

Seventeenth Lok Sabha

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Title: Issue regarding increasing air pollution in the country.

SHRI FEROZE VARUN GANDHI (PILIBHIT): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak on the issue of air pollution. Sir Gangaram Hospital in New Delhi conducted a survey last year where they said that 30 years ago, approximately 90 per cent of those who had lung cancer were smokers. But in the survey that they conducted last year, they found that 64 per cent of those people in our country today who have lung cancer are non-smokers. The demographics of people who today have lung cancer are completely different. Thirty-eight per cent people in India who have lung cancer are under the age of 45 as opposed to 4 per cent of people two decades ago.

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease which is a severe lung condition, is the second biggest killer in India after heart disease today. Rising industrial emissions, crop burning, dirty diesel, exhaust fumes and construction dust are the causes. In Delhi, there was a flagrant example of the destruction of our aerial environment with very little benefit to our economy which was the Badarpur Thermal Power Plant. It was shut down last year. It was made with technology from the 1940s from the erstwhile Soviet Union and the Czech Republic. In all developed countries, technology commissioned before 1985 has been termed obsolete because it is severely polluting and it does not produce merely enough energy. At its peak, the Badarpur Thermal Power Plant gave five per cent of Delhi's electricity while giving 18 per cent of Delhi's PM 2.5 particulate matter. Despite being seen as clean, the emission levels of sulphur dioxide were four times that of permissible

limits of coal power plants. A population of 200,000 people lives in a six-kilometre radius near the power plant. They have 15 times higher incidents of cancer than if they lived 15 kilometres away. There are more than 400 such operational thermal power plants in India today which have 19 million people around what the Indian Government has termed as cancer circles in India. The Supreme Court has mandated retro-fitting of clean technologies. The Power Ministry has said that it will phase them out by 2022. There is no action that we have seen as yet.

When we look at what the solutions are, today the industrial plants and factories hire a third party to come and audit their factories. These auditors check pollution levels three times a year and give an audit report at the end of the year. Sir, I want to ask you, which auditor is going to speak against the factory which is signing their cheques? The Indian Government's data states that 59 per cent factories have violated Indian pollution norms while only seven per cent have been cited.

Sir, I would seek your protection for two minutes more. In the case of Gujarat, they decided to do three very interesting things; no company was allowed to hire their own auditors - the Government gave them the auditors -, no auditor was sent to the factory twice thinking that they would make a relation perhaps with the owner, and if they gave information about pollution, they were paid a bonus. It led to a 28 per cent reduction in air pollution in one year in Ahmadabad.

It will be interesting to look at the fact that Germany, France, and Sweden are using ethanol-laced petrol, which is completely non-toxic and biodegradable. It gives more output than gasoline. Why are we not using it? It curbs the emission of Sulphur dioxide. Sir, it is a long topic. I can continue with it later.

माननीय अध्यक्ष : आप इस मामले पर एक बार लिखकर दीजिए । आपका अच्छा विषय है, अगले सत्र में कभी समय मिलेगा तो डिबेट कराएँगे ।

SHRI FEROZE VARUN GANDHI : I will do that, Sir.

माननीय अध्यक्ष : कुँवर पुष्पेन्द्र सिंह चन्देल को श्री फिरोज़ वरुण गांधी द्वारा उठाए गए विषय के साथ संबद्ध करने की अनुमति प्रदान की जाती है ।