

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 4421
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.03.2020

Alternative to Single-Use Plastic

4421. SHRI PARVESH SAHIB SINGH VERMA:
SHRI P.C. MOHAN:
SHRI JAGDAMBIKA PAL:
SHRI JAMYANG TSERING NAMGYAL:

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

- (a) the present rules/laws that regulate the use of single-use plastic in the country;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to enact a new law to punish people for usage of single-use plastic and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has issued any standard guidelines to States for minimising the usage of single-use plastic and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether any expert group has been constituted for Research and Development of any alternatives to plastic and if so, the details thereof along with the other steps taken to provide substitute or alternatives of plastic in the country; and
- (e) whether the Government has provided incentives to manufacturers and traders for moving from plastic to other alternatives, if so, the details thereof and the other steps taken by the Government to end/phase out single-use plastic?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c) The Government has notified Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016. The Rules prohibit the use of carry bags 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. 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 authorized by the local bodies. The rules also mandate the responsibilities of local bodies, gram panchayats, waste generators, retailers and street vendors to manage plastic waste. The rules mandate the producers, importers and brand owners to work out modalities for waste collection system based on the principle of Extended Producer Responsibility.

Further, considering the high environmental cost associated with the use of single-use plastic, particularly the adverse effect on soil, water bodies and on marine environment, Hon'ble Prime Minister has announced India's pledge to phase out Single-use plastic by 2022. Many States/UTs through their own notifications have also imposed partial or complete prohibition on the use of plastic carry bags/single use plastic. 23 States and 9 UTs have issued notifications/orders introducing regulations pertaining to complete ban on plastic carry bags and/or other single-use plastic items.

The Ministry had issued "Standard Guidelines for Single-Use Plastic" on 21st January 2019 to all States/UTs and Ministries. The Standard guidelines entailed waste management system improvements, legal options for States/UTs to prohibit SUP items through regulatory measures, eco-friendly alternatives, social awareness and public education. The guidelines also included measures to be taken by government offices.

(d) and (e) A committee has been constituted by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) with respect to research and development for Oxo-Biodegradable Technology on Plastic. It has been decided that CPCB will analyse the information available on the subject of bio-degradable/compostable plastic including Oxo-Biodegradable plastic. Further, Central Institute of Plastics Engineering & Technology (CIPET) is advised to perform all tests on Oxo-Biodegradable Technology on Plastic.

Establishments are not directly incentivized for not using plastics, however, the producers, importers and brand owners have initiated steps to set up material recovery facilities by their own or through the Producers Responsibility Organizations (PRO) for collection of plastic waste and are tying up with the registered recyclers for the recycling of plastic waste. This EPR mechanism has created additional source of income for recyclers. Further, the producers, importers and brand owners are switching towards alternate packaging to reduce the EPR cost.
