

ही नहीं अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर भी हमारे देश का सम्मान बढ़ाया है। मेरा आपसे विनम्र निवेदन है कि सरकार उत्तराखंड को एक विशेष स्पोर्ट्स हब के रूप में विकसित करे, ताकि यहां के खिलाड़ी अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर देश का सम्मान बढ़ाएं।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI KARTIKEYA SHARMA): The following hon. Members associated themselves with the Special Mention made by the hon. Member, Shri Naresh Bansal: Dr. Sasmit Patra (Odisha), Dr. Amar Patnaik (Odisha) and Dr. Fauzia Khan (Maharashtra).

Need to explore sustainable alternatives to stubble burning

PROF. MANOJ KUMAR JHA (Bihar): Sir, it is the same story every winter. The capital and adjoining regions are engulfed in smog, setting fresh records of extreme Air Quality Index (AQI) levels due to stubble burning in northern States. While some efforts are being made to lower AQI levels through temporary sprinklers, imposing robust vehicular movement guidelines and issuing numerous health advisories, long-term sustainable alternatives to a major source of pollution remain unexplored. There are various eco-friendly crop residue alternatives that the Government can explore to mitigate climate hazards posed by stubble burning. Biomass briquettes, compressed blocks made from residual straw and paddy, provide an environmentally-conscious substitute for coal. When used in thermal power plants, these briquettes can significantly reduce the carbon footprint. Leftover paddy can be used innovatively by transforming it into various products such as paper, cattle fodder, animal bedding, agri-fiber boards and packaging materials. These practices promote sustainability and create monetary benefits from leftover paddy instead of incessant burning. The Indian Agriculture Research Institute has introduced a bio-enzyme that, when sprayed on paddy residue, facilitates decomposition and transforms it into nutrient-rich manure within a couple of weeks.

Other viable alternatives, such as Happy Seeder, bio-ethanol production and providing better subsidies to other crops should also be explored by the Agricultural Department. Educational promotion of green farm practices among farmers and highlighting associated benefits should accompany these initiatives. I urge the Government to start implementing sustainable alternatives to stubble burning before the next winter sets in.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI KARTIKEYA SHARMA): The following hon. Members associated themselves with the Special Mention made by Prof. Manoj Kumar Jha:

Shri P. Wilson (Tamil Nadu), Dr. Sasmit Patra (Odisha), Shri Binoy Viswam (Kerala), Dr. Kanimozhi NVN Somu (Tamil Nadu), Dr. John Brittas (Kerala), Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla (Tamil Nadu), Shri M. Shanmugam (Tamil Nadu), Shri Sandosh Kumar P (Kerala), Shri Abir Ranjan Biswas (West Bengal), Shri Aneel Prasad Hegde (Bihar), Dr. V. Sivdasan (Kerala), Shrimati Vandana Chavan (Maharashtra), Dr. Fauzia Khan (Maharashtra) and Dr. Amar Patnaik (Odisha).

Now, Shrimati Mahua Maji - not present. Dr. Ameer Yajnik.

Demand for bringing innovative policies in Plastic Waste Management

DR. AMEE YAJNIK (Gujarat): Sir, plastic over-consumption and mismanagement of plastic waste is a growing menace, causing landfills to overflow, choking rivers and threatening marine ecosystems. This has a negative impact on our environment and valuable resources are harmed.

Efforts to manage plastic waste have been implemented at the national, State and local levels, including ban on single-use plastic items. The Government of India notified the Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016; the Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2018; the Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2021; and the Guidelines on Extended Producer Responsibility for plastic packaging through the Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2022.

Plastic waste management remains a significant challenge due to lack of infrastructure, low waste collection rates, inadequate funding and lack of recognition to the informal recycling sector. Plastic waste generated is currently utilised for road construction, waste-to-energy plants, waste-to-oil plants and in cement plants for co-processing. However, local waste management infrastructure has not kept pace, resulting in large quantities of mismanaged waste.

In this context, I urge the Government to bring policies whereby innovative economic instruments such as incentive mechanisms are created and investments are identified across major economic sectors that could reduce plastic waste. The Government should come out with solutions whereby producers and importers of plastic goods take the responsibility for the disposal of plastic waste. A major rush would be market-based tools such as tax exemptions, subsidies, or grants/loans that can be applied to support businesses to incentivize the prevention, minimization and recycling of plastic waste.