

Besides, MoEF&CC fixes afforestation targets under 20 point Programme annually to each State/UTs. Tree Plantation/Afforestation activities, being the multi departmental effort, are taken up cross-sectorally by various Departments, NGOs, Civil Societies, Corporate bodies etc. under various Central and State Plan/Non Plan Schemes.

**Radiation from cellphone towers harming birds,
insects and plants**

1618. SHRIMATI SHANTA CHHETRI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry is aware that European Union (EU) funded review body EKLIPSE has concluded that radiation from cellphone towers, phone masts, WiFi and broadcast transmitters is a potential risk to insect and bird orientation and plant health;

(b) whether the Ministry has taken cognisance of the fact that the report found that the magnetic orientation of birds mammals and invertebrates such as insects and spiders could be disrupted by Electromagnetic Radiation (EMR); and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has not received report from EU funded review body EKLIPSE regarding radiation from cellphone towers, phone masts, WiFi and broadcast transmitters being potential risk to insect and bird orientation and plant health.

(c) Does not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

Curbing pollution in Delhi

1619. SHRI VIJAY GOEL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Delhi has become the most polluted city in the world;

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

(c) steps taken by Government in curbing the pollution in Delhi;

(d) whether Government has received any proposal from Government of NCT Delhi with regard to curbing air pollution;

(e) if so, the details thereof and the response of the Ministry thereto; and

(f) details of funds spent on the projects of Delhi Government which are aimed to curb pollution in Delhi, if any?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) and (b) The average annual concentrations of PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} in Delhi are above the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Several measures have been taken by the Government to check/control air pollution in Delhi. Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS) data indicated general improvement in air quality of Delhi in 2018. The number of 'Good', 'Satisfactory', and 'Moderate' days has increased to 159 in 2018, as compared to 152 in 2017 and 106 in 2016, and the number of 'Poor', 'Very Poor' and 'Severe' days has reduced to 206, compared to 213 in 2017 and 246 in 2016. In Delhi, reduction in PM₂₅ levels in 2018 is 7.3% over 2017 and 14.8% over 2016. In Delhi, reduction in PM₁₀ levels in 2018 is 8.6% over 2017 and 16.5% over 2016.

(c) The Central Government has taken a number of regulatory measures for prevention, control and abatement of air pollution in the country.

Action Plans for Improvement of Air Quality in Delhi NCR:

- (i) Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) was notified on January 12, 2017, for prevention, control and abatement of air pollution in Delhi and NCR. It identifies graded measures and implementing agencies for response to four AQI categories, namely, Moderate to Poor, Very Poor, Severe and Severe + or Emergency.
- (ii) The Central Government has notified a Comprehensive Action Plan (CAP) in 2018 identifying timelines and implementing agencies for actions identified for prevention, control and mitigation of air pollution in Delhi and NCR.

Monitoring

- Setting up of monitoring network for assessment of ambient air quality. Presently, ambient air quality is being monitored at 779 locations covering 339 cities in 29 States and 6 Union Territories across the country under National Air Quality Monitoring Programme (NAMP). Further, real time monitoring is taking place at 170 locations in 102 cities in 18 States/UTs.
- Notification of National Ambient Air Quality Standards.
- Launch of National Air Quality Index.

- Implementation of Air Quality Early Warning System for Delhi in October, 2018 in association with Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).

Transport

- Leapfrogging from BS-IV to BS-VI fuel standards since 1st April, 2018 in NCT of Delhi and from by 1st April, 2020 in the rest of the country.
- Introduction of cleaner / alternate fuels like gaseous fuel (CNG, LPG etc.), ethanol blending.
- Promotion of public transport and improvements in roads and building of more bridges to ease congestion on roads.
- Operationalisation of Eastern Peripheral Expressway and Western Peripheral Expressway to divert non-destined traffic from Delhi.
- Streamlining the issuance of Pollution Under Control Certificate.
- Environment Protection Charges (EPC) have been imposed on diesel vehicles with engine capacity of 2000cc and above in Delhi NCR.

