



Centre planning to upgrade, expand zoos across India in PPP mode: Prakash Javadekar

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New Delhi: Marking the celebration of Wildlife Week 2020, Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Prakash Javadekar on Monday (October 5, 2020) congratulated the country for the diverse wildlife and said that the government is working towards the up gradation and development of 160 zoos in Public-Private Partnership (PPP) across the country to encourage interaction between wildlife and humans, and help people observe and understand wildlife behaviour more closely.

The Union Minister informed that policy for up-gradation and development of all the zoos in the country is underway and will be taken up during the upcoming budget.

Javadekar further added that the state governments, corporations, businesses and people will all be key elements of the plan.

It will help give an enhanced experience to the visitors especially the students and children and the future generation in order to nurture the connection between wildlife, nature and humans.

On the occasion, Javadekar also launched a report of the CZA-TERI titled "Economic valuation of ecosystem services, National Zoological Park, New Delhi". The report highlights the importance of habitats such as zoos to human wellbeing and the need for replication across India.

The study first of its kind in India and perhaps the entire World pegs the total annual economic value of the ecosystem services (biodiversity conservation, employment generation, carbon sequestration, education and research, recreational and cultural) at around Rs 423 crore (2019-20) whereas, the total value of the one-time cost of services such as carbon storage and land value provided by the zoo is estimated to be around Rs 55,000 crore. (e-report)

The Minister also gave away the CZA-Prani Mitra awards to encourage the zoo officers and staff towards working for captive animal management and welfare. The awards were given in four categories - the Outstanding Director / Curator, Outstanding Veterinarian, Outstanding Biologist /Educationist, Outstanding Biologist /Educationist and Outstanding Animal keeper.

The Minister, during the virtual interaction, also addressed questions of school children from across the country, concerning wildlife protection and human-wildlife interaction. He stated that we must all work together to protect the valuable wildlife of the country.

CZA which was established to oversee the functioning of the Indian zoos and complement the wildlife conservation strategies through ex-situ measures, as on today recognizes around 160 zoo and rescue centres that enforce global standards in animal housing and welfare. Over 567 captive animal species (with 114 species under endangered category) with overall 56481 individual animals are currently housed in Indian zoos.

Sanjay Kumar, DG (Forest) & Special Secretary, Ministry of Environment Forest & Climate Change (MoEFCC); Soumitra Dasgupta, ADG (Wildlife), SP Yadav, ADG (Project Tiger) and Member Secretary CZA and other senior officers of MoEF & CC also participated in the event.

Source: <https://zeenews.india.com/india/centre-planning-to-upgrade-expand-zoos-across-india-in-ppp-mode-prakash-javadekar-2315055.html>