

(Q. 401)

SHRIMATI DEEPA DASMUNSI (RAIGANJ): Madam Speaker, thank you. I would like to first thank all the Opposition Members because today the Question Hour is not being interrupted. I also want to thank the hon. Prime Minister as he has shown deep concern for the conservation of wild life, especially of tigers. Today, my Question is not about Tigers. As we all know, five per cent of the entire habitat of wild life is in India.

My Question is about deer. I visited the National Zoo in Delhi, the Zoological Park, where I found that in a small enclosure where hardly sixty deer can stay, almost 200 to 250 deer have been put up. Many a time, it may cause injury to them and it may also cause casualty. On the other hand, there are a few areas where there are no animals at all.

There are some norms and there are some laws to be followed in this regard. The hon. Minister has also said that there are norms for that. According to those norms, more than sixty deer should not be put up, but it is more than that.

So, I would like to ask the Minister whether we could provide different areas or different enclosures for different species of deer. There are not many kinds of animals in that Zoo. Can we provide different areas so that visitors and tourists – Common Wealth Games is also knocking at our doors and there will be many tourists – could see many more animals over there?

In Malda there is a deer park called Adina Deer Park where we do not get to see any deer at all. In North Bengal, there are many forests, but deer are hardly seen over there. If we can send some of these deer to that area for the sake of visitors and tourists, it would be ideal.


SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Madam Speaker, I share the concern of the hon. Member on the plight of deer in many of our zoos. The problem is caused by the fact that deer, perhaps like us Indians, are prolific breeders and there is excess of their numbers. We have had to adopt very stringent methods. Particularly in the Delhi Zoo, we have introduced norms, we have introduced castration, we have


introduced transfer of power to other sanctuaries like the Asola Sanctuary and the A.N. Jha Sanctuary. So, we are trying a variety of ways to ensure that the norms are implemented. The fact of the matter is that the number of deer is very large because they are prolific breeders.

But I would like to assure the hon. Member that all efforts will be made to ensure that norms are maintained and, to the extent possible we will encourage transfer of deer from zoos where there seems to be an over population of deer in small enclosure.

SHRIMATI DEEPA DASMUNSI (RAIGANJ): There is no adequate infrastructure in the Zoo.

(b1/1105/tkd-bks)

There are hardly one or two  Medical Officers who are looking after the entire animal fraternity.

Thirdly, there is  scarcity of water in Delhi Zoo and last year in June due to drinking water scarcity, many of the animals, six deer, two lions and tigers, and one elephant fell sick. So, this should be taken care of.

Madam, my main point is that from the Kolkata Zoo last year, there were two rare species of monkeys which have been stolen because of the lapses of the security people. So, it should be taken care of. Though they have got back from Chhattisgarh yet these kinds of things are happening in the Zoo because of inadequate staff in the zoo itself. So, is there any provision of filling up the vacancies, especially in Delhi Zoo, because the Commonwealth Games are fast approaching? The Delhi Zoo has been given a lot of funds; a sum of Rs. 830.05 lakh has been given to the Delhi Zoo. It has not been given for painting or for decoration. This amount is given so that more animals should be taken to this zoo and it will be good for the tourists also.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: There are 198 zoos in the country and only one of these zoos is run by the Central Government, viz, the Delhi Zoo. We are trying to ensure that the Delhi Zoo comes out as an exemplar for quality. But I agree with

Comment: Contd. By B1

Comment: Q. 401 cd. And Smt. Dasmunsi cd.

the hon. Member that still there is room for improvement, particularly in providing health facilities. We have the Central Zoo Authority which has an agreement with the Indian Veterinary Research Institute at Bareilly which provide these referral services. But I would be the first one to accept the fact that perhaps there is always room for improvement. But I do want to bring to the hon. Member's attention that out of these 198 zoos, only one zoo is directly under the control of the Central Government and 197 zoos are run by private agencies, trusts, agricultural universities, municipal corporations or by State Governments.

I would also like to inform the hon. Member that we have asked for the perspective plans to be prepared for each of these zoos. I am glad to say that out of 198 zoos in the country, 134 zoos have prepared the perspective plans, which is how they are going to expand and maintain over the next ten years. The Central Zoo Authority, which was set up some 18 years ago, is being strengthened. We are opening regional offices of the Central Zoo Authority to ensure quality in enforcing these laws. The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau is also very active to control the crimes that are committed in these zoos and to ensure security in these zoos.

