

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1194
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27.07.2026

Comprehensive Environmental Pollution Index for the Dhanbad-Bokaro Region

1194. SHRI DULU MAHATO:

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

- (a) the current status of the Comprehensive Environmental Pollution Index (CEPI) for the Dhanbad-Bokaro regions and the specific action plans initiated to downgrade these areas from Critically Polluted to Safe zones;
- (b) the details of the findings of the latest third-party audit regarding compliance with Environmental Clearance (EC) conditions by industrial units in this cluster, particularly concerning mandatory green-belt development and groundwater recharge norms;
- (c) whether the Government has launched a specialized reforestation program for the degraded forest lands of the Damodar basin and the details of progress made in carbon-sequestration projects in these industrial zones; and
- (d) whether the Government plans to establish an integrated Environmental Monitoring and Early Warning System in the region to provide real-time air and water quality data to citizens through a public mobile interface?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): Comprehensive Environmental Pollution Index (CEPI) was formulated by CPCB, which is a rational number (ranging from 0 to 100) to characterize environmental quality at a given industrial area following algorithm of pollution source, pathway and receptor. The industrial area having aggregated CEPI scores 70 and above are considered as Critically Polluted Areas (CPAs), whereas CEPI scores ≥ 60 and < 70 are considered as Severely Polluted Areas (SPAs) and CEPI scores less than 60 are considered as Other Polluted Areas (OPAs).

During 2018, CPCB carried out CEPI assessment of 100 industrial areas, located in 21 States/UTs and identified 38 CPAs, 31 SPAs and 31 OPAs which includes Dhanbad which has a CEPI score of 59.78 and as categorized as OPA. As per CPCB directions of 26.04.2016, action plan for improvement of environmental quality is prepared by SPCB/PCC for CPAs and SPAs only and since the Dhanbad Industrial area is classified as Other Polluted Area, no action plan was prepared by SPCB for improvement of environmental quality.

As per information received from Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), groundwater extraction is concerned, compliance with the conditions stipulated in the No Objection Certificates issued by CGWA, including provisions relating to rainwater harvesting, recharge, metering, monitoring and water-use efficiency, are examined in accordance with the applicable groundwater-regulation Guidelines.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) is undertaking afforestation and reforestation work through ongoing schemes such as the National Mission for a Green India (GIM), Nagar Van Yojana (NVY), and the Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitat and Tangible Benefits (MISHTI), among others. The MoEFCC also promotes mass plantation drives on occasions such as International Day of Forests, World Environment Day, Van Mahotsav, Wildlife Week and raises awareness through campaigns. The 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign, launched on 5th June 2024, encourages citizens to plant trees in honour of one's mother.

National Afforestation & Eco-Development Board (NAEB) implements Nagar Van Yojana which envisages developing 600 Nagar Vans and 400 Nagar Vatikas in the country during the period of 2020- 21 to 2026-27 through the State/UT Forest Departments and Urban Local Bodies. The objective Nagar Van Yojana is to significantly enhance the tree outside forests and green cover, enhancement of biodiversity and ecological benefits to the urban and peri-urban areas apart from improving quality of life of city dwellers. This scheme is funded by the National Authority of the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA). The Central grants from funds under National Authority of CAMPA is provided under the scheme to cover mainly the cost of fencing, soil-moisture conservation measures & related activities, administrative activities, plantation and maintenance.

Air Quality Forecast and Early Warning System (AQEWS) in 48 cities is operated by Indian Metrological Department (IMD) and Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune for providing information to public as well as authorities on air quality 3-4 days in advance enabling them for timely implementation of air pollution control measures under the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP)/ Emergency Response Plan (ERP).
