

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2891
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.08.2018

Contamination of Soil by e-waste

2891. SHRI PONGULETI SRINIVASA REDDY:

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

- (a) whether improperly-handled electronic waste (e-waste) is contaminating sections of the city's/town's groundwater and the soil, if so, the details thereof and the reasons for such situation;
- (b) whether the Government has analysed the soil samples which has several mounds of unprocessed electronic waste and has found, among other pollutants, copper in the region's topsoil in mg/kg in many parts of the country, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the contamination in the sub-soil where plants take root can mean that these residues can be absorbed into plant systems and find their way into human tissues; and
- (d) 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) & (b) Disposal of e-waste from such electronic devices, without processing it in an environmentally sound manner, may affect the human health and environment including soil and ground water. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in 2015-16 had carried out sampling in the vicinity of river Ramganga at Moradabad. Samples of surface water, groundwater, soil and sediments were collected at different locations for analysis. The analysis of samples indicated that soil, sediments, drain and surface water along the banks of Ramganga River are contaminated with heavy metals. The contamination is due to unscientific/uncontrolled processing of milled black powder mainly from e-waste/slag by unauthorized recyclers. Directions under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 were issued to the District Administration Moradabad on 26.04.2016 and 22.11.2016 for immediate closure of unauthorized e-waste recycling activities in the residential areas and on the bank of river Ramganga in Moradabad. In compliance to the directions, the district administration imposed Section 144 of CrPC on 08.07.2016 for prohibition of entry of any vehicle carrying e-waste into Moradabad and storage of e-waste without permission of Regional Officer, Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board, Moradabad. Instructions were also given on 06.08.2016 to Superintendent of Police (Traffic), Joint Commissioner, Sales Tax and Regional Transport Officer for preventing entry of vehicles carrying e-waste material into Moradabad from all entry points. Thirteen illegal units in Karula and one illegal unit in

Nagfani area of Moradabad were closed on 06.08.2016. Twenty-seven ball mill units in Barbalan (Mughalpura area) of Moradabad were closed on 30.01.2017

(c) & (d): The Ministry has not carried out any study related to absorption of contaminant of e-waste by plant systems and finally finding their way into human tissues.
