

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:961
ANSWERED ON:28.07.2003
ILLEGAL IVORY TRADE
ANANTA NAYAK;SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWASI

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

- (a) whether the Government are aware that Ivory trade in India is still flourishing inspite of the ban;
- (b) if so, whether a survey conducted by TRAFFIC India run by WWF and World Conservation Union has found that Orissa, Assam and U.P are among the most active centres for illegal Ivory trade; and
- (c) if so, the steps taken or being taken by the Government to stop illegal trade in Ivory?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JU DEV)

(a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Government of India has taken many steps for curbing illegal trade in ivory as under:

1. The Indian elephant has been included under Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 which prohibits its hunting and commercial trade.
2. Domestic trade in ivory of all kinds has been prohibited.
3. The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 has been amended in 2002 for enhancing penalties and forfeiting the property of the offenders convicted for indulging in illegal wildlife trade relating to animals and animals articles derived from animals under Schedule I and part II of Schedule II of the Act.
4. The Central Government has banned import and export of ivory from the country.
5. The Government of India receives international co-operation under the provisions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) for control of illegal trade in elephants and their ivory⁶. The Central Government has empowered the C.B.I. under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute the wildlife offenders.
- 7 A Special Co-ordination and Enforcement Committee has been set up under the chairmanship of Secretary, Environment & Forests, Government of India, for control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.
8. The Central Government of India provides financial assistance to the major elephant-bearing states under Project Elephant for strengthening protection measures.
9. The Government of India has identified 26 Elephant Reserves in the country with a view to provide systematic and focussed management of viable elephant ranges. Of these, 19 Elephant Reserves have since been notified by the state governments.