

Conservation of endangered birds in the country

3572. SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of steps taken by Government for conservation of rare and- endangered birds listed in Schedule I area across the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that the owlet, which is found only in the Toranmal and Melaghat regions in Vidarbha region, is rapidly diminishing; and

(c) if so, the total number of owlet left till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) Steps taken by the Government for the conservation of rare and endangered birds across the country include:

- i) Protected Areas, viz. National Parks, Sanctuaries, Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves covering the important habitats all over the country have been created as per the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to provide for better protection to wildlife, including threatened species and their habitat.
- ii) Financial and technical assistance is provided to the State/Union Territory Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes, viz. 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', 'Project Tiger' and 'Project Elephant' for better protection and conservation of wildlife including rare and endangered birds.
- iii) The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats' has been modified in 2008-09 by including a new component namely 'Recovery of Endangered Species' and 16 species, including five birds species viz. Bustard, Vulture, Edible Nest Swiftlet, Nicobar megapod and Jerdon's courser have been identified for the recovery programmes.
- iv) Legal protection has been provided to endangered wild animals and plants against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
- v) The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, has been amended and made more stringent. The punishments in cases of offences have been enhanced. The Act also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that are used for committing wildlife offence.

- vi) The State Governments have been requested to strengthen the field formations and intensify patrolling in and around the Protected Areas.
- vii) The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has been set up for control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife and its products.
- (viii) Strict vigil is maintained through effective communication system.

(b) and (c) The State Government of Maharashtra has informed that there is no report indicating the change in population of owl in Maharashtra and no estimation data regarding owlets is available with the State Government.

Cleaning of Yamuna river

3573. SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the Yamuna river is still highly polluted and Government is unable to clean it despite huge sums of money being spent;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) the details of the funds allocated and spent since the year 2005;
- (d) whether any private player has been involved with the cleaning up of the Yamuna; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government to clean-up the river?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) to (e) The water quality of the river has not shown the desired improvement owing to large gap between the demand and availability of the sewage treatment capacity and lack of availability of fresh water for ensuring adequate flow in the river.

To supplement the efforts of State Governments in addressing the problem of pollution of river Yamuna, Government of India is implementing Yamuna Action Plan (YAP) with assistance from Japan International Cooperation Agency, Government of Japan in a phased manner. The works taken up under YAP include interception and diversion of raw sewage, setting up of sewage