

Implementation of Forest Rights Act

21. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the implementation of the Forest Rights Act has been inappropriate;
- (b) whether the report by the National Committee on Forest Rights Act (FRA) which includes recommendations for implementing it effectively, has been taken into account;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH) : (a) Ministry of Tribal Affairs is the Nodal Ministry for the implementation of Forest Rights Act. Based upon the information available with the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, the States have reponed progress in varying degrees in implementation of the Act. While States like Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal have established the prescribed structures and procedures, have received a large number of claims and have started distributing the title deeds, other States, because of various reasons, are still to catch up. As per the information collected by Ministry of Tribal Affairs, from various States/UTs till 31st January 2011, more than 30.39 lakh claims have been filed and more than 11.09 lakh titles have been distributed. More than 34 thousand titles are ready for distribution. A total 25,53,315 claims have been disposed of (84.00%).

(b) to (d) The report of the National Committee on Forest Rights Act is still under examination in the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

Increase in smuggling of endangered species

22. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the smuggling of endangered species through private airlines has increased recently;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that the wild life smuggling is happening all across the border including the Indo-Tibetan boundary and border areas of Myanmar, Bangladesh and Nepal;

(c) if so, the details of steps contemplated by Government to prevent such smuggling of endangered species through private airlines; and

(d) the action taken by Government to preserve and develop the existing endangered species?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH) : (a) Some cases of wildlife contraband being transported through private airlines have come to the notice of the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau.

(b) Yes, Sir. The porous borders of the country are often being used to smuggle out wildlife and wildlife products from India.

(c) Wildlife Crime Control Bureau is maintaining vigil against smuggling of endangered species through various modes including private airlines.

(d) The Government of India has taken various measures as under to conserve the endangered species in the country:

1. Threatened species of wildlife are included in the Schedules of the Wildlife (Protection), Act, 1972, thereby according them the highest degree of protection.
2. A network of Protected Areas has been established to conserve wildlife and their habitats including rare animals.
3. Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has been set up to check illegal trade in wildlife and its products.
4. Financial and technical assistance is extended to the State/UT Governments under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, namely 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', 'Project Tiger' and 'Project Elephant' for providing better protection and conservation of wildlife.
5. Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', a new component has been added for initiating 'Recovery Programme for critically endangered species and their habitats' during the Eleventh Five Year plan period.

6. A Special Consultative Committee comprising various intelligence, security and enforcement agencies has been formed.
7. Checks are conducted at the exit points by various agencies to prevent trafficking of wildlife articles.
8. The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 has been amended from time to time and made more stringent against wildlife related offences.
9. Training courses are conducted for various enforcement agencies like Customs, Central Police Forces etc for better control of illegal wildlife trade.

Invasion by elephants at Chittoor district in Karnataka

23. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware of the recent deaths of villagers in the Chittoor district of Karnataka due to elephant trampling;
- (b) if so, whether Government proposes to install solar-powered fences and trenches at vulnerable points to address this invasion by elephants into the region;
- (c) if so, by when this is likely to be implemented; and
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH) : (a) Yes, Chittoor district is in Andhra Pradesh and no death due to elephant trampling is reported in Andhra Pradesh recently.

(b) to (d) The Ministry of Environment and Forests provides financial assistance to the State Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Project Elephant' for various activities including installing electric/solar fences and laying elephant proof trenches upon receipt of proposals from the concerned State Government. No such proposal has been received for the area in question from the State Government of Andhra Pradesh at present.

Strengthening of Forest Advisory Committees

24. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has established a number of green tribunals;