



Ban on Plastic! A Blessing or A Curse

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ABSTRACT

Use of plastic is a habit. Ban on plastic is an essential control by government. There are obvious reactions to this policy both from the trading community and the citizens. There are number of effects of this policy on the day to day civic life as well as on the business. The present research paper is based on the primary data collected through questionnaire, from different parts of the city as well as with interviews of the traders. Secondary data is adopted from the government policy documents and by referring websites. A number of suggestions are made to make effective use of the ban on plastic with smooth going.

Keywords-- Globalization, Ban on Plastic, Micron, Hygiene, Environment Pollution, Environment Friendly Alternatives

I. INTRODUCTION

Environmental awareness is a matter of concerned all over. With the opening of the 21st Century the entire world is a common market. WTO (1995) and BRIC (2010) have brought together the developed as well as developing nations. A number of trade treaties have been signed across the globe making business with a competitive edge for each other. One of such concerns is the Ban on use of Plastic for the health and hygiene of living beings. According to the Earth Policy Institute, nearly one trillion plastic bags are used worldwide every year however it is proved that plastic is not degradable as it contains specific chemicals. Today in several parts of the world plastic bags have been banned.

In the state of Maharashtra, a huge amount of plastic waste every day hence it has become the top priority consideration to totally stop the uses of plastic as it is hazardous for the health of living beings. On March 23rd 2018 the state government of Maharashtra has passed a notification for the ban on use of plastic items starting with

23rd June 2018 the government has brought into practice this notification by announcing penal penalties as well as imprisonment for the wrong doers. The present paper considers of the extent and the impact of ban on the use of plastic and its effects on the various parts of the society. Faculty members at the commerce wing, Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth had undertaken a research on the impact of ban on use of plastic.

Worldwide fight against the use of plastic upon the opening up of the 21st century, besides the international trade practices the awareness for health and hygiene across the various nations has identified the ill effects of plastic starting with South Africa in 2003 number of nations have either levied heavy dose of taxes through malls and public places on the use of plastic. Following are the leading examples of nations placing ban on the use of plastic – Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, South Africa, Botswana to name a few. Today in any of the African Continental nations 90% of the use of plastic has been dropped out as regards Europe since 1994 the awareness of the fight against plastic started with heavy taxation on the use of plastic nations like England, Italy, Weles and Germany have accepted the banning of use of plastic even in the south and north America the use of plastic bags has either been banned or taxed. In case of Asia particularly after the Olympics games of 2008 China placed a ban on all thin plastic bags further in different parts of Asia either ban or heavy taxation has been accepted in nations like Bangladesh, Cambodia, Honkong, Indonesia and Malaysia. India is no longer backward in this connection and in the different parts of the nation the awareness is growing.

The state of Maharashtra is treated as a second largest state next to Uttar Pradesh and Madhypradesh in the geographical spread in the nation Maharashtra is treated as a pragmatic, progressive state for the literacy, hygiene as well as social developments. It is surprising still that the topic of ban on the use of plastic was taken up as late as in 2006. For the first time the state government

banned the use of plastic items below 50 microns of thickness as it is hazardous for the human as well as for animal health. Off late, on 23rd March 2018 a policy to ban completely the use of plastic has been announced to come into effect from 23rd June 2018. Further as per notification individuals found violating the ban would be penalized by Rs. 5,000/- for the first time, by Rs.10,000/- for the second time and for the repeat offenders as much as Rs.25,000/- and also to face imprisonment.

II. BAN ON PLASTIC! A BLESSING OR A CURSE

Ban on plastic in Maharashtra state has become a point of law and order. Besides its health and hygiene issues, its socio economic impact has brought out the matter on the table of discussions at various levels plastic bags and the different other items of plastic are of day to day use at various levels of the strata of the economy both in urban and rural areas of Maharashtra. Its extremity has come to the surface as from the dustbins to the collection centers to the disposal centers of garbage and yet the flowing reverse and dams and even sea shores are flooded with the thrown outs of plastic. Following are mainly the items of plastic now banned in Maharashtra cups and plates. Utensils, straws and glasses. Bags and containers even the similar items of thermocol are non degradable.

