

Ban on use of Plastic Carry Bags

*7 SHRI PRASAD BABURAO TANPURE :
DR. SUGUNA KUMARI CHELLAMELLA :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are contemplating a ban on the use of plastic carry bags for certain products and prescribe minimum standard for their use in other types of works;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether his Ministry have directed plastic industry to impose self-regulations on the manufacture of polythene carry bags;

(d) if so, the response of the plastic industry thereto;

(e) whether any standards have been recommended for the manufacture of plastic bags; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and further steps proposed by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU) : (a) and (b) The government has published Draft Rules entitled Recycled Plastics Usage Rules, 1998 on 20.11.98 under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 inviting objections from the public within a period of sixty days. These draft Rules envisage prohibiting the use of carry bags or containers made of recycled plastics for storing, carrying and packing the food stuffs. The Rules also prescribe minimum thickness of not less than 25 microns for carry bags made of recycled plastics and not less than 20 microns for carry bags made of virgin plastics.

(c) and (d) The National Plastics Wastes Management Task Force set up by the Ministry of Environment and Forests have formulated an action programme in consultation with the plastics industry which includes self regulation by plastic manufacturers.

(e) and (f) The draft rules notified by the Government, prescribe that reprocessing or recycling of plastics be undertaken strictly in accordance with the Indian Standards, IS 14534 : 1998 entitled "Guidelines for Recycling of Plastics" published by the Bureau of Indian Standards and the end product made out of recycled plastics be marked as "recycled" alongwith the percentage of recycled material used.

[Translation]

Pollution in Damodar River

*8. PROF. RITA VERMA :
SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of factories polluting the Damodar river in Bihar and West Bengal;

(b) the steps taken to save Damodar river from pollution;

(c) the extent to which these measures have been successful in controlling the pollution;

(d) the prospective plans in this regard;

(e) whether there is any scheme for creating public awareness in this regard; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU) : (a) Three industrial units pollute the Damodar river in Bihar and one in West Bengal.

(b) to (d) The industrial pollution of Damodar river has been controlled to a significant degree by enforcing the provisions of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 through the Central and State Pollution Control Boards. For the control of pollution of the river from municipal sewage Damodar River Conservation Plan under National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) has been approved by Government of India in October, 1996. This action plan is still to be started by the State Governments.

(e) and (f) The State Pollution Control Boards and State Environment Departments regularly carry out Seminars and Workshops on the subject of industrial pollution of rivers, their impact and abatement measures.

[English]

Barring Candidates with Criminal Background from Contesting Elections

*9. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA :
SHRI SURENDRA PRASAD YADAV
(JHANJIHARPUR) :

Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 290 on July 6, 1998 and state :

(a) whether a meeting of all the political parties