

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**STARRED QUESTION NO. 39**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.11.2024

**Death of Migratory Birds**

\*39. SHRI ASHOKRAO SHANKARRAO CHAVAN:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of various migratory birds coming in the country particularly during winter season;
- (b) whether over 500 migratory birds of different species have died around Sambhar Lake in Jodhpur, Rajasthan due to avian botulism;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Union Government has set a body/committee to ascertain the reasons behind the death of large number of migratory birds around Sambhar Lake;
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the findings of the said body/committee; and
- (f) the measures taken/being taken by Government to save the lives of these migratory birds visiting the country every winter?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
(SHRI BHUPENDER YADAV)

- (a) to (f) A statement is laid on the table of the House

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**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF THE RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. \*39 REGARDING “DEATH OF MIGRATORY BIRDS” BY SHRI ASHOKRAO SHANKARAO CHAVAN FOR REPLY ON 28.11.2024.**

(a) India is an important habitat for large number of migratory birds. At least 370 species of migratory birds are reported to visit the Indian subcontinent. The migratory birds include various species of ducks, waders, stork, raptors, cranes, etc.

(b) and (c) As informed by the State of Rajasthan, 982 birds of 21 different species died due to Avian Botulism disease during the period from 26<sup>th</sup> October 2024 to 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024 in Sambhar lake in Jaipur and Deedwana-Kuchaman districts in Rajasthan.

(d) and (e) A team from Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun visited the Sambhar lake, Rajasthan. The team along with officials from Rajasthan Forest Department, Rajasthan Revenue Department, Rajasthan Animal Husbandry Department and State Disaster Response Force and other experts surveyed and monitored the area. The Rajasthan Forest Department coordinated the rescue and mitigation operation. Few dead birds, along with oral, cloacal and blood samples from the rescued birds and water samples were sent to Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Bareilly (IVRI) and the National Institute of High Security Animal Disease, Bhopal (NIHSAD) for analysis. The sample test report received from IVRI confirmed the cause of mortality of birds as Avian Botulism caused by bacteria, *Clostridium botulinum*. The test report received from NIHSAD ruled out Avian influenza virus.

(f) The important steps taken by the Government for protection of birds, including the migratory birds visiting the country include:

- i. Several important habitats of migratory birds have been declared as Protected Areas under Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
- ii. Rare and endangered migratory species of birds found in India, like Black Necked Crane, Great Indian Bustard, Bar Headed Geese, Himalayan Griffon, etc. have been listed in Schedule-I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, thereby providing them the highest degree of protection.
- iii. Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs) around many National Parks and Sanctuaries have been notified under the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 to further strengthen conservation of wildlife, including migratory birds.
- iv. A specific component of ‘Recovery programmes for saving critically endangered species and habitats’ is included in the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme of ‘Development of Wildlife Habitats’.

- v. Financial and technical assistance is provided to the State/UT Governments for protection and management of Protected Areas under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of 'Development of Wildlife Habitats'
- vi. India is a signatory to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS).
- vii. The Ministry has also notified the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017 for conservation of all wetlands in the country which are also the resting places /breeding grounds of a large number of migratory birds.
- viii. India is a signatory to the Convention on Wetlands and currently 85 wetlands in India have been notified as Ramsar Sites.
- ix. The Rajasthan State Forest Department has issued a Standard Operating Procedure in September 2020 for handling Avian Botulism incidences.

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