

Delhi seeks GST reduction on raw materials of alternatives to single-use plastic

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The Delhi government will seek a reduction in the GST rates of raw materials for manufacturing alternatives to single-use plastics after the Centre imposed a ban on them, said state environment minister Gopal Rai.

The announcement came after a roundtable with stakeholders to discuss SUP alternatives. During the meeting, some stakeholders drew the minister's attention to high GST rates on raw materials for green alternatives.

Following this, Rai said the Delhi government will request the Centre to reduce GST rates on raw materials to manufacture alternatives to single-use plastics.

Further, the minister states that there is a lot of confusion among the public and even some government agencies regarding the items covered under the ban.

In view of this, the Delhi government will issue a helpline number to register complaints if action is taken for using products that are not banned.

"We will conduct a training session for our enforcement teams so that there is no confusion while implementing the ban," Rai said.

Rai also said people think a ban on SUP items means a ban on plastic carry bags and that is why there is an urgent need to create awareness among the public.

The Delhi government is also working on a website which will contain all information related to banned SUP items, their alternatives and sources of raw material to manufacture alternatives.

Alternative measures

The Delhi government has decided to provide incentives to SUP manufacturing units willing to switch over to green alternatives.

The government has also issued directions to urban local bodies to install kiosks in markets for the promotion and sale of SUP alternatives. Delhi generates 1,060 tonnes of plastic waste per day. SUP is estimated to be 5.6 per cent (or 56 kg per metric tonnes) of the total solid waste in the capital.

Enforcing the ban without providing alternatives to people will be detrimental considering the effect of Covid on businesses and inflation, an official said on Saturday.

Rai had on Friday said the ban comes into effect when the unemployment rate is high.

"It is going to affect a large number of manufacturers, distributors and sellers of SUP items. Many people will find it difficult to make their ends meet. These people are our own," he had said.

A three-day fair is being organised at the Thyagraj Stadium to promote alternatives to SUP items.