

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY  
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:257  
ANSWERED ON:13.03.2015  
BAN ON IMPORT OF ASBESTOS  
Raghavan Shri M. K.

**Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government is aware that manufacture and usage of Asbestos has been banned worldwide for its ill-effects on health and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to ban import of Asbestos in the country;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the remedial steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) (SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

a) to d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 257 FOR ANSWER ON 13TH MARCH, 2015 REGARDING "BAN ON IMPORT OF ASBESTOS"

(a): There is no world-wide ban on manufacture and usage of asbestos. Countries like Russia, China, Brazil, Kazakhstan and Canada are large producers and exporters of asbestos.

(b) to (d) No. India is a signatory to the Rotterdam Convention which regulates International Trade in Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides (Annex III of the Convention) on health or environmental reasons. Asbestos consists of six varieties, namely, Crocidolite, Actinolite, Anthophyllite, Amosite, Tremolite and Chrysotile. Except Chrysotile variety of asbestos, import of first five varieties is "Restricted" in the Country (requiring import licence) as per the Rotterdam Convention, whereas Chrysotile variety has not been listed in Annex III and its import policy is "free". No authorisation/licence has been granted during 2011-2015 to import any of the 5 "Restricted" varieties of asbestos.

The following remedial steps have been taken by the Government for regulation and safe use of Asbestos:

(a) As per the provisions of the Factories Act, 1948 and rules framed there under, manufacture, handling and processing of asbestos and its products is declared as hazardous process.

(b) 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.

(c) Govt. of India by Notification in Official Gazette has reduced the permissible level of Air borne Asbestos fibres in work environment to 20.1 fibre/cc.

(d) Grant of fresh mining leases and renewal of existing mining leases for Asbestos was banned by the Ministry of Mines in the country on Health Grounds.