



**STANDING COMMITTEE ON CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS
(2025-26)**

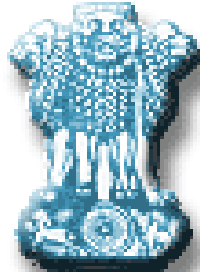
(EIGHTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS

(DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICALS AND PETROCHEMICALS)

Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Thirteenth Report of the Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers (Eighteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Health hazards due to use of compromised/substandard quality of food-grade plastics and their exposure to extreme Indian climatic conditions' of the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers (Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals)

EIGHTEENTH REPORT



सत्यमेव जयते

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

FEBRUARY, 2026/ MAGHA, 1947 (SAKA)

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(DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICALS AND PETROCHEMICALS)**

Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in the Thirteenth Report (Eighteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Health hazards due to use of compromised/substandard quality of food-grade plastics and their exposure to extreme Indian climatic conditions' of the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers (Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals)

Presented to Lok Sabha on 10th February, 2026

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 10th February, 2026



सत्यमेव जयते

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

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**COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON CHEMICALS AND
FERTILIZERS
(2025-2026)**

Shri Azad Kirti Jha - Chairperson

**MEMBERS
LOK SABHA**

2. Shri Brijmohan Agrawal
3. Shri Ajay Bhatt
4. Shri Robert Bruce C.
5. Shri Bharatsinhji Shankarji Dabhi
6. Smt. Kriti Devi Debbarman
7. Dr. Kalyan Vaijinathrao Kale
8. Shri Malvinder Singh Kang
9. Shri Babu Singh Kushwaha
10. Shri Utkarsh Verma Madhur
11. Shri Praveen Patel
12. Dr. Sambit Patra
13. Shri Balram Naik Porika
14. Shri Sachithanantham R.
15. Shri Eatala Rajender
16. Shri Rajesh Ranjan
17. Shri Daggumalla Prasada Rao
18. Shri Tharaniventhan M.S.
19. Shri Nalin Soren
20. Dr. Ricky Andrew J. Syngkon
21. Shri Shivmangal Singh Tomar

RAJYA SABHA

22. Shri Naresh Bansal
23. Shri Subhash Barala
24. Dr. Bhagwat Karad
25. Shri Rwngrwa Narzary
26. Shri Subhash Chandra Bose Pilli
27. Shri Arun Singh
28. Shri Akhilesh Prasad Singh
29. Shri Tejveer Singh
30. Shri G.K. Vasam
31. Vacant

SECRETARIAT

1. Smt. Maya Lingi - Joint Secretary
2. Ms. Miranda Ingudam - Director
3. Shri Kulvinder Singh - Deputy Secretary

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers (2025-26) having been authorized by the Committee, do present on their behalf this Eighteenth Report on Action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Thirteenth Report (Eighteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Health hazards due to use of compromised/substandard quality of food-grade plastics and their exposure to extreme Indian climatic conditions' pertaining to the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers (Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals).

2. The Thirteenth Report was presented to Lok Sabha and also laid in Rajya Sabha on 20th August, 2025. The Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers furnished their replies on 20th November, 2025 indicating Action Taken on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Thirteenth Report. The Committee considered and adopted this Report at their Sitting held on 06th January, 2026.

3. An analysis of the Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Thirteenth Report (Eighteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee is given in **Appendix-II**.

4. For ease of reference, Observations/Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold letters in the Report.

New Delhi;
06 January, 2026
16 Pausa, 1947 (Saka)

AZAD KIRTI JHA
CHAIRPERSON,
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS.

CHAPTER - I

REPORT

This Report deals with action taken by the Government on observations/recommendations of the Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers contained in their Thirteenth Report (18th Lok Sabha) on 'Health hazards due to use of compromised/substandard quality of food-grade plastics and their exposure to extreme Indian climatic conditions' pertaining to the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.

1.2 The Thirteenth Report was presented to Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 20th August, 2025. It contained 13 Observations/Recommendations. The Replies of the Government in respect of all the Recommendations have been received and are categorized as under:

- (i) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government:
Rec. Para No. 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13

**(Total-09)
Chapter-II**

- (ii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's reply:
Rec. Para No. NIL

**(Total-'NIL')
Chapter-III**

- (iii) Observations / Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee which require reiteration:
Rec. Para No. 1, 3, 4 and 5

**(Total- 04)
Chapter-IV**

- (iv) Observations / Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited:
Rec. Para No. NIL

**(Total- 'NIL')
Chapter-V**

1.3 The Committee desire that Action Taken Notes in respect of Observations/Recommendations contained in Chapter-I be furnished to them within three months of the presentation of this Report.

1.4 The Committee will now deal with action taken by the Government on some of their Recommendations that require reiteration or merit comments.

(Recommendation No.1)

STUDY TO DETECT PLASTICS AND NANO PLASTICS

1.5 The Committee note that the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is funding a project w.e.f March, 2024 entitled “Micro and Nano-plastics as Emerging Food Contaminants: Establishing Validated Methodology and Understanding the Prevalence in Different Food Matrices”. While the objective of the project is statedly to develop and validate analytical methods to detect micro and nano-plastics in various food products and assess their prevalence and exposure levels, the duration of the project is two years and sanctioned to three (03) research institutes namely (i) CSIR-Indian Institute of Toxicology Research, Lucknow, (ii) ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (ICAR-CIFT), Kochi; and (iii) Birla Institute of Technology and Science (BITS), Pilani. The Committee note that a considerable time period of more than one year have already elapsed and while the research project was under progress, the method validation for microplastic detection (PC, PET and Polystyrene) in packaged animal products, beverages and packaged drinking water was reportedly completed. The Committee, therefore, desire that findings of the research projects as and when completed may be furnished by the Department/FSSAI highlighting the actionable points thereon for tackling the menace of plastics and nano-plastics; and protection of human health from the use of compromised/substandard quality of food grade plastics and their exposure to extreme Indian climatic conditions. The Committee find that sampling and analyzing of the packaged food products from Rajasthan, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh was under progress. The Committee desire that the same may be put to a fruitful completion and findings/recommendations alongwith the details of steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Department/FSSAI/BIS in pursuance of those findings may be furnished within the timelines set. The Committee further desire that feasibility of adequate publicity of these research findings may also be explored so that they are disseminated to all the citizens.

1.6 In their Action Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has stated as under:

“The project titled “Micro-and Nano-plastics as Emerging Food Contaminants: Establishing Validated Methodologies and Understanding the Prevalence in Different Food Matrices” was launched by FSSAI in March, 2024 in collaboration with 3 research institutes viz. CSIR-Indian Institute of Toxicology Research (CSIR-IITR), Lucknow; ICAR-Central Institute of

Fisheries Technology (ICAR-CIFT), Kochi and Birla Institute of Technology and Science (BITS), Pilani. The duration of the project is 2 years. The research is still in progress and is scheduled to be completed by March-2026. FSSAI has noted the recommendations of the committee for future compliances.

FSSAI has also submitted that the impact of microplastics on human health are not yet known scientifically established. Hence more studies have to be carried out to better characterize exposure and link of microplastics from food articles and its impact on human health. In this regard, FSSAI is coordinating with ICMR, New Delhi, to carry out a study on the risk assessment of the impact of microplastics on human health”.

1.7 The Committee in their 13th report had *inter-alia* desired that the findings of the research projects initiated by FSSAI regarding Micro and Nano-plastics as Emerging Food Contaminants as and when completed may be furnished highlighting the actionable points thereon. The Committee had further noted that the sampling and analysing of the packaged food products from Rajasthan, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh may be put to a fruitful completion and the findings/recommendations should also be furnished within the time line set. In their action taken replies with regard to the former, the Department has submitted that the project titled “Micro-and Nano-plastics as Emerging Food Contaminants: Establishing Validated Methodologies and Understanding the Prevalence in Different Food Matrices” was launched by FSSAI in March, 2024 and the research is still in progress and is scheduled to be completed by March-2026. The Committee therefore recommend, that as assured to them the project may invariably be completed by the deadline set by the Department. With regard to the later, the Department has not furnished any information to the Committee though the sampling and analysing of the packaged food products from the Rajasthan, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh was in progress. However, the Department has submitted that according to FSSAI the impact of micro plastics on human health are not yet known scientifically established, as such more studies need to be carried out. The Committee therefore also recommend that further studies be expedited and all necessary action may be taken in the matter and they may be apprised accordingly.

