

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1082
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10.02.2025

LANCET Report on the Health Impacts of PM 2.5

1082. SHRI SASIKANTH SENTHIL:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the recent LANCET report, which finds 7.2 percent of all deaths in India are attributable to daily PM2.5 exposure and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the assessments have been made on the regional health impacts of air pollution, particularly in areas with consistently high PM2.5 levels, particularly Delhi and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the steps taken proposed to be taken by the Government to enhance public awareness and education on the health risks of PM2.5 exposure;
- (d) the measures taken/ proposed to be taken by the Government to strengthen healthcare infrastructure and medical interventions for pollution-related illnesses, particularly in urban and industrial areas; and
- (e) the specific measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to protect the health of poor and vulnerable populations, who are disproportionately affected by air pollution?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) : There is no conclusive data available to establish a direct correlation of death exclusively by air pollution. Air pollution is one of the many factors affecting respiratory ailments and associated diseases. Health is impacted by a number of factors which include food habits, occupational habits, socio-economic status, medical history, immunity, heredity, etc., of the individuals apart from the environment.

The article published in the Lancet Planet Health Journal ‘Ambient air pollution and daily mortality in ten cities of India: a casual modelling study’ was based on study conducted using statistical models and cited its limitations that the study was unable to conduct analysis of cause-specific mortality.

(b) : National Environmental Health Profile Study has been awarded to assess human health impact in consequence of exposure to air pollution in 20 selected cities including Delhi across the country.

(c) : The government has initiated several measures to enhance public awareness and education regarding the health risks of air pollution including exposure to PM_{2.5} levels. Under National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), guidelines on 'Capacity Building and Public Outreach (CBPO) programmes' has been issued for undertaking awareness programmes by State Government and Municipal Corporations in 130 targeted cities. Further, Mission LiFE actions relevant to air pollution have been integrated with State and City Clean Air Action Plans for enabling citizens to adopt environment friendly lifestyles. Further, Swachh Vayu Diwas is organized on 7th September every year at National, State and City level to raise public awareness and encourage wider public participation to improve air quality.

Government launched National Air Quality Index (AQI) in the year 2015, through which air quality data of eight pollutants including PM_{2.5} is transformed into single number for effective communication of air quality status. There are six AQI categories namely, Good, Satisfactory, Moderately Polluted, Poor, Very Poor and Severe and are based on ambient concentration of air pollutants and their likely health impacts. Daily AQI bulletin for 289 cities is disseminated through Central Pollution Control Board website and SAMEER app.

(d) & (e): Ministry of Health and Family Welfare prepared National Action Plan on Climate Change and Human Health(NAPCCH) and is implemented through planned short-term, medium-term and long-term activities with a view:-

- i. To create awareness among general and vulnerable population, health-care providers and policy makers regarding impacts of climate change on human health;
- ii. To strengthen capacity of existing and future healthcare workforce to combat health conditions / diseases due to variability in climate;
- iii. To strengthen health preparedness and response by performing situational analysis, developing health adaptation plans, setting up surveillance and early warning systems, building low carbon, sustainable, and climate resilient healthcare infrastructure at national, state and district levels;
- iv. To develop partnerships and create synergy with other missions, sectors and organisations to ensure that health is adequately represented in the climate change agenda in the country; and
- v. To strengthen research and technology capacity to fill the evidence gap on climate change impact on human health and its solutions.

The following measures have been taken by the Government to address the impact of air pollution on health by the NPCCHH programme of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare:

- i. The NPCCHH has developed a national "Health Adaptation Plan for Diseases due to Air Pollution"
- ii. National Action Plan on Air Pollution and Health was developed in year 2021. States and UTs have also developed their State Action Plan on Climate Change and Human Health. This state specific action plan contains dedicated chapter on Air Pollution and health about interventions to reduce the impact of air pollution on health.

- iii. States/UTs issue public health advisory on air pollution related health matters every year so that people are aware on the Do's and Don'ts to minimise, protect and prevent on the health impacts related to air pollution.
- iv. States/UTs have been provided IEC materials in English and Hindi (Posters, Audio and Videos) including regional languages to generate widespread public awareness by disseminating to the community including other stakeholders in the States /UTs. Separate IEC for Children has been developed.
- v. Nationwide campaigns are held on certain International Days such as International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies, World Environment Day to generate more awareness among the people regarding air pollution and its health effects.
- vi. Surveillance on air pollution related illnesses are conducted from designated sentinel hospitals in the States/ UTs to help understand the trend of health problems with respect to Air Quality Index (AQI) level.
- vii. The NPCCHH has developed Training Manuals on Air Pollution and Health and trainings have been provided to programme officers, health professionals and community level health workers and surveillance nodal officers under NPCCHH
- viii. Capacity building of the health professionals and community level health workers on air pollution and health so that health related action plans are taken up in the States/UTs for tackling the health problems in the health sector including in the community.
- ix. Air Quality Index (AQI) alerts and forecasts generated by IMD and CPCB are shared with States/UTs regularly for timely action.

Industries have been mandated to strengthen healthcare infrastructure in and around project area through implementation of environment management plan and CSR activities. Specific condition in this regard are stipulated in environmental clearance issued under EIA Notification, 2006.
