

MCD issues circular to stakeholders on banning Single Use Plastic

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NEW DELHI : The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has issued a circular to all e-commerce companies, street vendors, retailers, stockist, local shopkeepers and commercial establishments among others regarding the elimination of Single Use Plastic (SUP).

The circular issued guidelines including ensuring zero inventory of the banned SUP items. The ban on SUP comes into effect on July 1, 2022.

"The carry bags made of virgin or recycled plastic should not be less than 75mm and 120 microns in thickness with effect from December 31st, 2022. The plastic sheet which is not an integral part of multi-layered packaging and cover made of plastic sheet used for packaging, wrapping the commodity should not be less than fifty microns in thickness except where the thickness of the plastic sheet impairs the functionality of the product," the circular said.

Plastic material, in any form including Vinyl Acetate – Maleic Acid – Vinyl Chloride Copolymer, for storing, packing, or selling pan masala, gutkha, and tobacco should not be used, the circular added.

"The Plastic Industry is one of the big sectors in India, which is not only a labour intensive but also involves huge capital expenditure (CAPEX) in terms of plant & machinery, and employment opportunities and contributes significantly to the nation's exchequer. These business units manufacturing single/standalone products which fall under the banned category will face an unprecedented situation in terms of economic and fiscal issues," said Jigish Doshi, President, Plastindia Foundation.

For compliance with the provisions the stakeholders covered under the Plastic Waste Management Rules have been directed to not supply plastic raw materials to producers in formal/informal sector engaged in production of banned SUP items. "All manufacturers of plastic raw material should ensure that suppliers/stockists/dealers and other entities engaged in the industry's supply chain do not supply plastic raw materials to the producers engaged production of banned SUP items," the circular said.

In case of non-compliance, strict action will be taken against the defaulters including closure of the unit, disconnection of electricity and water connections, and levying fines. This comes in the backdrop of environment ministry implementing the ban on July 1, 2022 and forming special task forces for checking any illegal manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of banned SUP items across the country.

Mint has previously reported that the MSMEs have previously requested the government for a staggered implementation of the ban to allow a smooth transition to alternatives.

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“These manufacturers need to be protected by the Government by extending support in terms of the policy as well as fiscal incentives. One of the policy guidelines possibly is to extend some more time to the manufacturing units to enable them to comply with the order complemented with financial support from the government across the country. Industry and Society will need viable alternatives to Single-Use Plastics products. While for Plastics Carry Bags, it is only a matter of increasing the thickness to 120 microns but finding alternatives for Plastic Plates and Cutleries will be a challenge unless the thickness of these items is increased in order to make them Reusable/ Recyclable. To achieve the desired objective, we will need to make a significant investment in R&D and innovative technology to develop alternative products, which will take some time. The ragpickers don't have the technology or are not incentivized enough to collect small plastic waste like straws etc. Therefore, the need of the hour is a waste management solution and recycling technology that ensures proper collection and recycling of plastic waste. The ragpickers who play a key role in this process should also be given proper incentives. Waste management solutions and recycling technologies need to be put in place.”

On Tuesday, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) said it has written to Yadav to push back the ban by a year. MSMEs have warned that the ban could result in the closure of swab manufacturing in India, threatening around 3,000 MSMEs and 15,000 jobs.