

(b) and (c) In order to increase the forest cover in the country, afforestation programmes have been taken up under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as National Afforestation Programme (NAP), Green India Mission (GIM), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP), which from 2015-16 has been amalgamated as the Watershed Development Component of the “Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)” and under Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA). Local people are involved in afforestation activities by the State Forest Departments.

As per the latest India State of Forest Report *i.e.* ISFR-2017 published by Forest Survey of India, Dehradun, a subordinate organization under the Ministry, the total forest and tree cover in the country is 8,02,088 square kilometers (forest cover 708273 square kilometer, tree cover 93815 square kilometer) which is 24.39% of the geographical area of the country. There is an increase of 8021 square kilometer (forest cover 6778 square kilometer, tree cover 1243 square kilometer) of total forest and tree cover compared to that of ISFR-2015.

(d) The Ministry recognizes the fact that publicity and awareness program for general public is important for conservation of forests in the country. Many forestry schemes of Central and State Government have an inbuilt component of publicity and awareness generation. State Forest Department also carry out awareness campaigns to educate people regarding conservation of forests. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change also has a Central Sector Scheme namely Environment Education, Awareness and Training (EEAT). The scheme aims to promote environmental awareness amongst school and college level students across the country. The Ministry celebrates Van Mahotsav, Earth Day, World Environment Day, Forest Day and Wildlife Day to create awareness regarding forest and biodiversity conservation.

#### **Environmental clearance for Vijayawada terminal**

52. SHRI PRABHAKAR REDDY VEMIREDDY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) when was the proposal for clearance from the Ministry, for construction of a new terminal at Vijayawada was submitted by AAI with an estimated cost of ₹ 500 crores;

(b) the reasons for delay in getting approval from the Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) of the Ministry; and

(c) by when approval of EAC is going to be given?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) accords prior environmental clearance for projects or activities listed in the Schedule to the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006 (and its amendments) after having followed the prescribed process in the said notification. The proposal for Terms of Reference (ToR) to the project 'Expansion of Vijayawada Airport in respect of construction of new integrated terminal building and allied facilities' at Kesarapally Village, Gannavaram, Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh by M/s Airports Authority of India, Vijayawada was submitted to this Ministry *vide* online proposal No. IA/AP/MIS/75598/2018 dated 27th June, 2018. The Ministry *vide* letter F.No.10-59/2016-IA-III dated 7th September, 2018 has issued ToR to the above said project for preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report and Environmental Management Plan. Further, this Ministry has not received application from M/s Airports Authority of India, Vijayawada for grant of Environmental Clearance to the above said project so far.

**Increase in number of polluted river stretches in Southern States**

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

- (a) whether Government is aware of the fact that polluted river stretches have increased over the years, especially in Southern States;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the steps taken by Government to curb the polluted river stretches?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in association with the State Pollution Control Boards monitors the water quality of rivers across the country through a network of monitoring stations under the National Water Quality Monitoring Programme. As per the report published by CPCB in February 2015, 302 polluted river stretches have been identified on 275 rivers, spread over 28 States and 1 Union Territory, based on Bio-chemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) levels, a key indicator of organic pollution. Of these 302 polluted stretches, 48 were in 5 Southern States. In the latest CPCB report of September 2018, 351 polluted river stretches have been identified on 323 rivers, spread over 29 States and 2 Union Territory, as per details given in the Statement (*See below*). Out of the total 351 polluted stretches identified by CPCB as per their latest report,