

**Press Information Bureau
Government of India
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**

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Health Hazards from Emission in Coal-Fired Power Plants

Government is aware of the report titled “ Coal kills- An assessment of death and disease caused by India’s dirtiest energy source” which was jointly published by Conservation Action Trust (a non-profit organization), Urban emission (air pollution research firm) and Greenpeace India in Dec 2012. The report shows that in 2011-2012, emission from Indian coal plants resulted in 80,000 to 1,15,000 premature deaths and more than 20 million asthma cases from exposure to air pollution. The study quantified additional health impacts such as large number of cases of heart attacks, emergency room visits, hospital admission and lost workdays caused by coal based emissions. The study estimates that monetary cost associated with these health impacts exceeds Rs. 16,000 to 23,000 crores per year.

Central Electricity Authority (CEA) has informed that Ministry of Power has constituted a Standing Committee on occupational health and safety of workers of thermal power plants. The committee has members from various stake holders. On the recommendations of the standing committee a task force was constituted which has submitted its report on 06/08/2013

Considering the impact of the emissions on the environment including human health, the central Pollution Control Board under Ministry of Environment and Forest has informed that following steps have been taken to prevent/minimize emissions from thermal power plants:

1. Developed emission and effluent standards for control of air & water pollution
2. To minimize dust generation, power plant has been directed to use beneficiated coal not having ash content more than 34% (low ash coal).
3. In order to mitigate problems related to flyash disposal such as land degradation, fugitive dust emission from ash ponds, flyash utilization has been made mandatory since September 14, 1999.
4. Emphasis is giving to cleaner coal technology (like supercritical, Circulating fluidized Bed Combustion) while granting environmental clearance to new coal based thermal power plants.
5. Asking thermal power plants to install pollution control systems for control of SO₂ emission on case to case basis wherever need is felt based on ambient air quality and sensitivity of area.
6. National Ambient Air Quality standards have been notified which are to be met by applying suitable control measures by the all air polluting industries including thermal power plants.

This information was given by Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad, in written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha today.

BN/HB