

BAN ON IDENTIFIED SINGLE USE PLASTIC ITEMS FROM 1ST JULY 2022

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Environmental Pollution - Air, Water, Soil & E-waste

In line with the clarion call given by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, to phase out single use plastic items by 2022, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India notified the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021, on 12 August 2021. Carrying forward the spirit of 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsava', a defining step to curb pollution caused by littered and unmanaged plastic waste is being taken by the country. India will ban manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of identified single use plastic items, which have low utility and high littering potential, all across the country from July 1, 2022.

The adverse impacts of littered single use plastic items plastic on both terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, including in marine environment are globally recognized. Addressing pollution due to single use plastic items has become an important environmental challenge confronting all countries.

In the 4th United Nations Environment Assembly held in 2019, India had piloted a resolution on addressing single-use plastic products pollution, recognizing the urgent need for the global community to focus on this very important issue. The adoption of this resolution at UNEA 4 was a significant step. In the recently concluded 5th session of United Nations Environment Assembly in March 2022, India engaged constructively with all member states to develop consensus on the resolution for driving global action on plastic pollution.

The Government of India has taken resolute steps for mitigation of pollution caused by littered Single Use Plastics. The list of banned items includes -ear buds with plastic sticks, plastic sticks for balloons, plastic flags, candy sticks, ice- cream sticks, polystyrene (Thermocol) for decoration, plastic plates, cups, glasses, cutlery such as forks, spoons, knives, straw, trays, wrapping or packing films around sweet boxes, invitation cards, cigarette packets, plastic or PVC banners less than 100 micron, stirrers.

The Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021, also prohibit manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of plastic carry bags having thickness less than seventy five microns with effect from 30th September, 2021, and having thickness less than thickness of one hundred and twenty microns with effect from the 31st December, 2022.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has also notified the Guidelines on Extended Producers Responsibility on plastic packaging as Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2022 on 16th February, 2022. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is responsibility of a producer for the environmentally sound management of the product until the end of its life. The Guidelines will provide framework to strengthen circular economy of plastic packaging waste, promote development of new alternatives to plastic packaging and provide next steps for moving towards sustainable plastic packaging by businesses.

Capacity building workshops are being organized for MSME units to provide them technical assistance for manufacturing of alternatives to banned single use plastic items with the involvement of CPCB/SPCBs/PCCs along with Ministry of Small Micro and Medium Enterprises and Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering (CIPET) and their state centres. Provisions have also been made to support such enterprises in transitioning away from banned single use

plastics.

The Government of India has also taken steps to promote innovation and provide an ecosystem for accelerated penetration and availability of alternatives all across the country.

For effective enforcement of ban on identified SUP items from 1 July 2022, national and state level control rooms will be set up and special enforcement teams will be formed for checking illegal manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of banned single use plastic items. States and Union Territories have been asked to set up border check points to stop inter-state movement of any banned single use plastic items.

CPCB Grievance Redressal App has been launched to empower citizens to help curb plastic menace. For wider public outreach, PRAKRITI - mascot was also launched on 5th April.

The Government has been taking measures for awareness generation towards elimination of single use plastics. The awareness campaign has brought together entrepreneurs and startups, industry, Central, State and Local Governments, regulatory bodies, experts, citizens organizations, R& D and academic institutions.

The success of the ban will only be possible through effective engagement and concerted actions by all stakeholders and enthusiastic public participation, believes the Ministry.

HS/PD

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