(RecommendationNo.3)

COORDINATION BETWEEN FSSAI AND DCPC FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOOD SAFETY AND STANDARDS PACKAGING REGULATIONS, 2018

1.8 The Committee note that, there is lack of coordination between Food Safety and standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals (DCPC) for effective implementation of the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulation 2018. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) was established and entrusted with the responsibility of implementation of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 (FSS Act). The Committee note that though FSSAI was established and entrusted with responsibility of implementation of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 but unfortunately it has a long way to go. The Committee note with concern that no other concrete actionable mechanism of a robust coordination between the FSSAI and the Department exists. The Committee, therefore recommend that the Department and FSSAI should work in close tandem and bring out a robust coordination mechanism for effective implementation of the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulation, 2018. The Committee further note that an expert committee was constituted by FSSAI to develop guidelines/advisory document regarding use of safe food packaging materials by various food service establishments like hotels/ restaurants / street vendors etc. wherein the Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals (DCPC) also participated. The Committee desire the details of the expert Committee, its mandate, composition, work done, recommendations given etc. may be furnish to the Committee.

1.9 FSSAI has notified the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018, which lay down the general and specific requirements applicable to different packaging materials. These regulations, however, are primarily viewed as governing pre-packaged food commodities. To address is the concerns emerging from the use of non-standardised materials, an Expert Committee (EC) was constituted vide order dated 03rd May 2023 and subsequently extended vide order dated 09th January 2024, with the mandate to develop a guideline/advisory document on the safe use of food packaging materials by food service establishments such as hotels, restaurants, and street vendors.

Expert Committee (EC) members:

The expert committee comprises the following members:

i.	Prof. Vimal Katiyar, Dean - R&D & Professor, IIT – Guwahati (Chairperson)
ii.	Sh. Avinash Mishra, Former Advisor (Water & Land Resources), Niti Aayog
iii.	Mr Rajeev Kumar Dwivedi, Director, TTRC Lohiacorp

iv.	Dr. Rajeshwar Matche, Chief Scientist, CFTRI, Mysore
v.	Dr. Sanjay Kr Chattopadhyay, Convener, Chemicals & Petrochemicals Advisory Forum, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers
vi.	Dr. Pasupathy Venkat, National Advisor, Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Association of India, Delhi
vii.	Shri Kamlesh Singh, Scientist E & Division Head (DH) of the IPC-III Division, Central Pollution Control Board

Mandate:

The terms of reference/mandate of the Expert Committee is as follows:

- i. To review the definition of food grade packaging materials;
- ii. To examine alternate packaging materials for use by food service establishments;
- iii. To develop a guideline document regarding the use of safe & suitable food packaging materials by various food service establishments and to suggest a list of packaging materials based on the nature of the cooked food product.
- iv. To conduct survey and evaluate the food packaging materials currently used by the food service establishment.

Work Done by the Expert Committee:

Five meetings of the Expert Committee (EC) were held on 26th May 2023, 01st & 16th June 2023 (2nd meeting in two parts), 11th January 2024, 13th June 2024, and 10th January 2025. During the 5th meeting, the EC finalised its recommendations on the Terms of Reference and submitted the compiled report.

The report was subsequently placed before the 13th meeting of the Scientific Panel on Packaging (SP-20) held on 21st February 2025, where it was endorsed. It was further endorsed by the Scientific Committee in its 53rd meeting held on 15th May 2025. Thereafter, the report underwent stakeholder consultations, during which stakeholders appreciated the efforts of FSSAI and raised no objections to the proposed guidelines. Consultations with States/UTs were carried out in the Central Advisory Committee held on 27th May 2025.

Finally, the report was placed before the 47th Food Authority meeting on 06th August 2025. The draft of the Final Report of the EC is placed as *Annexure –I*.

1.10 The Committee note that the Department in their action taken notes has submitted the composition of the Expert Committee constituted by FSSAI to develop guidelines/advisory document regarding use of safe food packing materials. The Department has further submitted that five meetings of the Expert

Committee were held and the Expert Committee submitted its report which was subsequently placed before Scientific Panel of FSSAI and also before stake holders and finally it was placed before the 47th food authority meeting. The Committee do appreciate the work done by the Expert Committee. However, the Committee desire to know the impact of the recommendations of the report of Expert Committee which they have made in minimizing the use of plastic for food packaging in the country and in restricting its harmful effects. The Committee also desire to know the steps taken by the FSSAI, the Department and all other concerned organizations to minimize the use of plastic and also to minimize its harmful effects on human health. The Committee are of the considered view that the whole process of constitution of Expert Committee and submission of its report would be good in paper only if it fails to minimize the use of plastic and its harmful effects. The Committee desire that they may be apprised accordingly at the earliest.

(RecommendationNo.4)

FSSAI'S SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON PACKAGING

1.11 The Committee note that the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018, focus largely on packaging materials such as glass, metal, paper, and plastic. However, a comprehensive framework for safety of biodegradable and compostable plastics, testing methods and long-term performance and migration limits for emerging chemicals from food packaging, such as: Bisphenol A (BPA), per fluorinated Alkyl substances (PFAS), phthalates and other harmful chemicals found in plastic packaging were under deliberations of FSSAI's Scientific Panel on Packaging. The Committee desire that the findings of Scientific Panel on Packaging on elimination of the harmful effects of plastics on human health be furnished to the Committee at the earliest. The Committee further recommend that FSSAI come out with a comprehensive framework for zero tolerance of plastic contamination in food packaging processes.

1.12 In their Action Taken Notes furnished to the Committee, the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has stated as under:-

“FSSAI's Scientific Panel on Food Packaging deliberated on the presence of PFAS and BPA in Food Packaging and food contact materials and their health effects. To mitigate the risk associated with BPA and PFAS

exposure through the food contact materials, the panel recommended as below:

(a) Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAs) substances shall not be used in manufacturing of food contact materials.

(b) Food contact materials manufactured with polycarbonate and epoxy resins shall be free from Bisphenol A (BPA) and its derivatives.

The above-mentioned recommendations of the panel were endorsed by Scientific Committee in its 50th meeting held on 11.12.2024 and approved by Food Authority in its 46th meeting held on 7th march 2025.

Currently, the draft notification of FSS (Packaging) amendment Regulation, 2025 is under process of approval by the ministry.

Further, Scientific Panel on Method of Sampling and Analysis is in the process of developing analytical method for both the compounds.

With regards to Phthalic acid, bis (2- ethylhexyl) ester (DEHP), FSS (Packaging) Regulation 2018 specifies that the Maximum Migration Limit should not exceed 1.5 mg/Kg.

The comprehensive framework for safety of biodegradable and compostable plastics will be deliberated in the upcoming meetings of Scientific Panel.

Further, FSSAI has given research projects to ICAR-IITR, Lucknow, ICAR-National Research Centre for Grapes (NRCG), Pune and ICAR- Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT), Cochin under FSSAI-National Reference Laboratory (NRL) stream. The project under IITR, Lucknow is for the establishment of a state-of-the-art Analytical Testing Facility for PFAS and their related compounds in food and food packaging materials and Chemical Risk Assessment for PFAS and their related compounds. The project under NRCG, Pune is to develop and validate the analytical method for multi-residue Pesticides (including PFAS compounds) in grapes, pomegranate and citrus. The project under CIFT, Cochin is to perform a risk assessment of targeted and untargeted PFAS in fish and poultry products.”

1.13 The Committee had desired that the findings of Scientific Panel on packaging regarding elimination of the harmful effects of plastics on human health be furnished to them and FSSAI should come out with a comprehensive framework for zero tolerance of plastic contamination in food packaging processes. The Department in their action taken replies have apprised the

Committee at length about the findings of scientific panel. However nothing has been mentioned regarding comprehensive framework for zero tolerance of plastic contamination in packing process. The Committee therefore desire to be apprised accordingly of the changes at the ground level regarding elimination of the danger posed by plastic contamination.

