

Guest Column: How to beat plastic pollution



This World Environment Day is addressing the single biggest man-made pollutant on earth, the innocuous plastic . Plastic is a part of our daily lives like nothing else is. Its versatility is a boon and its permanence a bane. While industry is spending millions of rupees constantly improving packaging to ensure its customers world- wide are kept happy, the municipalities are now grappling with the monstrous problem of dealing with plastic waste, which is not just growing in volumes, but is also hard to tackle owing to its incredibly complicated composition that no technology can deal with.

For effective collection of plastic waste, the BBMP must upgrade its dry waste collection centres to receive and store the volumes that a ward generates. Supporting these waste picker -run operations will maximise the plastics that can be sent for recycling.

However, not all plastic can be recycled, and this is where the ban on its use plays an important role. The BBMP and the FSSAI, which are the licencing authorities for the branded operations, must ban single- use disposable plastics including carry bags, and use and throw cutlery used mostly by the food and beverage operators (FBOs) , the smaller food carts and stalls as well as the street vendors.

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The regulatory authorities like the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board(KSPCB) must ensure that the manufacturing operations are compliant with the ban and shut down the manufacturing units of the carry bags and thin single- use plastics, and stop the entry of outstation supplies.

While the necessary policies and rules for all of the above is in place, implementation is tardy. The most important requirement is for industry to examine how producers can start taking responsibility for the re-design packaging and till such time it is upto the consumers to refuse single- use disposables and multi- layer packaging and send a strong message to it.