

Once I asked the same question about merciless cutting of trees in the Nilgiris in Tamil Nadu, but I got a reply about some nilgiris in Maharashtra.... (*Interruptions*) I would also like to know about the First Ecological Task Force for planting trees.... (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Only one supplementary is allowed.... (*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI VYJAYANTHIMALA BALI: It is part of the supplementary. This was raised with the blessings of our beloved late Shrimati Indira Gandhi.... (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Madam, more than one supplementary is not allowed.

SHRIMATI VYJAYANTHIMALA BALI: I would like to know as to what has happened to that force.

[*Translation*]

SHRI BHAJAN LAL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member has rightly said that atmosphere, ecology and environment should be preserved and it is only possible if we prevent the destruction of trees. Indiscriminate cutting of trees has slightly disturbed the climate of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. The second thing, she has pointed out is about the involvement. To maintain the ecological balance we have to protect the trees. For this purpose, it is the duty of every individual to extend full cooperation to the Government. Laws have been enacted and we have asked the State Governments for their speedy implementation. Many States have taken speedy action to implement them. We have written to the States time and again to protect the forests. But as I have already said, the States did not implement the law fully. We are going to make this law more

As regards protection from drought and flood, there is no denying the fact that if there will be no trees, drought will occur and also floods will occur. We require both trees and good environment in order to protect ourselves from drought and floods. Only trees will not serve the purpose but it requires other things also. We are making every effort to create good environment. All of us are required to work unitedly for this purpose. Only then the environment will be free from pollution.

[*English*]

Environmental Pollution

*439. SHRI VIJAY N. PATIL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up an expert Committee to study and examine the extent of human exposure to high level of suspended particulate matter resulting from combustion of coal, oil and wood:

(b) if so, the result of the study; and

(c) the steps taken to control suspended particulate matter and sulphur-dioxide pollution?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z.R. ANSARI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Steps taken to control suspended particulate matter and sulphur-dioxide pollution include the following:

(i) Ambient air quality standards for different categories of areas have been prescribed.

- ing stations has been set up.
- (iii) Emission standards have been laid down in respect of twelve varieties of major air polluting industries.
 - (iv) Air pollution control areas have been designated.
 - (v) Industrial units, are advised to install pollution control devices and flue gas desulphurisation plants.

SHRI VIJAY N. PATIL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Minister has said 'No' and 'Does not arise' in his answer to parts (a) and (b) of the question. I was expecting that he will give in his answer the list of network of air quality monitoring stations but it has not been given. I would like to know whether he will be able to provide it now. Despite the monitoring stations and their suggestions, many of the industrial units do not comply with the requirements to stop the air pollution. For example, thermal power stations are required to instal electrostatic precipitators, but we see in Delhi that because of thermal power stations lot of coal has accumulated in the air which is flown throughout the crowded parts of Delhi. Even in North Avenue and South Avenue, we are finding lot of dust. How much dust goes into the ears and noses of the people and effects the lungs, is a question to be imagined. Wherever there are sugar factories and fertiliser plants, even in rural areas, the dust is also there. So, my first supplementary is to know the number of monitoring stations and their places.

SHRI Z.R. ANSARI: Sir, as regards the number of monitoring stations which have been sanctioned, 75 stations were sanctioned earlier and ten more have been added very recently, bringing the total number of monitoring stations to 85. Out of these 85, 48

are operating and 37 are yet to become functional. The hon. Member wanted to know the names of these monitoring stations. I can provide that long list to the hon. Member. Presently I do not have the long list but if the hon. Member is interested in knowing the specific names of those monitoring stations, I shall certainly provide.

As far as the thermal power stations are concerned, it is the ignition which is polluting the atmosphere, and specially it is more severe a problem in Delhi. We have taken a number of steps to force these power stations to instal effective electrostatic precipitators. Some of these power stations have installed electrostatic precipitators, but the difficulty is that the electrostatic precipitators which were installed were designed on the technology which was available in the Western countries. There is a basic difference between the conditions prevailing in the West and the conditions prevailing in India because of two factors - one is the wheather and the other is the coal and oil which is being used here. In India, the coal which is used is a low sulphur content and more ash content coal. In the Western countries, the coal which is used has got more sulphur content and less ash content. So, those electrostatic precipitators which were designed on that pattern, had not worked well. Therefore, BHEL has now designed new electrostatic precipitators which are being installed. It takes time to give order and to instal it. Therefore, we have given a time-bound programme to these thermal power stations to instal electrostatic precipitators and we are taking all steps. In some cases we found that they are not taking any steps. We have asked them to close down that thermal power station. We have also prosecuted one thermal power station in Delhi itself. These are the steps which we are taking, and you know, Sir, that this is a process which will take some time.

