

**Blow out at an OIL well at Assam**

50. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Green Tribunal (NGT) had constituted a committee of experts to probe the blow-out and subsequent fire at an Oil India Ltd. well in Assam's Tinsukia district in the month of June this year;

(b) if so, the details of damage caused to humans, wildlife and the environment by the incident; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to provide adequate compensation to the affected families and to protect biodiversity and wildlife in the region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The National Green Tribunal has constituted an Expert Committee in the matter of Original Application No.43/2020/EZ and 44/2020/EZ under the chairmanship of former Judge of the Guwahati High Court, Hon'ble Justice Shri B.P. Katakey *vide* its order dated 02.07.2020. Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has been made the nodal agency for coordination of the Committee related work. The Committee is tasked to study and assess the cause of gas and oil leak; extent of loss and damage caused to human life, wildlife, environment; damage and health hazard caused to the public; contamination caused to water, air and soil of the area of the oil well and its vicinity; extent of contamination of water of the Dibru river due to the oil spill; monitoring of air quality, samples of soil and ground water of the area as well as the water of river Dibru downstream of the oil spill; impact on the eco sensitive zone of the Dibru-Saikhowa National Park and Maguri-Motapung Wetland; impact on agriculture, Fishery and domestic animals in the area; mitigation measures put in place by OIL to offset the incident; persons responsible for the fire incidents and the cause of failure to prevent the incident; assessment of compensation for the victims and cost of restitution of the damage caused to property and the environment; preventive and remedial measures; and, any other incidental or allied issues.

In compliance to the directions of Hon'ble NGT, CPCB had filed a Preliminary Report of the Expert Committee on 24th July, 2020 which covers the progress, assessment and findings of the Committee based on the secondary data gathered from various agencies. The report is hosted on the website of CPCB also. The Preliminary Report

explains the methodology adopted by the Committee in the performance of its task, reasons for the blowout on 27.05.2020 and explosion on 09.06.2020; the environmental and regulatory violations emerging from the primary assessment; review of the environmental damage caused based on secondary research/ data and the interim compensation to the affected families and individuals.

The Expert Committee made recommendation to categorise grant of interim compensation in three categories which *inter alia* envisages grant of ₹25 lakhs, ₹10 Lakhs and ₹2.5 lakhs to those falling in Category (i), Category (ii) and Category (iii), respectively. The categorisation is based on the extent of injury/ fatality, damage to houses, loss of livelihood, impact on cultivable land/ livestock, damage to standing crops/horticulture/fisheries.

#### **Burning of e-waste**

51. DR. VIKAS MAHATME: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that many factories are extracting metals from e-waste/batteries by burning them, thereby causing a spike in pollution and increasing the possibility of lung cancer in people;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the corrective measures taken by Government in this regard; and

(c) the quantum of e-waste generated and recycled in all parts of rural and urban areas of the country during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. As per the reports received from State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/ Pollution Control Committees (PCCs), it has been observed that illegal trading, storage, dismantling and recycling of e-waste was carried out in the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Delhi, Meghalaya, Pudducherry and Uttar Pradesh. To ensure safe disposal of e-waste, the Government has notified E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2016 and has further made amendments in March, 2018 for its effective implementation. The provisions of these Rules include extended producer responsibility, setting up of producer responsibility organizations and e-waste exchange to facilitate collection and recycling, assigning specific responsibility to bulk consumers of electronic products for safe disposal. The