



PRESS RELEASE

Protection of Public Health and Environment from Carcinogenic Asbestos Needs Effective Implementation of Government Decision

October 21, 2016, Kathmandu, Center for Public Health and Environmental Development (CEPHED) stressed the needs of effective implementation of Government's decision of banning all form of asbestos except lining of brake shoes and clutch plates, effective since 20 June 2015 for the protection of Public Health, especially of workers health and environment.

Today, a research based document "National Asbestos Profile of Nepal" prepared by CEPHED under the project supported by Takagi Fund for Citizen Science, Asia Ban Asbestos Network (ABAN) and International Ban Asbestos Secretariat (IBAS) has been released by the **Chief Guest Mr. Narayan Raj Timalsina**, Acting Secretary, Ministry of Population and Environment (MOPE) in an interaction program organized by CEPHED participated by some 50 persons from different concerned government agencies, development agencies, private agencies, consumers, professional associations like FCAN, FGSFN, PABSON, GEFONT, Trade Unions, Health professional and media personnel. Other special remarks have been made by, ILO, WHO representatives, NHRC, Department of Customs and several other professional organizations and OSH health professionals and experts. Program were held under the chairmanship of **Mr. Mohan Katuwal**, Advisor of CEPHED, President of Federation of Grill and Steel Fabricators Nepal and Vice President (Objective), Small and Cottage Industry , Nepal

Chief Guests and other delegations from concerned government and private agencies strongly believed that this country's National Asbestos Profile will be very useful and complement in many ways Government of Nepal, especially to the Ministry of Population and Environment (MOPE) , Ministry of Health (MOH), Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA), Ministry of Labour and Emploument (MOLE) and Ministry of Finance (MOF)'s work towards effective implementation of Government of Nepal's Asbestos banning decision, market monitoring and equally useful for other concerned stakeholders towards protection of the public health, workers health and environment. This profile will be also very useful for Government of Nepal in realizing its national obligation under multiple chemicals Conventions such as Rotterdam Convention, Basel Convention and SAICM etc. to which Nepal is party since a decade ago.

It is a matter of pride to state that Nepal is the first country in South Asia to ban the Import, Sale, Distribution and Uses of all forms of Asbestos (Corrugated / Non-corrugated Sheet, Tiles, Insulators etc.) and Asbestos containing products except asbestos lining of Brake Shoe and Clutch Plates, on December 22, 2014. The decision took effects after 181 days of Gazette notification i.e. on 20 June 2015. Since then there has been continued efforts made by concerned ministries and their department especially the Department of Customs in coordination with all other related departments, stakeholder has achieved very noticeable result of about 50% reduction in importation within a year of effective implementation, still more has to be done and hence called for effective implementation of banning decision and increased market monitoring. It has been believed and committed from concered agencies especially Department of Customs and Department of Commerce that in coming years they will able to achieve 100% import ban and regulate the market accordingly with the cooperation from all stakeholders and concerned other government agencies towards making the ZERO importation.

As Nepal has achieved legal ban of import, sale, distribution and uses of asbestos and asbestos containing products for protection of public health and environment from these deadly toxic substances, urgent need of developing the national action plant and elimination strategies has been felt. In this regard, this National Asbestos Profile prepared based on actual field condition by CEPHED was appreciated as best complement by Mr. Narayan Raj Timilsina, Acting Secretary at MOPE. This document serves as the base line for asbestos



