

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3282**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12.07.2019

**Air Quality**

3282. SHRI KOTHA PRABHAKAR REDDY:

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

(a) whether according to the UN World Health Organization (WHO), about 90% of the global population living in cities was exposed to particulate matter (PM) that exceeded the WHO air quality guidelines;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether planting trees is a cost-effective way to tackle urban air pollution;

(d) whether the Government is preparing any policy to mandate the planting of trees in urban cities in and around residential areas; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE**  
**(SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO)**

(a) to (b) As per WHO Report titled as State of Global Air 2018, 95% of the world's population lived in areas that exceeded the WHO Guideline for PM<sub>2.5</sub> (10 µg/m<sup>3</sup>). Fifty-eight percent of the global population resided in areas with PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations above the WHO Interim Target 1 (IT-1, 35 µg/m<sup>3</sup>), 69% lived in areas exceeding IT-2 (25 µg/m<sup>3</sup>), and 85% lived in areas exceeding IT-3 (15 µg/m<sup>3</sup>).

(c) to (e) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has decided to make plantation a people's movement through various programmes that promote school nursery, urban forestry, planting trees on vacant lands, bunds on farm land etc. Tree Plantation/Afforestation activities are also taken up cross-sectorally by various Departments, NGOs, Civil Society, Corporate bodies etc. under various Central and State Plan/Non Plan Schemes. State/Union Territory Governments also take up tree plantation activities on special occasions and celebrations including World Environment Day, Van Mahotsav etc.

Further, in order to address the air pollution across the country in a comprehensive manner, MoEF&CC has launched the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP). One of the component / activity under NCAP is "Extensive plantation drive" which includes Plantation initiatives at pollution hot spots in the cities and towns. Besides, the Government has launched 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan' from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019 wherein 'intensive afforestation' is one of the intervention areas.

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