(RecommendationNo.5)

MIGRATION OF PLASTIC AND NANO PLASTIC IN THE FOOD CONTENTS

1.14 The Committee find that FSSAI had submitted that inspections are carried out on outlets of manufacturer where pickle etc are prepared and food vending establishment i.e, Restaurants etc on the 44 List of Points drawn up for inspection of these units. The Committee are of the considered view that while the pickle manufactured may qualify the quality test of the FSSAI but instances of contamination may occur while they are packed/stored or transported and exposed to high temperature when plastic migration occurs in the pickle from its plastic container. This exposure can also affect bottled water etc. The Committee finds that no specific authority has been assigned to check contamination when migration of the plastic occurs. The Committee, therefore, desire that a specific authority should ensure that the migration was as per permissible limits and the pickle was fit for human consumption. The Committee also recommend that foolproof measures need to be initiated at the earliest to ensure that pickle stored and sold in plastic containers are indeed fit for consumption by human beings. To this extent the Committee desire that concrete actionable steps to protect human health from the ill effects of plastic/nano plastic contamination be taken at the earliest. The Committee desire that information regarding the steps taken firstly by the Department, secondly by FSSAI and thirdly by BIS may be furnished to them at the earliest.

1.15 In their Action Taken Notes furnished to the Committee, the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has stated as under:-

“Regarding the recommendation that a specific authority should ensure that the migration in food products/pickles packed in plastic packaging was as per permissible limits and it was fit for human consumption, it is submitted that activities related to manufacturing, processing, packaging, storage, transportation and distribution of food including quality of plastics material coming in contact with food products is regulated by FSSAI.

Regarding the steps taken to ensure that the food products/pickles packed in plastic packaging are fit for human consumption, the desired information is as given below:

- Indian Standards on Plastic packaging intended for Food application

BIS has published 14 Indian Standards on plastic packaging intended for food contact application that cover aspects such as physical and mechanical properties, among other criteria. These Indian Standards also specify requirements for overall migration, specific migration, and use of food grade additives/colorants and pigments.

- Indian Standards on Plastic Resin for Food Contact Application

BIS has published 12 Indian Standards for plastic materials (resins) for its safe use in contact with foodstuffs, pharmaceuticals and drinking water which prescribes the requirements of overall migration, use of colorants and pigments and residual monomer content, as applicable.

- Indian Standards on Positive List of Constituents of Polymers Suitable for Safe Use in Food Contact Application

BIS has published 15 Indian Standards providing positive list of constituents of polymers suitable for safe use in contact with foodstuffs.

- Indian Standards on Suitability of Plastics for Food Packaging

BIS has published an Indian Standard on guide for suitability of plastics for food packaging. Under the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018, FSSAI has made it mandatory that Plastic materials used for the manufacturing of containers for packing or storing the food products shall conform to either of the Indian Standards specifications as provided in Schedule III of the regulation. All packaging materials of plastic origin shall pass the prescribed overall migration limit of 60mg/kg or 10mg/dm² when tested as per IS 9845 with no visible color migration. Plastic materials and articles shall not release the substances in quantities exceeding the specific migration limits. Pigments or Colorants for use in plastics in contact with food products and drinking water shall conform to IS: 9833.

- Study regarding the migration of constituents from plastic packaging to food product/pickles when exposed to high temperature while packing/storage and transportation

BIS has formulated IS 9845: 1998 titled 'Indian Standard – Determination of overall migration of constituents of plastics materials and articles intended to come in contact with foodstuffs – Method of analysis'. BIS has constituted a Working Group to undertake review of IS 9845. The scope of Working Group includes evaluation of the adequacy of the Standard IS 9845 viz-a-viz extreme

Indian Climatic conditions with particular attention given to the extraction methodology, the choice and suitability of the simulating solvent or extractant, and the time-temperature parameters specified for the migration testing of constituents in plastic materials. BIS has also decided to institute R&D projects to study overall migration and specific migration from different types of plastic packaging materials intended for food contact applications, specifically to evaluate the influence of extreme temperature conditions. The findings of these R&D projects will be considered by BIS to update and upgrade the existing Indian standard IS 9845.”

1.16 As regards recommendation of the Committee regarding a specific authority which should ensure that the migration in food products/pickles packed in plastic packaging was as per permissible limits and it was indeed fit for human consumption, it was submitted by the Department in the action taken replies that activities related to manufacturing, processing, packaging, storage, transportation and distribution of food including quality of plastics material coming in contact with food products was regulated by FSSAI. The Committee do agree with the contention of the Department. However, the Department can not absolve of its responsibility to protect human health from the risk of the plastic contamination by merely submitting this fact. As such the Committee recommend that instead of running away from its responsibilities the Department should work in close coordination with FSSAI for eliminating plastic migration during transportation of edible items/pickles etc. The Committee would like to be apprised of the step taken by the Department in this regard.

CHAPTER – II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

(Recommendation No.2)

SUBSTANTIVE ROLE OF FSSAI IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FOOD SAFETY AND STANDARDS PACKAGING REGULATIONS 2018

The Committee note that FSSAI has been entrusted with the responsibility for the implementation of the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018 by way of notifying (i) Regulations or by bringing amendments; (ii) by verifying the compliance through inspection and surveillance; and (iii) by creating awareness through training of food handlers. In this connection, the Committee further note that FSSAI through its regional offices was regularly conducting inspections, audits, monitoring, random sampling and surveillance and have trained around twenty-two lakhs Food handlers under Food Safety Training and Certifications (FoSTaC) program. Though the Committee are of the view that training of food handlers was one of the steps which could lead to minimization of harmful effects of use of compromised / substandard quality of food grade plastics and needs more intensification, the Committee feels that much more needs to be done by the FSSAI. It appears to the Committee that FSSAI has failed to play a substantive role in the implementation of the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018 and the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 was not enforced effectively and failed to counter use of compromised and substandard quality of food grade plastic. The Committee, therefore, desire that FSSAI should come out with a roadmap to implement the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018 strictly and bring forth requisite amendments to the Regulation as may be deemed fit in the interest of ordinary citizens.

2.2 In their Action Taken Notes furnished to the Committee, the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has stated as under:-

“Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is mandated to lay down science-based standards for articles of food and to regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption. To ensure compliance with the set standards, limits, & other statutory requirements under the Act and Food Safety & Standards Regulations (FSSR), FSSAI, through its four regional offices and State/UT food safety authorities, conducts regular surveillance, inspections, sampling, and enforcement activities in the country. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has notified the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018, which set standards and migration limits for all food packaging materials, including plastics. Further sub-regulation 3(14) of the ibid regulation requires every food business operator to obtain a certificate of conformity from an NABL-accredited laboratory for any packaging material that comes in direct contact with food or is likely to do so. Further, under the Food Safety and Standards (Licensing and Registration of Food Businesses) Regulations, 2011, only food-grade materials may be used for primary packaging.

Plastic containers for packing or storing food must also comply with the relevant Indian Standards specified in Schedule III of the 2018 regulations. The recommendation of the committee has been noted. The roadmap for the strict implementation of the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulation 2018 is under consideration by FSSAI”.

(Recommendation No.6)

DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVES TO PLASTIC

2.3 As regards development of alternatives to plastic use, the Committee find that Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET) was granted Rs.100 Crore as planned fund for infrastructure development and it has authorized three laboratories. The Committee was apprised that work in this regard was in progress in CIPET Bhubaneswar and CIPET, Bangaluru with full support of the Department. The Committee desire that the work of developing alternatives to the Plastics is very important and imperative to help curb plastic usage and its ill effect on human health and therefore urges CIPET to complete the project and come forth with a concrete alternatives.

2.4 In their Action Taken Notes furnished to the Committee, the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has stated as under:-

“CIPET under Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, Govt. of India has established School for Advanced Research in Petrochemicals (SARP) at Chennai, Bhubaneswar and Bengaluru. To reduce reliance on petroleum-based polymers, CIPET’s R&D centers at Bhubaneswar and Bengaluru are actively involved in developing Biodegradable and compostable alternative. These compositions include polylactic acid (PLA), polyhydroxybutyrate (PHB), and poly (lactic-co-glycolic acid) (PLGA) derived from agro-waste, seaweed and other bioresources. These bioplastics are being formulated to degrade under controlled industrial composting conditions in accordance with IS/ ISO 17088 standard, ensuring environmental safety intended for application in the area of Packaging as well as Agricultural sector. Additionally, the R&D labs have also developed agro-based biodegradable mulch film formulations with improved performance and sustained release mulches. Various renewable resources, such as starch, lignocellulosic natural fibre, fruit seeds, Sea Weeds, Castor Oil etc. are being utilised to develop eco-friendly resin systems.

CIPET has completed the following developmental projects:

- Evaluation of Compostability of biodegradable polymer as per IS 17088: for 80 nos. of Industries/Entrepreneurs/start-ups
- Developed biodegradable stretch film for M/s Hindalco
- Developed biodegradable seaweed-based biopolymer for M/s Sea6
- Provided Consultancy services towards the development of biodegradable material for M/s Ecocorn Pvt Ltd, Bengaluru; M/s BPC Bioproduct, Bengaluru; M/s Earthworks Biomat Private Limited, Bengaluru.”

