

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1918
TO BE ANSWERED ON 19.12.2022

Standard Practices for Air Pollution Emergencies

1918. DR. KALANIDHI VEERASWAMY:
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) the details on the action plans for improvement of environment in critically polluted areas/clusters and monitoring their implementations in the North Chennai Constituency.
- (b) whether the Government has carried out any vulnerability mapping to identify the most affected socio-economic groups and sensitive areas to acquire data on it and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has projected estimates or undertaken any study on the risks and impact of Air Pollution on the economy and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) whether the Government has developed Standard Practices for the Response, Prevention and Handling of Air Pollution Emergencies and 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 ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) to (c): Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) carried out Comprehensive Environmental Pollution Index (CEPI) assessment in 100 Polluted Industrial Areas (PIAs) located in 21 States/UTs in the country during 2018. Based on the above CEPI evaluation, 04 PIAs from Tamil Nadu State were categorised as Critically Polluted Areas, i.e., Manali (Manali Industrial Area), Vellore-North Arcot (Ranipet SIPCOT Industrial Area), Tirupur (Tirupur corporation including Mangalam, Velampatty, Andipalayam, Kasipalayam) and Mettur (Mettur Industrial Area). Manali Industrial area falls under North Chennai Constituency. Accordingly, the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) submitted the Remedial Action Plans of the above 04 PIAs including Manali Industrial Area, in January 2020 with short term and long term goals to restore the environmental quality within norms.

Government has launched National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) in 2019 as a national level strategy to reduce air pollution levels across the country. Taking into account the available international experiences and national studies, the tentative national level target under NCAP is 20%–30% reduction of PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ concentration by 2024. CPCB has identified 131

non-attainment cities exceeding National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), including Chennai, Trichy, Madurai & Thoothukudi cities of Tamil Nadu. City Specific Clean Air Action Plans have been prepared and rolled out for implementation in these 131 non-attainment/million plus cities to improve the air quality.

“Portal for Regulation of Air Pollution in Non-Attainment Cities” or “PRANA” has been launched by Ministry for paperless monitoring of NCAP and for disseminating information about the programme to public. Chennai city specific action plan targets the sources like Vehicles, Road dust, C&D activities, Biomass and garbage burning and Industries. The plan also focuses on Strengthening of Ambient Air Quality Monitoring stations and Public Awareness among the citizens. 13.6% decrease in PM10 concentration has been observed in Chennai city during 2021-22 as compared to levels during FY 2017-18. Further, steps taken by Government to improve the air quality are given as **Annexure I**.

(d): To tackle air pollution in emergencies, all Non-attainment/ Million Plus cities have been directed to prepare an Emergency Response System (ERS)/ Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) in line with GRAP developed for Delhi-NCR under different Air Quality Index (AQI) categories namely, Poor, Very Poor, Severe, and Severe+ based on city air quality and National Air Quality Index. Accordingly, till now out of 131 cities, ERS/GRAP has been developed by 120 cities.

Measures taken by the Government for Air Quality Management

Various steps have been taken for monitoring and management of air quality for reducing air pollution are as follows:

Vehicular Emission

- Leapfrogging from BS-IV to BS-VI fuel standards since 1st April, 2018 in NCT of Delhi and from 1st April, 2020 for the rest of the country.
- Introduction of BS VI compliant vehicles across the country since April, 2020.
- Development of Expressways and Highways to reduce fuel consumption and pollution.
- Introduction of cleaner/alternate fuels like CNG, LPG, ethanol blending in petrol.
- Promotion of public transport and improvements in roads and building of more bridges to ease congestion on roads.
- Network of metro rails for public transport are enhanced and more cities are covered.
- Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles (FAME) -2 schemes has been rolled out.
- Permit requirement for electric vehicles has been exempted.
- Promotion of public transport and improvements in roads and building of more bridges to ease congestion on roads.

Industrial Emission

- Stringent emission norms for Coal based Thermal Power Plants (TPPs).
- Shifting of industrial units to PNG/cleaner fuel.
- Installation of online continuous emission monitoring devices in highly polluting industries.
- Shifting of brick kilns to zigzag technology for reduction of pollution.

Air Pollution due to Dust and Burning of Waste

- Notifications of 6 waste management rules covering solid waste, plastic waste, e-waste, bio-medical waste, C&D waste and hazardous waste.
- Setting up infrastructure such as waste processing plants.
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for plastic and e-waste management.
- Ban on burning of biomass/garbage.

Monitoring of Ambient Air Quality

- Expansion of air quality monitoring network of manual as well as continuous monitoring stations under programmes such as National Air Monitoring Programme (NAMP).
- Initiation of pilot projects to assess alternate ambient monitoring technologies such as low-cost sensors and satellite-based monitoring.

Monitoring the Implementation of NCAP

- Government has launched NCAP as a national level as a national-level strategy outlining the actions for reducing the levels of air pollution at city and regional scales in India. City specific air action plans have been rolled out for implementation in 132 NACs and MPCs
- City specific action plans are regularly monitored by committees at Central; Apex, Steering, Monitoring and implementation committee; at State; Steering, implementation committee and at City Level Implementation and Monitoring Committee.
- PRANA a portal for monitoring implementation of NCAP has been launched.