

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Title : Regarding allocation of funds under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)

Shri Gaurav Gogoi (KALIABOR): The prime reason for India's poor performance in combating air pollution is the insufficient capacity building of municipal corporations and district subdivision administrations under the National Clean Air Program (NCAP). Reportedly, most of the cities mandated to submit their respective city action plans have simply replicated each other's initiatives. Some local Governments have either underspent or diverted majority of funds towards projects not closely related to NCAP. Comprehensive monitoring mechanisms must be developed by the Union Government to prevent such activities of the local Governments. From the financial year 2022-23, presenting evidence for the increased number of good days and reduction in PM10 annual average concentration is mandatory to receive the 15th Finance Commission recommended grants. This requirement neglects the need for the essentials, such as building a robust monitoring framework. Only 69 out of 132 NCAP cities have real-time monitoring stations.

14.27 hrs(Shri Rajendra Agrawal *in the Chair*)

In 2020-21, the NCAP was clubbed with other items under "Control of Pollution" and the budget was marginally reduced. Many 'most polluted' cities are provided with reduced NCAP funds or no funds at all. Thus, the States must be provided freedom in NCAP funds allocation, since the top-down approach is not apt to reduce air pollution.