(Recommendation No.7)

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT TO MINIMISE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF PLASTIC AND NANO PLASTICS

2.5 The Committee note that two Centre of Excellence (CoEs) have been entrusted the work of finding alternatives to the plastics. The Committee further note with concern that these CoEs were engaged long back about six years ago for the purpose but two COEs could manage to come out with only one Polylactic acid which was not biodegradable but compostable and indigenous technology have since been developed for which pilot scale testing was under progress. The Committee are however dismayed that these CoEs have not been able to make any breakthrough even after a laps of a considerable time period of over six years. The Committee observe that the slow pace of work being carried out by the two CoEs need thorough review as to whether these centres are indeed delivering excellent work as expected. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the functioning of these CoEs may be reviewed as per the extant benchmarks set for CoEs. The Committee may be apprised of the action taken in this regard.

2.6 In their Action Taken Notes furnished to the Committee, the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has stated as under:-

“Out of the 18 CoEs approved, so far, by the Department, three CoEs i.e. IIT, Guwahati, CIPET-LARPM, Bhubaneswar and IIT Madras is working on the bio-compostable plastics and applications.

The Centre of Excellence in Sustainable Polymers at IIT Guwahati was approved in 2013. The major work done by the CoE so far is as follows:

- Bioplastic plant with 100 Kg Pilot Plant for production of PLA (Poly Lactic Acid), PBAT (Polybutylene Adipate Terephthalate), PCL (Polycaprolactone production) with fifty Kg per batch Lactide Production plant and PLA production in downstream reactor facility was established;
- monomer production processes for adipic acid, succinic acid, lactic acid and butanediol was established;
- pilot plant to produce compostable bags was established.
- worked on developing Poly (lactic acid) nanocomposites formulation and method of making thereof and has filed patent in this regard.
- Formulation of heat stable stereocomplex poly (lactic acid) composites was developed and got patent for it.
- The CoE, since inception, has filed 29 patents of which 20 have been granted and has transferred 10 new technologies/ products to the industry and has also published around 150 research papers.

The Centre has assisted the industry in NE region for manufacturing various biocompostable plastics applications and also has developed new technologies.

The Centre of Excellence on Bio-engineered Sustainable Polymeric Systems (CoE-

BeSPS) was established in 2019 . The CoE focuses on development of eco- friendly formulations derived from renewable resource based polymers like PLA, PBAT, PHBH, PCL etc. for application in Packaging and Agricultural Sectors. The CoE has developed Sustainable Agri-Mulches from PLA, PBAT & Starch based formulations for improved Weed Control, Plant Growth, Inherent Moisture Stability while retaining the soil fertility as well as compostability. Additionally, sustained release mulches comprising of NPK-fertilizers with reduced quantity for better growth of plants have been developed. The CoE has also developed high barrier compostable overwraps with improved heat sealability and other functional properties for packaging sectors.

Further, CoE in Biodegradable Packaging Materials (BioPack) has been approved in 2024 at IIT, Madras. The Centre aims to develop cost-effective, scalable, and zero-waste alternatives to conventional plastic applications through biodegradable and compostable materials. The research outputs are awaited.”

(Recommendation No.8)

REVISION OF STANDARDS BY Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)

2.7 The Committee note with serious concern that BIS does not have standards governing microwave bowls as admitted by the representative of BIS during oral evidence. The Committee, however find that BIS was working to make standards for Food grade bowls and spoons but could not be finalized as it could not pass the requirements of requisite safety standards, but on the intervention of the Committee, BIS constituted a working panel to revise ISI 9845 standards and also put in its scope to study the harmful effects emanating from use of plastics when exposed to extreme climatic conditions. The Committee were apprised that the working panel was expected to complete its study in about two months time period to revise the standard. The Committee, therefore, urges the BIS to expedite the findings of the panel and complete the study within the stipulated time period of two months as assured to the Committee. The Committee may be apprised of the action taken in this matter.

2.8 In their Action Taken Notes furnished to the Committee, the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has stated as under:-

“The detailed status of various studies and projects is as follows:

1) Status of formulation of Indian Standard on Microwave Bowls:

The ‘Plastics Packaging Sectional Committee’, of BIS has taken up formulation of Indian Standard on “Plastics Bowls for Microwave Use” by constituting a Working Group under Convenorship of CIPET, Kochi to prepare a draft standard on the subject. The Working Group is currently preparing a working draft of the standard focusing on key quality and safety aspects of such product. The Working Group is expected to complete the assigned task and submit the working draft by the end of December 2025. Subsequently, further actions for public consultation on the draft standard and, finalization and publication of the Indian Standard will be undertaken on priority.

2) Status of Study regarding the migration of constituents from plastic

packaging to food product/pickles when exposed to high temperature while packing/storage and transportation

IS 9845: 1998 is Indian Standard for Determination of overall migration of constituents of plastics materials and articles intended to come in contact with foodstuffs and their Method of analysis. BIS has constituted a Working Group to undertake review of IS 9845. The scope of Working Group includes evaluation of the adequacy of the Standard IS 9845 viz-a-viz extreme Indian Climatic conditions with particular attention given to the extraction methodology, the choice and suitability of the simulating solvent or extractant, and the time-temperature parameters specified for the migration testing of constituents in plastic materials.

Recognizing the diverse environmental stresses across the country, the Working Group (WG) identified the need for a systematic and detailed study to understand how such extreme climatic conditions affect the safety and performance of plastic packaging, particularly in applications such as packaging for water and pickles. Upon reviewing the subject, the Working Group concluded that the scope of study should not be restricted to specific food categories alone. Instead, it shall be broadened to cover a wide range of plastic packaging materials used for different varieties of foods. This would ensure a more comprehensive assessment of migration behavior and overall suitability of plastics under extreme climatic variations.

With the approval of BIS Sectional Committee, the Working Group has prepared two Terms of Reference (ToRs) for R&D studies:

- a) Study on Overall Migration from Different Types of Plastic Packaging Materials Intended for Food Contact Applications.
- b) Study on Specific Migration from Different Types of Plastic Packaging Materials Intended for Food Contact Applications.

These ToRs have been prepared specifically to address the influence of extreme temperatures on commonly used plastic packaging categories such as PET bottles, recycled-PET bottles, polycarbonate cans, laminates with food-contact coatings, laminates with sealant films, and other packaging types. The studies will focus on packaging applications across diverse food matrices, including water, carbonated soft drinks, alcoholic beverages, acidic foods, fatty foods, snacks, pickles, and hot-filled products.

BIS has invited technical and financial proposals for undertaking the studies from eligible academic and R&D institutions by 14 November 2025. Keeping in view the extensive work envisaged in the ToRs the maximum duration for completion of the R&D projects has been prescribed as 6 months. The report and findings of these studies will be put up to the PCD 27 Sectional Committee for review of relevant Indian Standard.”

(RecommendationNo.9)

2.9 As regard provisions of Penalty/punishment to defaulters/violators of Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018, the Committee find that provisions for penalties have been given in Sections 48 to 67 of the Food Safety and

Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018. The Penalties provided for the production, sale, storage etc. of food which was in contravention of the Regulations includes both fines as well as imprisonment. For instance under Section 54,55,56,57,58,61 and 63 of the regulations penalty can be levied for contravention of provisions of the Regulation and under Section 59 imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months and also with fine which may extend to three lac rupees can be imposed. The Committee desire that they may be furnished data on levy of fine/penalties/imprisonment for violation of these regulations for the last three years. The Committee also desire that these provisions of the Regulations may be implemented in letter and spirit by the FSSAI.

2.10 In their Action Taken Notes furnished to the Committee, the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has stated as under:-

“Packaging Material in direct contact with food product are sampled at pre-packaging stage at the manufacturing unit of Food Business Operators (FBOs). Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018 stipulates that every manufacturer of food products shall obtain the Certificate of Conformity (CoC), issued by NABL accredited laboratory, for the packaging material which comes in the direct contact with food or layers likely to come in contact with food. All States and Union Territories have been further directed to strengthen the monitoring and intensify the sampling and testing of food-contact packaging materials to verify and ascertain compliance with the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018. The details with respect to inspection, Non-Compliance and improvement notice issued are as follows:

Year	Overall Inspection conducted on Licensed FBOS	Non-Compliance observed regarding Food grade Packaging material	No. of Improvement Notice issued
2023-24	2,32,534	5453	2732
2024-25	1,66,943	3442	1540

FSSAI has submitted that details on levy of fine/penalties/imprisonment for the last three years is pending with the States/UTs and it will take some time to submit.”

