

assessment, forest cover in the country is 19.27% of the geographical area.

6. Wildlife (Protection) Act was enacted in 1972 (amended 1991), to protect wild flora and fauna.

7. A network of 447 wildlife sanctuaries and 84 National Parks covering about 1,50,000 sq. km. has been developed for conservation of wild flora and fauna.

Pollution Caused by Leaded Petrol

*170. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE :
SHRI PRABHASH CHANDRA TIWARI :

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

(a) whether the leaded petrol is one of the main causes of vehicular pollution in the country;

(b) if so, whether the Government have conducted or propose to conduct any test regarding the pollution caused by the leaded petrol in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken by the Union Government to check the pollution caused by the leaded petrol?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) Yes sir.

(b) and (c): The Central Pollution Control Board is carrying out a study on measurements of lead in ambient air. The study is being carried out with the assistance of the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute, Nagpur. Four metro cities, Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Calcutta, have been covered. The selection was based on the fact that the number of vehicles in these cities is higher than other cities. Lead levels in ambient air of Delhi have shown that levels of lead are showing a reducing trend.

(d) The Government in order to check pollution caused by leaded petrol introduced low leaded petrol (0.15 gm/l), as against the prevailing specification of 0.56 gm/l, in the four metro cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Calcutta in June 1994, and in the entire country in December 1996. Unleaded petrol (0.013 gm/l) has been introduced in the four metro cities from April 1995. Unleaded petrol is also available in the Taj Trapezium and at some selected retail outlets on the radial routes

emerging out from the metros to important cities/tourist destinations. Unleaded petrol was proposed to be introduced at all the State/UT capitals and towns with population of 10 lakh and above from December, 1998 but has been advanced to August 1998. Further it is proposed to introduce unleaded petrol throughout the country from April, 2000.

[English]

Financial Crisis in Major Ports

*171. SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether some major ports have been facing financial crisis;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to improve their financial position, port-wise; and

(c) the details of the Central assistance sought by Paradeep Port to take up its development projects during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Paradip Port has been financing all its development projects from their own internal resources except for one Externally Aided ADB Project for creating mechanised coal handling facilities. During the last 3 years, following amounts of loan has been disbursed to Paradip Port for this Project:—

(Rs. in crores)

Year	Amount released
1995-96	7.22
1996-97	16.39
1997-98	44.68

Pollution Control Measures

*172. SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN :
SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO :

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

(a) whether the Government have mooted a proposal to motivate the Industries to open a Pollution Control Wing attached to their major factories in order to minimise the environmental pollution in the major cities;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reaction of the Industry thereto;

(d) whether there is a proposal to open an Environmental Wing to monitor various Pollution Control measures at the Central level; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU) : (a) and (b) While according environmental clearance to the development projects, the Ministry of Environment & Forests stipulates a number of conditions for safeguarding environment including creation of Environmental cell and providing of monitoring stations. As promotional measures, the Government has also been encouraging the industries to adopt clean technologies, undertake waste minimisation measures and incorporate environmental management system (EMS).

(c) About 15 waste minimisation circles in clusters of small scale industries have so far been established to conserve resources and reduce pollution with the active participation of industries. Besides, more than 25 major companies have so far obtained EMS certification and many other are in the process of adopting EMS.

(d) and (e) Under the Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and the Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, the responsibility of monitoring is primarily entrusted to the State Pollution Control Boards. In addition, the existing Pollution Control Division in the Ministry is already monitoring environmental pollution through the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) using a network of ambient air (290) and water quality (480) monitoring stations established throughout the country. CPCB also conducts surveys in the major Indian cities to assess the levels of noise and vehicular pollution.

Conversion of DOT Into India Telecom

*173. SHRI CHANDRASHEKHAR SAHU : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to convert Department of Telecom into a company named India Telecom;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor,;

(c) whether various Unions of Telecom Employees have been opposing the said proposal;

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(e) the decision taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (e); the question of restructuring of the Department of Telecommunications (DOT) in regard, mainly, to distancing the policy-making and licensing functions from operational functions is being examined, keeping in view, *inter-alia*, the need to enhance functional efficiency so as to effectively meet the emerging competition. With the setting up also of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) last year, the distancing of the policy-making and licensing functions from those of operations is being regarded as a logical step.

2. It may be recalled that a Committee headed by Dr. Athreya, a noted management expert, was set up some years back to recommend the most appropriate organisational structure for management of telecom services in the country, taking into account the future operational and development requirements. The Committee (which submitted its report in March, 1991) recognised the need for the 'Policy and Regulation' tier to be separated from the Operations' tier in any modified structure but was divided on the form of future organisation for the Department.

3. Subsequently, In 1995, a Committee headed by Shri D.K. Gupta who retired as Member (Services) in the Telecom Commission was constituted to make recommendations in respect of restructuring of DOT Headquarters. In formulating their findings, the Committee met with senior departmental officers and representatives of Employees Association, amongst others, and recommended that DOT may be split into two clearly defined bodies, namely, a body to deal with policy and planning and another to handle the operation and maintenance of telecom services which could be called "India Telecom."

4. The D.K. Gupta Committee also recommended that "India Telecom" should function as a corporate body with Circles/Districts as independent cost and profit centres. Its Report was examined further when the consensus emerged that DOT's operating functions should be separated from licensing and policy functions so as to provide dedicated management inputs to operations and extend a level-playing field to all telecom operators.