

**Indian Wildlife Business Council**

1757. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:.

(a) whether the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) and the World Bank have signed an MoU to establish the Indian Wildlife Business Council to promote tiger and biodiversity conservation for sustainable development;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the initiative comes against the backdrop of dwindling tiger population as there are just about 3000 tigers in the wild now;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether bringing private sector into this effort will infuse new ideas and new resources will serve as a powerful instrument of change?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) to (e) It is learnt that the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) and the Global Tiger Initiative have signed a MoU to establish the Indian Wildlife Business Council to promote tiger and biodiversity conservation for sustainable development. Details are not available as the Government of India is not a signatory of the said MoU.

**Conservation of House Sparrows**

1758. SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that population of House Sparrows (*passer domesticus*) is fast dwindling, disappearing and facing extinction globally including India since last few years;

(b) whether any effort have been made to list this bird in the schedule of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972; and

(c) the details of the action taken by Government to protect House Sparrow and to increase its population?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) Studies carried out by Research Organizations and NGO's including Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology, Coimbatore and Bombay Natural History Society, indicate a decline in population of house sparrows in India.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The Ministry of Environment and Forests provides financial assistance for conservation of wildlife including house sparrows, both within as well as outside Protected Areas, under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats'.

A research project has also been assigned to Bombay Natural History Society during 2009 for 'Investigation of causes of house sparrow population decline in urban and sub-urban habitats of India' with a financial grant of Rs. 4.3 lakhs.

**Categorization of coalfields as inviolate areas**

1759. SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T.: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that her Ministry has categorized some of the coalfields as inviolate areas;

(b) if so, the details of coalfields categorized as inviolate areas;

(c) what exactly the meaning of 'inviolate areas';

(d) whether any recommendations to this effect have been made by B.K. Chaturvedi Committee;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether any consultations have been held with Coal Ministry before categorization;

(g) if so, the details thereof; and

(h) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) No, sir.

(b) In view of reply to part (a) above, reply to part (b) does not arise.

(c) to (e) The B.K. Chaturvedi Committee recommended that coal bearing blocks should normally be taken for mining and clearances given for it except where there is a strong case for rejection due to extremely dense forests and other ecological and environment consideration of serious nature. The Group of Ministers (GoM) constituted to consider the environmental and developmental issues relating to coal mining and other development projects in its fifth meeting held on 20th