

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3633
TO BE ANSWERED ON 16.03.2018

World Environment Day

3633. SHRI JANARDAN MISHRA:
SHRI TEJ PRATAP SINGH YADAV:

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

- (a) whether India will host the World Environment Day 2018;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including its objectives, theme, programmes etc.;
- (c) whether excessive use of plastic is polluting our oceans, damaging marine life and threatening human health and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether India was one of three countries to reject concrete target in a UN agreement to reduce plastic waste in oceans in December, 2017; and
- (e) if so, the steps taken by the Government to generate awareness and public participation towards a cleaner environment ?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a) & (b): Yes Madam. India has accepted the offer of United Nations Environment to be the global host for the World Environment Day, 2018. The theme of the World Environment Day, 2018 is "Plastic Pollution". Plastic itself is not a problem, littering and unsafe disposal of single-use plastic products, plastic bottles, food containers and packaging materials is causing concern to environment. Plastic garbage/waste that ends up in landfills and oceans take hundreds of years to degrade and gradually releases toxins into the environment. In the age of advanced technology, we cannot live plastic free but we can manage our plastic waste disposal into circular economy and building construction materials and paving roads. The per capita consumption of plastics of India is on the rise and this is the right time for us to plan for the future.

The World Environment Day shall be celebrated through United Nations Environment and Indian Embassies across the globe. At national level it will involve various stakeholder Ministries/Departments, all States and UTs, Districts, Local Bodies, Industries and Plastic Manufacturing Units, Non-Governmental Organizations, Civil Societies etc. across the length and breadth of the country in the celebrations, thus giving it the widest possible geographical and

demographic coverage to transform habits, practices, standards to dramatically reduce plastic litter and the harm it causes to surroundings.

Government of India is planning to involve students of school/college/university/institutions across the country in cleanness drives. They will also be roped in to spread the messages of sustainable use of the plastic items and sensitize public of harmfulness of plastic littering to environment/surroundings through nature walk, live music, nukkad natak, street entertainment, cycling, athletic activities, forestry conservation activities etc. Students can also share their views and take pledges online on MyGov platform.

(c): The volume of plastic produced in the world has increased significantly and an increasing amount of plastic litter ends up in waterways and the ocean. Globally, an estimated 20 million tons of plastic enters the ocean each year including Indian coasts. Plastic litter adversely impacts marine life and environment. Plastic litter is hazardous to the marine environment because plastics are durable, buoyant, waterproof, indigestible, and non-biodegradable. Animals at all levels of the food chain consume plastic. Plastic debris injures and kills fish, seabirds and marine mammals.

As per Coastal Regulation Zones (CRZ) Notification, 2011, dumping of solid waste including plastic in CRZ areas is prohibited. The Government has notified Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016. As per the provisions of Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016, the generators of waste have been mandated to take steps to minimize generation of plastic waste, not to litter the plastic waste, ensure segregated storage of waste at source and handover segregated waste to local bodies or agencies authorised by the local bodies. The rules have also mandated the responsibilities of local bodies, gram panchayats, waste generators, retailers and street vendors to manage the plastic waste. The rules mandate the producers, importers and brand owners to work out modalities for waste collection system based on Extended Producer Responsibility. Central Pollution Control Board has also issued guidelines for utilization of plastic waste in road construction, cement kilns and usage as liquid RDF (oil).

(d): No Madam.

(e): However, the Government of India has been organizing training and awareness programs from time to time for various stakeholders pertaining to various waste rules including plastic waste.

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