

**Shifting of AWBI headquarters**

1022. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government had shifted the headquarters of Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) recently from Chennai to a village in Haryana;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) whether the decision to shift the headquarters was taken by the Board unanimously and the details incidental thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Rule 3 of the Animal Welfare Board (Administrative) Rules, 1962 reads as—"The Headquarter of the Board shall be at New Delhi or at such other place as the Central Government may, after consultation with the Board direct." After consultation with the Board, the headquarter of Animal Welfare Board of India has been shifted from Chennai to Ballabhgarh, Haryana for better coordination between Ministry and AWBI for carrying out the animal welfare activities.

(c) No, Sir.

**Notification of Ecologically Sensitive Areas**

1023. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government had received any representation from six States *viz.*, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Goa, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Gujarat as regards increasing the Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA) beyond 56,825 sq. km., pursuant to Government's draft notifications issued on 10.03.2014, 4.09.2015 and 27.02.2017;
- (b) if so, details thereof; and
- (c) Government's response to the views expressed by these States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) to (c) Pursuant to the Draft Notifications dated 10.03.2014, 04.09.2015 and 27.02.2017 declaring 56,825 sq.kms area of Western Ghats as Ecologically Sensitive, this Ministry has received inputs from six (6) States. Ministry is considering the views of the States in consultation with the stakeholders including the State Governments.

Of the above States, Government of Gujarat envisages to increase the ESA in the State from 449 sq.kms to 714 sq.kms by including 81 new villages located within the notified Eco Sensitive Zones of two Protected Areas in the State and removing 19 villages from the original list as per the report of High Level Working Group (HLWG).

**Awareness programme to reduce noise level**

1024. SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the average level of noise pollution generally exceeds permissible limits in seven Indian cities;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that advisories have been issued for noise monitoring on various occasions; and
- (d) whether Government is considering to undertake awareness programme to reduce the noise level in cities and towns?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) and (b) Ambient noise levels are monitored by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in association with State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) in seven metro cities, namely Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Lucknow under National Ambient Noise Monitoring Programme (NANMP). The data indicates fluctuating trend in noise levels city-wise and relevant details are given in the Statement (*See* below).

(c) Government has been issuing advisories for noise monitoring on the occasion of Deepawali apart from prohibition of the use of fireworks between 10.00 p.m. and 06.00 a.m.; issuance of directions under Section 5 of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and under section 18 (1) (b) of Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 etc.

(d) As part of strategy to reduce noise pollution in cities and towns, the Ministry has notified the Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000 under the provisions of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, for the regulation and control of noise pollution. Ministry has undertaken awareness programme to avoid bursting of fire-crackers and publicity regarding the ill-effects of fire-crackers. Recently, Ministry has conducted 'Harit Diwali-Swasth Diwali' campaign, Half Marathon, exhibitions etc. to bring awareness among children for Environment Friendly Deepawali, which also address noise pollution.