

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2116
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.08.2022

Premature deaths due to air pollution

2116. SHRI S. SELVAGANABATHY:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware that more than one million premature deaths are attributed to air pollution and if so, the details thereof,
- (b) whether air pollution is a major factor for death of children under five years of age; and
- (c) whether Government recognises air pollution as a health emergency in the country and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) and (b)

There are several studies conducted by different organizations, using different methodologies, on the impact of pollution on human health. There is no conclusive data available to establish a direct correlation of death/disease exclusively with air pollution. Air pollution is one of the many factors affecting respiratory ailments and associated diseases. Health is impacted by a number of factors which includes food habits, occupational habits, socio-economic status, medical history, immunity, heredity, etc., of the individuals apart from the environment.

(c)

The Government of India has launched a very comprehensive plan named National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) in the year 2019 to tackle air pollution problem across the country in a focused manner. The line Ministries, State Governments, Research Institutes, Industries, etc. are partner in this programme. Under NCAP, a National Knowledge Network (NKN) has been constituted with a group of experts from IITs and Institutes of Repute as an Advisory Board for providing capacity building, State of art technologies, suggestions and advisories regarding air pollution mitigation and abatement. The Government of India has also launched Air Quality Index (AQI) in 2015, which provides information on air quality using a single indicator for

common persons. Further, Government has taken several steps for mitigation of air pollution including, *inter-alia*:

- Notification of Ambient Air Quality Standards.
- Introduction of National Clean Air Programme (NCAP).
- Revision of emission standards for industrial sectors from time to time.
- Setting up of monitoring network for assessment of ambient air quality.
- Introduction of cleaner/alternate fuels like gases fuel (CNG, LPG etc.).
- Ethanol blending.
- Launching of National Air Quality Index.
- Leapfrogging from BS-IV to BS-VI fuel standards.
- Expansion of Metro Rail Network.
- Operationalization of Eastern and Western peripheral expressways.
- Notification of Construction and Demolition Waste Management Rules.
- Banning on burning of biomass; Streamlining the issuance of Pollution Under Control Certificate.
- Issuance of directions under Section 18(1) (b) of Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and under Section 5 of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 for controlling air pollution.
- Installation of on-line continuous (24x7) monitoring devices by major industries.
- Notification of Graded Response Action Plan for Delhi and National Capital Region (NCR).
- Constitution of Commission on Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM), etc.
