

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF MINES**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1692
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.12.2017**

IMPORT OF ASBESTOS

1692. DR. GOKARAJU GANGA RAJU:

Will the Minister of **MINES** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the import of white asbestos from Russia, Kazakhstan, Brazil and China continues to rise according to Indian Minerals Yearbook published in December, 2015 despite technical ban on mining of all kinds of asbestos in India;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to curb imports of deadly material of asbestos; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINES AND COAL
(SHRI HARIBHAI PARTHIBHAI CHAUDHARY)**

(a): White Asbestos is used for various purposes viz. asbestos cement pipes, roofing of households, asbestos based manufacturing products like brake linings etc. India's asbestos requirement is mainly met through imports from Russia, Kazakhstan, Brazil and Republic of China since the mining activity of asbestos mineral has been banned in the country on health ground.

As per available information from Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics and Indian Bureau of Mines, the country-wise details of quantity of asbestos imported during the year 2014-15 to 2017-18 (April-September) are as follows:

(Quantity in thousand tonne)

Name of the Country	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18 (April - September)
Russia	257.69	212.02	208.69	100.56
Kazakhstan	73.52	92.28	63.49	27.14
Brazil	61.79	49.22	37.28	33.66
Republic of China	2.78	2.08	1.00	0.54
Other Countries	0.69	0.06	0.11	0.74
Grand Total	396.47	355.66	310.57	162.74

(Source: Indian Bureau of Mines, DGCIS)

It can be seen from the table that there is continuous decline in import of asbestos during the period of 2014-15 to 2017-18 (Apr-Sep).

(b): Does not arise in view of the reply given to (a) above.

(c) and (d): Information in this regard is not held in Ministry of Mines since the import/export of minerals is regulated through EXIM policy of Directorate General of Foreign Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry. However, the following remedial steps have been taken by the Government for regulation and safe use of asbestos in the country:

- i. As per the provisions of the Factories Act, 1948 and rules framed there under, manufacture, handling and processing of asbestos and its products is declared as hazardous process.
- ii. Government of India has prepared Schedule XIV – Handling and Processing of Asbestos, Manufacture of any Article or Substance of Asbestos and any other Process of Manufacture or otherwise in which Asbestos is used in any form as a dangerous operation under section 87 of the Factories Act, 1948.
- iii. Government of India by Notification in Official Gazette has reduced the permissible level of Air borne Asbestos fibres in work environment to 20.1 fibre/cc.
- iv. Grant of fresh mining leases and renewal of existing mining leases for Asbestos was banned by the Ministry of Mines in the country on Health Grounds.
