

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 3491
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 08.08.2022

Commission for Air Quality Management

3491. SHRI SANJAY SADASHIVRAO MANDLIK:
SHRI RAVI KISHAN:
SHRI MANOJ TIWARI:
SHRI RAVINDRA KUSHWAHA:
SHRI SHRIRANG APPA BARNE:
SHRI DHAIRYASHEEL SAMBHAJIRAOMANE:
SHRI SUDHEER GUPTA:
SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV:
SHRI BIDYUT BARAN MAHATO:

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

- (a) whether the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has started the new Graded Response Action Plan recently;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the salient features of the said CAQM;
- (c) whether the scientists has developed a Decision Support System (DSS) used by the Central Pollution Control Board on pilot basis to provide air quality forecasts for Delhi;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the salient features of the said DSS;
- (e) whether the Government is working on a comprehensive action plan aimed at year long action to prevent high level of pollution in Delhi and if so, the details thereof and the progress made in this regard; and
- (f) whether the Government is preparing any policy to mandate the planting of trees in urban cities in and around residential areas and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) & (b)

The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has comprehensively revisited the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), also with a view to invoke the identified measures in advance, based on a predictive AQI forecast. Salient features of the revised GRAP are as given as Annexure-I.

(c)& (d)

The Commission for Air Quality Management has set up a committee comprising of experts from reputed institutions like IMD, IITM, IIT Delhi, TERI, NEERI and C- DAC Pune, which has developed a Decision support system (DSS) for facilitating early warning and informed actions.

The DSS shall provide early warning and air quality forecasts for Delhi and NCR. CAQM shall take informed decisions on critical issues related to the ambient air quality management in NCR and adjoining areas with the help of an early warning system and ensuring air quality emergency response.

(e) & (f)

The Government in coordination with CAQM, has finalized a policy to curb air pollution menace occurring every year in Delhi and National Capital Region. The Policy contains sector wise recommendations to prevent, control and abate air pollution in the NCR including industries, vehicles/ transport, construction and demolition, dust from roads and open areas, municipal solid waste burning, crop residue burning etc. The policy also deals with thermal power plants, clean fuels & electric mobility, public transportation, road traffic management, diesel generators, bursting of fire crackers and abating air pollution through greening and plantation etc.

The Government has already planned to expand the net of “Nagar Van” and “Nagar Vatika”, wherever feasible, in urban agglomerations and cities. Under central government funding, urban local bodies and others can help to establish Nagar Vans in 10-50 hectare of land and vaatikas in 1-10 ha land. Owing to space constraints in urban landscapes, vertical gardens along metro rail pillars and other such structures etc. shall also be promoted.

Salient features of the revised GRAP are as under:

- The GRAP for NCR has now been classified under four different stages of adverse air quality in Delhi, reflected through the Air Quality Index (AQI) — Stage I - ‘Poor’ (AQI 201-300); Stage II - ‘Very Poor’ (AQI 301-400); Stage III - ‘Severe’ (AQI 401-450); Stage IV - ‘Severe+’ (AQI >450).
- Actions under Stages II, III and IV shall be invoked at least three days in advance of the AQI reaching to the projected levels of that stage, based on the dynamic model and weather/ meteorological forecast to be provided to the Commission by IMD / IITM on a day-to-day basis.
- Proposed restrictions are to be progressive from a lower stage to higher stage i.e., restrictive actions undertaken as per previous stages shall be continued, in addition to the air pollution stage under which the restrictive actions are envisaged to be taken. For example, restrictive actions under the Stage III category, whenever invoked, shall be in addition to those under Stage I and II respectively and so on and so forth.
- The Sub-Committee on GRAP constituted by the Commission shall meet frequently to plan for advance action and issue necessary orders for invoking various provisions of the GRAP, based on the prevalent air quality and the AQI forecast to be provided by IMD from time to time.
- The Sub-Committee shall also review the actions taken by various agencies responsible towards effective implementation of the GRAP.