mechanism. But is some hidden inter-play going on to ensure that these funds meant for larger good do not have good returns? Have you ordered some enquiry or left it completely to market mechanism?

SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA: Sir, the SEBI is the regulator and whatever investment are made by investors and by various institutions, etc., it is the job of the SEBI to look after the interest of investors, and there is a mechanism under various Rules and Regulations ... (Interruptions) ...

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: I hope the hon. Minister has heard and understood my question.

SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA: Yes, I agree. The SEBI is regulator and Government is accountable to Parliament for what is being done by SEBI and through Parliament to the public. That I understand. But there is a regulator which is exclusively meant to control and watch over the actions and investment in various stock exchanges. There is a mechanism laid down for this. If you see and compare our market with major stock exchanges, you will see that our performance is stable and good.

Protection of animals in Assam

*164. SHRI Bhubaneswar Kalita: Will the Minister of Environment and Forests be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has taken up a programme on tiger and rhino breeding in Assam;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Ministry has taken steps for the protection of river dolphin and crocodiles in the Brahmaputra river; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Jairam Ramesh): (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) The Central Zoo Authority (CZA), Government of India, has identified Assam State Zoo as the coordinating zoo for conservation breeding of rhinoceros. As a part of this programme, the CZA has released Rs 64.13 lakhs during the current financial year for construction of enclosure for the breeding programme.

There is no tiger breeding programme taken up by the Ministry in Assam. However, under the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Project Tiger, funding assistance is provided to the State Government of Assam for in situ conservation of tiger and other wild animals in Kaziranga, Manas and Nameri Tiger Reserves.
(c) and (d) Ministry has not undertaken any specific programme for the protection and conservation of river dolphin and crocodiles in the Brahmaputra river. However, the State Government of Assam in collaboration with local Non-Governmental Organisations has undertaken conservation studies of the river dolphin in Brahmaputra river.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Question No. 164. Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita, not present. Shri Kumar Deepak Das.

SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Sir, 25 per cent of the total forest cover of India is in Assam. Due to destruction of forest and illegal encroachment in the forest area, the forest cover is reducing day by day. Now, regarding conservation of forests, for tiger and other vulnerable animals in the Kaziranga and Manas, what are the specific steps taken to evict the illegal occupation?

Is there any specific programme for conservation of river dolphin in the current financial year? Will the Government consider taking proper steps in this regard?

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, the Government is very much aware of the fact that over the last few years, there have been encroachments, particularly in the Manas Reserve which is a world heritage site declared under UNESCO. Regarding Manas, I would like to inform the hon. Member that it is a success story. Manas, over the years, had been destroyed through a variety of reasons, but in the last few years, we have seen a revival of the habitats, the tiger habitats and the biodiversity in Manas. I myself had gone to Manas and have seen the transformation that has taken place. However, Sir, the hon. Member will agree with me that where human beings are involved, where encroachments are involved, we can’t take any coercive action. We have to do this in a democratic framework. We have to take people along with us. We don’t want to create law and order situations. Recently, there was a serious law and order situation in the Kaziranga Reserve. The hon. Member is aware of this. So, this is something that we are sensitive to. But, I would like to assure the hon. Member that Kaziranga and Manas are important reserves, important for tigers, important for rhinos, important for elephants, important for the forest cover. The State Government has to maintain the primary vigil; the Central Government can provide the technical and financial assistance, and I would request the hon. Member to create an environment in his own State which makes people aware of the value of protecting these Reserves. Thank you.

SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Sir, my question regarding dolphin has not been answered.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No discussion. Now, Shri Swapan Sadhan Bose.

