



Date – 7 July 2022

Alternatives to Plastic: NITI Aayog



- Recently NITI Aayog has released a report titled ‘Alternative Products and Technologies for Plastics and their Applications’ to encourage the use of alternatives to plastics.
- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has also banned Single Use Plastic (SUP), violating this ban will attract penal action under Section 15 of the Environment Protection Act (EPA).

Key features of the report:

Global Plastics Production and Disposal:

- Cumulative production of polymers, synthetic fibers and additives “between” 1950-2015 was 8,300 million tonnes, of which 55% was

dumped directly into landfills or 8% incinerated and only 6% of plastics were recycled.

- If production is continued at this rate till the year 2050, it will produce 12,000 metric tons of plastic.

Case of India:

- India produced 47 million tonnes of plastic waste annually, of which per capita waste increased from 700 grams to 2,500 grams in the last five years.
- Goa, Delhi and Kerala generated the highest per capita plastic waste, while Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura generated the lowest per capita plastic waste.

Challenge:

- Globally, 97–99% of these plastics are derived from fossil fuel feedstocks, while the remaining 1-3% is bio (plant) based plastics.
- Only a small portion of this plastic waste is recycled, as it is believed that the majority of this waste is expelled into the environment through various polluting routes.
- India collects only 60% of its plastic waste and the remaining 40% remains uncollected which directly enters the environment as waste.
- Almost every piece of plastic begins as a fossil fuel, and greenhouse gases (GHG) are emitted at **each stage of the plastic lifecycle**:
 - Fossil fuel extraction and transportation
 - Plastics Refining and Manufacturing
 - Management of plastic waste
 - Impact on oceans, waterways and various ecosystem landscapes

Initiative:

- The most preferred option for waste management is waste reduction. Strengthen the waste reduction campaign through Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), proper labeling and composting and collection of biodegradable plastics, while relaxing the timelines for adoption of biodegradable plastics.

- Developing emerging technologies, for example additives that can convert plastics into biodegradable polyolefins, such as polypropylene and polyethylene.

Uses of Bio-Plastics:

- As an economical alternative to plastics.
- To encourage R&D and manufacturing sector.
- Increase transparency in the disclosure of waste generation, collection, recycling or scientific disposal to set accountability and avoid greenwashing.
- Greenwashing is a process of providing misleading information about how a company's products are environmentally sound.

Plastic option:

Glass:

- Glass has always been the safest and most viable option for packaging and use of food and liquids.
- Glass can be recycled multiple times, so it does not end up in landfills. It is cost effective given its durability and recyclability.

Bagasse:

- Compostable eco-friendly bagasse can eliminate the need for plastic in the form of disposable plate cups or boxes.
- After extracting the juice from sugarcane or beet, bagasse is made from the remaining pulp. It can also be used for other purposes like biofuel.

Bioplastics:

- Plant-based plastics, known as bioplastics, are touted as a green alternative to fossil fuel-based plastics, especially when it comes to food packaging.
- But bioplastics have their own environmental footprint, which requires growing crops and using land and water.
- Bioplastics are considered to be just as harmful and in some cases more harmful than conventional plastics.

Natural Fabrics:

- Millions of tiny plastic fibers are shed with each wash, making cotton, wool, linen and hemp the traditional choice when it comes to replacing polyester and nylon fabrics.
- Production of cotton is posing a serious threat to the environment.

Refill, reuse and buy unpacked:

- Least harmful packaging is one that can be used repeatedly or not at all.
- Reusable cloth bags for fruits and vegetables etc.
- Reusable containers and boxes for meat, fish, cheese etc.
- Refillable bottles and jars for oil and vinegar, cleaning liquids, etc.
- Wrapping Beeswax instead of Foil and Clingfilm.

Swadeep Kumar

Election of vice president



- Recently the Election Commission announced the Vice-Presidential election to be held in August 2022.

Provisions relating to Vice President:

- The Vice President is the second highest constitutional office of India. He serves for a term of five years, but he can continue in office notwithstanding the expiry of the term until the office is taken over by the successor.

- The Vice President can resign from office by giving his resignation to the President of India which becomes effective from the day the resignation is accepted.
- The Vice-President can be removed from office by a resolution of the Council of State (Rajya Sabha), which is then passed by a majority of the members present, with the consent required by the Lok Sabha. A motion to this effect can be moved only after giving a notice of not less than 14 days for the purpose.
- The Vice President is the ex-officio President of the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) and does not hold any other office of profit.

Qualification:

- Must be a citizen of India.
- Must have completed 35 years of age.
- Must be eligible for election as a member of the Rajya Sabha.
- Should not hold any office of profit under the Central Government or any State Government or any local authority or any other public authority.

