

- 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,comprehensiverly,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.

Further, to achieve the 33% of geographical area under forest and tree cover as envisaged in the National forest Policy-1988, the State/UT Governments have been sensitized time to time to make an inventory of the available potential land along roads, railway lines, rivers, streams and canals, and on other unutilized lands under State/corporate, institutional or private ownership which could be utilized for taking up afforestation through participation of multiple stakeholder and multi agencies.

Health problems due to deteriorating air quality

1621. SHRI KANAKAMEDALA RAVINDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that Air Quality (AQ) of the major cities including metropolitan cities has reached the most dangerous level thereby causing severe health problem to all its residents;

(b) if so, details thereof;

(c) whether Government has drawn any comprehensive plan/contingent plan to tackle the issue of deteriorating air quality due to which children and aged persons are severely affected;

(d) if so, details thereof; and

(e) if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) and (b) Air pollution has emerged as a serious environmental concern in the country. The ambient air quality data for metropolitan cities / million plus urban agglomerations during 2016- 2018 is given in Statement-I (*See below*). Analysis of data revealed that SO₂ levels were within the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) in all 50 cities during 2016-18. With respect to NO₂, 17 cities showed an increasing trend, 16 cities showed a decreasing concentration, 16 cities showed a fluctuating trend and 1 city revealed steady concentration. With respect to PM₁₀, 14 cities showed an increasing trend, 14 cities showed a decreasing concentration, 22 cities showed a fluctuating trend. With respect to PM_{2.5}, trends are available for 17 cities and out of 17 cities, 08 cities showed an increasing trend, 04 cities showed a decreasing concentration, 05 cities showed a fluctuating trend.

Though air pollution is one of the triggering factors for respiratory ailments and associated diseases, there are no conclusive data available in the country to establish direct correlation of death/ disease exclusively due to air pollution.