

Reduction of ESZ areas

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

- (a) whether Government has allowed to reduce the Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) area of certain wildlife sanctuaries and National Parks in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the fresh steps taken by Government to protect the habitat of a number endangered animal species belonging to these sanctuaries and National Parks?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. HARSH VARDHAN): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has not reduced the area of eco-sensitive zone around National Parks and Sanctuaries that has been notified.

(c) The important steps taken by the Government to protect endangered wild animals and their habitats include:—

- (i) The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 provides for punishment for violation of its provisions. The Act also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that is used for committing wildlife offence(s).
- (ii) Increase in Protected Areas, viz., National Parks, Sanctuaries, Tiger Reserves, 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.
- (iii) Enhanced financial 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 including peacock, and improvement of habitat.
- (iv) The Ministry has taken up the initiative for conservation breeding of the critically endangered species, like Asiatic Lion, Great Indian Bustard, Gangetic Dolphins, Manipur Brow Antler Deer, Vultures, etc. under the Endangered Species Recovery Programme Scheme.

- (v) The local communities are involved in conservation measures through eco-development activities who help the forest department in protection of wildlife.
- (vi) Wildlife Crime Control Bureau activities have been intensified to gather intelligence about poaching and unlawful trade in wild animals and animal articles, including peacocks, and to achieve inter-state and trans-boundary coordination in enforcement of wildlife laws.

Pollution in mines, streams and rivulets

†862. SHRI AMAR SHANKAR SABLE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether rivers are getting polluted on a large scale, due to flowing of untreated sewage and industrial and hotel wastes directly into rivers, streams and rivulets and if so, the total number of polluted rivers and rivulets in Maharashtra;
- (b) the schemes being implemented by Government to save these rivers from pollution; and
- (c) the details of the above schemes and the streams and natural rivulets apart from the big rivers included under this scheme to make them pollution free?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. HARSH VARDHAN): (a) to (c) According to Central Pollution Control Board, 49 polluted rivers are identified in Maharashtra. Water quality monitoring of aquatic resources including surface and sub-surface is carried out at 250 locations in Maharashtra under National Water Quality Monitoring Programme (NWMP). The water quality monitoring indicates that the rivers are polluted in downstream of major urban and industrial centers due to water abstraction and discharge of untreated/ partially treated/ treated wastewater which are not meeting the prescribed criteria.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has been supplementing the efforts of the State Governments, including Maharashtra, in abatement of pollution in identified stretches of various rivers under the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP). Projects at a total cost of ₹ 1182.85 crore have been sanctioned under NRCP in Maharashtra on cost sharing basis between Central and State Government for River Mula -Mutha at Pune; River Panchganga at Kolhapur; River Krishna at Sangli and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.