

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 5165
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 04.04.2022

Ban on the Use of Asbestos

5165. SHRI KANUMURU RAGHU RAMA KRISHNA RAJU:

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

- (a) whether the Government proposes to prohibit the use of Asbestos in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to stop granting environmental clearances to asbestos-based factories across the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to ban the non-banned asbestos in the country and if so, whether they are banned in other countries; and
- (e) the details of the Hon'ble Supreme Court ruling regarding the use of non-banned asbestos and if any, along with the stand of Union Government on this?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

- (a)to(d) There is no proposal under the consideration of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) to prohibit the use of asbestos in the country. The usage of asbestos in industries is subject to stipulation of environmental safeguards which *inter alia* includes use of personal protective equipment approved for asbestos workers involved in bag cutting & mixing areas, employing wet processing method at shop floor level to reduce fibre exposure and regular health check-up of employees.

The MOEFCC grants the Environmental Clearance (EC) to industries engaged in asbestos milling and asbestos based products under schedule 4(c) of the Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006 (EIA, 2006). The EC to such industries is granted as per the procedure laid down in the EIA, 2006 subject to environmental safeguards.

- (e) The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in its judgment in the matter of '*Consumer Education & Research Centre & Others Vs Union of India & Others – [1995 3 SCC 42]*' and '*Kalyaneshwari Vs Union of India and Others (Writ Petition (Civil) No. 260 of 2004)*' in 1995 and 2011 had duly considered adverse health impact and pollution caused by asbestos and passed directions for adoption of stricter health and environmental safeguards in line with global standards. Accordingly, the Government has taken following actions:

- Prescription of the stringent emission standards for ‘Asbestos based product manufacturing industries’ and ‘General Emission Standards-Part D’ under the provisions of Environment (Protection) Act, 1998
- Declaration of manufacture, handling and processing of Asbestos and its products as hazardous process under Factories Act, 1948
- Preparation of model rules under Factories Act, 1948 viz. Schedule XIV – Handling and processing of Asbestos, manufacture of any article of Asbestos and any other process of manufacture or otherwise in which Asbestos is used in any form
- Regulating the permissible level of Airborne Asbestos fibres in work environment to 20.1 fiber/cubic centimetre
- Ban on grant of fresh mining leases and renewal of existing mining leases