(RecommendationNo.10)

2.11 The Committee are dismayed to note the figures of inspections of licenced food business operators conducted *viz-a-viz* the figures of non compliance reported as they are not proportionate. Out of the overall inspections conducted on 2,32,638 licensed food business operators, non-compliance reported was only 4,765 cases during the year (2023-24) and only 3,063 cases during the year (2024-25) out of 1,68,000 overall inspections conducted on licensed food business operators. The Committee observe that the figures sighted on non-compliance does not appear to be realistic for the whole country for one full year. The Committee therefore desire that the basis of these data

may be re-visited and reasons furnished for such non-compliance figures be furnished. The Committee are of the considered view that adequate number of inspections were not conducted specially in those areas/sectors where there is non-compliance to the regulations. To this extent, the Committee strongly recommend that a robust inspection mechanism with specific periodicity inspections and stipulated to cover all sectors may be put in place to overcome the present lacuna.

2.12 In their Action Taken Notes furnished to the Committee, the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has stated as under:-

“To ensure compliance with food quality, packaging standards, and related requirements, FSSAI, through order dated 02nd May 2022, implemented inspection checklists based on Schedule 4 of the Food Safety and Standards (Licensing & Registration of Food Businesses) Regulations, 2011. Under this mechanism, FSSAI conduct regular inspections of Food Business Operators falling under High-Risk category on priority with frequency of inspection at least once a year, including checks on food-grade packaging materials. The data previously shared was based on records available in Food Safety Compliance System (FoSCoS) portal. Further, the parameter/requirement of compliance with food packaging material as provided under the Food Safety and Standards Regulations has been made as “Critical” parameter in the inspection checklists.”

(Recommendation No.11)

STUDY BY ICMR ON EXPOSURE OF BISPHENOL A (BPA) AND BISPHENOL S (BPS) ON RATS

2.13 The Committee note that Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) has conducted a preliminary study on Rats exposed to Bisphenol A (BPA) and Bisphenol S (BPS) chemicals used in manufacturing plastic and the study found that there were serious ill effects of said exposure on Rats to the extent that their metabolic and reproductive functions were altered. The Committee have also been apprised that to validate the findings of the preliminary study, a bigger study on animals and human beings need to be conducted, which has not yet been done. The Committee are of the considered view that the harmful effects of exposure to plastic were very serious and an imminent danger to mankind as evidenced by the findings of the preliminary study on Rats. The Committee, therefore, recommend that studies be conducted so that reliable data on the harmful impacts of plastic contamination be collated. The Committee recommend that the Department, FSSAI, BIS should collectively come out with a concrete actionable solution to address the alarming situation being faced by present day citizens.

2.14 In their Action Taken Notes furnished to the Committee, the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has stated as under:-

“FSSAI has implemented specific restrictions on Bisphenol A for Foods for infant nutrition. In accordance with the Food Safety and Standards (Foods for

Infant Nutrition) Regulations, 2020, the FSSAI has explicitly mandated that the packaging materials used for packaging of Foods for infant nutrition shall be free from Bisphenol A (BPA).

Although there are numerous animal studies available, no clinical data are available on the potential hazards associated with food grade plastic in India. Therefore, the ICMR has initiated research for the risk exposure analysis using samples from a pan-India Survey for Assessment of Markers of Population Health, Activity, Diet and Anthropometry (SAMPADA). The ongoing study is currently analysing Bisphenol A and different derivatives of Phthalates in blood samples collected in a nationally representative SAMPADA survey. Preliminary information will be available on the exposure risks of BPA and Phthalates with this analysis. In addition, ICMR-NIN plans to measure exposure to BPA through diet by analysing food samples collected from a pan-India SAMPADA survey. Currently, ICMR-National Institute of Nutrition (ICMR-NIN) is developing a protocol to assess the migration of BPA into foods.”

(Recommendation No.12)

ILL EFFECTS OF PLASTICS ON HUMAN HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

2.15 As regards ill-effects of plastic and nano-plastic on human health, the Committee note that in the Country 60% of our food containers have BPA which causes not only reproductive and fertility issues but also causes cancer. Further BPA was also responsible for obesity particularly amongst children. The Committee further finds that “styrene”, a group of 28 carcinogen was apparently responsible for increased cases of cancer in the country. In a nutshell, metabolic syndromes like obesity, reproductive as well as fertility issues, cancer may be linked to the consumption of microplastics. Apart from these risks studies have shown microplastics being found in human placenta indicating wide spread migration of plastics in the human body. The Committee, therefore, recommend that elimination of the Plastic and nano-plastic from our day to day life is the dire need of the hour to tackle the plastic menace which is looming large over the country. The Committee, therefore, recommend that to curb the menace collective wisdom of the Department, BIS and FSSAI may result in a roadmap with concrete measures and implementation in letter and spirit of the present regulations are required to save the citizens and also their future generations.

2.16 In their Action Taken Notes furnished to the Committee, the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has stated as under:-

“With regard to the issue of BPA causing not only reproductive and fertility issues but also causes cancer, it is humbly submitted that DGHS has informed that there have been media reports and small studies on these aspects. Scientific largescale studies need to be planned/ undertaken for better understanding of health risks. FSSAI has implemented specific restrictions on Bisphenol A for Foods for infant nutrition. In accordance with the Food Safety and Standards (Foods for Infant Nutrition) Regulations, 2020, the FSSAI has explicitly mandated that the packaging materials used for packaging of Foods for infant nutrition shall be free from Bisphenol A (BPA).

Styrene is classified as a probable human carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). It is used as raw material/monomer to make Polystyrene (PS). Food contact applications of Polystyrene are regulated

as follows:

- FSSAI's Packaging Regulations (2018) specify polystyrene (IS 10142, revised) standard to ensure its safe use with food, pharmaceuticals, and drinking water.
- The draft revision aligns with international regulations (such as those from the US FDA and EU) and emphasizes conformity assessment and quality monitoring to ensure consumer safety.
- Styrofoam cups have been banned for single use under Plastic Waste Management Regulation.

Further some studies have indicated microplastics presence in human body, however they did not provide conclusive evidence and establish microplastics effects on human health. Although there are numerous animal studies available, no clinical data are available on the potential hazards associated with food grade plastic in India. FSSAI has given research projects to ICAR-IITR, Lucknow, ICAR-National Research Centre for Grapes (NRCG), Pune and ICAR- Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT), Cochin under FSSAI-National Reference Laboratory (NRL) stream. The project under IITR, Lucknow is for the establishment of a state-of the-art Analytical Testing Facility for PFAS and their related compounds in food and food packaging materials and Chemical Risk Assessment for PFAS and their related compounds. The project under NRCG, Pune is to develop and validate the analytical method for multi-residue Pesticides (including PFAS compounds) in grapes, pomegranate and citrus. The project under CIFT, Cochin is to perform a risk assessment of targeted and untargeted PFAS in fish and poultry products.

The present Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018 specify requirements for food-grade packaging to minimize health risks. These regulations mandate that any material which comes in direct contact with food or likely to come in contact with food used for packaging, preparation, storing, wrapping, transportation and sale or service of food shall be of food grade quality, which ensures that the substances used in material are safe and suitable for their intended use, and shall not endanger human health or result in unacceptable change in the composition of the food or organoleptic characteristics in Indian climatic conditions. The packaging regulations specifies that all packaging materials of plastic origin shall pass the prescribed overall migration limit of 60mg/kg or 10mg/dm² when tested as per IS 9845 with no visible colour migration. Further plastic materials and articles shall not release the specified substances like Barium, Cobalt, Copper, Phthalic acid etc. in quantities exceeding the specific migration limits.

Every food business operator shall obtain the certificate of conformity issued by NABL accredited laboratory against these regulations for the packaging material which comes in direct contact with food or layers likely to come in contact with food to be used. Schedule IV of these regulations provide the suggestive list of the packaging materials for food articles suitable in Indian climatic conditions.”

