

- (d) if so, the request received in this regard from the State Governments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) and (b) There is no proposal from State Governments for creating artificial rain for various needs under consideration in this Ministry.

(c) and (d) It is generally observed that rainfall results in lowering of the concentration of the pollutants in the atmosphere. As on date, no proposal has been received in this regard from State Governments in this Ministry. However, PAAC-EPC (Project Appraisal and Approval Committee constituted for the utilization of Environment Protection Charge fund) in its meeting on 13th November 2018 approved, in-principle, a project of IIT Kanpur for artificial rain in Delhi region.

Acts for environmental protection of waterways and rivers

2781. SHRI RAJMANI PATEL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether despite a number of prevailing Acts intended to protect India's waterways, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) have not ensured their effective implementation and if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether a more ecologically by sound approach towards environmental protection of flows of rivers is necessary; and

- (c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 as well as various rules notified under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 intend to protect aquatic resources in the country. Rivers including waterways in the country are mainly polluted due to discharge of untreated and partially treated sewage from cities/towns, industrial effluents and non-point sources such as agricultural run-off.

Development of adequate infrastructure for treatment of wastewater, on the other hand, is not commensurate with the increasing wastewater generation especially by urban settlements. Further, lean flow in rivers during pre-monsoon and post-monsoon period reduces the assimilation of the pollution load.

(b) and (c) Higher volume of extraction of water on account of irrigation, industrial use, drinking purpose, etc. from the rivers has reduced perennial flows and decreases the assimilative capacity in the large river segments. Ecological approach towards environmental protection of flows in rivers *inter alia* include provisions for enhanced flow of fresh water by releases from the dams and barrages towards ecological purposes, conservation of rain water during the monsoon period all along the watersheds through harvesting, promotion of water efficient crop cultivation, minimisation of loss of water for irrigation, etc. Central Pollution Control Board has communicated State Pollution Control Boards/Pollution Control Committees for persuading Urban Local Bodies for setting up of sewage treatment facilities and directed municipal authorities for setting up adequate sewage treatment facilities based on stringent discharge standards to abate pollution of water bodies.

The Central Government has issued a notification under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 *vide* Notification No. S.O. 3187 (E) dated 7th October, 2016 and has constituted authorities at Central, State and District level to take measures for prevention, control and abatement of pollution in river Ganga by ensuring continuous adequate flow of water for rejuvenation of the river Ganga. Also, with a view to ensure continuity and uninterrupted flows in river Ganga, the Central Government *vide* Notification No. S.O. 5195 (E) dated 9.10.2018 published in the Gazette of India, has notified minimum environmental flows to be maintained at locations downstream of existing and proposed structure on river Ganga in stretch extending upto Unnao (Uttar Pradesh).

Exemption in ESA limit in the Western Ghats

2782. SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has exempted 3,115 square kilometres of land in the Western Ghats in the State of Kerala, from regulations that are binding on Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESA) set by Kasturirangan panel;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government has received any appeal to revise the ESA limit in the State of Kerala?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) and (b) The High Level