SHRI VIJAY N. PATIL: Sir, the Minister

has given round and round answer. He just tried to create an air-pocket. My major question in the first supplementary was that it is not only the low sulphur content which is responsible for air pollution, but even the ash which is very dangerous for the lungs. The dust that is coming out of hundreds of cement factories being installed all over the country, also requires to be controlled. My second supplementary is that along with the industrial units, the vehicles running on the roads, specially in the crowded metropolitan cities, that is, Madras, Calcutta, Delhi and Bombay, and even in other crowded cities, are also creating lot of air pollution. So, I would like to know whether the Government is thinking of enacting some laws for the vehicles which emit more gas because of the faulty engines or because of no proper repairs of the engines. Under the Motor Vehicles Act we insist that there should be red light on the back of the vehicles, the brakes should be properly checked, and the lights should be on when the brakes are applied, and if these are not provided, we punish them. So, likewise in crowded cities, are you going to enact a law that if there are faulty engines in the vehicles and they are emitting lot of gas, if even fifty per cent combustion is not there, and the air pollution is more, action will be taken... (*Interruptions*).

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is enough.

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI: Sir, I think I could not explain to the hon. Member in reply to his first question. I am sorry for that. Actually, the low sulphur content coal which is used here, has got more ash content, and because of low sulphur content, the electrostatic precipitators which are designed on the basis of the technology in the West, are not working well. Appropriate technology has been developed in BHEL and when those electrostatic precipitators with the appropriate technology suited to the Indian conditions will be installed, they will work well, provided the

maintenance is well taken care of.

As far as the vehicular pollution is concerned, the specific question put by the hon. Member was whether we are going to have some law to control the vehicular pollution. I understand that in the Motor Vehicles Act which is presently there, there is a provision for making some rules at the State level. The State Governments can make rules under the Motor Vehicles Act. In Maharashtra, in Bombay they have made certain rules under the Motor Vehicles Act to control the vehicular pollution. We have taken up the matter with the other States also to frame rules to control the vehicular pollution. We have also taken up the matter with the concerned Ministry to change the Motor Vehicles law which is an old law, and provide measures for the control of vehicular pollution in the law itself so that there may not be any need of depending on the States to frame rules under that law. These are the steps which we are taking. We have also taken up the matter with the Petroleum Ministry to reduce the lead content in the oil which is being used.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: They are mixing kerosene also in the petrol and that also creates more pollution.

SHRI Z.R. ANSARI: The standards have been prescribed for it. And also the Motor Vehicles Act has been amended in the House in May, 1987 and it has been taken up.

The hon. Member wanted to know the places where monitoring centres....

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You can place it on the Table of the House.

SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: The open cast mining in coal field indulged by Coal India Ltd has resulted in lot of environmental problems. Will the Minister tell us whether any steps have been taken to stop this

damaging practice in the coal field of Assam? (*Interruptions*).

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You repeat the question.

SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: The open cast mining from the top by felling trees in vast areas has resulted in lot of environmental problems, specially in the coalfield of Assam. This is being indulged by the contractors engaged by the Coal India Ltd. This has resulted in evacuation of a large number of tribal people, besides other problems. Will the Minister inform the House whether any steps have been taken to do away with the very damaging practice indulged by the Coal India Ltd?

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI: As far as we are concerned, when any mining case comes to us for clearance, we try to discourage this open cast mining. It is because, I know the hazards of open cast mining. Unless it is not possible to have the other system, we do not normally agree to the open cast mining. I know the hazards which are there.

SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: It is not more economical or more viable technologically.

SHRI Z.R. ANSARI: There are many things. If the report of the expert is that the open cast mining is only possible and the other system is not possible, only then, we allow open cast mining. Otherwise normally we do not allow open cast mining which is certainly a hazard.

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BHAJAN LAL): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to clarify the position regarding pollution caused due to mining of coal. If coal-mining is stopped, it will create great difficulty for us. We have to develop the country also. I would like to

inform the hon. Member that it will be the sole responsibility of the mine or the factory management to check the emission of ashes and smoke which creates pollution problem. If they do not take any action in this direction, legal action will be taken against them.

[*English*]

Cut in US Aid

*440. SHRIMATI
BASAVARAJESWARI †:
SHRI K.V. SHANKARA
GOWDA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has conveyed to the United States its unhappiness over the decision of the House of the Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee to cut by one third American Development assistance for India during 1988;

(b) if so, the reaction of the U.S. Government;

(c) whether the U.S. Government has agreed to reconsider its decision; and

(d) if not, to what extent it will affect India's development projects and the steps being taken to meet it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B.K. GADHVI): (a) to (d). A statement is given below.

STATEMENT

While considering the Foreign Aid Bill proposed by the US Administration for US FY 1988, the Foreign Affairs Committee of the US House of Representatives passed a