

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2829

ANSWERED ON:17.12.2008

BAN ON PLASTIC BAGS

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

(a) whether the Government proposes to ban the use of plastic/polythene bags in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the extent of adverse impact on environment caused by the use of plastic bags in the country alongwith the steps taken to check the menace;

(d) whether the Government proposes to take steps and encourage plastic bag manufacturers to set up state-of-art plastic recycling units and to take up research for the development of biodegradable plastics;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether the Government is aware of any eco-friendly technology being adopted by any other country for preparing food wrappers as a substitute to plastic bags; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS(SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(a) & (b): Considering the volume of plastic bags used, size of plastic industry and the non- availability of cheaper substitutes, at present there is no proposal with the Government of India to call for a complete ban on the usage of plastic bags all over the country.However,in some of the hill stations, tourist and pilgrimage places, the use of plastic carry bags has been prohibited/restricted by the local authorities.

(c) The virgin plastic bags are not per-se injurious to health and hazardous to environment. The indiscriminate littering of used plastic bags and the recycled/coloured plastic bags containing certain chemical additives may pose environmental problems including making land infertile, choking open drains, ground water contamination, etc. The Government of India has notified "Plastics Manufacture, Sale and Usage Rules, 1999 as amended in 2003. As per the provisions of these Rules, carry bags and containers made of virgin plastic shall be in natural shade or white.

(d) & (e) Recycling of plastic bags if carried out in unsound manner can result in emission of toxic gases which may affect environment and pose health risks.According to the Plastic Manufacture, Sale and Usage Rules, 1999, as amended in 2003, the recycling of plastic wastes is required to be undertaken by the registered units only and as per the norms prescribed under these rules.The Government provides financial assistance for management of plastics including R & D activities.

(f) & (g) Some of the developed countries have started using bio-degradable plastics, paper, etc. in food packaging.