Electoral College:

- According to Article 66 of the Constitution of India, the Vice President is elected by the members of the Electoral College.

Electoral Board Members:

- Elected members of Rajya Sabha.
- Nominated members of Rajya Sabha.
- Elected members of Lok Sabha.

What is the election process?

- According to Article 68 of the Indian Constitution, elections to fill a vacancy caused by the termination of office must be completed before the term of the outgoing Vice President expires.
- The superintendence, direction and control of the conduct of elections to the office of the Vice-President is vested in the Election Commission of India under Article 324 of the Constitution along with the Presidential

and Vice-President Election Act, 1952 and the President and Vice-President's Election Rules, 1974.

- Notification for election shall be issued on or after sixty days before the expiry of the term of the outgoing Vice-President.
- Since all the members of the electoral college are members of both the Houses of Parliament, each Member of Parliament's vote will have the same value i.e. 1 (one).
- The Election Commission, in consultation with the Central Government, appoints the Secretary General of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha as Returning Officers on rotational basis.
- Accordingly, the Secretary General, Lok Sabha shall be appointed as the Returning Officer for the present election to the office of the Vice President of India.
- The Commission has also decided to appoint an Assistant Returning Officer in the Parliament House (Lok Sabha) to assist the Returning Officer.
- As per Rule 8 of the Election of President and Vice-President Rules, 1974, voting for the election shall be held in the Parliament House.

Swadeep Kumar

YOJNA IAS

Unethical Practices should be stopped in Pharma Field

Context:

Pharma should be used for the well-being of the Public. Through a recent decision, the honorable supreme court has cleared it. In a judgment of the Supreme Court of India by a two-judge Bench

Introduction court dismissed the Special Leave Petition by Apex Laboratories to claim deduction on freebies given to doctors. the Bench said that the act of pharmaceutical companies giving freebies to doctors is clearly

‘prohibited by the law’. Further, it cannot be claimed as a deduction under Section 37(1) of the Income Tax Act, 1961.

Introduction

In pharma filed we generally see the unethical practice of the gifting the medicines to the doctors and the companies raised the price of medicines accordingly. Some doctors who received the gift from the several pharma company recommend their medicines to the patient. In this way the patient are generally exploited and cheated.

Court states that it is a type of bribe which should be stopped immediately. Justice Ravindra Bhatt said that pharmaceutical companies have misused a legal gap which gave the right stop pharma companies for the promotion of his brand through the gifting of medicines to doctors. However MCI (Medical Council of India) never recognized this mal practice. Judge said that these types of the mal practices ultimately impacts the life of the costumer. The pharmaceutical company raises the price of the medicines which ultimately impacts the public life, which should not be tolerated.

Upholding the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) circular dated August 1, 2012, and applying it to the case, the Court also cited and relied upon Regulation 6.8 of the Indian Medical Council (Professional Conduct, Etiquette and Ethics) Regulations, 2002 framed under the Medical Council Act, 1956, now repealed and substituted by the National Medical Commission Act, 2019.

The court also highlighted Qureshi (2007) 2 SCC 759 and Commissioner Of Income Tax vs Khemchand Motilal Jain to explain this illegal practice which must be prohibited

What is the practice in US

To elaborate his decision court had to take the example of US where the the health department of the Govt of US stated in its report “Savings Available Under Full Generic Substitution of Multiple Source Brand Drugs in Medicare Part D” dated July 23, 2018 that the beneficiaries could have saved over \$600 million in out-of-pocket payments had they been dispensed generic equivalent drugs. Similar voice was raised by the reason of the Physician Payments Sunshine Act 2010 also known as Section 6002 of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) of 2010

The Issue of Retail price

It has been observed in India there is huge anomalies in the retail price of the medicines. Some medicine provide the discount up to 90 %. However still there cost is high. The retail price of the medicine in India is a scam and this scam is going on with the support of pharma companies. Generally the medicines are sold in the shop on MRP. These types of the malpractices impacts the treatment of a patient and the life of the patient as well

Conclusion

As per the above discussion, it can be concluded that, government should have strong hold on the pharma, companies in India. The medicines are the essential for the life of the citizens therefore every type of the mal practices in the field of the pharma should be stopped. However, this is the right of pharma company to provide the medicine in free to doctor to promote their brand , but this is also a moral and ethical duty of the doctor not to promote the medicines of the high price. Doctors should prescribe only those medicines which are cheap and effective. However government can fix the price of the some medicines also.

Anshul

YOJNA IAS