SHRI SWAPAN SADHAN BOSE: Chairman, Sir, through you, I want to inform our dynamic Minister about breeding of tigers. I have seen in Thailand that a Buddhist monastery has started breeding tigers, and they have started exporting a large number. Is
it possible to take the technology from them and start a breeding centre to make the numbers of tigers more? Of course, in preservation and all these things, you have lots of problems of forest size, human population getting so large, tribals getting into the forest, etc. But, I want to know if you can start breeding centres, and I am interested because Bengal is known for Royal Bengal Tigers. I want a positive answer from our dynamic Minister.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, I apologise that I should have answered the question on river dolphin. The dolphin has been declared as a national aquatic animal of India in recognition of the importance that the Gangetic dolphin has. It is one of the few dolphins that are remaining; a population of about 2,000 to 3,000. Once upon a time, there used to be 30,000 to 40,000 dolphins. We have declared dolphin as the national aquatic animal and we are in the process of putting together a recovery programme for the Gangetic dolphin which will extend to Assam as well. Recently, Sir, I was privileged to see a couple of these dolphins in Patna. In fact, one of the leading authorities on dolphins is a Professor at the Central University. His name is R.K. Sinha, popularly called ‘Dolphin Sinha’. With the help of people like him, we are trying to bring back the Gangetic dolphin which is a unique heritage resource for India.

Sir, as far as hon. Member’s question is concerned, I have to say with all respect, I am not a believer in Buddhist philosophy as far as tigers are concerned. Tigers are best left in the wild. A tiger which is a pet animal, a tiger which believes in Buddhist principles, is no tiger at all.

SHRI SWAPAN SADHAN BOSE: I did not talk of Buddhist principle. I talked of breeding, increasing the numbers. I am not talking of religion. ...(Interruptions)...

श्री अनिल माधव दंगे: समापति जी, घटनों के मामलों में सरकार की गणना के अंदर एक विसंगति है वह घटन को भी जंगल मानती है, छोटे झाड़ को भी जंगल मानती है और जो बड़े जंगल हैं, उनको भी जंगल मानती है। वह जब भी आंकड़े दर्शाती है, तो छोटे झाड़ के जंगल और घास, दोनों को जंगल में जोड़ लेती है। क्या यह विसंगति है? दूसरी बात यह है कि...

श्री समापति: एक सच्चाई पूर्णित।

श्री अनिल माधव दंगे: सर, यह जंगल का ही विषय है। यह कहा जाता है कि वनवासी और हथून सोयायटी जंगल के लिए सबसे बड़ा खतरा है, सही बतात भाग है कि वनवासी हजारों सालों से जंगल के खास करते आ रहे हैं। It is the mafia, local politicians and bureaucrats, they are the worst.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, may I just say that as far as tiger breeding programme is concerned, we do have a ‘White Tiger Breeding Programme’, which we have just sanctioned in Madhya Pradesh because it is rare specie. But with regard to the breeding of the Royal Bengal Tiger, which the Member is concerned with, I don’t think that there is any shortage of breeding that is taking place at the natural habitats. Recently, at Buxa Tiger Reserve, which is in the hon. Member’s own State, cubs have been born. I don’t think that
the hon. Member should be too worried as of now as far as breeding of the Royal Bengal Tiger is concerned. As far as White Tigers are concerned, we have sanctioned a breeding centre because it is a very rare animal.

As far as the question raised by the hon. Member is concerned, I entirely agree with him. It is the real estate mafia, it is the mining mafia, and, it is the collusion of these mafias, which is creating a huge pressure on many of these tiger reserves and forest areas. The Forest Rights Act of 2006, which was passed by the Parliament, is a historic opportunity for us to redefine the role between the forest department, and the local tribal communities and forest dwellers. This is what we are attempting to do. But I appeal to the hon. Member to extend his hand of cooperation when the Ministry of Environment and Forests takes on some of these vested interests, who are hell bent in destroying these forests in the name of development.

Deaths of infants

*165. SHRI NATUJI HALAJI THAKOR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that near about two and a half crore infants die every year within a few months of their birth in the country;

(b) if so, whether insufficient healthcare service is the major cause thereof;

(c) whether Government has a clear cut vision to check this increase in deaths of infants; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) No Sir, as per Sample Registration System 2009 of Registrar General of India, Infant Mortality Rate in the country is 50 per thousand live births which translate into deaths of 13 lakh children before they complete one year of age.

(b) Amongst other causes, insufficient health services also contribute to infant mortality.

(c) and (d) Government of India has a clear vision to reduce maternal and infant mortality. The main interventions include promotion of institutional deliveries through Janani Suraksha Yojana, capacity building of health care providers, establishment of safe delivery points and specialized new born care units, provision of free referral transport for pregnant women and sick new born, universal immunization and provision of home based care for mother and newborn through ASHA.