

Traffic congestion in major cities

*101. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that traffic congestion on roads in major cities costs crores of rupees annually because of fuel wastage due to idling of vehicles, productivity loss, air pollution and road crashes;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's response thereto; and

(c) the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to tackle the daily mayhem by minimising the wastage particularly in major cities?

THE MINISTER OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI NITIN JAIRAM GADKARI): (a) to (c) This Ministry has taken a number of steps to improve public transport in the country and reduce the congestion by private vehicles.

- (i) A comprehensive paper on Taxi Policy Guidelines was issued in December 2016 which has helped in creation of a suitable regulatory framework in the country to promote shared mobility, liberate the existing taxi permit system and encourage reliable alternatives to private transport. The said guidelines have also helped in bringing aggregators, radio taxi operators and traditional city taxis under a uniform, fair and transparent framework.
- (ii) Under the proposed Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2019 for strengthening of public transport, several measures have been proposed for speedy grant of driving licence to individuals and for improving the operation of Cabs and bus aggregators.
- (iii) To promote clean fuel for reduction of vehicular pollution, this Ministry has issued notification number G.S.R. 643(E) date 19.08.2015 *vide* which the Mass Emission Standards for Bharat Stage IV shall come into force all over the country in respect of four wheeled vehicles manufactured on or after the 1st April, 2017. Furthermore, this Ministry, *vide* notification number G.S.R. 889(E), dated 16.09.2016 has mandated mass emission standards for BS-VI throughout the country with effect from 1st April 2020 in order to bring down emission;

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs have taken following steps for reduction of traffic congestion and for providing safer and less polluting modes of transport:

- (i) 657 km. of Metro Rails are operational in 14 cities across the country; Projects for construction of 791 km. of Metro Rails have been approved in 18 cities and project

for 82.15 km. of Regional Rapid Rail Transit System (RRTS) between Delhi and Meerut has also been approved.

- (ii) Sanction of 22,994 modern ITS enabled buses for 157 cities in two phases (2009-10 and 2013-14) under Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JnNURM). So far, more than 20,300 modern ITS enabled have been procured by States/ Cities; and ₹ 2782 cr. (approx.) released for this Purpose;
- (iii) The Bus Rapid Transport System (BRTS) is operational in several cities including Ahmedabad, Surat, Indore, Bhopal, Vijayawada, Vishakhapatnam, Pune, Pimpri-Chinchwad, Kolkata, Amritsar, Hubli-Dharwad and Naya Raipur etc.;
- (iv) Urban Bus Specifications (UBS-II) in 2013 which encourages use of CNG and electric buses have been issued.

In addition of the above steps, the MOHUA has issued the National Transit Oriented Development (TOD) policy on 01.05.2017 after consultation with all States/ Union Territories (UTs) and urban transport experts. This policy is a guiding document for all States/ UTs to develop, notify and formulate State/ UT/ city specific TOD policies for implementation of projects. The TOD Policy aims to promote planned and sustainable urban centers with high density, mixed land-use within an influence zone of 500-800 meters of mass transit stations. The objective is to enable transformation of cities from private vehicle-dependent development, to public transport-oriented development, so that public transport is accessible, and at the same time curb pollution.

Inclusion of Jharkhand Akashwani Centre in DTH

*102. SHRI MAHESH PODDAR: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Akashwani Centre of Jharkhand has not been included in the Direct-to-Home (DTH) free channel platform for broadcasting in Jharkhand;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that Jharkhand has very limited access to radio channels;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the details of the timeline for Akashwani Jharkhand to be included in the free channel platform of DTH, if any?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) Prasar Bharati has informed that All India Radio (AIR) has not included