

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1321
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.12.2021

Environmental Performance Index

1321. SHRI BENNY BEHANAN:

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

- (a) Whether the ministry has taken cognizance of the Environment Performance Index which in its most recent report gives India a rank of 168 out of 180 countries;
- (b) If so, the Government's response to the same;
- (c) Whether the Government has identified the reason for India's poor performance on the index; and
- (d) If so, the details thereof and if not the reasons therefore?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) to (d)

The government is aware of EPI (Environmental Performance Index) on which the most recent report has been released in June 2020 by Yale and Columbia Universities with support from The McCall MacBain Foundation. The data for scoring come from third-party sources. Hence the report needs to be interpreted in proper perspective as it is based on different methodologies which involve various assumptions and uncertainties. The metrics on which the 2020 rankings are based are from a variety of sources and represent available data from 2017 or 2018. Thus the analysis does not reflect the recent developments and initiatives for improvement of environment.

EPI 2020 ranks 180 countries on policy objectives of environmental health and ecosystem vitality using 32 performance indicators across 11 issue categories like Air Quality, Climate Change, etc. The EPI rank of India in 2020 was analysed vis a vis its rank in 2018. There was improvement in rank by 9 places in 2020 vis a vis 2018. This was mainly due to increase in India's rank in Environmental Health objective.

It has been observed that the constituent parameters of the Index vary from one edition of the index to another. Hence the ranking is not strictly comparable over time.

With the growing concerns on air pollution, the Central Government has launched National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) under the Central Sector "Control of Pollution" Scheme as a long-term, time-bound, national level strategy to tackle the air pollution problem

across the country in a comprehensive manner with targets to achieve 20 % to 30 % reduction in PM10 and PM2.5 concentrations by 2024 keeping 2017 as the base year for the comparison of concentrations. Similarly, important initiatives have been undertaken to address environmental problems of water pollution, land degradation and biodiversity loss.

The Government has taken several steps for mitigation of pollution which include introduction of BS-VI norms for fuel and vehicles since April, 2020, promotion of E-vehicles, stringent emission norms for industries including coal based Thermal Power Plants (TPPs), cleaner fuel such as PNG, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for plastic and e-waste management, real time monitoring of major industrial sectors. Tree plantation efforts have been intensified under Green India Mission, National Afforestation Program and Nagar Van Yojana. Compensatory afforestation is carried out for offsetting the loss of forest and tree cover in respect of various developmental projects. These reforms would have a long term impact but do not seem to have been fully reflected in the EPI indicators.
