

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3222
ANSWERED ON:05.08.2002
EXPERTS OPINION ON POLLUTED ENVIRONMENT
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether many scientists have expressed concern in their report over the deteriorating condition of environment and stated that in next 50 years there will be shortage of potable water, clean air and eatables;
- (b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken to ensure healthy human life and balanced use of natural resources; and
- (c) the measures taken to avoid depletion of forest cover beyond 12 percent and to check water level from falling further?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T. R. BAALU)

(a) & (b) Concerns are expressed from time to time about the quality of environment. However, steps taken by the Government for maintaining the environment include the following: -

- (i) A comprehensive Policy for Abatement of Pollution that lays stress on both the control and preventive aspects of pollution has been formulated.
- (ii) Action Plan for 24 critically polluted areas have been made and are under implementation.
- (iii) National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) for restoration of river and water quality have been launched by the National River Conservation Directorate.
- (iv) To ensure proper management of garbage, the Ministry of Environment & Forests has notified Municipal Solid Wastes (Management & Handling) Rules, 2000.
- (v) Zoning atlas for siting of industries based on environmental considerations have been prepared for proper siting of industries.

(c) The measures taken to avoid depletion of forest cover beyond 12 percent and to check water level from falling further include the following:-

- (i) Afforestation programs are undertaken by the Governments.
- (ii) Guidelines have been issued to all States/UTs to involve village communities in protection and regeneration of degraded forests.
- (iii) Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 has been enacted to regulate the diversions of forest land for non-forestry purposes.
- (iv) A network of protected areas has been established.

(v) A National Forestry Action Programme to enhance the contribution of forestry and tree resources for ecological stability and people centered development through increased investments in conservation and development of forest resources has been prepared.