

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION No. 148
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13.02.2023

Closure of Coal-powered Boilers

*148. SHRI SANJAY BHATIA:

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

- (a) whether the industrial units running on coal-powered boilers in Karnal and Panipat Parliamentary Constituencies have been served with closure notice by the Pollution Control Board (PCB);
- (b) whether the said boilers are required to be replaced for being run on Piped Natural Gas (PNG) and the said step is not practically economical as the cost of fuel in case of PNG powered boilers is likely to increase threefold in comparison to that of the coal-powered boilers;
- (c) whether the replacement of thousands of boilers in NCR through boiler manufacturers is likely to take three to four years, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the PNG suppliers have their monopoly and charging very high prices and whether the Government has taken any steps in this regard, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether all the industrial units of NCR region are likely to remain closed due to the above facts, and if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) whether the Government has taken any steps to allow industries in Panipat to use coal as fuel for their boilers with a view to make them competitive in industrial market and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI BHUPENDER YADAV)

(a) to (f): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARAS (a) TO (f) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 148 DUE FOR REPLY ON 13.02.2023 REGARDING 'CLOSURE OF COAL-POWERED BOILERS' RAISED BY SHRI SANJAY BHATIA, HON'BLE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

(a) to (f)

Emissions from heavily polluting fuels for various industrial, domestic and miscellaneous applications contribute significantly to the degradation of air quality in the NCR and adjoining areas and accordingly a consistent need has been felt to switch over to lesser polluting and cleaner fuels in the NCR.

Shifting of industries to PNG / cleaner fuels has accordingly been a high priority area. While within Delhi, industries had majorly shifted to PNG, use of highly polluting fossil fuels like coal, furnace oil and the types dominated the industrial spectrum in the NCR beyond Delhi. As the concerns of air pollution are uniform across NCR and from the standpoint of a common airshed approach, also considering the need to optimally balance the imperatives of sustainability of operations as also the emissions from use of various types/ categories of fuels that have a direct bearing on the air quality, statutory directions were issued for adoption of a standard list of permissible fuels for entire NCR for adoption in a graded and phased response manner, targeting transition of all industries in the NCR including industries in Karnal and Panipat Parliamentary Constituencies, latest by 31.12.2022.

Coal being a highly polluting fuel, it was decided to phase out its use from entire NCR in industrial, domestic and miscellaneous applications (barring use of low Sulphur coal only in thermal power plants), towards aiming for an overall improved air quality in the region.

Besides clean gaseous fuels like PNG/ CNG/ LPG etc., biomass fuels and fuels for specific applications have also been permitted for industrial applications in the NCR, beyond the jurisdiction of NCT of Delhi, towards an affordable alternative to highly priced gaseous fuels like PNG/ CNG etc. and also to arrest the uncontrolled burning of biomass / agricultural residue etc. in fields and open areas.

Thus in NCR, beyond Delhi, it is not mandatory for industries to use only PNG as fuel and various other alternatives for clean fuels, which are also much economical as compared to PNG, have been provided in the standard list of approved fuels.

Pursuant to the directions as above, almost all the industries in NCR have adopted the standard list of approved fuels. Of a total of about 7,760 fuel based industries presently operating in NCR, 4082 industries have opted for running their operations with PNG and the balance are now running on biomass based fuels / fuels other than PNG. Only about 320 industrial units across entire NCR have temporarily ceased their operations on their own, beyond 31.12.2022, till they also migrate to cleaner fuels as per the approved fuel list.

Shifting of coal based boilers to biomass based fuels / other fuels etc. does not entail any major modifications or cost implications towards such transition.
