

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the efforts for protection of the elephants lacks local consensus in view of the existing provisions in the statute; and

(f) if so, whether Government proposes to amend the relevant statute?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) to (f) The Task Force on Project Elephant constituted by the Ministry during 2010 has recommended in its report that Project Elephant should be converted into a statutory agency on the lines of National Tiger Conservation Authority for a more effective conservation and management regime for the elephant in India. It has suggested relevant amendments in the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 for the purpose. The Government has not taken a final decision in the matter.

Review of hydel project in Ganga basin

3580. SHRI T.M. SELVAGANAPATHI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering to review a number of hydel projects situated in Ganga basin;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that this was necessitated because of the revelation made in a study conducted on the issue recently; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) and (b) All hydro power project proposal, including those in the Ganga Basin, are appraised for environment clearance as per the Environmental Impact Assessment Notification, 2006. The condition regarding minimum environmental flow in the downstream stretches for maintenance of aquatic ecology has been introduced recently.

(c) and (d) The Ministry of Environment and Forests has awarded Studies to the Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee and Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun for Assessment of

Cumulative Impacts of Hydro Power Projects in Bhagirathi and Alaknanda Basins. The Studies highlight the requirement for minimizing impacts on terrestrial ecology and environment due to hydro power projects and minimum flow for sustenance of aquatic ecology of these rivers.

Measures to check pollution in Delhi

3581. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a recent study has concluded that Delhi is the most polluted city in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of corrective measures Government proposes, to take to minimize the pollution levels in the national capital?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) and (b) The ambient air quality in Delhi is monitored at ten manual stations by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and NEERI, Nagpur and twelve continuous stations by CPCB and Delhi Pollution Control Committee respectively.

The annual average concentration of PM₁₀ in ambient air in Delhi is much above the notified standards during last three years due to, *inter alia*, construction activities and vehicular pollution. Further, the levels of PM₁₀ are more in Delhi due to geo-climatic conditions and its proximity to *Thar* desert. The annual average levels of Lead (norm - 0.50 ug/m₃) and Sulphur Dioxide (norm - 50 ug/m₃) are well within the limits and levels of NO₂ (norm - 40 ug/m₃) are marginally exceeding the standards. There is a mixed trend for Lead, Sulphur Dioxide and PM₁₀. Nitrogen Dioxide is an emerging air pollutant in Delhi.

(c) Various steps taken by the Government in Delhi to minimize pollution levels, *inter alia*, include mandatory use of natural gas for public transport, metro rail system as means of public transport, implementation of BS IV emission norms for four wheelers and BS III for two/three wheelers, supply of cleaner fuel as per Auto Fuel Policy, closure of coal based Indraprastha Thermal Power Plant, use of beneficiated coal at Rajghat and Badarpur Thermal Power Plants and enforcement of 'Pollution Under Control' (PUC) Certificate Scheme for in-use vehicles.