

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3629
ANSWERED ON:18.04.2005
TIBETAN LINK IN POACHING OF TIGERS
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that some Tibetan poachers are active in the poaching of tigers in the country as reported in the Statesman dated March 23, 2005;
- (b) if so, the facts and the details thereof;
- (c) whether the census of tigers is being conducted by the three decade old method of pug mark counting;
- (d) if so, the extent to which such method of counting is accurate; and
- (e) the concrete steps taken to adopt latest method of counting of tigers and also to check poaching activities of Tibetans in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIROMENT AND FORESTS(SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

- (a) & (b) Body parts of tiger, leopard, otter and other wild animals have been seized several times from persons of Tibetan origin.
 - (c) & (d) The methodology in vogue for estimating tiger population through pugmarks yielded a total count rather than a statistical estimate. This has been refined with inputs from the Scientists of Wildlife Institute of India, and the refinement now addresses these concerns by mapping tiger distribution at the beat resolution using pugmark as an index for tiger presence and abundance. Total number estimates will be inferred by sampling and intensive research level data collection within the sample block by using scientifically valid and peer reviewed techniques.
- The following steps have been taken to protect wild animals in the country:
- (i) Legal protection has been provided to wild animals including tigers against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act. 1972.
 - (ii) Financial and technical help is being extended to the States under Centrally Sponsored Schemes for enhancing the capacity and infrastructure to provide effective protection to wild animals.
 - (iii) The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.
 - (iv) The Ministry of Home Affairs has addressed all State Governments to lend a helping hand to the field formations to curb poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.
 - (v) A National Wildlife Action Plan (2002-2016) has been launched with several action points and priority projects for conservation and protection of wildlife in the country.