

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOKSABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1804
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27.07.2018

Pollution by Pharmaceutical Industries

1804. SHRI S.R. VIJAYAKUMAR:
SHRI T. RADHAKRISHNAN:
SHRI BIDYUT BARAN MAHATO:
SHRI S. RAJENDRAN:
SHRI SUDHEER GUPTA:
KUNWAR HARIBANSH SINGH:
SHRI GAJANAN KIRTIKAR:

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

- (a) whether pharmaceutical industries are one of the grossly polluting industries in the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the presence of antibiotic residue in high concentrations in the environment can lead to the development of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) pathogens;
- (c) if so, the details thereof along with the corrective measures taken/being taken by the Government in this regard;
- (d) whether the Central Pollution Control Board was tasked with framing the standards for pharma antibiotic residue, if so, the details thereof and the time by which it is likely to be framed; and
- (e) whether World Health Organisation has also called for better management of pharmaceutical waste and if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a) Pharmaceutical industries are one of the grossly polluting industries and are covered under 17 category of highly polluting industries. As per data available with the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), 676 pharmaceutical manufacturing units are in operation in the country.

(b) & (c) Several global studies have indicated that the presence of antibiotic residue in high concentrations in the environment can lead to the development of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). The Government has developed the National Action Plan on AMR for the country with the objective to combat AMR in various sectors, including environment.

(d) CPCB has been tasked with developing of standards for antibiotic residues in pharmaceutical industrial effluents as per the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. Draft standards in this regard have been framed by CPCB.

(e) World Health Organization has released “Guidelines for Safe Disposal of Unwanted Pharmaceuticals in and after Emergencies” in 1999 to provide advice on the implementation of safe disposal of unusable pharmaceuticals in emergencies. The guidelines describe, *inter alia*, a number of methods for safe disposal of pharmaceuticals which help in minimizing risks to public health and the environment.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has notified the Bio-Medical Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 2016, which specify the methods of segregation, collection, treatment, processing and disposal of various bio-medical wastes, including pharmaceutical waste like antibiotics, cytotoxic drugs, etc.
