

Curb mfg of single-use plastic items by Oct 2: Centre to states

Even Thermocol Cutlery And PET Bottles On Hit-List

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New Delhi:

The Centre has issued an advisory to states and Union Territories asking them to curb production of plastic bags, plastic cutlery and cutlery made of thermocol before October 2 in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call to eliminate single-use plastics by 2022.

The advisory issued by the ministry of environment, forest and climate change said earlier this month that all government offices, public and private sector firms and all offices may be discouraged to use plastic products, including artificial flowers, banners, flags, flower pots, PET plastic water bottles, plastic stationery items like folders and any other plastic material for which an alternative exists.

The ministry is expected to shortly come out with a clear definition of single-use plastics, which is expected to expand upon this advisory, sources told **TOI**. Nearly 24 states and six UTs have issued specific regulations to curb the use of single-use plastics and the ministry's advisory said its suggestions should be added to the existing orders or to any new regulations that a state or UT undertakes.




It has urged all institutions to promote and practise source segregation on the office premises. The advisory said that the packaging industry may be called upon to implement the extended producer responsibility by effectively collecting back plastic waste.

The Centre has said states and UTs can play a key role in promoting eco-friendly alternatives in order to phase out single-use plastics progressively. "Projects which support up scaling or recycling of single-use plastic items and promote small-scale or micro enterprises, should be encouraged. Encouragement needs to be given for development of alternative packaging materials and single use plastics," according to the advisory.

It called for awareness and sensitisation campaigns using TV, radio "to discourage the use of single-use plastic".

No single-use plastic at any govt-organised event: Advisory

The advisory said all events organised by or sponsored by the government shall be single-use plastic free. It said the government should try to invite eminent public personalities to serve as brand ambassadors to take part in campaigns to discourage the use of single-use plastics. "Attention should be focussed on creating awareness/ sensitisation in hotspots of plastic usage, including tourist spots, religious spots, beaches, pilgrimage sites, schools, colleges," according to the advisory.

THESE MAY GO OFF THE TABLE		
 <p>All plastic carry bags, with or without handles, irrespective of thickness and size</p>	 <p>Plastic tableware and cutlery, including plates, plastic cups, spoons, forks, glass straws, stirrers</p>	 <p>Tableware, other decorative items made of styrofoam (thermocool)</p>
<p>➤ States urged to act against these products</p> <p>➤ Manufacturers and consumers to be encouraged to shift to environment-friendly materials</p>		<p>➤ Govt offices, firms to discourage single-use plastic items such as artificial flowers, banners, flags, flower pots, PET bottles and stationery items like folders</p>

Sources said the Centre will also provide enough time to companies to transition to a single-use plastics-free regime to ensure that supply chains are not disrupted. Consumer goods companies had recently met representatives of government think-tank Niti Aayog to discuss the road ahead for the industry. Sources said the companies are on board to comply with the rules but want enough time to be provided to move to alternatives.

The advisory said the focus of campaigns to discourage use of single-use plastic should be on students and young adults in order to

usher in behavioural change. It called for changes in school curriculum to discourage use of single-use plastics, promote use of alternative materials.