

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1345
TO BE ANSWERED ON 25.07.2022

Use of Plastic in Packaging Food Items

1345. SHRI UPENDRA SINGH RAWAT:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of large-scale use of plastic in packaging industry and its hazardous effects on the environment and human life, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the action proposed by the Government to reduce use of plastic in packaging of water and food items due to difficulties in recycling them;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to impose restrictions on packaging industry to stop the use of plastic and suggest appropriate alternative material in the packaging food and water and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) whether the Government has undertaken adequate Research and Development to identify an alternative to plastic for use in packaging industry and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) to (d): Unmanaged and littered plastic waste including plastic packaging waste has adverse impacts on terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. The Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016, provide the statutory framework for environmentally sound management of plastic waste including plastic packaging waste. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has also notified the Guidelines on the Extended Producer Responsibility for plastic packaging vide Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2022, on 16th February, 2022. The Guidelines inter alia provide for further next steps towards sustainable plastic packaging.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has notified the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018, prescribes general and specific requirements for different food packaging materials including plastics. The plastic materials used for packing and storing of food products shall conform to the Indian Standards specification given in these regulations. The limits for safety parameters such as overall migration and specific migration have been specified.

To encourage innovation in development of alternatives to identified single use plastic items and digital solutions to plastic waste management, the India Plastic Challenge – Hackathon

2021, for students of higher education institutions and startups was organized. The Department of Science and Technology has supported research and development projects for the development of biodegradable polymeric materials and biodegradable plastics. NITI Aayog has also brought a report on alternative products and technologies to plastics and their applications.
