6.2007 to effectively control illegal trade in wildlife.
6. Declaration of eight new Tiger Reserves and in-principle approval accorded for creation of four new Reserves, namely Sahyadri in Maharashtra, Pilibhit in Uttar Pradesh, Ratapani in M.P. and Sunabeda in Orissa.
7. The revised Project Tiger guidelines have been issued to States for strengthening tiger conservation, which apart from ongoing activities, *inter-alia*, include funding support to States for enhanced village relocation/rehabilitation package for people living in core or critical tiger habitats (from Rs. 1 lakh/family to Rs. 10 lakhs/family), rehabilitation/resettlement of communities involved in traditional hunting, mainstreaming livelihood and wildlife concerns in forests outside tiger reserves and fostering corridor conservation through restorative strategy to arrest habitat fragmentation.
8. A scientific methodology for estimating tiger (including co-predators, prey animals and assessment of habitat status) has been evolved and mainstreamed. The findings of this estimation/assessment are bench marks for future tiger conservation strategy.
9. An area of 29284.762 sq. km. has been notified by 15 Tiger States (out of 17) as **core or critical tiger habitat** under section 38V of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, as amended in 2006 (Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal), Two tiger States (Bihar and Uttar Pradesh) have taken a decision for notifying the core or critical tiger habitats (2765.04 sq.km.). The State of Madhya Pradesh has not identified/notified the core/critical tiger habitat in its newly constituted tiger reserve (Sanjay National Park and Sanjay Dubri Wildlife Sanctuary).
10. Memorandum of Understanding developed for better/concerted implementation of conservation inputs through tiger reserve States.

#### **Financial steps**

11. Financial and technical help is provided to the States under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, viz. Project Tiger and Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats for enhancing the capacity and infrastructure of the States for providing effective protection to wild animals.

#### **International Cooperation**

12. India has a Memorandum of Understanding with Nepal on controlling trans-boundary illegal trade in wildlife and conservation, apart from a protocol on tiger conservation with China.
13. A Global Tiger Forum of Tiger Range Countries has been created for addressing international issues related to tiger conservation.

14. During the 14th meeting of the Conference of Parties to CITES, which was held from 3rd to 15th June, 2007 at The Hague, India introduced a resolution along with China, Nepal and the Russian Federation, with directions to Parties with operations breeding tigers on a commercial scale, for restricting such captive populations to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers. The resolution was adopted as a decision with minor amendments. Further, India made an intervention appealing to China to phase out tiger farming, and eliminate stockpiles of Asian big cats body parts and derivatives. The importance of continuing the ban on trade of body parts of tigers was emphasized.

#### **Reintroduction of Tigers**

15. As a part of active management to rebuild Sariska and Panna Tiger Reserves where tigers have become locally extinct, reproduction of tigers/tigresses have been done.

#### **Creation of Special Tiger Protection Force (STPF)**

16. The policy initiatives announced by the Finance Minister in his Budget Speech of 29.2.2008, *inter-alia*, contains action points relating to tiger protection. Based on the one time grant of Rs. 50.00 crore provided to the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) for raising, arming and deploying a Special Tiger Protection Force, the proposal for the said force has been approved by the competent authority for 13 tiger reserves. Rs. 93 lakhs each has been released to Corbett, Ranthambhore & Dudhwa Tiger Reserve for creation of STPF during 2008-09. Central Assistance will be provided to States for creation of STPF in remaining 10 Tiger Reserves in 2009-10.

#### **Himalayan Ski Village Project**

902. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Gobind Ballabh Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development (GBPIHED) has been asked about its observation over setting up of any projects in the fragile environment of Himalayan region;

(b) if so, whether the views of GBPIHED have been sought with regard to setting up of the proposed Himalayan Ski Village project in Kullu, Himachal Pradesh; and

(c) if so, the details of the report submitted by the GBPIHED and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) No, Madam.

(b) and (c) Does not arise in view of reply to part (a) above.

#### **Ecological Values of Wetlands**

903. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state: