

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.-3909
ANSWERED ON- 06/04/2023

REGIONAL COOPERATION ON AIR POLLUTION

3909. DR. FAUZIA KHAN
DR. AMAR PATNAIK
SHRI MOHAMMED NADIMUL HAQUE

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be please to state :-

- (a) whether there are existing partnerships with neighboring countries to combat the issue of air pollution in South Asia;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, whether there are plans to execute any such agreement;
- (c) whether any MoUs have been signed with neighboring countries to install air pollution monitors at critical points to generate data and adopt cost-effective solutions to tackle the issue of air pollution based on airshed approach; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(DR. RAJKUMAR RANJAN SINGH)

(a to d) In India's neighbourhood at the regional level, SAARC member states (*India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka*) signed the "Convention on Cooperation in Environment" in 2011. Similarly, under the reorganized areas of cooperation arrived at in 2022, BIMSTEC member states (*India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand*) identified "Environment and Climate" as a priority area of cooperation; currently, led by Bhutan as 'Lead Country' for this area of cooperation, BIMSTEC members are elaborating a joint work program.

At the bilateral level, India identifies cooperation activities with neighbouring countries based on mutual consultations, mutual requirements and mutual benefits. India has signed an umbrella "MoU on Cooperation in the Areas of Environment" with Bhutan in June 2021 that envisages long term cooperation on environmental protection and management of natural resources including prevention of Air Pollution. No specific cooperation agreement to combat air pollution have been entered into with Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in India's neighborhood.
