

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 43
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.02.2023

Tigers in Sunderbans

43. DR. SANTANU SEN:

Will the MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of steps Government propose to take in response to the recent report of the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) which suggests that the tiger population in Sunderbans has reached its saturation limit;
- (b) the number of human-wildlife conflicts that have been reported in the Sunderbans since 2018, year-wise;
- (c) the details of the action taken by Government to reduce the human-wildlife conflict in the Sunderbans; and
- (d) the number of Tigers that died in Sunderbans including the death due to poaching since 2018 year-wise?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

- (a) As per the All India Tiger Estimation 2018, conducted by the National Tiger Conservation Authority and Wildlife Institute of India, the tiger population in the Sundarbans Tiger Reserve is 88 in an area of 2584.89 sq.km. As per the Tiger Conservation Plan, need based and site-specific management interventions are done for improving quality of wildlife habitat for which funding support is provided to the State under the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Project Tiger.
- (b) As reported by the State, the details of human deaths due to tiger attacks in the Sundarbans Tiger Reserve are at **Annexure-I**.
- (c) The Government of India, through the National Tiger Conservation Authority, has advocated a three pronged strategy to manage human-tiger negative interactions as follows:-
 - (i) **Material and logistical support:** Funding support through the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Project Tiger, is provided to tiger reserves for acquiring capacity in terms of infrastructure and material, to deal with tigers dispersing out of source areas. These are solicited by tiger reserves through an Annual Plan of Operation (APO) every year which stems out from an overarching Tiger Conservation Plan (TCP), mandated under Section 38 V of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. *Inter alia*, activities such as payment of ex-gratia and compensation, periodic awareness campaigns to sensitize, guide and advise the general populace on man-animal conflict, dissemination of information through various forms of media, procurement of immobilization

equipment, drugs, training and capacity building of forest staff to deal with conflict events are generally solicited.

- (ii) **Restricting habitat interventions:** Based on the carrying capacity of tigers in a tiger reserve, habitat interventions are restricted through an overarching TCP. In case tiger numbers are at carrying capacity levels, it is advised that habitat interventions should be limited so that there is no excessive spill over of wildlife including tigers thereby minimizing man-animal conflict. Further, in buffer areas around tiger reserves, habitat interventions are restricted such that they are sub-optimal vis-à-vis the core/critical tiger habitat areas, judicious enough to facilitate dispersal to other rich habitat areas only.
- (iii) **Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs):** The National Tiger Conservation Authority has issued following three SOPs to deal with human-animal conflict, which are available in public domain:
 - i. To deal with emergency arising due to straying of tigers in human dominated landscapes
 - ii. To deal with tiger depredation on livestock
 - iii. For active management towards rehabilitation of tigers from source areas at the landscape level.

The three SOPs *inter alia* include the issue of managing dispersing tigers, managing livestock kills so as to reduce conflict as well as relocating tigers from source areas to areas where density of tiger is low, so that conflict in rich source areas does not occur.

- (d) As reported by the State Government of West Bengal, the details of tiger mortality in the Sundarbans Tiger Reserve, are at **Annexure-II**.

**ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (b) OF THE RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 43 ON TIGERS IN SUNDERBANS DUE FOR REPLY ON
02.02.2023**

**Details of number of human deaths due to tiger attacks in the Sundarbans Tiger Reserve, as
reported by the State**

Year	Number of human deaths
2018	0
2019	2
2020	4
2021	5
2022	1
2023 (as on 30.01.2023)	0

Annexure-II

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (d) OF THE RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 43 ON TIGERS IN SUNDERBANS DUE FOR REPLY ON 02.02.2023

Details of tiger deaths in the Sundarbans Tiger Reserve, as reported by the State Government of West Bengal (year-wise)

Year	Number of tiger deaths/Cause
2018	0
2019	0
2020	0
2021	2/ Natural
2022	0
2023 (as on 30.01.2023)	0
