

Shrinking of elephant habitat

1650. SHRI D. KUPENDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that elephant habitat area in Western Ghats has shrunk by more than half as per a recent survey;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that about hundreds of elephants are found dead during the last few months due to poaching; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Central Government for their conservation in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) No Sir.

- (b) Question does not arise.
- (c) Poaching of 16 elephants has been reported from Western Ghats during the year 2015.
- (d) Following steps have been taken by the Government for conservation of elephants in the country:
 - (i) Elephants has been classified in Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 to provide highest legal protection to it.
 - (ii) Financial and technical assistance is provided to elephant range states under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Project Elephant'.
 - (iii) 29 Elephant Reserves have been notified in the country till date.
 - (iv) Regular nationwide elephant census is conducted at interval of 5 years.
 - (v) Wildlife Crime Control Bureau is assisting Chief Wildlife Wardens of Elephant Reserve States in prosecution and detection of Crimes relating to poaching of elephants and smuggling of ivory.

Lakes in Jammu and Kashmir

†1651. SHRI NAZIR AHMED LAWAY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware that the beautiful lakes in Jammu and Kashmir are dying fast;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

- (b) whether Government has formulated a scheme to save these lakes;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) to (c) A few lakes in the country, including Jammu and Kashmir, have reportedly been impacted due to rapid urbanization, various developmental activities and other anthropogenic pressures. For conservation and management of identified lakes and wetlands in the country, this Ministry had been earlier implementing two separate programmes, namely National Lake Conservation Plan (NLCP) and National Wetland Conservation Programme (NWCP). To have better synergy and avoid overlap, both the programmes have been merged in February, 2013 into an integrated scheme of National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Eco-systems (NPCA) with the objective of conserving lakes and wetlands in an integrated and holistic manner. NPCA is presently operational on cost sharing basis between the Central and the State Governments. The various activities covered under the scheme include interception, diversion and treatment of waste water, shore line protection, lake front development, de-silting, bio-remediation, catchment area treatment, lake beautification, survey and demarcation, bio-fencing, fisheries development, weed control, bio-diversity conservation, education and awareness creation and community participation, etc.

So far, an amount of ₹ 273.85 crore for Dal-Nigee lake in Srinagar as well as ₹ 8.25 crore for wetlands, namely Wular lake, Tso Moriri, Tsigul Tso, Mansar- Surinsar, Hokersar and Pangong Tso has been made available to the Government of Jammu and Kashmir for conservation and management activities under the programme. Additionally, an amount of ₹60 crore has been released by Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance under the 13th Finance Commission for conservation of Wular lake.

- (d) Question does not arise.

Solar plant in Mahaboobnagar of Telangana

1652. SHRI PALVAI GOVARDHAN REDDY: Will the Minister of NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that NTPC is planning to set up a 1,000 MW solar plant in Mahaboobnagar district of Telangana;
- (b) whether the survey for this project has been taken up;