

(b) if so, the reasons of the disappearances thereof; and

(c) whether Government has taken any steps to stop the oldest mountain range from disappearing and its conservation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) to (c) As per information provided by Department of Mines and Geology, Government of Rajasthan, excavation of minerals from hillocks results in leveling of ground and the Forest Survey of India (FSI) has observed that in Alwar district 31 hillocks have disappeared. The State Government of Haryana informed that no hillocks from the Aravali Range have disappeared due to mining operation undertaken illegally.

As per section 23C of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) (MMDR) Act, 1957, State Governments have been empowered to make rules for preventing illegal mining, transportation and storage of minerals.

Further, for protection of Aravali ranges the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has issued a Notification on 07.05.1992 as amended from time to time. The MoEF&CC has also delegated powers to State Governments to take measures for protecting and improving the quality of the environment and preventing, controlling and abating environmental pollution. The State Governments of Haryana and Rajasthan have been directed to constitute Expert Committee and Monitoring Committee, under the chairmanship of the District Collector concerned. Further, the District Collectors of Gurgaon in Haryana and Alwar in Rajasthan have been authorised by the respective State Governments to take necessary action under section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 in respect of cases where project proponents fail to implement the required safeguards.

Impact of oil spill

2763. SHRI G.C. CHANDRASHEKHAR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether oil spill has polluted fragile coastal ecology and marine biodiversity;

(b) if so, the details along with ecological environmental impacts thereof and steps taken to clean up the damaged coast;

(c) whether oil spillage also affect mangroves and the fishermen;

(d) if so, whether there is a need to provide the compensation to affected fishermen;

(e) whether there is an urgent need to update the existing protocols to ensure better coordination among various agencies for on and off-shore impacts of oil spills; and

(f) if so, the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) and (b) Oil spills adversely impact intertidal flora and fauna and coastal environment leading to mass mortality of flora and fauna, choking of highly mobile species like crabs, clogging of water canals, loss of foraging grounds for shore birds and loss of nesting grounds for turtles. The residual oil from spills can settle down vertically in the sea-bed for prolonged durations causing long-term effects on the benthic environment. Similarly, oil spills also adversely affect port infrastructure, harbours, beaches, wildlife, fisheries etc. The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) is nodal agency for dealing with incidents of oil spills within territorial limits of India. The ICG has developed a National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOS-DCP) for responding to Oil Spill accidents. The NOS-DCP is a comprehensive tool which provides framework of co-ordination of integrated response by various governmental departments and agencies to protect the environment from the deleterious effects of pollution by oil spillage.

(c) and (d) Mangroves and fishermen community are affected by near-shore large scale oil v spills. Oil spills can reach estuaries by water currents leading to poor growth or death of mangroves. The presence of tar balls on beaches affect the fishing space as well as the market price of fish stocks thereby affecting the livelihood and economic interests of the fishermen. The State Fisheries Department can seek compensation for oil spills from polluters. Further, the Ministry of Agriculture and Family Welfare *vide* F.No.21001/05/2014-FY(Ind) Vol. V dated 28.04.2017 has notified the National Policy on Marine Fisheries, 2017 to ensure the health and ecological integrity of marine living resources in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of India. Oil spills are considered as manmade calamities affecting fishing communities. Support/assistance are admissible to fishing communities for restoration of their livelihoods as part of strategy on 'Fisher Welfare, Social Security Nets and Institutional Credits'.

(e) and (f) The roles and responsibilities of all agencies are defined in the National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOS-DCP). The last revision of NOS-DCP was

done in 2015 incorporating the international requirements and standard practices. Indian Coast Guard (ICG), being the Competent National Authority, revises NOS-DCP regularly in coordination with concerned stakeholders.

Deaths due to air pollution

†2764. SHRI SANJAY SETH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that every year more than ten lakh people in India die due to air pollution only;
- (b) if so, the steps taken by Government to check air pollution; and
- (c) if not, the level of pollution in India and annual death rate due to it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) to (c) There is no conclusive data available in the country to establish direct correlation of death/disease exclusively due to air pollution. Air pollution is one of the triggering factors for respiratory ailments and associated diseases. Health effects of air pollution are synergistic manifestation of factors which include food habits, occupational habits, socio-economic status, medical history, immunity, heredity, etc., of the individuals.

The Government has however, taken several steps to address air pollution, which inter alia include notification of National Ambient Air Quality Standards; revision of emission standards for industrial sectors from time to time; setting up of monitoring network for assessment of ambient air quality; introduction of cleaner / alternate fuels like gaseous fuel (CNG, LPG etc.), ethanol blending, launching of National Air Quality index; leapfrogging from BS-IV to BS-VI fuel standards; notification of Construction and Demolition Waste Management Rules; banning of burning of biomass; streamlining the issuance of Pollution Under Control Certificate; issuance of directions under Section 18(1)(b) of Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and under Section 5 of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 for controlling air pollution; installation of on-line continuous (24x7) monitoring devices by major industries; notification of Graded Response Action Plan for Delhi and NCR; comprehensive action plan for air pollution control in Delhi and NCR; etc.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.