

Regarding need for comprehensive measures to address acute air pollution crisis in Delhi and other cities of country-Laid

SHRI KIRTI AZAD (BARDHAMAN-DURGAPUR): I wish to draw the attention of the Government to the severe and worsening air pollution crisis, which continues to pose a grave public health emergency in Delhi and across India. According to the latest data, 74 of the worlds top 100 most polluted cities are in India, with Delhis annual average PM2.5 concentration at 101 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ - over twice the national standard and 20 times the WHO guideline. This pollution causes nearly 2 million premature deaths annually and triggers a surge in respiratory and cardiac illnesses, especially among vulnerable populations. Despite the National Clean Air Programme and increased monitoring, most cities continue to breach air quality standards, highlighting critical gaps in implementation, inter-state coordination, and accountability. Public trust in air quality data is eroding due to incidents of manipulation and wasteful measures like cloud seeding, which yield negligible results. Indias global image is tarnished as cities are increasingly seen as hazardous rather than progressive. I urge the Government to treat clean air as a fundamental right, enforce science-based emission cuts, strengthen independent monitoring, and adopt a regional airshed approach. Immediate, enforceable actions are needed to protect public health and restore credibility.