

achieve 20 to 30% reduction in PM10 and PM2.5 concentrations by 2024. The plan includes 102 non- attainment cities, across 23 States and Union Territories.

- Notification of Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) for Delhi and NCR.
- Comprehensive Action Plan (CAP) for air pollution control in Delhi and NCR.
- Organization of clean air campaigns, etc.

Illegal sand mining in Pangan river

†3232. SHRI RAM VICHAR NETAM: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that illegal mining in Pangan river of Sanwal and Trisuli village of Balrampur Ramanujanj districts of Chhattisgarh is damaging the environment, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the policy/ plan formulated by Government to prevent illegal mining in other rivers of Chhattisgarh including pangan river;

(c) whether Government has taken any action against the persons, involved in illegal sand mining from the rivers; and whether Government proposes to make sand mining work free from illegal activities; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) to (d) Mining of minor minerals (including in Pangan River and other parts of Chhattisgarh) is regulated by the State Government and section 23C of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 empowers State Governments to frame rules to prevent illegal mining, transportation and storage of minerals and for purposes connected therewith. Further, Section 15 of the MMDR Act empowers State Governments to make rules for regulating the grant of quarry leases, mining leases or other mineral concessions in respect of minor minerals including sand.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

The Ministry has taken several steps to ensure environmental safeguards due to mining of minerals, *inter alia*, include mandating the requirement of prior environmental clearance under the provisions of Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006, as amended from time to time; laying stringent conditions while granting the environmental clearances with due consideration of various aspects related to flora, fauna, air, water, land, environmental health etc.; issuance of Sustainable Sand Mining Management Guidelines 2016; and Enforcement and Monitoring Guidelines for Sand Mining 2020 wherein the use of IT Technology, night surveillance through UAV/Drone etc. has been proposed to control illegal mining. Further, in pursuant to S.O. 804 (E) dated 14.03.2017, damage assessment and remediation plan and natural and community resource augmentation plan corresponding to the ecological damage assessed and economic benefits derived due to violation is also required to be carried in case of violation of EIA Notification, 2006.

Increase in forest cover

3233. SHRI LAL SINH VADODIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Government is seriously considering to increase forest cover in various parts of the country;
- (b) if so, whether Government has taken any step in this regard so far; 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) to (c) The Ministry has taken several initiatives for increasing forest cover in the country. These include ongoing Centrally Sponsored Schemes of the Ministry such as National Afforestation Programme, National Mission for a Green India and Development of Wildlife Habitats. Details of fund released to States/UTs by the Ministry under these schemes for last three years and the current year are given in Statement-I, II and III respectively (See below).

Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAP) Rules, 2018 also contain provisions for taking up assisted natural regeneration, artificial regeneration and silvicultural operations in forests which contribute to increase in forest cover. Under CAP, funds were released during 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19 and part of 2019-20 by the Ad-hoc Compensatory