

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-4895**  
ANSWERED ON- 31/03/2023

**AIR POLLUTION IN SOUTH ASIA**

4895. SHRI SATYADEV PACHAURI  
SHRI JAGANNATH SARKAR  
SHRI HASNAIN MASOODI  
SHRI BRIJENDRA SINGH  
SHRIMATI SUNITA DUGGAL

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be please to state :-

- (a) whether there are existing partnerships with neighbouring countries to combat the issue of Air Pollution in South Asia, a global hotspot for the most polluted cities in the world;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the plans to execute such an agreement;
- (c) whether there are any signed MoUs with neighbouring countries to install air pollution monitors at critical points to generate data and adopt cost-effective solutions to tackle the issue of air pollution based on airshed approach; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, reasons therefor?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(DR. RAJKUMAR RANJAN SINGH)

(a to d) In India's neighbourhood at the regional level, SAARC member states (India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) signed the "Convention on Cooperation in Environment" in 2011. Similarly, under the reorganized areas of cooperation arrived at in 2022, BIMSTEC member states (India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand) identified "Environment and Climate" as a priority area of cooperation; currently, led by Bhutan as 'Lead Country' for this area of cooperation, BIMSTEC members are elaborating a joint work program.

At the bilateral level, India identifies cooperation activities with neighbouring countries based on mutual consultations, mutual requirements and mutual benefits. India has signed an umbrella "MoU on Cooperation in the Areas of Environment" with Bhutan in June 2021 that envisages long term cooperation on environmental protection and management of natural resources including prevention of Air Pollution. No specific cooperation agreement to combat air pollution have been entered into with Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in India's neighborhood.

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