

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:188

ANSWERED ON:02.12.2009

BAN ON POLYTHENE BAGS

Singh Shri Radha Mohan; Verma Shri Sajjan Singh

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

- (a) whether the Union Government proposes to impose a ban on polythene bags and disposable items made of substandard plastic in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any norms/guidelines have been issued by the Union Government in this regard;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether similar guidelines have also been issued to the State Governments in the matter; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the State Governments thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) to (f) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.188 FOR ANSWER ON WEDNESDAY, the 2nd DECEMBER, 2009 REGARDING "BAN ON POLYTHENE BAGS" RAISED BY SHRI SAJJAN VERMA AND SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH.

(a) to (f) No proposal for a complete ban on the use of polythene bags and disposable items made of plastic is under consideration of the Central Government. However, in some of the hill stations and tourist and pilgrimage places, use of plastic carry bags has been prohibited/ restricted by the State Governments/ Local Authorities.

The Central Government has notified Recycled Plastics Manufacture and Usage Rules, 1999 (amended in 2003) to regulate the use and manufacture of plastic carry bags, containers and recycling of plastics wastes. As per these rules:

- i) Carry bags and containers made of virgin plastic shall be in natural shade or white.
- ii) No person shall manufacture, stock, distribute or sell carry bags made of virgin or recycled plastic bags which are less than less than 8" x 12" in size and 20 micron in thickness.
- iii) No vendor shall use carry bags or containers made of recycled plastic for storing, carrying, dispensing, or packaging of food stuffs.
- iv) Carry bags and containers made of recycled plastic and used for purpose other than storing and packaging foodstuffs shall be manufactured as per the specifications of the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).
- v) The recycling of plastics shall be undertaken in accordance with specifications of the BIS.
- vi) Manufacturing and recycling of plastic wastes is to be undertaken only by units registered with State Pollution Control Boards/ Committees.

Several States have prescribed stricter norms with regard to thickness of plastic carry bags ranging from 30 to 70 microns. Some States have banned the use of plastic bags in certain tourist or public places.

The Ministry of Environment & Forests has notified draft Plastics (Manufacture, Usage and Waste management) Rules, 2009, on 17th September 2009 inviting public comments. The provisions of these draft Rules include increasing the minimum prescribed thickness and size of the plastic carry bags, prohibition of manufacture of non-recyclable laminated plastic/metallic pouches and multilayered packaging, and other non-recyclable plastics etc. These rules will be finalized after taking into consideration the comments received.