श्री अर्जुन राम मेघवाल (बीकानेर): अध्यक्ष महोदया, आपने मुझे इस महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्न पर बोलने का अवसर दिया, इसके लिए मैं आपको धन्यवाद देता हूँ। मैं बीकानेर राजस्थान से आता हूँ और हमारे एरिया में हिरणों की संख्या बहुत ज्यादा है। मैं बताना चाहता हूँ कि हमारे क्षेत्र के करीब एक ताल चापर है, जहां ब्लैक बक की एक सैक्चुअरी है और मेरे ख्याल में यह एशिया की सबसे बड़ी सैक्चुअरी है। बीकानेर के रियासतकाल में इसे स्थापित किया गया था।

मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी को बताना चाहता हूँ कि वर्ष 2008-09 में सौ से अधिक हिरणों की मौत हुई और अभी तो तूफान आया, उसमें भी ताल चापर में सौ से अधिक हिरणों की मौत हुई। क्या सरकार हिरणों की मौतों को रोकने का कोई उपाय करना चाहती है?

मेरा दूसरा प्रश्न यह है कि...

अध्यक्ष महोदया : आप एक ही प्रश्न पूछिये।

श्री अर्जुन राम मेघवाल (बीकानेर): इन्होंने अभी कहा कि हम हिरणों की संख्या को ट्रांसफर कर रहे हैं। मैं बताना चाहता हूँ कि हमारे यहां बिश्नोई समाज की जो जाति है, वह हिरणों की रक्षा के लिए बहुत बड़ा काम कर रही है। आप हमारे एरिया में हिरण भेज दीजिए, उन्हें मारने की जरूरत नहीं है। हम उनकी रक्षा कर लेंगे। मैं सरकार से यही कहना चाहता हूँ।

श्री जयराम रमेश : महोदया, मैं जानता हूँ कि ताल चापर सैंक्चुअरी में करीब तीन-चार वर्षों से समस्याएं आ रही हैं। पहले अकाल की वजह से समस्या पैदा हुई थी और अभी अधिक बारिश के कारण वहां ब्लैक बक, एंटीलोप मारे जा रहे हैं। मैं जानता हूँ कि बिश्नोई समाज जानवरों का सम्मान करता है। परंतु जो ताल चापर सैंक्चुअरी की समस्याएं हैं, उन पर हमने एक अध्ययन किया है और उसकी एक रिपोर्ट भी हमारे पास आई है। इसके अलावा जो भी कदम राज्य सरकार के द्वारा उठाये जाने हैं, मैंने खुद मुख्य मंत्री को खत लिखा है कि अगर राज्य सरकार वे कदम उठायेगी तो हम उनका पूरा समर्थन करेंगे।

श्री चंद्रकांत खैरे (औरंगाबाद): अध्यक्ष महोदया, मैं इससे हटकर एक क्वेश्चन रज करवाने वाला हूँ।

अध्यक्ष महोदया : इससे हटकर नहीं पूछिये, इसी की परिधि में प्रश्न पूछिये।

श्री चंद्रकांत खैरे (औरंगाबाद): मैं आपके माध्यम से जानना चाहता हूँ कि हिरणों के बारे में इन्होंने उनके मानदंड वगैरह के बारे में बताया। लेकिन जो हिरण किसानों की सारी फसलों को नुकसान पहुंचाकर उन्हें तकलीफ दे रहे हैं।

(c1/1110/cs-brv)

ऐसे कई हिरण हैं। मेरे क्षेत्र में वैजापुर तालुका, कन्नड तालुका, गंगापुर तालुका, पैठन तालुका में हिरणों की संख्या बहुत बढ़ी है। उन्हें भी नहीं सकते हैं क्योंकि वाइल्ड लाइफ एक्ट है। हमारे यहां वैजापुर तालुका में तलवाड़ा स्वरूप के बारे में सरकार को एक प्रस्ताव भेजा है कि सारे हिरणों को इकट्ठा करके, वहां उनका बहुत बड़ा तीन हजार हेक्टेअर में एक बड़ा पार्क बनाये और उन्हें सारी सुविधाएं दी जायें। मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहूंगा कि आप तलवाड़ा प्रोजेक्ट को जो महाराष्ट्र के औरंगाबाद जिले में है, क्या उसे मान्यता देंगे ताकि बहुत से किसानों की खेती का संरक्षण हो सके।

श्री जयराम रमेश : महोदया, अगर यह प्रस्ताव आया है तो मैं उसे जरूर देखूंगा। अगर हमारी तरफ से अनुमति दिये जाने की जरूरत पड़ेगी तो हम अनुमति जरूर देंगे। पर मैं यह भी कह दूँ कि हिरण, हाथी, नील गाय आदि से संबंधित कई ऐसी समस्याएं हैं, जिन पर कई राज्यों ने मुझे पत्र लिखा है कि मैं एनीमल कनफ्लिक्ट की वजह से कंपनसेशन बढ़ाने की जरूरत है। हम उस पर भी विचार कर रहे हैं।

Comment: (cd. by c1)

Comment: Khaire contd.

