

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1201
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.06.2019

Impact of Microplastic Particles on Health

1201. SHRI KALYAN BANERJEE:

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

- (a) whether according to a global report, every year tens of thousands of microplastic particles are consumed by the people of the country;
- (b) if so, its impact on human health as reported therein; and
- (c) the details of any proposal planned and the action taken by the Government to protect the ecology and environment by banning use of contaminated plastics in the country?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO)

(a) and (b) The global concern of plastics disintegrating into micro particles and entering water bodies and ocean is growing. Such microscopic and invisible plastic particles known as microplastics may also enter the food chain as these can be absorbed by fish and other sea creatures. Other products of human consumptions may also contain or be contaminated by microplastic during production and processing or from plastic packaging etc. Study suggests that the tiny plastic particles may be widespread in the human food chain. However, since there are only limited studies and evidence available on the subject, the negative impacts of microplastics are not fully understood.

(c) Sound management of plastic waste can effectively tackle the problems of microplastics in the environment. In this direction, the Government has notified Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016. As per the Rules, 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 prohibit the use of carry bag made of virgin or recycled plastic less than fifty microns in thickness. Sachets made of plastic material for storing, packing or selling gutkha, tobacco and pan masala are also prohibited. Carry bags made of recycled plastic or products made of recycled plastic are prohibited to be used for storing, carrying, dispensing or packaging ready to eat or drink food stuff.
