

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3449
ANSWERED ON:29.07.2009
AIR AND WATER POLLUTION
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has conducted any survey to study the outcome of the measures taken to check air and water pollution in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of the standards/norms set by World Health Organisation regarding the quality of air and water;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to launch any programme to achieve these norms;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the time by which these norms are likely to be achieved by the Government?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) & (b) As such, no specific survey has been conducted to study the outcome of the measures undertaken to control air and water pollution in the country. However, ambient air and water quality are regularly being monitored under the National Air Monitoring Programme (NAMP) and the National Water Monitoring Programme (NWMP) by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) along with State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) and the Pollution Control Committees (PCCs). The monitoring of ambient air and water quality and interpretation of data therein helps in determining broadly the outcome of various measures adopted by the Government to control air and water pollution. Ambient air quality data for the last 03 years has revealed that air quality is within the ambient standards with respect to Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂). However, the levels of Oxides of Nitrogen

(NO_x) are exceeding the ambient air quality norms in residential areas at 08 locations in Kolkata, Howrah & Delhi and levels of Respirable Suspended Particulate Matter (RSPM) are exceeding the norms in 86 out of 125 cities monitored during 2008. The analysis of water quality data for the last 03 years has revealed that organic and bacterial contamination continue to be critical in water bodies. 150 polluted river stretches have been identified in the country.

(c) The mandate of the World Health Organization (WHO) includes prescribing guidelines in respect of ambient air quality and Drinking – Water Quality, which have been issued from time to time, the latest being in 2005 for ambient air and in 2008 for drinking water respectively. WHO Guidelines are global in nature and do not take into account the local conditions. The Indian Standard Drinking Water-Specification: (IS-10500: 1991) are based on WHO guidelines and local conditions. Drinking Water Quality specifications are followed by various municipalities, public health engineering departments/ water boards, cantonment board, etc. at local level.

(d) & (e) The Government has taken various measures to control air and water pollution which inter alia includes implementation of notified emission and effluent standards for industries. Implementation of action plan for air quality management in 16 cities is being undertaken. Action plans are being implemented in 24 critically polluted areas.

Implementation of emission norms for new and in-use vehicles and fuel quality in accordance with the Road Map of the Auto Fuel Policy, introduction of cleaner fuel in public transport and strengthening of mass transportation is underway.

Monitoring of inter-State river quality, implementation of River Action Plans including the Ganga Action Plan and establishment of Common Effluent Treatment Plant (CETPs) to treat industrial effluent is being done.

(f) It is difficult to allocate a time line for the achievement of the said WHO Air Quality Guidelines.