

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 957
TO BE ANSWERED ON 22.11.2019

Ban on Polythene Bags

957. SHRI LALLU SINGH:
SHRI E.T. MOHAMMED BASHEER:
SHRI KANAKMAL KATARA:

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

- (a) whether the Government has recently issued instructions regarding complete ban on polythene bags/plastics, plastic bottles, envelops and other items of packaging in the country, if so, the details thereof along with the alternative mechanisms developed/suggested in this regard;
- (b) whether any awareness programme is being run by the Government to implement the said ban properly and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to impose heavy fine on use of such plastics which could not be recycled and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to recycle all the recyclable plastics and if so, the details of provisions in this regard;
- (e) whether any standards have been fixed by the Government regarding production of polythene and if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the provisions of punitive action to be taken on violating the said standards along with the total number of cases in which punishment has been awarded on violation of the same?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) The Ministry has issued “Standard Guidelines on Single-Use Plastic” with suggestions on different set of actions by State/UT Governments to minimize/reduce the usage of Single-use plastic.

The Ministry has also written letters to all States/UTs, all offices under its administrative jurisdiction, Regional Offices of the Ministry, all Ministries, offices of Central Government and its departments, major PSUs, corporates, institutions etc. to prohibit Single-use plastic products including water bottles, take away coffee cups, lunch wrapped in disposable plastic packaging, plastic bags, disposable food containers, plates and containers made of polystyrene foam, plastic straws etc. from their respective offices. Awareness creation exercise were undertaken in schools through Eco-Clubs operating in different States about ill effects of “Single-use plastic”.

On the call of Hon'ble Prime Minister, a three-phase campaign “Swachhta Hi Sewa” (SHS) was also launched from 11th Sep, 2019, which ended on Diwali i.e. 27th October 2019. This campaign inter-alia focused on awareness, advocacy, collection and safe disposal of littered plastic. Under the campaign, all stakeholders i.e. general public, students, industry, governments, and local bodies came together and collected waste plastic from houses, streets, public places like parks, beaches, markets, religious and tourist places etc.

(c) to (f) The Government has notified Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016 for environmentally sound management of plastic waste and to prevent plastic pollution in the country. On the “Polluter Pays Principle”, the generators of waste under the Rules have been mandated to take steps to minimize generation of plastic waste, not to litter such waste, ensure segregated storage of waste at source and handover the segregated waste to local bodies or the agencies authorised by them or to the registered waste pickers or registered recyclers. Provisions have also been made for registration of all plastic recyclers with respective State/UT Pollution Control Boards/Committees. Every Urban Local body has been made responsible for setting up of infrastructure for collection, segregation and processing, including recycling and disposal of plastic waste.

As per the provisions of Rules, plastic bags, sheets or like with thickness less than 50 microns is prohibited. Use of carry bags made of recycled plastic or products made of recycled plastic for storing, carrying, dispensing or packaging ready to eat or drink food stuff is also prohibited. Further, sachets using plastic material are prohibited for storing, packing or selling gutkha, tobacco and pan masala. Multi-layered plastics which are non-recyclable, non-energy recoverable or which have no alternative use is also to be phased out. There are 4773 registered plastic manufacturing / compostable manufacturing / Multi-Layer Plastic manufacturing / recycling units in the country. Approximately 15,384 tonnes per day, which is 60% of the total plastic waste generation in the country, is collected and recycled.

The Rules mandate the local bodies to frame bye-laws incorporating the provisions of these rules. All waste generators shall pay user fee or charge as may be specified in the bye-laws of the local bodies for plastic waste management such as waste collection or operation of the facility etc. The local bodies have also been mandated to create awareness among all stakeholders about their respective responsibilities.
