

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1035
TO BE ANSWERED ON 22.11.2019

Hazards of Air Pollution

1035. SHRI SUNIL KUMAR PINTU:
SHRI VASANTHAKUMAR H.:

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken steps to protect people from the health hazards posed by the sudden spike in air pollution across the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has conducted mass awareness campaigns in this regard and if so, the details thereof along with the funds allocated for the purpose;
- (d) the details of measures taken by the Government to control pollution in the country including flood affected districts of Bihar; and
- (e) the extent to which success has been achieved in controlling pollution so far?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c) The Government has launched the Air Quality Index (AQI) as a tool for effective communication of air quality status to people in terms, which are easy to understand. AQI values provide information about air quality status along with possible health impacts. For prevention of high pollution events and dealing with air pollution emergencies in Delhi NCR, the Government has notified the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) for implementation of identified actions under different AQI categories. It identifies graded measures and implementing agencies for response to four AQI categories, namely, Moderate to Poor, Very Poor, Severe and Severe + or Emergency. The Government has also formulated 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.

Further, the Government has launched the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) in 2019 as a pan India time bound national level strategy to address the increasing air pollution across the country in a comprehensive manner. 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. Under NCAP, ₹ 10 crores per city have been sanctioned for 28 cities with million plus population, ₹ 20 lakh per city for 22 cities with 5 to 10 lakh population and ₹ 10 lakhs per city for 48 cities with <5 lakh

population for implementation of the programme. This also includes funds sanctioned to carry out public awareness and capacity building activities in these cities.

Other measures taken by the Government for generating mass environmental awareness includes:

- 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 a special campaign called “Clean Air Campaign” during November 01, 2018 to November 10, 2018 to check air polluting activities pre and post Diwali.
- Promotion of 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.

(d) In addition, the Government has also taken various regulatory measures for prevention, control and abatement of air pollution in the country, which include:

Monitoring

- Setting up of monitoring network for assessment of ambient air 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

- Badarpur thermal power plant has been closed from 15th October, 2018.
- Notification of stricter emission norms for power plants.
- About 2800 brick kilns have been shifted to zig-zag technology in Delhi and NCR.
- Installation of on-line continuous (24x7) monitoring devices in all red category industries in Delhi and NCR.
- Revision of emission standards for industrial sectors from time to time.
- 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.
- Out of about 4700 industrial units in Delhi – NCR, about 2400 units have shifted to PNG.

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.

With specific reference to Bihar, the cities namely, Patna, Gaya and Muzaffarpur have been prioritized for action under NCAP.

(e) As a result of the various measures taken, in Delhi, the number of 'Good', 'Satisfactory', and 'Moderate' days has increased to 159 in 2018, as compared to 152 in 2017 and 106 in 2016, and the number of 'Poor', 'Very Poor' and 'Severe' days has reduced to 206, compared to 213 in 2017 and 246 in 2016. Analysis of Ambient air quality data of Delhi monitored under Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS) during 2016-2018 revealed that there is reduction of 7.3 % in PM_{2.5} levels in 2018 over 2017 and 14.8% over 2016 and reduction of 8.6% in PM₁₀ levels in 2018 over 2017 and 16.5% over 2016.
