

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4481
TO BE ANSWERED ON 19.07.2019

Environmental Pollution

4481. SHRI JAI PRAKASH:
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the environmental pollution is posing the biggest threat to human life;
- (b) if so, the steps taken and other awareness campaigns being organized to address the problem of environmental pollution; and
- (c) the situation of environmental pollution in India as compared to other developed countries of the world?

ANSWER

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

(a) Various Organizations/ Institutes, from time to time, have been publishing estimates of mortality/ morbidity attributable to environmental pollution based on models, simulations and extrapolations. Air pollution is one of the triggering factors for respiratory ailments and associated diseases. However, there are no conclusive data available in the country to establish direct correlation of death/ disease exclusively due to air pollution. Health effects of air pollution are synergistic manifestation of factors which include food habits, occupational habits, socio-economic status, medical history, immunity, heredity, etc., of the individuals.

(b) The Central Government has taken a number of regulatory measures for prevention, control and abatement of environmental pollution. These include

Action Plans for Improvement of Air Quality in Delhi NCR:

- (i) Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) was notified on January 12, 2017, for prevention, control and abatement of air pollution in Delhi and NCR. It identifies graded measures and implementing agencies for response to four Air Quality Index (AQI) categories, namely, Moderate to Poor, Very Poor, Severe and Severe + or Emergency.
- (ii) The Central Government has notified a Comprehensive Action Plan (CAP) in 2018 identifying timelines and implementing agencies for actions identified for prevention, control and mitigation of air pollution in Delhi and NCR.

Action Plans for Improvement of Air Quality of Other Cities:

- (i) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has launched National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) in January 2019 to tackle the problem of air pollution in a comprehensive manner with targets to achieve 20 to 30 % reduction in PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations by 2024. This is keeping 2017 as the base year for the comparison of concentration. The overall objective is to augment and evolve effective ambient air quality monitoring network across the country besides ensuring comprehensive management plan for prevention, control and abatement of air pollution and enhancing public awareness and capacity building measures.
- (ii) 102 non-attainment cities have been identified based on ambient air quality data for the period 2011 – 2015 and WHO report 2014/2018. A total of 86 city specific action plans have been approved for ground implementation.

Monitoring

- Setting up of monitoring network for assessment of ambient air quality and water quality.
- Notification of National Ambient Air Quality Standards.
- Launch of National Air Quality Index.
- Implementation of Air Quality Early Warning System for Delhi in October, 2018 in association with Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).

Transport

- Leapfrogging from BS-IV to BS-VI fuel standards since 1st April, 2018 in NCT of Delhi and from by 1st April, 2020 in the rest of the country.
- Introduction of cleaner / alternate fuels like gaseous fuel (CNG, LPG, etc.), ethanol blending.
- Promotion of public transport and improvements in roads and building of more bridges to ease congestion on roads.
- Operationalisation of Eastern Peripheral Expressway & Western Peripheral Expressway to divert non-destined traffic from Delhi.
- Streamlining the issuance of Pollution Under Control Certificate.
- Environment Protection Charges (EPC) have been imposed on diesel vehicles with engine capacity of 2000cc and above in Delhi NCR.

Industry

- Revision of environmental standards for industrial sectors from time to time.
- Enforcing of environmental standards through consent mechanism and regular monitoring.
- Badarpur thermal power plant has been closed from 15th October, 2018.
- Notification of stricter emission norms for power plants.
- All brick kilns have been shifted to zig-zag technology in Delhi and NCR.
- Issuance of directions to 17 categories of highly polluting industries to install Online Continuous Effluent/Emission Monitoring System (OCEMS)
- Installation of on-line continuous (24x7) monitoring devices all red category industries in Delhi and NCR.
- Ban on pet coke and furnace oil - monitoring of use of pet coke in Lime Kilns/Cement Kilns and Calcium Carbide Industry in Delhi and NCR States.

Biomass and Solid Waste

- A new Central Sector Scheme on 'Promotion of Agricultural Mechanization for in-situ management of Crop Residue in the States of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi' for the period from 2018-19 and 2019-20 has been launched.
- Banning of burning of biomass/garbage.

- 3 Waste-to-Energy (W-t-E) plants are currently operational in Delhi with a total capacity of 5100 Tonnes Per Day (TPD).
- Notifications of 6 waste management rules covering solid waste, plastic waste, e-waste, bio-medical waste, C&D waste and hazardous wastes issued in 2016.

Dust

- Notifications regarding dust mitigation measures for construction and demolition activities.
- Number of mechanized road sweeping machines has been increased significantly and presently 60 machines are deployed for cleaning of roads in Delhi.

Public Outreach

- Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change and Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Delhi Governments launched Clean Air for Delhi Campaign from 10th – 23rd Feb 2018 and to check air polluting activities pre and post Diwali, a special campaign called “Clean Air Campaign” during November 01, 2018 to November 10, 2018.
- Ministry is promoting peoples participation and awareness building among citizens for environmental conservation through Green Goods Deeds that focus on promotion of cycling, saving water and electricity, growing trees, proper maintenance of vehicles, following of lane discipline and reducing congestion on roads by car pooling etc.
- Development of mechanism for redressal of public complaints regarding air pollution issues in Delhi and NCR (through ‘Sameer App’, ‘Emails’ (aircomplaints.cpcb@gov.in) and ‘Social Media Networks’ (Facebook and Twitter), etc.

(c) The Yale Center for Environmental Law & Policy (YCELP), Yale University and Columbia University in collaboration with the World Economic Forum and the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission released a report in January, 2018 entitled ‘Environmental Performance Index (EPI) 2018’ which ranks 180 countries on 24 performance indicators across ten issue categories, like air quality, water and sanitation, etc. However, the report has relied on data gathered by NASA satellite in place of actual monitored data.

Analysis of ambient air quality data monitored in the country under the National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Programme (NAMQP) revealed that SO₂ levels were within the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) in all 50 million plus/ urban agglomerations cities during 2016-18. With respect to NO₂, 17 cities showed an increasing trend, 16 cities showed a decreasing concentration, 16 cities showed a fluctuating trend and 1 city revealed steady concentration. With respect to PM₁₀, 14 cities showed an increasing trend, 14 cities showed a decreasing concentration, 22 cities showed a fluctuating trend. With respect to PM_{2.5}, trends are available for 17 cities and out of 17 cities, 08 cities showed an increasing trend, 04 cities showed a decreasing concentration, 05 cities showed a fluctuating trend.

Also, water quality of both surface and ground water is being monitored by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) along with State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) and Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) under the National Water Monitoring Programme (NWMP). Based on long term monitoring, CPCB has identified 351 polluted river stretches on 323 rivers for prioritization of pollution control measures. Further, according to analysis by CPCB, the tributaries of river Ganga have shown improvement in water quality with respect to Dissolved Oxygen (DO) since 2014.