SHRI S. SEMMALAI (SALEM): Madam, the hon. Minister has stated in his Statement that water points and sitting places have been created in the Delhi Zoological Park for the safety of deer. Frequently, the deer are straying away from the forest and entering into roadside and human habitations in search of drinking water. As a result, the deer are getting killed in traffic and hunted by the villagers. To avoid such a situation, sufficient drinking water facilities like drinking water ponds and water bodies have to be created in the forest itself. Will the Ministry pay attention to this fact and create as many water bodies as possible in the forest areas to avoid the deer moving away from their places to risky areas? So, I would like to know about it from the hon. Minister.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: I would like to state that the primary responsibility of providing these water bodies in the forest areas lies with the State Forest Departments. Where we have direct control, direct responsibility like, for example, in the Project Tiger Areas, we can certainly step in and provide all financial and other forms of assistance. But I take the hon. Member's point and I will impress upon the Chief Wildlife Wardens that they should pay extra attention to the provision of water bodies to enable the deer not to stray out and get killed by the moving traffic.

(ends)

(Q.402)

SHRI RAVNEET SINGH (ANANDPUR SAHIB): Madam, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government proposes to convert the tiger habitat areas and sanctuaries into National Parks so as to protect the remaining tiger population by preventing free entry of human population and their livestock there.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Madam Speaker, the Question is very large but I do want to inform the hon. Member and the House that Project Tiger, which was launched on 1st April, 1973 under the leadership and inspiration of the then Prime Minister late Shrimati Indira Gandhi, is today acknowledged as one of the success stories in conservation across the world. We have had problems on the tiger front in various sanctuaries. I admit it. But, overall, I think it is important to appreciate and acknowledge the success that India has had in tiger conservation. Over 50 per cent of the tigers in the world are in India alone and people are looking to India as a success story of tiger conservation.

[(d1/1115/ksp/hcb)]

We have 39 Tiger Reserves in the country. We have requests from various States like Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka etc. to declare more areas as Tiger Reserves and I would assure the hon. Member that Project Tiger continues to receive the highest attention even at the level of the Prime Minister who has written, at various points of time, to the Chief Ministers concerned alerting them to the need to take action so that we do not repeat the Sariska or the Panna type of calamities that overtook the tiger population.

SHRI RAVNEET SINGH (ANANDPUR SAHIB): Madam, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government proposes to include wildlife in the Concurrent List because the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhiji wanted to place wildlife sanctuary under the Concurrent List as suggested by Dr. Salim Ali and 'Billy' Arjan Singh to place wildlife under the Concurrent List.

Comment: Pages 2 to 5 written reply

Comment: (Q. 402 - Cd. & Shri Jairam Ramesh - Cd.)

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Madam, to the best of my knowledge, in 1976, the 42nd Amendment to the Constitution brought environment and wildlife on to the Concurrent List.

श्री तूफ़ानी सरोज (मछलीशहर): माननीय अध्यक्ष महोदया, मेरा मूल प्रश्न राष्ट्रीय पक्षी मोर से संबंधित था लेकिन उसको तोड़-मरोड़ दिया गया है। फिर भी यह वन्य जीव के प्रजनन से जुड़ा हुआ मामला है।

जिस तरह से मानव जीवन के आपसी संबंधों से बीमारियों का आदान-प्रदान होता है, वैसे ही वन्य जीवों में भी बीमारियों का आदान-प्रदान होता रहता है। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या शेर एडज़ की बीमारी और बोवाइन टीबी के रोग से वन्य जीव मर रहे हैं? यदि हाँ, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है? सरकार उसके रोकथाम के लिए क्या उपाय कर रही है? ...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : ठीक है, आपने एक प्रश्न पूछ लिया है। कितने प्रश्न पूछेंगे।

श्री तूफ़ानी सरोज (मछलीशहर): यह उसी से जुड़ा हुआ प्रश्न है। देहरादून स्थित भारतीय वन्य जीव संस्थान ने मोरों की गणना के लिए सरकार के पास 2008 में एक विस्तृत प्रस्ताव भेजा था। सरकार ने उसे सैद्धांतिक मंजूरी भी दी थी। क्या सरकार ने इस योजना के लिए धन और अन्य सुविधा मुहैया करा दी है?

