

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2193
TO BE ANSWERED ON 09.12.2024

EPR Framework

2193. DR. BACHHAV SHOBHA DINESH:

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken cognizance of the fact that some firms had issued nearly 600,000 fake certificates under the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programme, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has initiated any punitive action against those responsible for the cause, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the EPR portal has been updated to enhance security measures, and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether it is a fact that unknown “hackers”, having allegedly stolen several thousand EPR credits from its Central Pollution Control Board's (CPCB's) online portal, if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) whether the Government has provided for representation of urban local bodies and informal waste collectors in the current online EPR framework, if so, the details thereof, including contribution of plastic waste management by Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) & (b): The Central Pollution Control Board had conducted random audit of registered plastic waste processors, as per Guidelines for Extended Producer Responsibility on plastic packaging. Irregularities were observed during the random audit of plastic waste processors. Accordingly, CPCB had issued directions dated 26.10.2023 to concerned SPCBs to levy Environmental compensation (EC) corresponding to the quantum of EPR certificates generated not in conformity with the stipulated requirements and also to take necessary actions as per applicable law against the violating Plastic Waste Processors (PWPs). Directions were also issued to all SPCBs / PCCs on 20.11.2023 to re-check processing facilities of registered plastic waste processors in their state and regularly monitor EPR certificate generation process of the registered PWPs in order that EPR certificates generated are in accordance with statutory requirements and guidelines.

(c) To enhance the security of the centralized EPR portal for plastic packaging and prevent the unauthorized activities following measures were implemented on the EPR portal:

1. Mandatory Password Updates
2. Two-Factor Authentication
3. Password Resets

4. Login Restrictions
5. Captcha Implementation
6. Restricted Access Post-Updates
7. Unique Contact Information
8. EPR Certificate Security Protocols

(d) On the basis of few complaints received from PIBOs / PWPs regarding illegal transfer EPR certificates from their wallet on the Centralized EPR portal for plastic packaging, CPCB has filed two complaints dated 2.2.2024 and 22.3.2024 with Intelligence Fusion & Strategic Operations (IFSO) for investigation in this regard.

(e): EPR as an innovative way for generation of revenues for local bodies. As local bodies are engaged in the collection of the waste within their jurisdiction, EPR mechanism provides for means to the local bodies to generate revenues from the plastic packaging waste collected by them by way of selling those to registered recyclers or by generating EPR certificates in their own name which can be sold to producers, importers and brand owners having EPR obligations. They may do so by setting their own recycling facilities or by entering into an arrangement with recyclers. They may adopt other means as well to meet the cost of collection and transportation of plastic waste. The sourcing of plastic packaging waste from the informal sector for implementation of EPR obligations provides a mechanism for integration of informal sector. Already, 157 urban local bodies have registered on the Centralized EPR portal for plastic packaging.