(RecommendationNo.13)

2.17 The Committee note that the Department is taking steps to minimize the use of

plastic and also to minimize the harmful effects of it by taking a slew of measures which include to recycle the plastic, to develop new material which would be non-plastic and bio-waste green material which could replace plastic, several IITs and scientific organisations as well as private industries are also doing research to develop a material which would be cost effective and good for environment. Further, the Department is taking up the matter with the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change to ban the use of single use plastic. The Committee are deeply concerned to note that nothing concrete has emerged so far from the various steps stated to be taken by the Department. The Committee desire that the matter may be taken at the highest level and vigorously pursued with all concerned Ministries/Organisations etc. to find a concrete solution of the plastic menace. The Committee further find that nothing is being done for manufacturing and promotion of Jute bags as an alternative to the plastic. The Committee are of the view that Jute bags may be an alternative to the plastic. The Committee would like to be apprised of the steps taken by the Department in this regard.

2.18 In their Action Taken Notes furnished to the Committee, the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has stated as under:-

“Considering the adverse environmental impacts of littered and unmanaged plastic waste, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, has notified Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2021 on 12th August 2021, for placing a ban on identified single use plastic (SUP) items, which had high littering potential and low utility, with effect from 1st July 2022. The notification also prohibits manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of plastic carry bags having thickness less one hundred and twenty microns with effect from the 31st December, 2022. The Central Pollution Control Board (hereinafter referred to as ‘CPCB’) has inter-alia issued the following directions under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986:

- i. Directions issued to Plastic Raw material manufacturers to stop supplying plastic raw material to manufacturer of banned SUP items;
- ii. Directions issued to SUP users & E-commerce companies to stop usage & ensure zero inventory by June 30, 2022;
- iii. Comprehensive Directions issued to all SPCBs/ PCCs to take necessary action including to revocation/ modification of Consents/ Registration issued to banned SUP Producers;
- iv. Directions issued to State UDDs to take necessary action for implementation of SUP ban including action for implementing and promoting SUP Grievance app among citizens.

Central Pollution Control Board has also separately issued letter to Custom Authorities to stop import of banned SUP item. All thirty-six States/UTs have constituted the Special Task Force under the chairpersonship of the Chief Secretary / Administrator for elimination of identified single use Plastic items and effective plastic waste management. A National Level Taskforce has also been constituted by the Ministry for taking coordinated efforts to eliminate identified single use plastic items and effective implementation of Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016.

The States and Union Territories have been asked to undertake regular

enforcement drives to implement ban on identified single use plastic items and on plastic carry bags having thickness less than one hundred twenty microns covering fruit and vegetable markets, wholesale markets, local markets, flower vendors, units manufacturing plastic carry bags etc. Action have been taken by concerned authorities including local bodies on the deviations, which include seizure of banned single use plastic items and levy of penalty. As per details provided by SPCB/PCC and details available at SUP compliance monitoring portal, a total of 8,61,335 inspections have been conducted across the country and 1976 tonnes of banned single use plastic items have been seized and a total of Rs19.8 crores of fine has been levied.

For effective monitoring of ban on identified Single Use Plastic items and plastic waste management in the country, the following online platforms are in operation:

- (a) National Dashboard for monitoring of comprehensive action plan implementation,
- (b) CPCB Monitoring Module for Compliance on Elimination of Single Use Plastic, and
- (c) CPCB Grievance Redressal App.

Central Government, State Governments and local authorities have taken steps on moving towards eco-friendly alternatives. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change organized the National Expo on Eco alternatives to SUPs and Start-up Conference 2022 during 26th -27th of September 2022 in Chennai. The expo provided a platform for around 150 entities who are into research and development, manufacture and sale of eco-friendly alternatives to plastics. The expo unveiled innovative products in the eco- friendly product spectrum covering carry bags, utility items, apparels, footwear, wellness products, sanitary pads, cutlery and many more. These products are made from varied raw materials such as banana leaf products, fibre, rice bran, rice husk, agricultural products, areca leaf, coir, clay, palm leaf, cloth, jute, etc.by manufacturers, Self Help Groups and many other start-up firms across India. Further, to encourage innovation in development of alternatives to banned identified single use plastic items and digital solutions to plastic waste management, concerned Central Ministries including Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Ministry of MSME and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and CPCB, have organized Hackathons. The ban on identified single use plastic items has triggered development of innovative eco-alternatives. In keeping with the development of eco-alternatives, Bureau of Indian Standard has notified Indian Standard IS 18267 for Food Serving Utensil Made from Agri By-Products in 2023.

The Ministry had notified Guidelines on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Plastic Packaging on 16th February 2022, vide G.S.R. 133(E). The Guidelines stipulate mandatory targets on EPR, recycling of plastic packaging waste, reuse of rigid plastic packaging and use of recycled plastic content. EPR framework is fully functional and since 2022, a total of 2974 units as Plastic Waste Processors (PWP) and a total of 54,423 PIBOs, have successfully registered themselves on EPR Portal for plastic packaging. A total of 1,64,69,215 tons of plastic packaging waste has been processed by

registered PWPs since 2022.

Keeping in view the focus of the Government on addressing plastic pollution, a National Expo on eco-alternatives to banned single-use plastic was also organized on the occasion of World Environment Day 2025. The expo saw a vibrant participation of start ups, recyclers, and local bodies from across India showcasing innovative technologies and best practices on Eco- alternatives and plastic waste management. The Expo also had a separate pavilion for Mission LiFE.

The ban on identified single use plastic items has triggered development of innovative eco-alternatives. Central Government, State Governments and local authorities have taken steps on moving towards eco-friendly alternatives. Based upon the information provided by State Pollution Control Boards and Pollution Control Committees, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change and Central Pollution Control Board have prepared a “Compendium of Manufacturers / Sellers of Eco-alternatives to Banned Single Use Plastic Items”, which launched on World Environment Day, 2025. The compendium provides details of nearly 1000 units spread across the country.

The Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory Use in Packing Commodities) Act, 1987 provides for the compulsory use of jute packaging material in the supply and distribution of certain commodities. Under the provisions of JPM Act, the Central Government has mandated packaging of 100% foodgrains and 20% sugar in jute bags in jute year 2024-25.”

CHAPTER III

**OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT
DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REPLIES**

-NIL-

CHAPTER IV

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH THE REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

(RecommendationNo.1)

STUDY TO DETECT PLASTICS AND NANO PLASTICS

4.1 The Committee note that the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is funding a project w.e.f March, 2024 entitled “Micro and Nano-plastics as Emerging Food Contaminants: Establishing Validated Methodology and Understanding the Prevalence in Different Food Matrices”. While the objective of the project is statedly to develop and validate analytical methods to detect micro and nano-plastics in various food products and assess their prevalence and exposure levels, the duration of the project is two years and sanctioned to three (03) research institutes namely (i) CSIR-Indian Institute of Toxicology Research, Lucknow, (ii) ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (ICAR-CIFT), Kochi; and (iii) Birla Institute of Technology and Science (BITS), Pilani. The Committee note that a considerable time period of more than one year have already elapsed and while the research project was under progress, the method validation for microplastic detection (PC, PET and Polystyrene) in packaged animal products, beverages and packaged drinking water was reportedly completed. The Committee, therefore, desire that findings of the research projects as and when completed may be furnished by the Department/FSSAI highlighting the actionable points thereon for tackling the menace of plastics and nano-plastics; and protection of human health from the use of compromised/substandard quality of food grade plastics and their exposure to extreme Indian climatic conditions. The Committee find that sampling and analyzing of the packaged food products from Rajasthan, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh was under progress. The Committee desire that the same may be put to a fruitful completion and findings/recommendations alongwith the details of steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Department/FSSAI/BIS in pursuance of those findings may be furnished within the timelines set. The Committee further desire that feasibility of adequate publicity of these research findings may also be explored so that they are disseminated to all the citizens.

4.2 In their Action Taken Notes furnished to the Committee, the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has stated as under:-

“The project titled “Micro-and Nano-plastics as Emerging Food Contaminants: Establishing Validated Methodologies and Understanding the Prevalence in Different Food Matrices” was launched by FSSAI in March, 2024 in collaboration with 3 research institutes viz. CSIR-Indian Institute of Toxicology Research (CSIR-IITR), Lucknow; ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (ICAR-CIFT), Kochi and Birla Institute of Technology and Science (BITS), Pilani. The duration of the project is 2 years. The research is still in progress and is scheduled to completed by March-2026. FSSAI has noted the recommendations of the committee for future compliances.

FSSAI has also submitted that the impact of microplastics on human health are not yet known scientifically established. Hence more studies have to be carried out to better characterize exposure and link of microplastics from food articles and its impact of human health. In this regard, FSSAI is coordinating with ICMR, New Delhi, to carry out a study on the risk assessment of the impact of microplastics on human health.”

