

31% of generation. Considering the widening gap between sewage generation and treatment capacity, the State Governments are required to prepare a very thoughtful action plan to fill this gap in a minimum time frame. As regard, the polluted water enters our houses for daily use, the concerned authorities like Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, State authorities are taking requisite actions like proper management of water supply pipeline network and sewerage system as per the manuals prepared for the purpose.

**Uniform policy for immersion of idols in rivers**

2345. DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has chalked out a uniform policy with regard to immersion of idols in rivers and other water bodies during religious events, if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor; and

(b) the concrete steps taken by Government to promulgate a uniform, practical, pragmatic and well accepted Standard Operating Procedure for immersion of idols across the country?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI M. VEERAPPA MOILY): (a) and (b) Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has brought out specific guidelines on prevention and control of pollution in rivers and other water bodies from idol immersion. These guidelines prescribe that the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/ Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) conduct water quality assessment of the water body before and after immersions, post the data on internet and help local administration in preparing material for mass awareness for the purpose. Further, the guidelines prescribe that idols be made from natural materials like traditional clay, water soluble and nontoxic natural dyes be used for painting of idols, worship material like flowers, clothes, decorating material (made of paper and plastic) be removed before immersion of idols, biodegradable materials collected separately for recycling or composting, non-biodegradable materials disposed off in sanitary landfills, immersion of idols in river, be done at identified idol immersion spots along the river bank in temporary ponds having earthen bunds with removable synthetic liners at bottom, etc. The guidelines have been circulated to all States and Union Territories for implementation.