

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:956
ANSWERED ON:03.03.2010
POACHING OF RHINOS
Deka Shri Ramen

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the fact that the Rhinos in Assam are at the verge of extinction due to illegal poaching;
- (b) if so, the details of poaching of Rhinos in Assam during the last three years; and
- (c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to preserve one horn Rhinos?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) It is not correct that Rhino population is on the verge of extinction due to poaching or any other reason. Infact the Rhino population has been increasing in all range states in the country.

(b) Details of Rhino poaching in Assam for the last three years are as below:

Year	Assam
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2007	21
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2008	16
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2009	12
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(c) Important steps taken by the Central Government for conservation of wildlife including rhinoceros in the country are as follows:

1. Threatened species of wildlife, including Rhinos are placed in the Schedules of the Wildlife (Protection), Act, 1972, thereby according them the highest degree of protection.
2. The Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 has been amended from time to time and made more stringent against wildlife related offences.
3. A network of Protected Areas has been established to conserve wildlife and their habitats including rhinoceros.
4. Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has been set up to check illegal trade in wildlife and its products.
5. The State/ UT Governments have been requested to strengthen the field formations and intensify patrolling in and around wildlife rich areas.
6. Financial and technical assistance is extended to the State/UT Governments under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, viz, 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', 'Project Tiger' and 'Project Elephant' for providing better protection and conservation of wildlife including rhinoceros.
7. Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme - 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', a new component has been added for initiating 'Recovery Programme for critically endangered species including rhinoceros and their habitats' during the 11th Five Year plan period.