Comments of the Committee

[Please see Para No:1.7 of Chapter – I of the Report]

(RecommendationNo.2)

SUBSTANTIVE ROLE OF FSSAI IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FOOD SAFETY AND STANDARDS PACKAGING REGULATIONS 2018

4.3 The Committee note that FSSAI has been entrusted with the responsibility for the implementation of the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018 by way of notifying (i) Regulations or by bringing amendments; (ii) by verifying the compliance through inspection and surveillance; and (iii) by creating awareness through training of food handlers. In this connection, the Committee further note that FSSAI through its regional offices was regularly conducting inspections, audits, monitoring, random sampling and surveillance and have trained around twenty-two lakhs Food handlers under Food Safety Training and Certifications (FoSTaC) program. Though the Committee are of the view that training of food handlers was one of the steps which could lead to minimization of harmful effects of use of compromised / substandard quality of food grade plastics and needs more intensification, the Committee feels that much more needs to be done by the FSSAI. It appears to the Committee that FSSAI has failed to play a substantive role in the implementation of the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018 and the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 was not enforced effectively and failed to counter use of compromised and substandard quality of food grade plastic. The Committee, therefore, desire that FSSAI should come out with a roadmap to implement the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018 strictly and bring forth requisite amendments to the Regulation as may be deemed fit in the interest of ordinary citizens.

4.4 In their Action Taken Notes furnished to the Committee, the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has stated as under:-

“Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is mandated to lay down science-based standards for articles of food and to regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption. To ensure compliance with the set standards, limits, & other statutory requirements under the Act and Food Safety & Standards Regulations (FSSR), FSSAI, through its four regional offices and State/UT food safety authorities, conducts regular surveillance, inspections, sampling, and enforcement activities in the country. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has notified the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018, which set standards and migration

limits for all food packaging materials, including plastics. Further sub-regulation 3(14) of the ibid regulation requires every food business operator to obtain a certificate of conformity from an NABL-accredited laboratory for any packaging material that comes in direct contact with food or is likely to do so. Further, under the Food Safety and Standards (Licensing and Registration of Food Businesses) Regulations, 2011, only food-grade materials may be used for primary packaging. Plastic containers for packing or storing food must also comply with the relevant Indian Standards specified in Schedule III of the 2018 regulations.

The recommendation of the committee has been noted. The roadmap for the strict implementation of the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulation 2018 is under consideration by FSSAI.”

Comments of the Committee

[Please see Para No:1.10 of Chapter – I of the Report]

(Recommendation No.3)

COORDINATION BETWEEN FSSAI AND DCPC FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOOD SAFETY AND STANDARDS PACKAGING REGULATIONS, 2018

4.5 The Committee note that, there is lack of coordination between Food Safety and standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals (DCPC) for effective implementation of the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulation 2018. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) was established and entrusted with the responsibility of implementation of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 (FSS Act). The Committee note that though FSSAI was established and entrusted with responsibility of implementation of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 but unfortunately it has a long way to go. The Committee note with concern that no other concrete actionable mechanism of a robust coordination between the FSSAI and the Department exists. The Committee, therefore recommend that the Department and FSSAI should work in close tandem and bring out a robust coordination mechanism for effective implementation of the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulation, 2018. The Committee further note that an expert committee was constituted by FSSAI to develop guidelines/advisory document regarding use of safe food packaging materials by various food service establishments like hotels/ restaurants / street vendors etc. wherein the Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals (DCPC) also participated. The Committee desire the details of the expert Committee, its mandate, composition, work done, recommendations given etc. may be furnish to the Committee.

4.6 In their Action Taken Notes furnished to the Committee, the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has stated as under:-

“FSSAI has notified the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018, which lay down the general and specific requirements applicable to different packaging materials. These regulations, however, are primarily viewed as governing pre-packaged food commodities. To address is the concerns

emerging from the use of non-standardised materials, an Expert Committee (EC) was constituted vide order dated 03rd May 2023 and subsequently extended vide order dated 09th January 2024, with the mandate to develop a guideline/advisory document on the safe use of food packaging materials by food service establishments such as hotels, restaurants, and street vendors.

Expert Committee (EC) members:

The expert committee comprises the following members:

Prof. Vimal Katiyar, Dean - R&D & Professor, IIT – Guwahati (Chairperson)
Sh. Avinash Mishra, Former Advisor (Water & Land Resources), Niti Aayog
Mr Rajeev Kumar Dwivedi, Director, TTRC Lohiacorp
Dr. Rajeshwar Matche, Chief Scientist, CFTRI, Mysore
Dr. Sanjay Kr Chattopadhyay, Convener, Chemicals & Petrochemicals Advisory Forum, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers
Dr. Pasupathy Venkat, National Advisor, Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Association of India, Delhi
Shri Kamlesh Singh, Scientist E & Division Head (DH) of the IPC-III Division, Central Pollution Control Board

Mandate:

The terms of reference/mandate of the Expert Committee is as follows:

- v. To review the definition of food grade packaging materials;
- vi. To examine alternate packaging materials for use by food service establishments;
- vii. To develop a guideline document regarding the use of safe & suitable food packaging materials by various food service establishments and to suggest a list of packaging materials based on the nature of the cooked food product.
- viii. To conduct survey and evaluate the food packaging materials currently used by the food service establishment.

Work Done by the Expert Committee:

Five meetings of the Expert Committee (EC) were held on 26th May 2023, 01st & 16th June 2023 (2nd meeting in two parts), 11th January 2024, 13th June 2024, and 10th January 2025. During the 5th meeting, the EC finalised its recommendations on the Terms of Reference and submitted the compiled report.

The report was subsequently placed before the 13th meeting of the Scientific Panel on Packaging (SP-20) held on 21st February 2025, where it was endorsed. It was further endorsed by the Scientific Committee in its 53rd meeting held on 15th May 2025. Thereafter, the report underwent stakeholder consultations, during which stakeholders appreciated the efforts of FSSAI and raised no objections to the proposed guidelines. Consultations with States/UTs

were carried out in the Central Advisory Committee held on 27th May 2025.

Finally, the report was placed before the 47th Food Authority meeting on 06th August 2025. The draft of the Final Report of the EC is placed as *Annexure – I.*”

Comments of the Committee

[Please see Para No:1.13 of Chapter – I of the Report]

(RecommendationNo.4)

FSSAI'S SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON PACKAGING

4.7 The Committee note that the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018, focus largely on packaging materials such as glass, metal, paper, and plastic. However, a comprehensive framework for safety of biodegradable and compostable plastics, testing methods and long-term performance and migration limits for emerging chemicals from food packaging, such as: Bisphenol A (BPA), per fluorinated Alkyl substances (PFAS), phthalates and other harmful chemicals found in plastic packaging were under deliberations of FSSAI's Scientific Panel on Packaging. The Committee desire that the findings of Scientific Panel on Packaging on elimination of the harmful effects of plastics on human health be furnished to the Committee at the earliest. The Committee further recommend that FSSAI come out with a comprehensive framework for zero tolerance of plastic contamination in food packaging processes.

4.8 In their Action Taken Notes furnished to the Committee, the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has stated as under:-

“FSSAI's Scientific Panel on Food Packaging deliberated on the presence of PFAS and BPA in Food Packaging and food contact materials and their health effects. To mitigate the risk associated with BPA and PFAS exposure through the food contact materials, the panel recommended as below:

- (a) Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAs) substances shall not be used in manufacturing of food contact materials
- (b) Food contact materials manufactured with polycarbonate and epoxy resins shall be free from Bisphenol A (BPA) and its derivatives.

The above-mentioned recommendations of the panel were endorsed by Scientific Committee in its 50th meeting held on 11.12.2024 and approved by Food Authority in its 46th meeting held on 7th march 2025.

Currently, the draft notification of FSS (Packaging) amendment Regulation, 2025 is under process of approval by the ministry.

Further, Scientific Panel on Method of Sampling and Analysis is in the process of developing analytical method for both the compounds.

With regards to Phthalic acid, bis (2- ethylhexyl) ester (DEHP), FSS

(Packaging) Regulation 2018 specifies that the Maximum Migration Limit should not exceed 1.5 mg/Kg.

