

- (b) if so, the target and objectives of the programme along with its main features;
- (c) whether Government plans to implement NCAP in other parts of the country and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) whether Government has made any efforts to increase the usage of technology in enhancing plantation and forest areas in the country and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) to (c) In order to address the increasing air pollution across the country in a comprehensive manner, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has finalized the National Clean Air Program (NCAP) as a pan India time bound national level strategy. Overall objective of the NCAP is comprehensive mitigation actions for prevention, control and abatement of air pollution besides augmenting the air quality monitoring network across the country. City specific action plans for 102 non-attainment cities identified for implementing mitigation actions is covered under NCAP. Taking into account the available international experiences and national studies, midterm target of 20-30% for reduction of PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ concentration by 2024 is part of the NCAP. This is keeping 2017 as the base year for comparison of concentration.

Other main features of NCAP include mainstreaming and integrating the air pollution in existing policies and programmes of Government of India, emphasizing enforcement, extensive plantation drive, increasing number of monitoring stations in the country including rural monitoring stations, creation of Technical Assessment Cell, technology support, emphasis on awareness and capacity building initiatives, public participation in planning and implementation, setting up of certification agencies for monitoring equipment, setting up of Air Information Centre for data analysis, resource apportionment studies, national inventory, guidelines for Indoor Air Pollution and setting up of Rural Monitoring stations etc.

(d) National Mission for a Green India (GIM) is one of the eight Missions outlined under the National Action Plan on Climate Change. It aims at protecting, restoring and enhancing India's forest cover and responding to Climate Change. The mission integrates application of modern technology like Remote Sensing and GIS etc. for identification of landscapes and also for Monitoring and Evaluation purposes.

Exemption of residential projects from environmental clearances

1975. DR. PRABHAKAR KORE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Government proposes to exempt residential projects

upto 1.5 lakh sq.m. requirement of environmental clearance to quicken building construction in urban areas;

(b) whether the above exemption is also applicable to educational institutions in the vicinity of residential projects;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) to (d) Yes sir. The Ministry has issued a Notification *vide* S.O.5733 (E) dated 14th November, 2018 wherein in exercise of the powers conferred by section 23 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 (29 of 1986), the Central Government has delegated the power to local bodies such as Municipalities, Development Authorities, District Panchayats as the case may be, to ensure the compliance of the environmental conditions as specified in the Appendix of the Notification in respect of building or construction projects with built-up area >20,000 sq. mtrs. to 50,000 sq. mtrs. and industrial sheds, educational institutions, hospitals and hostels for educational institutions \geq 20,000 sq. mtrs. upto 1,50,000 sq. mtrs. along with building permission and to ensure that the conditions specified in the Appendix are complied with, before granting the occupation certificate/ completion certificate.

Subsequently, *vide* Notification no. S.O.5736 (E) dated 15th November, 2018, the Ministry has increased the threshold for obtaining a prior environmental clearance upto 50,000 square metres built up areas for Building or Construction projects and empowered the local bodies such as Municipalities, Development Authorities and District Panchayats, to stipulate environmental conditions while granting building permission, for the Building or Construction projects with built-up area \geq 20,000 sq. m. and <50,000 sq. m. and industrial sheds, educational institutions, hospitals and hostels for educational institutions from built-up area \geq 20,000 sq.m. to <1,50,000 sq.m. as specified in Notification S.O. 5733(E) dated 14th November, 2018.

However, the operation of both the aforesaid notifications has been stayed by the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi *vide* order dated 26th November 2018 in the matter of Social Action for Forest and Environment vs. Union of India in W.P.(C) 12570/2018. The notification dated 14th November, 2018 has also been stayed by the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal, Principal Bench *vide* order dated 3rd December, 2018 in the matter of Shashikant Vithal Kamble vs. Union of India and Ors in O.A. No 1017/2018.