

PARLIAMENT QUESTION: POPULATION OF ASIATIC LIONS IN GIR FORESTS

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The population of Asiatic Lion in the country has increased from 674 in 2020 to 891 in 2025. As per the information received from the State of Gujarat, Lion population has inhabited new areas like notified forest areas, river corridors as well as revenue wastelands. The State has taken up various measures to manage human-wildlife conflicts and disease vulnerability by strengthening veterinary facilities. The following are the important steps taken in this regard:

- (i) A comprehensive **satellite telemetry** study carried out to generate scientific data on lion ecology, spatial distribution, corridor use, movement of satellite populations, seasonal patterns, land-use preferences, and key management zones.
- (ii) **Vanya PraniMitras and trackers** are engaged to sensitize the nearby population regarding wild animal movement in the area.
- (iii) **Improvement and restoration of grasslands**, prey base augmentation, and habitat improvement across Gir and Greater Gir Lion landscape.
- (iv) **Management of satellite populations** in Greater Gir Landscape and strengthening of protection.
- (v) **Delineation, habitat improvement** and protection of key corridors and lion movement routes.
- (vi) Provision for **Machans** (elevated platforms) to farmers for guarding crops at night.
- (vii) **Augmentation of water resources** to reduce animal movement toward human dominated areas.
- (viii) **Eco-development activities, community participation**, nature education camps and other outreach programmes.
- (ix) **SOP** for protection of lions around railway tracks developed, speed restrictions of trains in hotspot areas and monitoring and patrolling of the area around railway tracks.

Barda Wildlife Sanctuary has been developed as a second home for lion population and corridor management initiatives have facilitated safe movement between sub-populations, for natural expansion into new habitats.

In addition, habitat improvement initiatives are also taken up in the newer areas inhabited by lion population. A **Hi-Tech Monitoring Unit** has been established at Sasan-Gir in 2019 for real-time tracking of lions using radio telemetry.

This information was provided by UNION MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE, SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH, in a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha today.

VM/GS/SK

(Rajya Sabha US Q700)

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