

Title: Unabated killing of wild animals in the North-East particularly in Manipur.

SHRI MANI CHARENAMAI (OUTER MANIPUR): Sir, North East Region has been identified as one of the biodiversity hot spots of the country. The forest cover in the North-East Region in 2001 was 1,69,366 sq. kms. and area under various Protected Areas is 22,815.84 sq. kms. that is 13.5 per cent of the total forest area. In Manipur, the forest area is 16,926 sq. km. and area under Protected Area is 81.30 sq. kms., that is 0.48 per cent of the total forest. The remaining 99.52 per cent is outside the Protected Areas and it is in these areas where all kinds of endangered wild flora and fauna are found. In these areas the meat of wild animals is being sold openly in big markets. Till today, Manipur State has not acknowledged the presence of Royal Bengal Tiger and elephants in the State. For the last about 20 years, the State has been sending nil report. On the other hand, killing of tiger has been going on unabated by the tribal people living in the forest.

In the year 1996, one male tiger was killed at Gaidimjang village. In the same year, two tigers were poisoned by the villagers of Phoklong village. In 2002, one tiger was killed at Sekjang village and recently on 5th March, 2005, one tiger was killed by the villagers just near the District Headquarters. The number of elephants in Manipur before 1980 was about twelve. Between 1980 and 1992, about six elephants were killed. Today, the remaining elephants are locked up in the deep forest of Chkha-Lemta forest. All corridors have been completely cut off due to construction of roads. As such, they have become resident elephants. All the above mentioned places are outside the Protected Area.

According to the villagers, the Royal Bengal Tiger and wild elephants are still at large in the vast virgin forest of the State. I, therefore, urge the Centre to ask the State Government to conduct census of the tigers and elephants in the areas where they are reported to have been sighted along with the villagers of the respective areas and also take up necessary steps to bring those areas under Project Tiger and Project Elephant. I further urge the hon. Minister of Environment and Forests to impress upon the Planning Commission to earmark fund for conservation of priceless flora and fauna, which are outside the Protected Areas with effect from the current financial year.