

Elephant deaths due to train accident

81. SHRI BHASKAR RAO NEKKANTI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the elephant deaths hit by trains across the country has increased in recent years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof during the last five years, State-wise;
- (c) whether Government is taking any steps to minimize such incidents particularly in the States of Odisha and Northeast; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) and (b) As per the information received from States, the number of elephants killed in train hits has been showing a declining trend in recent years. The State-wise and year-wise details of elephant deaths due to train hits in the last five years is given in the Statement (*See* below).

(c) and (d) The Ministry is taking various measures to prevent the death of elephant due to train hits in coordination with Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) and State Governments including Odisha and Northeast which have resulted in slaving of elephants. The preventive measures undertaken include the following:—

- (i) Imposition of permanent and temporary speed restrictions in identified elephant corridors.
- (ii) Provision of signage board to warn loco pilots about identified elephant corridors.
- (iii) Sensitization of train crew and Station Masters on a regular basis.
- (iv) Need based clearance of vegetation on the sides of track within railway land.
- (v) Construction of underpasses and ramps for movement of elephants at identified locations. Work is in progress at one more location in East Central Railway.
- (vi) Provision of fencing at isolated locations both by Railway and Forest Department.

(vii) Deputing Forest Department staff in Railway control offices to liaison with Railway and engagement of elephant trackers by Forest Department for timely action by alerting Station Masters and Loco Pilots.

(viii) Frequent coordination meetings between State Forest Department and Railway department.

Due to concerted efforts taken by the Central and State Governments the elephant deaths by train accidents has been reducing in the recent years.

Statement

Elephant casualties in train accidents from 2015-16 to 2019-20

Sl. No.	Zones	State	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
1.	NE	Assam	5	10	10	2	2
2.	NE	West Bengal	5	3	2	6	4
3.	SZ	Tamil Nadu	0	2	0	0	0
4.	ER	Jharkhand	0	2	0	0	1
5.	SZ	Kerala	0	2	0	1	3
6.	ER	Odisha	1	0	2	7	1
7.	NE	Tripura	0	0	0	0	0
8.	NZ	Uttarakhand	0	2	5	1	2
9.	NZ	Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0
10.	SZ	Karnataka	0	0	1	2	0
TOTAL			11	21	20	19	13

Forest cover in the country

82. DR. SANTANU SEN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) the forest cover in hectares in the country, along with their percentage, State-wise;

(b) the details of number of trees chopped down for various development projects during the last five years, year-wise and State-wise;