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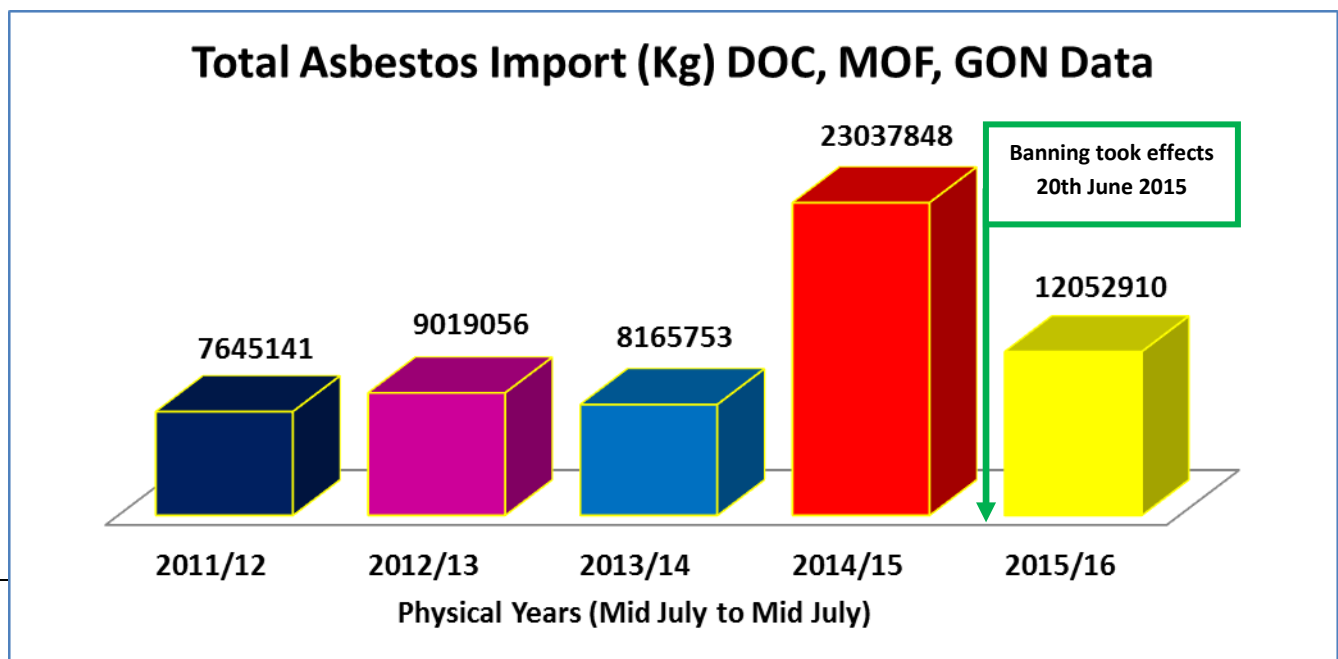
related health and environmental hazards for the different government agencies engaged in further monitoring and implementation.

In coming days, along with our continued efforts towards effective implementation of the decision, all the concerned ministries and their respective departments have to take up the findings, conclusions and recommendations to the implementation level by making appropriate arrangement of legal, institutions, financial and coordination mechanisms, said Mr. Ram Charitra Sah, Environment Scientist and Executive Director of CEPHED.

There is a need of ensuring that no asbestos containing construction materials would be allowed to be imported and used for any new constructions especially post disaster reconstruction of Nepal. At the same time, all the concerned ministries would also take appropriate initiatives towards developing national action plan, reduction of all possible and potential exposure as well as diseases associated to asbestos and most importantly environmentally sound management of all asbestos containing wastes going to be generated from the past and current uses.

The research and consultations which have been taken place in Nepal regarding asbestos consumption, geographical trends, workers' exposures, incidences of asbestos-related diseases and levels of environmental contamination and the data which has been accumulated and included in this National Asbestos Profile (NAP) prepared by CEPHED as a result of these enquiries are extremely valuable for protecting occupational and public health with a focus for asbestos audits and enquiries. This National Asbestos Profile of Nepal marks a starting point in a national dialogue which will, if it is to succeed, provide the opportunity for all civil society stakeholders and concerned government agencies to become engaged in the battle for a safer world. An asbestos-free future is possible, well said by Ms Laurie Kazan-Allen, Coordinator, International Ban Asbestos Secretariat (IBAS), UK.

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खण्ड ६४ संख्या ३० नेपाल राजपत्र भाग ५ मिति २०७१/१२/१७

सूचना ४

नेपाल सरकारले वातावरण संरक्षण ऐन, २०५३ को दफा ७ को उपदफा (३) ले दिएको अधिकार प्रयोग गरी यो सूचना प्रकाशन भएको मितिले १८१ औं दिनदेखि लागू हुने गरी सवारी साधनमा प्रयोग हुने Brake Shoe र Clutch Plate को Asbestos Lining बाहेक Asbestos Corrugated/ Non-Corrugated Sheet, Tiles, Insulators आदि सबै Asbestos र Asbestos युक्त वस्तुको आयात, विक्री वितरण र प्रयोग गर्न प्रतिबन्ध लगाएको छ।

आज्ञाले,

महेन्द्र मान गुरुङ्ग
नेपाल सरकारको नि.सचिव

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In exercise of the power conferred by Environment Protection Act 1997 (Section 7 and Sub-section 3), shall come into effects from 181 days from the date of publication of this notice by the Government of Nepal has banned the Import, Sale, Distribution and Use of all Asbestos and Asbestos containing products including Corrugated, Non Corrugated Sheet, Tiles, Insulators etc. except the asbestos lining of automobile's brake shoe and clutch plate.

With permission
Mahendra Man Gurung
Acting Secretary, Government of Nepal



Figure 1 Chief Guest, Mr. Narayan Raj Timilsina, Acting Secretary, Ministry of Population and Environment addressing the National Asbestos Profile Launching Program



Figure 2. Mr. Janak Chaudhary, General Secretary, GEFONT addressing the OSH and ASBESTOS interaction program