

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4474
ANSWERED ON:21.02.2014
ASBESTOS RELATED DISEASES .
Ramasubbu Shri S.

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether exposure to asbestos can lead to various life threatening diseases including lung cancer and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether cases of asbestos related diseases and deaths therefrom have come to the notice of the Government;
- (c) if so, the details thereof along with the steps taken/proposed by the Government for the treatment of affected people during each of the last three years and the current year, State/UT-wise;
- (d) whether his Ministry proposes to take up the matter with the concerned departments to ban the production and use of asbestos products in the country; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABIAZAD)

(a): Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has informed that major health hazards of asbestos include cancer of lung, mesothelioma of pleura and peritoneum and specific fibrous disease of lung known as asbestosis. All types of asbestos fibers are responsible for human mortality and morbidity. Studies have been carried out at National Institute of Occupational Research, an Institute of ICMR, Ahmedabad which show that workers when exposed to higher workplace concentration of asbestos fiber have higher incidence of interstitial lung disease and pulmonary function impairment.

(b) to (e): Directorate General Factory Advice Service and Labour Institutes, (DGFASLI) under Ministry of Labour & Employment has intimated data of workers suffering from Asbestosis in factories registered under the Factories Act, 1948. As per the information provided by DGFASLI, it is informed that 21 no. of Asbestosis cases were reported in Gujarat in 2010 and 2 cases in Maharashtra in the year 2012. As per the provisions of the Factories Act, 1948 and rules framed thereunder, manufacture, handling and processing of Asbestos and its products is declared as Hazardous Process. Further, Govt. of India has prepared Schedule XIV- "Handling and Processing of Asbestos, Manufacture of any Article or Substance of Asbestos and any other Process of Manufacture or otherwise in which Asbestos is used in any Form" as a Dangerous Operation under section 87 of the Factories Act, 1948.

Further, the Govt. of India by notification in official Gazette, has reduced the permissible level of Airborne Asbestos fibers in work environment 20.1 fiber/cc.

The Ministry of Mines has informed that the Grant of fresh mining leases and renewal of existing mining leases for Asbestos are presently banned in the country on Health Grounds.