

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:41

ANSWERED ON:09.07.2014

AIR POLLUTION

Mahtab Shri Bhartruhari;Simha Shri Prathap

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

- (a) whether increasing number of diesel vehicles causes more pollution in the environment than other modes of fuel used in the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether air pollution is a major cause of concern to human health in the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the US based Yale University in a Report has commented about the state of air pollution in India and its metropolitan cities, if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government on the findings of the said report;
- (d) whether the Government has formulated/proposes to formulate Air Quality Standards for the various cities in the country, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor along with steps taken/proposed to be taken to check air pollution in the country; and
- (e) whether the Government proposes to constitute an expert body to suggest ways and means to reduce air pollution in the country, if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 41 due for reply on 09.07.2014 regarding 'Air pollution' by SHRI PRATHAP SIMHA and SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB, Hon'ble Members of Parliament.

(a) The diesel vehicles cause more pollution due to high sulphur content and high temperature combustion and emit high level of particulate matter and oxides of nitrogen.

(b) & (c) Yes, sir. However, it is difficult to attribute causes of a disease to a particular pollutant. The Central Pollution Control Board had undertaken three epidemiological studies which indicated that several pulmonary and systemic changes and other health impairments are associated with cumulative exposure to high level of particulate matter which increases the risk of various diseases including respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. However, results are indicative rather than conclusive.

A report on Environmental Performance Index (EPI) 2014 has been produced jointly by a team of experts in Yale University and Columbia University which ranks countries on the basis of their environment performance. The report has ranked 178 countries based on 20 indicators tracked across nine areas. One of these areas is air quality. India's EPI rank is 155.

The report has taken only PM 2.5 as the pollutant for its analysis and not all the pollutants covered under the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) notified by the Government of India. The report relies on Satellite data in place of actual monitored data and it has also not been peer reviewed.

(d) The Central Government has already notified for twelve pollutants, the revised NAAQS in November, 2009 considering human health, state of environment, WHO Guidelines (2000 and 2005) and best global practices. These standards are not city specific and are applicable to the entire country. The important steps taken, inter alia, include formulation of regulations/statutes to address sector specific problems, setting up of monitoring network for assessment of ambient air, notification of stringent industry specific emission standards, carrying out of source apportionment studies in select cities and formulation of action plans for air quality in cities, implementation of Bharat Stage IV norms in the 12 selected cities apart from NCR and Bharat Stage III norms in rest of the country, introduction of cleaner/alternate fuels like CNG, LPG and promotion of public transport network, creation of infrastructure for industrial pollution control incorporating cleaner production processes and setting up of common facilities for treatment of wastes.

(e) The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change does not propose to constitute any Committee as a robust institutional and regulatory framework is already in place for monitoring and controlling air pollution in the country.