

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1486**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.08.2021

**Waste management in the light of COVID -19**

1486 DR. AMAR PATNAIK:

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

- (a) whether the usage of covid protection gear like Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) kits and masks has led to a strain on the country's waste management systems pertaining to medical waste;
- (b) if so, the details of measures that Government is following to combat this;
- (c) whether the increased generation of biomedical waste has caused hindrance to the cleanliness goals in the country agreed to as a part of the Paris Agreement; and
- (d) if so, the details of mechanism by which Government aims to overcome this?

**ANSWER**

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

- (a)&(b) The COVID-19 waste has increased the quantum of BMW generated in the country for treatment and disposal. The waste arising out of COVID-19 pandemic situation *viz.* Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) like goggles, face-shield, plastic coverall, Hazmat suite, nitrile gloves, masks etc. are identified as bio-medical waste (BMW) and required to be dealt under the provisions of Bio-Medical Waste Management Rules, 2016 (BMWM Rules, 2016). The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has come up with separate guidelines for 'Handling, Treatment & Disposal of biomedical waste generated during Treatment/Diagnosis/Quarantine of COVID-19 patients'. The guidelines prescribe the following w.r.t. PPEs:
- PPEs such as goggles, face-shield, splash proof apron, Plastic Coverall, Hazmat suit, nitrile gloves may be segregated into 'Red bag'
  - PPEs such as used mask (including Triple layer mask, N95 mask etc.), head cover/ cap, shoe-cover, disposable linen Gown, non-plastic or semi-plastic coverall are required to be segregated in 'Yellow bags'

Additionally, a mobile application has been developed by CPCB to track and compile the COVID-19 BMW generation, collection, treatment and final disposal by CBWTFs. The app has recorded 56898.14 Tons of BMW generation between June, 2020 to June, 2021. A High Level Task Team headed by CPCB Chairman is also constituted to review the status of COVID-19 waste management in the country.

- (c)&(d) The Paris Agreement pertains to the issue of climate change and not bio-medical waste management or cleanliness. The cleanliness goals of the country are addressed through various legal and promotional measures. The legal measures are implemented through Central and State Acts and Rules/ Notifications issued there under, such as the comprehensive set of waste management rules issued by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. Similarly, the promotional measures include various flagship programs and schemes of the Government such as the Swachh Bharat Mission, Smart Cities Programme, Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation etc.

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