

**Ban on white asbestos**

537. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether many organisations have demanded ban on white asbestos in the country causing lung cancer; and

(b) if so, the action proposed to ban use of white asbestos to make the environment free from pollution?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Yes, Sir. Some of the Non-Governmental Organisations have been campaigning for total ban on asbestos in the country causing lung cancer.

(b) As no scientific study establishing that the use of white asbestos causing lung cancer is available, it is not considered as desirable to ban the use of white asbestos

**Policy for bamboo-dependent people**

538. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that representations have been received to evolve a policy for bamboo-dependent people;

(b) if so, the details of this demand;

(c) the steps Government have taken to study and assess the need of some communities dependent on bamboo for their livelihood;

(d) whether any teams have visited such communities during the last year; and

(e) the steps proposed to interact with NGOs to further such plans for the bamboo-dependent people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) No, Sir. This Ministry has not received representations specifically seeking the evolution of a policy for bamboo-dependent people.

(b) Does not arise.

[16 July, 2004]

RAJYA SABHA

(c) Promotion of bamboo in the country has been a priority item on the agenda of the Planning Commission for the last couple of years. A Committee in the Planning Commission has studied and assessed the possibilities of developing bamboo sector which has submitted its report to the Commission. The report includes components like bamboo cultivation, value addition at community level and developing market linkages for the products. Apart from this, a 'National Mission on Bamboo Applications' has been operational in Department of Science and Technology.

(d) and (e) Ministry of Environment and Forests has not sent any task specific team to visit bamboo-dependent communities during last year and no plans are under consideration of the Ministry for any interaction with the NGOs.

#### **Erosion of river banks**

539. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the River Conservation Directorate made any study on the damage to the rivers by rapid erosion of their river banks in some States;

(b) whether it is a fact that there has been rapid erosion of river banks of the River Godavari in some areas;

(c) whether any aerial survey has been done by Government to establish the extent of such damage;

(d) whether other systems of survey has been used by the River Conservation Directorate to study this phenomena recently; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (e) No, Sir. The River Conservation Directorate under the Ministry of Environment and Forests has not made any study on the damage to the rivers by rapid erosion of their river banks nor any aerial study or other system of survey has been used by the Directorate to study this phenomena because the National River Conservation Directorate is dealing only with the schemes of abatement of pollution to the rivers