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Madam, I will have to get back to the hon. Member on the specific proposal. But I want to inform the hon. Member that there are two issues here. One is ensuring the health of the animal population which the Central Zoo Authority is doing through the agreement that we have with the Indian Veterinary Research Institute at Bareilly and the other issue, of course, is the health impact on human beings from the animal population. The hon. Member is from Uttar Pradesh. He knows that every year, year after year, hundreds of children die due to Japanese Encephalitis and Japanese Encephalitis is a zoonotic disease. It is a disease brought about by the contact between animals and human beings. This is also a very serious issue. But this goes beyond my own Ministry. It gets into issues of health, it gets into issues of urban development, it gets into issues or urban development and it gets into issues of how people live in the proximity of animal population. But this is a very serious issue and I share the hon. Member's concern that we should also pay attention not just to the welfare and health of the animals but the impact of them on the health of human beings as well.

श्री तूफ़ानी सरोज (मछलीशहर): मैंने शेरों में एडज़ की बीमारी से संबंधित प्रश्न पूछा था और शेरों में बोवाइन टीबी के संबंध में भी पूछा था। यह बात खबरों में भी आई है। ... (व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : आपने पूछ लिया है। आप बैठ जाइए।

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI (AONLA): Madam Speaker, I would like to say that relocation of deer, whether they breed or not, cannot be done because we have absolutely no expertise on how to relocate animals from zoos, especially deer. It is a fact that many deer die as soon as you dart them with anesthesia. The problem related to the second question is that wildlife medicine is not taught in the 33 veterinary colleges that we have in India. Therefore, there is not a single wildlife doctor. The zoos are run by Forest Officers and the doctors underneath them, who are trained in animal husbandry, have no clue on how to treat monkey, deer etc.

Recently, the Chief Wildlife Warden of Kerala has written to me saying that their Deer Sanctuary is also very crowded and they do not know how to relocate deer without causing death. The Maharajbagh Zoo in Nagpur has lost all its deer in the last one week because they picked them up to relocate them under the orders of the CZA and all of them died. We have had a huge number of death of deer every time deer are touched. May I suggest that the answer to both these problems would be to start wildlife courses in all the veterinary colleges and make it compulsory?

Comment: (Cd. by e1)

(e/1120/rs/mm)

Secondly, he should bring in foreign experts to teach our Vets because we have no idea of how to treat wild animals at all.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Madam Speaker, I accept the hon. Member's suggestion in view of her long experience and interest in this area. I will certainly take measures to ensure that the veterinary facilities available in the zoo improve.

I have seen in many zoos some excellent veterinary scientists but they do not belong to Government Department. They belong to private NGOs or Trusts. I entirely agree with her that this is a specialised branch and we should try to get the

best expertise possible for wherever it is available. I would like to assure her that this would be a priority issue as far as the Central Zoo Authority is concerned.

SHRI MOHAN JENA (JAJPUR): Madam, I would like to know from the Minister whether the Ministry is aware about the fact that 698 elephants died within 19 years, that is between 1990 and 2009, due to poaching, accidents and more particularly after coming in contact with high tension electric wires in Orissa.

I would like to know what steps the Government has taken against the persons responsible and what administrative action Government has contemplated to prevent this type of incidents in different parts of the country.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Madam Speaker, any action that has to be taken against poachers of elephants in Orissa has to be taken by the Orissa Government and not by the Government of India. That is the first response that I would like to have to the hon. Member's question.

But we are faced with a serious problem on elephants. The population of elephants is not dwindling substantially. It is somewhere in the region of 25,000 to 26,000. But elephants are being poached, particularly in Simlipal in Orissa, we have had a recent instance. Elephants are being killed by moving rail traffic, particularly in Jalpaiguri in North Bengal, in the North-East Frontier Railway operations. Every month there is a mortality of elephants and elephant calves. So, it is a serious issue.

We have set up an expert group bringing about 20 of India's leading experts on the elephants. They are submitting their report to me by the end of this month. I will make it public thereafter. We will strengthen Project Elephant. I think, Project Elephant should get the same degree of political attention as Project Tiger. After all elephant is related to our culture. We propitiate Elephant God as well. I think elephant certainly deserves much greater concern from all of us. In this, I would also include the way the elephants are treated in some of our Temples.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (KASARGOD): Thank you Madam Speaker. I fully agree with the views expressed by the hon. Minister that wild animals have to be protected and some more stringent action has to be initiated in order to punish the guilty.

