

Elephant mowed down by trains

1414. DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of elephants mowed down by trains in Uttarakhand, Odisha and West Bengal during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) whether Government has identified certain jumbo killer zones in the States mentioned above in order to observe the speed limit of train in order to avoid jumbo killings; if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the further steps taken by Government to prevent mowing down of jumbos by trains across the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATRAJAN): (a) The number of elephant deaths in train accidents in the States of Uttarakhand, Odisha and West Bengal for last three years, year-wise, as reported by the States are as follows:

State	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	Total
Odisha	0	2	10	12
West Bengal	12	3	4	19
Uttarakhand	0	0	2	2

(b) Yes sir, the Government has identified vulnerable stretches of railways in respect of train-elephant accidents, the detail of which are given in the Statement (*See below*).

(c) The Government has taken following measures to prevent accidental deaths of wild animals, especially elephants:

- (i) Ministry of Railways in consultation with the Ministry of Environment and Forests had issued a general advisory to all the railway zones suggesting measures to prevent collision of trains with wild elephants. A permanent coordination team has been constituted jointly by the Ministry of Railways and Ministry of Environment and Forests to share information and monitor the implementation of the advisory.

- (ii) Ministry of Railways has also been requested to regulate the speed of trains in vulnerable sections.
- (iii) Nodal officers have been designated in the vulnerable sections to facilitate quick sharing of information.
- (iv) The Ministry of Environment and Forests has been releasing financial assistance to the State Government of West Bengal under Centrally Sponsored Scheme-'Project Elephant' for construction of RCC watch towers, provision of heavy duty solar lights, high beam search lights, engagement of personnel to man watch towers, and clearing of bushes on the sides of railway tracks for improving visibility to monitor the movement of elephants near the railway tracks with the objective of preventing collision of elephants with trains.
- (v) In consultation with the Ministry of Environment & Forest (MoEF) and Forest Departments of the State Governments, Railways is also attempting to find a more lasting solution in the matter through deposit works consisting of measures such as construction of ramps and underpasses etc.

Statement

Vulnerable stretches of Railway tracks in Odisha

Section/Division	Location	Length
1	2	3
Keonjhar Forest Division	8 E Railway Post No. 380/58/1 to 415/5.	35 kms.
	Eco. Railway: railway post No. 16/6 to 23/11	7 kms
Athgarh Forest Division	Rai-Athgarh to Chhagaon Railway station	10 kms
	Rai-Athgarh to Joranda Road Railway station	12 kms
	Rai-Athgarh to Ghantikhal Railway station	10 kms
Berhampur Forest Division	Starting point : Railway post 557/19-20	
	Midpoints : Railway post 559/11-12, 561/32-33, 563/09-10, 564/17-88	

1	2	3
	End point : Railway post 568/07-08	
Angul Forest Division	Purunagarh : Talcher road to Range Angul	12 kms
	Talcher Range: Talcher to Kaniha Buda Panka	18 kms
	Durga Range : Jarpada to Kerjeng	6 kms
Dhenkanal Forest Division	Raj-Athgarh to Hindol	40 kms
Cuttack Forest Division	Byree to Jhadeswar kadei railway station (Railway post no. 385/9 to 385/12)	100 mtrs
	Slagaon to Charabatia (railway post no 403/20 to 403/28 and 404/17 to 404/24)	400 mtrs
Atthamalik Forest Division	Dalimura to Jhinkibhal	14.00 kms

Vulnerable Stretches of Railway tracks in West Bengal

Division	Location	Length
1	2	3
Buxa Tiger Reserve	Mahananda River- Bagrakote Railway Station	Railway Post 16/5 - 33/9 17.4 Km.
	Damdin RS-New Mall Junction	Railway Post 50/3 - 51/6 1.3 Km.
	Murti River-Jaldhaka River	Railway Post 65/7 - 72/7 7.0 Km.
	Chengmari RS-Banaghat Junction	Railway Post 86/2 - 86/8 0.6 Km
	Banarhat-Binnaguri	Railway Post 95/1 - 96/6 1.5 Km.
	Binnaguri RS-Dalgaon Railway Station	Railway Post 103/3 - 103/8 0.5 Km.

1	2	3
	Madarihat - Torsa River	Railway Post 2.4 Km.
		128/3-130/7
	Hasimara Rail Gate	Railway Post 32.0 km.
	Damanpur N.H. crossing	131 - 163

Vulnerable stretches of Railway tracks in Uttarakhand

Division	Range	Location	Length
Rajaji National Park	Kansrao Range	Culvert 139 Railway Pillar 52/2 to 43/9	9.00 Km.
	Motichur Range	Railway Pillar No. 43/9 to 40/9	3.00 Km.
		Railway Pillar No. 38/9 to 35/8	3.00 Km.
	Haridwar Range	Railway Pillar No. 35/6 to 31/8	4.00 Km.

Uncontrolled development in Himalayan region

1415. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the recent tragedy in Uttarakhand can be attributed to rampant, uncontrolled development in the Himalayan region, what steps Government is taking to assess its past decision making that may have contributed to this tragedy; and

(b) the steps Government proposes to take in the future to protect the region from such rampant development and prevent the recurrence of such a tragedy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) The environment and forest clearance for various developmental projects, including those in hilly areas in the State of Uttarakhand, are granted after following statutory procedures. The Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006 as amended from time to time, prescribes the procedure to be adopted for the grant of prior environment clearance in respect of developmental projects or activities stated in the Schedule to the Notification. Similarly, the diversion of forest land for non-forest activities is only allowed as per the provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and the rules and guidelines framed thereunder.