

(c) The EC process under the EIA Notification, 2006, as amended, aims at mainstreaming environmental issues in developmental process. Various streamlining decisions taken by the Government from time to time are with a view to facilitating timely and objective decision making without compromising the integrity of the environment.

Poaching of wildlife around National Parks

1699. SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that large scale poaching of wildlife is going on in and around the National Parks and zoos in the country during the last two years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof year-wise, category-wise, national park-wise; and
- (c) the action being taken to protect wildlife and to punish the guilty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) The management and protection of wild animals in and around the National Parks in the country is carried out by the concerned State/Union Territory Governments. National Park-wise details of poaching of wild animals are not collated in the Ministry. Further as per information available in the Ministry there has been no poaching of wildlife in the zoos of the country for the last two years except one incident at the Biological Park, Itanagar on 24th September 2012 wherein killing of one female Bengal Tiger was reported.

(c) The State Government of Arunachal Pradesh has recommended the said case to Special Investigation Team of Police. Further, the Central Zoo Authority has issued an alert to all Zoos in the country to keep necessary vigil regarding any such attempts.

In addition, the important steps taken by the Government for protection of wild animals in the country includes:

- (i.) Endangered species of animals including Tiger, Elephants, Lion, Rhino, etc are listed under Schedule-I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 thereby according them highest degree of protection.
- (ii.) Legal protection has been provided to wild animals against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
- (iii.) The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, has been amended and made more stringent. The punishments for offences have been enhanced. The Act also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that is used for committing wildlife offence(s).

- (iv.) Protected Areas, viz., National Parks, Sanctuaries, Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves covering important wildlife habitats have been created all over the country under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to conserve wild animals and their habitats.
- (v.) Financial and technical assistance is provided to the State/ Union Territory Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', 'Project Tiger' and 'Project Elephant' for providing better protection to wildlife and improvement of its habitat.
- (vi.) The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has been set up to strengthen the enforcement of law for control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife and its products.
- (vii.) The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.
- (viii.) The State/Union Territory Governments have been requested to strengthen the field formations and intensify patrolling in and around the Protected Areas.

Environmental clearance norms for projects

1700. SHRI DILIPBHAI PANDYA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has decided to relax environmental clearance norms for projects requiring forest land, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether an adverse impact on environment is likely to take place in the event of such relaxations, if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (c) whether Government has formulated any guidelines so as to reduce the diversion of forest land, and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) As per the guidelines, the environment clearance (EC) of a project involving forest land is granted only after the project proponent has obtained Stage-I forest clearance (FC). These guidelines are *inter alia* stated in this Ministry's OM No.J-11015/200/2008-IA. II(M) dated 31.03.2011 and 09.11.2011.

This Ministry received representations from various stakeholders to delink grant of EC from FC in case of linear projects such as roads, transmission lines, pipelines, etc., involving patches of forest land along their alignment, often stretching to several