On the other hand the following items have been excluded from the ban on the use of plastic such as Medicines rapped with plastic, agro related, nursery related and horticulture related bags, plastics used in exports items. Production related used plastic, dustbins and garbage bags, milk, edible oil containers (Poly-pack) etc..

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of this research work both the primary and the secondary data have been collected from different sources. Primary data is collected by adopting questionnaire method and interview method; whereas the secondary data is collected from the government policy documents, notification, news items and the official magazines.

Primary data was collected with the help of questionnaire circulated to shopkeepers, street side hawkers, malls through the consumers. A number of items like glossary, fruits and vegetables, flowers and ready to eat items usually are parceled with plastic bags that are now banned. Moreover interview method was applied to gather the opinions of the wholesalers in market yard about the ban on the use of plastic. The data so collected was classified and tabulated to draw meaningful conclusions

IV. SOCIO ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE POLICY ON PLASTIC BAN

As a student and faculty in commerce we felt it essential to understand the nature and impact of ban on use of plastic in Maharashtra state.

V. MAIN OBSERVATIONS AND FINDINGS

Following are the side effects of the use of plastic which has laid to the chronic situation in the society. Following are the impacts of the same

1. Garbage as well as the dirt goes on accumulating from home to the collection center to the disposal center to the reverse and sea shores.
2. The burning out method of disposal generates obnoxious fumes hazardous to human health.
3. Plastic is not 100% degradable hence flows ahead and accumulates
4. As regards animals the intake of plastics leads to total un-health.
5. Ban on plastic having no alternatives available has laid to further depressionary trends in the market.

On the basis of the data collected following are the main observations expressed by the consumers/ citizens, as well as traders.

VI. OBSERVATIONS OF THE CONSUMERS/ CITIZENS

- Citizens find it convenient and comfortable to carry folded plastic bags in transit.
- Plastic bags are useful as a temporary carrier as well as for storage for days together.
- Monetary fine levied on anybody holding plastic bags forthwith is found torturous
- Alternative packing material has added to the burden of cost to the end consumers.
- Ordinary citizens are not accustomed to the alternative packing material like cotton bags etc.
- Newspaper packing specially for food products is difficult unfolded and unhygienic too

VII. OBSERVATIONS OF THE TRADERS

- **Ban on plastic policy** was announced abruptly.
- **The stock of plastic bags and wrappers** is treated illegal and useless.
- Alternative environment friendly packing material yet needs to be manufactured on mass scale and such factories and the products are not yet available.
- Ban on plastic bags has resulted as a hurdle in business development.

- Even traders are the responsible citizens but are looked down as criminals and offenders.

VIII. SUGGESTIONS AND ALTERNATIVE METHODS

Use of plastic has been a part of civic life for years together. No doubt, plastic has been proved to be hazardous and dangerous to the human life as well as for the animal life. Environment pollution has crossed the limits hence; ban on plastic was the need of the hour.

However policy of ban on plastic should have been handled with better care and planning.

Following are the main suggestions in this connection

- Overnight change of habits is impossible hence step by step but determined policy was essential
- Training and education of citizens for minimizing the use of plastic, disposal of waste and waste management plan should have been adopted.
- Torturous penalty of heavy fine including imprisonment may create reaction
- Alternative material to plastic bags should have been researched.
- Even the traders associations should be consulted and taken in confidence from time to time

IX. CONCLUSION & EPILOGUE

Use of plastic is a civic habit for generations. Worldwide, the huge, uncontrolled use of plastics has resulted into threat to human life. Ban on plastic is an essential control by government. There are obvious reactions to this policy both from the trading community and the citizens. There are number of effects of this policy on the day to day civic life as well as on the business. . A number of suggestions are made to make effective use of the ban on plastic with smooth going.

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