

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3459
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10.08.2026

Microplastic Pollution in Urban Areas

3459 . SHRI UMMEDA RAM BENIWAL:

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

- (a) whether the Government has conducted any assessment regarding the prevalence of microplastic pollution in urban areas of the country;
- (b) whether any studies have been undertaken to examine its impact on public health and the urban environment;
- (c) whether any monitoring or mapping framework has been developed for assessment of microplastic contamination in cities; and
- (d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to address microplastic pollution in urban areas?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): Studies undertaken by national institutions have shown the presence of microplastics in riverine and coastal zones. The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) – National Institute for Research in Environmental Health (NIREH) has done a systematic review of studies on presence of microplastics in human body. The methodology adopted by different institutions for sampling and analysis as well as findings from monitoring initiatives have been documented in the report submitted to NGT by the Committee comprising of Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), ICMR, Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET), National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM).

In order to reduce pollution caused by littered and unmanaged plastic waste, which includes microplastics, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has already prohibited identified single use plastic items, which have low utility and high littering potential, with effect from 1 July, 2022. The notification also prohibits manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of plastic carry bags having thickness less than one hundred and twenty microns with effect from the 31st December, 2022. Further, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has also notified the Guidelines on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for plastic packaging vide Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2022, on 16th February 2022. The Guidelines stipulate mandatory targets on EPR, recycling of plastic packaging waste, reuse of rigid plastic packaging and use of recycled plastic content. The guidelines provide for moving towards sustainable plastic packaging and reducing the plastic footprint. Since 2022, nearly 233 lakh tonnes of plastic packaging waste has been processed.

Under Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0 central assistance for solid waste management, including plastic waste management in urban areas has been provided to States/UTs. In order to address river pollution including microplastics generation in waterbodies, the Government

of India supplements the efforts of the States/UTs by providing financial and technical assistance in addressing the challenges of river pollution including in urban areas through schemes/programmes such as National River Conservation Plan and Namami Gange programme.
