

Awareness about pollution hazard in India

254. SHRI SANJAY SINGH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that there were nearly 1.2 million deaths in India that were caused by exposure to air pollution, as reported in the State of Global Air 2019 Report;
- (b) if so, the steps being taken to raise awareness regarding this hazard; and
- (c) the current statistics of air pollution related deaths and diseases, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY): (a) 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.

However, As per the State of Global Air, 2019, Report, published by a private organization namely Health Effects Institute and the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, nearly 1.2 million deaths in India were stated to be caused by exposure to air pollution.

(b) Government has launched National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) in January 2019 to tackle the problem of air pollution in a comprehensive manner with targets to achieve 20 to 30 % reduction in PM10 and PM2.5 concentrations by 2024 keeping 2017 as base year. The overall objective is to augment and evolve effective ambient air quality monitoring network across the country besides ensuring comprehensive management plan for prevention, control and abatement of air pollution and enhancing public awareness and capacity building measures.

The plan includes 102 non-attainment cities, across 23 States and Union Territories, on the basis of their ambient air quality data between 2011 and 2015 and WHO report 2014/2018. A total of 86 city specific action plans have been approved for ground implementation.

In view of probable linkage of Respiratory illnesses with deteriorating Air Quality Index. Ministry Health & Family Welfare has also initiated following activities:

- Initiation of daily Sentinel surveillance for Acute Respiratory Illnesses in

Emergency Department of Hospitals: initially in four hospitals (AIIMS, SJH, LHMC & RMLH), expanded to two more hospitals in January, 2019 (National Institute of Tuberculosis and Respiratory Diseases and Vallabh Bhai Patel Chest Institute)

- Providing feedback to hospitals for undertakings appropriate measures for managing respiratory illnesses in their hospitals
- Time and again issue Health advisory on health effects of Air Pollution to Health department of all States. This year health advisory was issued in September-October 2019 and then again after Diwal when AQI deteriorated beyond; very Poor- Severe levels
- Prepared and shared IEC posters on Air Pollution and its health effects with State Health Departments
- Air Pollution and Health effects campaign have also been run on Social media (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Website, National Centre for Disease Control Website, Twitter handle and Facebook pages)
- The States and UTs have also been advised to initiate sentinel surveillance for Acute Respiratory Illnesses in at least four to five major hospitals in those cities which are being listed as highly polluted cities by Central Pollution Control Board.
- Indian Council of Medical Research is also conducting a study on "Health Impact Assessment in twenty most Polluted Cities' in the country. The report of this study may be valuable in terms of linking various health effects of air pollution.

(c) No such data is maintained centrally.

Skewed doctor-patient ratio in Government hospitals

255. SHRI SANJAY SINGH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) the average doctor-patient ratio in Government hospitals across India, Statewise;
- (b) whether it is a fact that there is a shortage of doctors in Government hospitals;