In this connection, I would like to bring to the notice of the House that there are instances where wild animals also attack humans or destroy the crops and agricultural products, especially in the border areas of States. Madam, in the border of areas of Kerala and Karnataka a good number of people are tribals. The hon. Minister has stated that we have to worship the elephants. I have my own experience that in the monsoon season the same elephants cross the borders and the fencing areas and destroy the crops and agricultural products. They even destroy the houses and even there are deaths.

Madam, it is really unfortunate for the tribals to go to the court. When they go to the Karnataka court, they say that this happened in Kerala and when we approach the Kerala court, they say that the elephant is from Karnataka. It is really sad to say that the innocent tribal people, even in the case of death, are not compensated.

MADAM SPEAKER: Please ask the question.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (KASARGOD): Madam, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what measures the Government can take; and while strengthening the protective measures for the wild animals, will there be any intention to protect these tribal people when such incidents take place.

(f1/1125/rcp/mm)

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Madam Speaker, if you do not mind my saying so, with greatest respect to the hon. Member, I have told him earlier and I would like to repeat it, that the Indian elephant is like the Malayali; it is highly migratory in nature. You cannot keep it controlled in one area. So, we are trying our best. This is an issue on the Karnataka-Kerala border. We have problems in Tamil Nadu. We have problems in Karnataka as well in Hassan district. The former

Comment: Fd by f



Prime Minister writes to me very frequently about the damage that is being caused by elephants to the human population, particularly the tribals. Certainly, we are looking at hiking the compensation. But that is not an answer to this situation. The answer to this situation is only possible if we allow natural elephant corridors to be maintained. Unfortunately, with the phenomenal growth in economy and new projects coming up, traditional elephant corridors have been disturbed. We are trying to restore some of the traditional elephant corridors. But it is very difficult to restore traditional elephant corridors simply because factories have come up; housing complexes have come up and we cannot; we have to live with people as well. They are a reality. So, the only answer that I can give to the hon. Member is that we are aware of this problem. We will certainly provide adequate compensation. We will try to ensure that corridors are maintained so that this type of conflict does not intensify in future.

SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR (DIBRUGARH): I would like to congratulate the Government for taking the World Heritage Biodiversity Programme for India building partnership and support by UNESCO and including two of the National Parks from Assam, namely, Kaziranga and Manas. Also, I would like to congratulate the Minister for Rhino 2010 Vision because rhino is one of the most endangered species of our country.

I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister that in Assam – it is our experience – at the time of flood, poaching increases and a lot of accidents take place. It is because, the National Highway goes through the National Park and when the whole forest is flooded, the wild animals shift their habitat to other places and while crossing the road, many of the wild animals lose their lives. I personally feel that without the support of the communities, who live around the forest, poaching cannot be stopped. I think, there has to be some programme. At the same time, there has to be protection by the forest guards. But without sensitization of the community, despite good intention of the Government and the amendment of the Wildlife Protection Act, that is not giving the desired result. So,

I would like to request the Minister to look into it and take appropriate step in this regard.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Madam Speaker, it is true that Manas and Kaziranga are the two success stories in revival and rehabilitation. Both Kaziranga and Manas have come onto the UNESCO Heritage World Sites. The State Government has also played a very important role in this revival. I want to congratulate the hon. Member and the State Government for allowing this effort to continue. Today, rhinoceros is a success story. Today the population of rhinos is over 2000. It is a good success story of conservation and I think that we can all take pride in this.

Insofar as the specific question that the hon. Member has raised about involving local communities in protection of sanctuaries and national parks, I think this is a very important issue. I happen to believe that without local community involvement, we cannot protect the sanctuaries or tiger reserves or national parks. We cannot do it by CRPF or para-military forces or by police; we have to involve the local communities. That is why, we have, in the last couple of months, begun a systematic programme of involving local communities. I will give you a couple of examples.

In the Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve which has now been open to public after many years of being closed because of Naxalite violence, the local Chenchu youths, the local tribal youths, over 400 of them, have been recruited as forest guards and conservation guards and they are increasing their role in protection of this Tiger Reserve.


In Corbett National Park, we have recruited over 40 to 51 Gujjars, who are the local communities so that we can increase their stake in production. In Tamil Nadu and in Tadoba Reserve near Nagpur, wherever we have local tribal population, we are doing it. In Manas itself we are trying to involve the local Bodo population in the protection of the National Park.

Comment: Contd. by g1



(g1/1130/lh-sb)

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So, I think, this  a very important point that the hon. Member has raised, and I would like to inform him that this is the priority of our Government. Conservation must come through people's participation. Conservation must come from the involvement of local communities. Conservation cannot come if it is imposed from outside.

(ends)