

Conservation of Great Indian Bustard

1634. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware that the population of Great Indian Bustard has plummeted to less than 200 now in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the steps taken by Government for conservation of this critically endangered species on the red list of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) Population of Great Indian Bustard is known to have decreased to less than 300 in the country. This species is one of the critically endangered species of bird in India and is confined to 6 states viz., Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The population of this species is declining due to land use change in important bustard habitats which are grasslands.

The Great Indian Bustard has been included in Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. Thus, the species is getting utmost protection and conservation status in India. This species has also been identified as one of the species under the component 'Recovery programmes for saving critically endangered species and habitats' of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats'. Financial assistance is provided to the State Governments for protection of Great Indian Bustard habitats under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats'. In the year 2015-16, Central Assistance of ₹ 65.36 lakh to Rajasthan, an amount of ₹ 11.79 lakh to Kutchh Bustard Sanctuary and ₹ 2.48 lakh to Gaga Great Indian Bustard Sanctuary of Gujarat and ₹ 110.63 lakh to Maharashtra was provided for conservation of Great Indian Bustards.

Under a programme for conservation breeding of Great Indian Bustard for augmenting wild population, Ministry has approved ₹ 33.85 crores for five years. This programme will be implemented by Wildlife Institute of India in the State of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra to begin with.

Population of rhinoceros

1635. DR. K. KESHAVA RAO: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of rhinoceros found in the country;