GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1339
TO BE ANSWERED ON 31.07.2025

Relaxed the Mandate for the Universal Installation of FGD Systems

1339. SHRI MUKUL BALKRISHNA WASNIK:
SHRI ASHOKRAO SHANKARRAO CHAVAN:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has recently relaxed the mandate for the universal installation of Flue Gas Desulphurisation (FGD) systems across all coal-fired power plants in the country;
(b) if so, details thereof and reasons therefor;
(c) whether Government has set any criteria for providing relaxation to the plants, and if so, details thereof;
(d) whether Government has extended the time limit for installation of FGD system within 10km radius of the NCR or cities with a population of 1 million, and if so, details thereof; and
(e) the manner in which Government plans to ensure compliance with air quality and pollution control standards?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) to (c):
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Govt. of India notified emission standards for coal/lignite-fired Thermal Power Plants (TPPs) vide notification dated 07.12.2015. The SO_2 emission standards prescribed vide notification dated 07.12.2015 have been reviewed by the Central Government taking into consideration the various representations received regarding exemption or relaxation in timelines of these emission standards due to limited availability of technology providers, its techno-economic feasibility, negative impact of COVID-19 pandemic on supply chain, price escalation due to high demand and low supplies, low Sulphur dioxide concentration in ambient air and heavy burden on consumer due to increase in electricity prices etc.

Besides, studies conducted by research institutions regarding effectiveness and rationale behind these standards and its role in overall ambient air pollution of the region, were also considered to evaluate the need of universal applicability and enforcement of these standards. After detailed

review of the matter, Ministry has recently issued notification *vide* G.S.R. 465 (E) dated 11.07.2025 regarding the applicability of SO_2 emission standards notified vide notification dated 07.12.2015. Accordingly, the applicability and timelines for compliance of SO_2 emission standards by TPPs are as follows:

Category	Applicability of SO_2 emission standards	Timelines for compliance
Category A (Plants within 10 km radius of NCR or cities having million plus population)	Mandatory	31.12.2027
Category B (Plants within 10 km radius of non-attainment cities or critically polluted areas)	To be decided on a case to case basis by the Central Government based upon the recommendations of the Expert Appraisal Committee (Thermal Projects). In case any TPP is considered for exemption from SO_2 emission standards, such TPP shall ensure meeting stack height as per notification no. G.S.R. 742 (E) dated 30.08.1990.	31.12.2028
Category C (Other than those included in Category A and B)	Not applicable subject to condition of meeting stack height as per notification no. G.S.R. 742 (E) dated 30.08.1990.	31.12.2029

(d):
The MoEFCC notification *vide* G.S.R. 465 (E) dated 11.07.2025 do not grant any relaxation to TPPs located within 10 km radius of NCR or cities having million plus population, from the timelines for implementation of SO_2 emission standards prescribed vide notification dated 30.12.2024.

(e):
TPPs are required to comply with the emission standards notified by MoEFCC within the prescribed time limits, failing which environmental compensation shall be imposed on the non-compliant TPP units for operation beyond the prescribed time limit at prescribed rates. In all cases where SO2 emission standards are not being made applicable TPPs shall ensure compliance of stack height criteria notified vide notification number GSR 742 (E) dated the 30th August, 1990 governing SO_2 emissions from TPPs.

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