The comprehensive framework for safety of biodegradable and compostable plastics will be deliberated in the upcoming meetings of Scientific Panel. Further, FSSAI has given research projects to ICAR-IITR, Lucknow, ICAR-National Research Centre for Grapes (NRCG), Pune and ICAR- Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT), Cochin under FSSAI-National Reference Laboratory (NRL) stream. The project under IITR, Lucknow is for the establishment of a state-of-the-art Analytical Testing Facility for PFAS and their related compounds in food and food packaging materials and Chemical Risk Assessment for PFAS and their related compounds. The project under NRCG, Pune is to develop and validate the analytical method for multi-residue Pesticides (including PFAS compounds) in grapes, pomegranate and citrus. The project under CIFT, Cochin is to perform a risk assessment of targeted and untargeted PFAS in fish and poultry products.”

Comments of the Committee

[Please see Para No:1.16 of Chapter – I of the Report]

(RecommendationNo.5)

MIGRATION OF PLASTIC AND NANO PLASTIC IN THE FOOD CONTENTS

4.9 The Committee find that FSSAI had submitted that inspections are carried out on outlets of manufacturer where pickle etc are prepared and food vending establishment i.e, Restaurants etc on the 44 List of Points drawn up for inspection of these units. The Committee are of the considered view that while the pickle manufactured may qualify the quality test of the FSSAI but instances of contamination may occur while they are packed/stored or transported and exposed to high temperature when plastic migration occurs in the pickle from its plastic container. This exposure can also affect bottled water etc. The Committee finds that no specific authority has been assigned to check contamination when migration of the plastic occurs. The Committee, therefore, desire that a specific authority should ensure that the migration was as per permissible limits and the pickle was fit for human consumption. The Committee also recommend that foolproof measures need to be initiated at the earliest to ensure that pickle stored and sold in plastic containers are indeed fit for consumption by human beings. To this extent the Committee desire that concrete actionable steps to protect human health from the ill effects of plastic/nano plastic contamination be taken at the earliest. The Committee desire that information regarding the steps taken firstly by the Department, secondly by FSSAI and thirdly by BIS may be furnished to them at the earliest.

4.10 In their Action Taken Notes furnished to the Committee, the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals has stated as under:-

“Regarding the recommendation that a specific authority should ensure that the migration in food products/pickles packed in plastic packaging was as per permissible limits and it was fit for human consumption, it is submitted that activities related to manufacturing, processing, packaging, storage,

transportation and distribution of food including quality of plastics material coming in contact with food products is regulated by FSSAI.

Regarding the steps taken to ensure that the food products/pickles packed in plastic packaging are fit for human consumption, the desired information is as given below:

➤ Indian Standards on Plastic packaging intended for Food application

BIS has published 14 Indian Standards on plastic packaging intended for food contact application that cover aspects such as physical and mechanical properties, among other criteria. These Indian Standards also specify requirements for overall migration, specific migration, and use of food grade additives/colorants and pigments.

➤ Indian Standards on Plastic Resin for Food Contact Application

BIS has published 12 Indian Standards for plastic materials (resins) for its safe use in contact with foodstuffs, pharmaceuticals and drinking water which prescribes the requirements of overall migration, use of colorants and pigments and residual monomer content, as applicable.

➤ Indian Standards on Positive List of Constituents of Polymers Suitable for Safe Use in Food Contact Application

BIS has published 15 Indian Standards providing positive list of constituents of polymers suitable for safe use in contact with foodstuffs.

➤ Indian Standards on Suitability of Plastics for Food Packaging

BIS has published an Indian Standard on guide for suitability of plastics for food packaging. Under the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018, FSSAI has made it mandatory that Plastic materials used for the manufacturing of containers for packing or storing the food products shall conform to either of the Indian Standards specifications as provided in Schedule III of the regulation. All packaging materials of plastic origin shall pass the prescribed overall migration limit of 60mg/kg or 10mg/dm² when tested as per IS 9845 with no visible color migration. Plastic materials and articles shall not release the substances in quantities exceeding the specific migration limits. Pigments or Colorants for use in plastics in contact with food products and drinking water shall conform to IS: 9833.

➤ Study regarding the migration of constituents from plastic packaging to food product/pickles when exposed to high temperature while packing/storage and transportation

BIS has formulated IS 9845: 1998 titled 'Indian Standard – Determination of overall migration of constituents of plastics materials and articles intended to come in contact with foodstuffs – Method of analysis'. BIS has constituted a Working Group to undertake review of IS 9845. The scope of Working Group

includes evaluation of the adequacy of the Standard IS 9845 viz-a-viz extreme Indian Climatic conditions with particular attention given to the extraction methodology, the choice and suitability of the simulating solvent or extractant, and the time-temperature parameters specified for the migration testing of constituents in plastic materials. BIS has also decided to institute R&D projects to study overall migration and specific migration from different types of plastic packaging materials intended for food contact applications, specifically to evaluate the influence of extreme temperature conditions. The findings of these R&D projects will be considered by BIS to update and upgrade the existing Indian standard IS 9845.”

CHAPTER V

**OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH THE FINAL
REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE STILL AWAITED**

-NIL-

**New Delhi;
06 JANUARY, 2026
16 PAUSA, 1947 (Saka)**

**AZAD KIRTI JHA
CHAIRPERSON,
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS.**

STANDING COMMITTEE ON CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS BRANCH

(2025-26)

Minutes of the Ninth Sitting of the Committee

The Committee sat on Tuesday, the 06th January, 2026 from 1100 hrs. to 1130 hrs. in Committee Room 'B', Parliament House Annexe (PHA), New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Azad Kirti Jha– Chairperson

LOK SABHA MEMBERS

2. Shri Brijmohan Agrawal
3. Shri Ajay Bhatt
4. Shri Robert Bruce C.
5. Shri Bharatsinhji Shankarji Dabhi
6. Dr. Kalyan Vaijinathrao Kale
7. Shri Malvinder Singh Kang
8. Shri Praveen Patel
9. Dr. Sambit Patra
10. Shri Balram Naik Porika
11. Shri Sachithannatham R.
12. Shri Eatata Rajender
13. Shri Rajesh Ranjan
14. Shri Daggumalla Prasada Rao
15. Shri Shivmangal Singh Tomar

RAJYA SABHA MEMBERS

16. Shri Subhash Barala
17. Shri Rwngrwa Narzary
18. Shri Subhash Chandra Bose Pilli
19. Shri Akhilesh Prasad Singh
20. Shri Tejveer Singh
21. Shri G.K. Vasam

SECRETARIAT

- | | | |
|------------------------|---|-----------------|
| 4. Smt. Maya Lingi | - | Joint Secretary |
| 5. Ms. Miranda Ingudam | - | Director |

- 6. Shri Kulvinder Singh - Deputy Secretary
- 7. Shri Abhishek Kumar - Deputy Director

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee. Thereafter, the Committee took up for consideration, the following Draft Reports:

- i. XXXX XXXX XXXX XXXX
- ii. XXXX XXXX XXXX XXXX
- iii. Eighteenth Report (18th Lok Sabha) on Action Taken by the Government on the Observation/Recommendation contained in Thirteenth Report on the subject 'Health hazards due to use of compromised/substandard quality of food-grade plastics and their exposure to extreme Indian climatic conditions' pertaining to the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.
- iv. XXXX XXXX XXXX XXXX

3. Giving an overview of the important Observations/Recommendations contained in the draft Reports, the Chairperson solicited the views/suggestions of the Members.

4. After some deliberations, the draft Reports were adopted by the Committee without any amendment.

5. The Committee then authorized the Chairperson to finalize the Reports and present/lay the Reports in both the Houses of Parliament in the budget session of Parliament.

The Committee then adjourned.

APPENDIX II

ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE THIRTEENTH REPORT (EIGHTEENTH LOK SABHA) OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (2025-26) ON 'HEALTH HAZARDS DUE TO USE OF COMPROMISED/SUBSTANDARD QUALITY OF FOOD-GRADE PLASTICS AND THEIR EXPOSURE TO EXTREME INDIAN CLIMATIC CONDITIONS' PERTAINING TO THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICALS AND PETROCHEMICALS)

	Total No. of Recommendations:	13
I.	Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government: (Recommendation Para Nos. 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13)	09
Percentage of Total:		69.23%
II.	Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies: -NIL-	00
Percentage of Total:		0%
III.	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee which require reiteration: (Recommendation Para No. 1, 3, 4 and 5)	04
Percentage of Total:		30.78%
IV.	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which the final replies of the Government are still awaited: -NIL-	00
Percentage of Total:		0%