

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:371

ANSWERED ON:18.12.2006

CENSUS ON WILD ANIMALS

Gangwar Shri Santosh Kumar;Singh Shri Uday

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

- (a) whether there have been discrepancies in the number of wild animals as per census conducted by different agencies during each of the last three years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the scientists in the Laboratory for the Conservation of Endangered species have come up with a DNA finger printing methodology for the tiger census;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Government has ascertained the exact number of tigers and other endangered animals with the use of the new technology; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof, as on date?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(a),(b), (c),(d),(e) & (f) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

SATATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) & (f) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 371 ON CENSUS ON WILD ANIMALS DUE FOR REPLY ON 18.12.2006.

(a & b) The Annual estimation of wild animals is conducted at the State level by the forest departments in several States, which is not collated at the Government of India level. The All India estimation of tiger and elephant are coordinated/collated at the Government of India level once in every four and five years respectively. The last such estimation for tigers was done in 2001-02, and for elephants in 2002. At present the All India estimation of tigers, using the refined methodology as approved by the Tiger Task Force is ongoing. However, there is a report of disappearance of tigers from the Sariska Tiger Reserve, and a decline in tiger population in the Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve from 35 in 2001-02 to 26 in 2005 as reported by the State (Rajasthan).

(c & d) The laboratory for conservation of Endangered species under the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad has applied the technique of DNA fingerprinting for identifying individual tigers. This technique needs to be tested over large landscape for its validation and ease of applicability before it is applied at All India level. This methodology, therefore, holds promise for as a tool for estimation of tiger population in future.

(e & f) A refined methodology for estimating tiger, co-predator, prey base and monitoring habitat has been developed by Project tiger Directorate (now the National Tiger Conservation Authority) in association with Wildlife Institute of India, and approved by the Tiger Task Force. This methodology is currently underway in 17 tiger states of the country. As per approved schedule, estimate of tiger population on the basis of a statistically validated methodology would be given for Central India by the end of December 2006, and for the rest of the country by June, 2007.