

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:42

ANSWERED ON:26.11.2014

PLASTIC HAZARDS

Kher Smt. Kirron;Patel Smt. Jayshreeben

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

- (a) whether any study has been conducted to ascertain the ill effects of plastic waste to the environment and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has formulated/notified rules banning use of polythene bags in the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the number of individuals/ companies/distributors and other entities penalised for the use, manufacture and distribution of plastic bags, etc., State-wise;
- (d) the names of the countries and the Indian States where use of plastic has been banned; and
- (e) the difficulties being experienced in the enforcement of the ban and the corrective action taken/proposed to be taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 42 FOR 26.11.2014 BY SHRIMATI JAYSHREEBEN PATEL AND SHRIMATI KIRRON KHER REGARDING PLASTIC HAZARDS:

(a): The environmental impact of plastic waste has been examined by various committees in the past which includes a Task Force headed by Shri Dilip Biswas in 1997 constituted to formulate a strategy and action program for management of plastic waste; Justice Ranganath Mishra Committee in 2002 which examined environmental hazards posed by indiscriminate littering and disposal of plastic waste; R. C. Chopra Committee in 2007 which assessed the environmental hazards related to use of plastic bags in the city of Delhi; expert Committee appointed by the Ministry in 2010 to evolve road map for management of waste in the country including plastic waste; and the study in 2008-09 by the Central Pollution Control Board to assess the impact of plastics waste disposal on soil and water quality at Lucknow dumpsites. The reports of committees indicate that plastic bags if not collected systematically choke drainage system and create unhygienic conditions; animals ingest plastic bags with the discarded food leading to their illness and sometimes death; the plastic waste when disposed off on soil reduces recharging of ground water aquifers; recycled plastic bags and containers contaminate packaged food; plastic waste when disposed off in landfill sites causes leaching of metals and additives into the soil and ground water; and uncollected plastic waste litters the surroundings.

(b): The Government of India has not banned use of polythene bags in the country. However, the Ministry has notified the Plastic Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 2011. These Rules prohibit manufacture, sale stocking and use of plastic carry bags of less than 40 micron in thickness. The Rules also provide for plastic waste management system to be established by the municipal authorities for management of plastic waste in areas under their jurisdictions.

(c): The number of individuals/ companies/distributors and other entities penalised for violation of the Rules is annexed.

(d): As per available information, use of plastic is not banned in any country. However, the States which have banned use of plastic carry bags are Sikkim, Nagaland, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Tripura, Rajasthan, J&K and Delhi. The Union Territories which have banned use of plastic carry bags are Andaman & Nicobar Island, Lakshadweep and Chandigarh,

(e): Although no information has been provided by the State Governments on difficulties experienced by them in enforcement of ban on use of plastic bags, some of the factors making implementation of ban difficult apparently are ubiquitous use of plastic bags, higher cost of substitute bags, lack of awareness, weak enforcement mechanisms in some local bodies, etc.