

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3118
TO BE ANSWERED ON 19.03.2026

Monitoring microplastic discharge

3118. SMT. SANGEETA YADAV:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has assessed the health risks associated with exposure to microplastics and nanoplastics, including toxicity, bioaccumulation and long-term impacts on vulnerable populations;
- (b) whether any regulatory standards or monitoring protocols have been notified to limit microplastic discharge from industries, wastewater and solid waste streams;
- (c) whether the provisions of Extended Producer Responsibility adequately address the issue of microplastic generation;
- (d) whether funds have been allocated for research on the detection and mitigation of nanoplastics; and
- (e) the steps taken to strengthen mitigation, public awareness and international cooperation on this issue?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) to (e): The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) – National Institute for Research in Environmental Health (NIREH) has done a systematic review of studies on presence of microplastics in human body. Also, a Committee comprising of Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), ICMR, Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET), National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM), under the coordination of CPCB, submitted a report to the National Green Tribunal. However, the studies did not have details about physiological or psychological impact of microplastics on humans.

Vide Amendment No. 2, of Indian Standard IS 4707 (Part 2): 2017, Classification of Cosmetic Raw Materials and Adjuncts (*Fourth Revision*), plastic microbeads, 5 mm or less, water insoluble, solid plastic particles used to exfoliate or cleanse present in rinse-off personal care products are not recognized as safe for use in Cosmetics. As per the Cosmetics Rules issued under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, the same shall not be added in cosmetic product

In order to reduce pollution caused by littered and unmanaged plastic waste, which includes microplastics, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has already prohibited

identified single use plastic items, which have low utility and high littering potential, with effect from 1 July 2022. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has also notified the Guidelines on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for plastic packaging vide Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2022, on 16th February 2022. The Guidelines stipulate mandatory targets on EPR, recycling of plastic packaging waste, reuse of rigid plastic packaging and use of recycled plastic content. The guidelines provide for moving towards sustainable plastic packaging and reducing the plastic footprint. Already, 206 lakh tonnes of plastic packaging waste have been recycled, after the EPR Guidelines have come into force in 2022.

Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) provides central assistance for solid waste management including plastic waste management in urban and rural areas of the country. There is a separate component for Information, Education and Communication for awareness generation under SBM. The Government of India also supplements the efforts of the States/UTs by providing financial and technical assistance for different pollution abatement works inter alia, include interception and diversion of raw sewage, sewerage system, and establishment of sewage treatment plants, through schemes/programmes such as National River Conservation Plan and Namami Gange programme, as per scheme guidelines. As per available information, the Department of Biotechnology has supported research projects on microplastics in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.

Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment), is a citizen-led initiative that focuses on inspiring and enabling individuals to adopt sustainable lifestyles through day-to-day voluntary actions. It, inter alia, addresses areas linked to waste reduction and segregation and reduced use of single-use plastics. All thirty-six States/UTs have constituted the Special Task Force under the chairpersonship of the Chief Secretary / Administrator for elimination of identified single use Plastic items and effective plastic waste management. A National Level Taskforce has also been constituted by the Ministry for taking coordinated efforts to eliminate identified single use plastic items and effective implementation of Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016. For effective monitoring of ban on identified Single Use Plastic items and plastic waste management in the country, the following online platforms are in operation: (a) National Dashboard for monitoring of comprehensive action plan implementation, (b) CPCB Monitoring Module for Compliance on Elimination of Single Use Plastic, and (c) CPCB Grievance Redressal App.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, celebrated World Environment Day (WED) 2025 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, on 5th June 2025, with the slogan ‘One Nation, One Mission: End Plastic Pollution’. As part of one month long pre-campaign activities undertaken before World Environment Day 2025, around 69,000 events were organized in which around 21 lakh people participated across the country. The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change and Central Pollution Control Board have prepared a “Compendium of Manufacturers / Sellers of Eco-alternatives to Banned Single Use Plastic Items”, which was also launched on World Environment Day, 2025. The Compendium is available and accessible on website of Central Pollution Control Board for wider dissemination and use.

Keeping in view the focus of the Government on addressing plastic pollution, a National Expo on eco-alternatives to banned single-use plastic was also organized during WED 2025. The expo saw a vibrant participation by 150 startups, recyclers, and local bodies from across India

showcasing innovative technologies and best practices on Eco-alternatives to single use plastics and plastic waste management.

The National Plastic Pollution Reduction Campaign (NPPRC) was also launched for the period 5th June to 31st October 2025. Over 38 lakh citizens participated in 4.95 lakh activities nationwide in the campaign organized in collaboration with Line Ministries, State/UT governments, etc. The Campaign also included activities to reduce plastic pollution in urban and rural areas under Swachhta Hi Sewa programme. The activities also include focus on reducing use of avoidable single use plastics in government offices especially during Special Campaign 5.0. A Hackathon on eco-alternatives to single-use plastics was also organized by Central Pollution Control Board, as part of NPPRC.

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