

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) The Government of India has undertaken Yamuna Action Plan (YAP) in a phased manner for the abatement of pollution of river Yamuna with the assistance from Japan Bank for International Cooperation, Government of Japan. The Yamuna Action Plan (YAP) Phase-I was started in April, 1993 in the three States of Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and Haryana covering 15 towns. The project was completed in February, 2003 at a total cost of Rs. 682 crore. A total of 269 schemes of pollution abatement were completed with the creation of sewage treatment plants having additional treatment capacity of 753.25 million liters per day (mld). Under the YAP-II, which commenced in December, 2004 at an approved cost of Rs. 624 crore, the major portion of the outlay *i.e.* Rs. 387.17 crore has been allocated to Delhi.

As per the water quality monitoring undertaken through independent intuitions, the water quality in the stretch of the river Yamuna from Tajewala to Palla in Haryana is found to be within the desired limits. However, the stretch of the river in the vicinity of Delhi and parts of Uttar Pradesh exceed the standards in terms of Bio-chemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) of 3.0 milligram per litre (mg/l) mainly due to large scale of extraction of water for drinking purposes.

A sewage treatment capacity of 135 mld is envisaged to be created under YAP-II in Delhi. In addition, projects for the rehabilitation of 324 mld treatment capacity and rehabilitation/laying of trunk sewers for a length of 30.82 kms are also envisaged under the YAP-II. To tackle the balance pollution load, the Government of NCT of Delhi has taken up large scale sewerage and sewage treatment works out of its own funds. In this regard the Delhi Jal Board has envisaged the laying of interceptor sewers along three major drains namely Najafgarh, Shahdara and Supplementary along with augmentation of sewage treatment plants, interception of small drains, rehabilitation of trunk sewers and construction of additional sewage treatment plants.

(c) No, Sir.

Noise level of crackers

1912. SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether 90 per cent of crackers and fireworks fail to clear the prescribed noise level norms and if so, the details thereof and action taken to stop sale of such crackers and fireworks in Delhi;

(b) whether crackers prove dangerous to persons suffering from breathing problems; and

(c) if so, the action proposed to be taken by Delhi Police and Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) against the shopkeepers for selling blacklisted crackers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) 'Noise Standards for Fire — Crackers' have been notified under

the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 read with rules. The Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organization (PESO), Nagpur earlier known as the Department of Explosives, is the implementing agency for the said standards/norms for fire crackers.

The officers of PESO at Sivakasi are constantly monitoring the prescribed sound level norms of firework items by inspecting licensed manufacturing premises, drawing the samples of various firework items and testing the samples. It is reported that a few samples in respect of 12 firework manufacturers, wherein the sound level was found exceeding the prescribed limit, action to stop manufacturing of such firework items was taken by PESO.

(b) No conclusive evidence is available to establish that crackers complying with the notified noise norms would prove dangerous to persons suffering from breathing problem.

(c) There is no category of fireworks as yet called 'blacklisted crackers'. As informed by the Delhi Police, as and when a complaint is received about a licensed shopkeeper that he is not licensed to sell the particular type of cracker(s), verification on ground is done and if the complaint is substantiated, action is initiated to cancel the license or a case is registered against the said shopkeeper.

Forest fires

1913. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) the quantum of loss suffered annually due to forest fire in the country, State/UT-wise;
- (b) whether Government has prepared any action plan to fight with the forest fire;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the total expenditure involved in the process of saving forests from the fire?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) As per the reports received from various State and Union Territory Forest Departments, the quantum of loss suffered annually due to forest fire is given in the Statement. (See below)

(b) to (d) Forest fire management involves prevention, timely detection, control and monitoring. A combination of technologies such as Remote Sensing, Geographic Information System *etc.* is being used for detection and monitoring of forest fires. Under the Centrally Sponsored—Integrated Forest Protection Scheme, Forest Fire Control and Management is one of the components. Financial assistance is provided by the Central Government to the States/Union Territories to take up various activities for effective prevention and control of forest fires including use of modern technology. The total assistance provided by this Ministry for forest-fire prevention and control to the State/Union Territory Governments for the year 2008-09 is Rs. 3149 lakhs.