Industry

- Badarpur thermal power plant has been closed from 15th October, 2018.
- Notification of stricter emission norms for power plants.
- All brick kilns have been shifted to zig-zag technology in Delhi and NCR.
- Installation of on-line continuous (24x7) monitoring devices all red category industries in Delhi and NCR.
- Revision of emission standards for industrial sectors from time to time.
- Ban on pet coke and furnace oil - monitoring of use of pet coke in Lime Kilns/ Cement Kilns and Calcium Carbide Industry in Delhi and NCR States.

Biomass and Solid Waste

- A new Central Sector Scheme on Promotion of Agricultural Mechanization for *in-situ* management of Crop Residue in the States of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi for the period from 2018-19 and 2019-20 has been launched.
- Banning of burning of biomass/garbage.

- 3 Waste-to-Energy (W-t-E) plants are currently operational in Delhi with a total capacity of 5100 Tonnes Per Day (TPD).
- Notifications of 6 waste management rules covering solid waste, plastic waste, e-waste, bio-medical waste, C&D waste and hazardous wastes issued in 2016.

Dust

- Notifications regarding dust mitigation measures for construction and demolition activities.
- Number of mechanised road sweeping machines has been increased significantly and presently 60 machines are deployed for cleaning of roads in Delhi.

Public Outreach

- Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change and Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Delhi Governments launched Clean Air for Delhi Campaign from 10th - 23rd Feb 2018 and to check air polluting activities pre and post Diwali, a special campaign called „Clean Air Campaign% during November 01, 2018 to November 10, 2018.
- Ministry is promoting people's participation and awareness building among citizens for environmental conservation through Green Goods Deeds that focus on promotion of cycling, saving water and electricity, growing trees, proper maintenance of vehicles, following of lane discipline and reducing congestion on roads by car pooling etc.
- Development of mechanism for redressal of public complaints regarding air pollution issues in Delhi and NCR (through Sameer App, Emails (aircomplaints.cpcb@gov.in) and Social Media Networks (Facebook and Twitter) etc.

(d), (e) and (f) For prevention, control and abatement of air pollution in Delhi and NCR, meetings have been held under the Chairmanship of Minister, Environment, Forest and Climate Change attended by Environment Ministers of Delhi and NCR States. Also, High Level Task Force (HLTF) has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Principal Secretary to Prime Minister for management of air pollution in Delhi and NCR. HLTF reviews the steps taken by Delhi Government under different verticals like the road and soil dust, vehicular emissions, industrial emissions, construction and demolition activities, garbage burning etc. It has supported and facilitated Delhi Government with respect to many aspects and activities that help in curbing air pollution in Delhi. These includein.

- Procurement of Mechanical Road Sweeping (MRS) Machines and water sprinklers.
- Massive greening/paving program by all the agencies, vertical greening of pillars and flyovers.
- Dust mitigation in all the major construction sites. Inspection and fining of violators who have not taken control measures.
- Establishment of solid waste processing plants by helping in getting the necessary clearances.
- Facilitating in settling the high cost of power generated by old solid waste processing plants.
- Operationalisation of Western and Eastern Peripheral Expressway to divert non destined traffic from Delhi.
- Providing last mile connectivity by DMRC by dove-tailing metro stations through mini buses and e-rickshaws.

Funds have been released from Urban Development Fund (UDF) of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) to the municipal corporations of Delhi for taking up of procurement and other activities that help in abatement of air pollution. Waiver in the contribution (20%) was also given to East Delhi Municipal Corporation to get UDF for taking up activities that include those that help in abatement of air pollution.

Studies on afforestation

1620. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has conducted any field survey to determine the total land available in the country for afforestation;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) whether Government plans to undertake such a study in the future and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) to (c) Biennial edition of India State of Forest Report (ISFR) by Forest Survey of India (FSI) of the ministry, comprehensive, brings out the district-wise and state-wise details forest and tree cover along with type of forest etc. This repository of data *inter alia* serves as the source to target the potential area for afforestation under various schemes.