

**Opening of forests for mining and its impact on wildlife**

3097. SHRI D.P. TRIPATHI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is fact that Government is planning to open large portions of forests for mining; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and what will be its impact on wildlife?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) Use of forest land for non-forest purpose, including for mining, requires prior approval of Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. Approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 is accorded only after examining all feasible alternatives, it is ascertained that the use of forest land for non-forest purpose, including the mining, is unavoidable and bare-minimum. To mitigate impact of diversion of forest land for mining project on flora and fauna, Central Government while according approvals under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 stipulates appropriate conditions. Important among them are creation of compensatory afforestation and implementation of Wildlife Conservation Plan from funds to be provided by the user agency and realisation from the user agency Net Present Value (NPV) of the forest land diverted in his favour for execution of various activities for conservation, protection and development of forest and wildlife resources.

**Rise in carbon monoxide (Co) levels in Delhi**

3098. SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the air quality in the city has worsened in the past few days owing to a dramatic rise in carbon monoxide (Co) levels in some areas of Delhi which can lead to shortness of breath, weakness and can impact oxygen delivery to organs;

(b) if so, whether Government has ever measured the air quality level of major Indian cities, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to improve the quality affairs in the different cities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) Ambient air quality is regularly monitored at 573 locations in 240 cities, towns and industrial areas in 27 States and 5 UTs under National Air Monitoring Programme (NAMP) by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in association with concerned State Pollution Control