

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4243
ANSWERED ON:16.12.2009
LEATHER TANNERIES POLLUTING ENVIRONMENT
Tandon Annu

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

- (a) Whether the Government proposes to strengthen the relevant environment laws and by-laws for criminal action to be taken against owners of polluting leather tanneries;
- (b) If so, the details thereof;
- (c) Whether the Government proposes to clean up areas affected by arsenic and lead poisoning by the untreated effluents released illegally by leather tanning units; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a)&(b) There are adequate provisions under the existing statutes, viz., The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 to take stringent action, including criminal prosecution, against owners of polluting leather industries. Hence there is no proposal to strengthen the relevant environmental laws.

(c)&(d) No specific details have been provided in the question about the affected areas. As and when specific cases are brought to the notice, the concerned State Pollution Control Boards/Pollution Control Committees take necessary action. Moreover, for the State of Tamil Nadu, The Loss of Ecology (Prevention and Payment of Compensation) Authority has been constituted with effect from 30.09.96 pursuant to the directions of the Supreme Court. This authority has the mandate to determine the compensation to be recovered from polluters, particularly tanneries, as cost of reversing the damaged environment and to provide compensation to individuals/families who have suffered because of the pollution.