

Wildlife Menace

3207. SHRI RAJKESHAR SINGH :
SHRI LALIT ORAON :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received reports of loss of life, property and standing crops due to menace of antelopes (neelgais), wild elephants and other wild animals from various States particularly Uttar Pradesh and Bihar during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures being taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to check the menace of wild animals and ensure safety of people, animals and crops?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Reports regarding loss of life, property and standing crops due to deprivations by wild animals have been received from following States;

Maharashtra (wild bear), Punjab (wild bear), Rajasthan (neelgai), Haryana (wild bear, Neelgai), Uttar Pradesh (neelgai, monkey, deer, leopard, wolf and wild elephant), Madhya Pradesh (neelgai, wild bear, sloth bear and wild elephant), Gujarat (Neelgai), Himachal Pradesh (monkey, leopard), Andhra Pradesh (wild elephant), Assam (wild elephant), Karnataka (wild elephant), Bihar (wild elephant), Arunachal Pradesh (wild elephant), Tamil Nadu (wild elephant) and Meghalaya (wild elephant), Kerala (wild elephant), West Bengal (wild elephant).

(c) The State Governments have been advised to take action regarding the problem of damage to crops by wild animals other than those included in Schedule I of Wild Life (Protection), 1972 under Section 11 (i) (b) of the Act and under Section 11 (i) (a) of the Wild Life (Protection) Act to deal with the problem causing animals to safeguard the lives of the people. For wild elephant steps have been taken to erect electric fencing, elephant proof trenches etc. to stop movement of elephant outside the forests in problematic areas.

[English]

Status of Industry to Agriculture

3208. SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA :
KUMARI FRIDA TOPNO :
PROF. OMPAL SINGH NIDAR :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to give industrial status of industry to agriculture;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken in this regard; and

(c) the time by which the final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) to (c). The draft Agriculture Policy Resolution envisages bestowing similar benefits on agriculture as exist in industry. This would include creating positive trade and investment climate for agriculture at par with industry through a continuous review of price structure and trade mechanism. However, care would be taken to ensure that agriculturists are not subjected to the regulatory and tax collection machinery of the Government. The draft Agriculture Policy is under finalisation keeping in view the suggestions made by Members of Parliament and concerned Ministries/Departments of the Government.

Gauge Conversion

3209. SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the time by which the ongoing survey for gauge conversion of the Rewari-Loharu-Sadulpur-Ratangarh-Degana section of the Northern Railway would be completed;

(b) the time by which the said metre gauge section would be converted into broad gauge and opened for the passenger traffic;

(c) whether the Jodhpur Mail presently running on the diverted route had been running on the said section for more than four decades;

(d) if so, whether the Jodhpur Mail would be restored on this section after its conversion into broad gauge; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Traffic survey for gauge conversion of Rewari-Loharu Sadulpur-Ratnagarh-Degana MG line into BG has been sanctioned and will be completed by June, 1997.

(b) Further consideration of the project would be possible once survey reports become available.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e). This will be considered on merits at that time.

Introduction of Special Train

3210. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any agreement has been entered with

M/s. Sterling Holiday Resorts (India) Limited for operation of a Special train for the tourist centres of Rajasthan and Gujarat:

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c). Indian Railways have entered into an agreement with M/s. Sterling Holiday Resorts (India) Ltd., Madras in respect of two tourist trains to be known as Royal Indian (Northern) which will operate between Delhi-Jaipur-Agra-Gwalior-Jhansi (Khajuraho)-Varanasi-Lucknow-Delhi and the Royal Indian (Southern) which will operate between Bangalore-Mysore-Madras-Kodaikanal Road-Kanyakumari-Trivandrum-Cochin-Mettupalayam (Ooty) - Bangalore.

Air Pollution due to Bio-Fuels

3211. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the air pollution is widespread in the rural areas where bio-fuels are used for cooking;

(b) if so, whether any study has been conducted about the volume of air pollution in the rural areas;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to check such air pollution in the rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) to (c). The nature and extent of air pollution in rural areas, where bio-fuels such as wood, dung cakes, crop residues and biogas are used, depend upon the nature and quality of fuel used, design of chulhas, ventilation system, etc. A number of studies have been conducted on air pollution in rural areas by the Tata Energy Research Institute and others, but all such studies are of limited nature relying on a small sample size. During the cooking period, the levels of particulates and carbon-monoxide encountered were not found exceeding the Threshold Limit Values (TLVs) prescribed by Occupational Safety and Health Association (OSHA), USA.

(d) The steps taken to check air pollution, including the rural areas, are given below :

1. The Government is implementing two Central sector schemes, namely, National Programme on Improved Chulha and National Project on Biogas Development which caters to family-size biogas plants. The Government is also providing subsidy and other incentives for promotion of these

devices in the rural areas with the objective to reduce air pollution in rural areas.

2. Ambient air quality standards have been prescribed for major pollutants for the different areas.

3. General environmental awareness campaigns have been launched.

Indian Prison Act, 1894

3212. SHRI PRADIP BHATTACHARYA : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the National Human Rights Commission has urged the Government to make changes in the provisions of the Indian Prison Act, 1894;

(b) whether a Bill has been prepared and submitted by NHRC in this regard to the Union Government;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Union Government thereto; and

(d) the time by which the Bill is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) to (c). The Government and National Human Rights Commission are interacting on the possible content of a Bill to cover changes on various aspects of the prison administration.

Tribal Hockey Players in Railways

3213. KUMARI FRIDA TOPNO : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Tribal Hockey players of Railways have brought laurels to the Ministry;

(b) if so, whether there is any proposal to establish Hockey Academy with a provision of Astro-Turf in the Tribal belt to hunt out the hidden talents;

(c) if so, whether it is proposed to utilise hundreds of acres of surplus land of the Railways at Bondamunda for the purpose;

(d) if so, the time schedule for the completion of this project; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Indian Railways Hockey Team which include tribal players as well has been giving good performance.

(b) No such proposal is under consideration.

(c) and (d). Does not arise.

(e) The development of sports in tribal areas as also in other areas does not come in the ambit of Railways.