

# Govt decides to phase out plastic within 3 years

TNN Jul 17, 2012, 03.13AM IST

PANAJI: The state government intends to phase out the use of plastic for domestic use-such as carry bags, sachets, wrappers-over a period of three years. It also intends to make the throwing of plastics in public places a cognizable offence, where offenders will be penalized, environment minister Alina Saldanha told the Goa legislative assembly on Monday.

Saldanha said that as a short-term measure, the government will launch a drive at the end of the monsoon to collect plastics from public places such as highways, with the help of government departments like the PWD and the Goa state infrastructure development corporation. She said the matter will be taken up after consultation with all stakeholders like the tourism department, the village panchayats and the people.

In her written reply to a starred question by Fatorda MLA Vijai Sardesai, Saldanha said the measures to phase out plastic will take some time for implementation and will be done by involving all stakeholders. She said the government will conduct appropriate sensitization and awareness programmes for the [general public](#) and visiting tourists in this regard.

She also informed the House that in August 2002, the government had prohibited the carrying, use and sale of non-biodegradable PET bottles and plastic carry bags in certain CRZ areas in [Panaji](#), Caranzalem and Dona Paula, and also in some wildlife areas such as Cotigao. For other beach areas in Goa, the matter will be taken up in consideration with all stakeholders, Saldanha said.

Intervening in the debate, chief minister [Manohar Parrikar](#) reiterated that plastic is posing a serious problem to the state and that as assured by the minister for environment, public places like highways will be cleared of plastics by the end of the monsoon. Parrikar assured the House that as stated in his budget speech, the government intends to phase out the use of plastic within three years.

He further said that the government will consider making the throwing of plastic in public places a cognizable offence. The chief minister said that the government will work out a clear policy to phase out the use of plastic and that the policy will be placed before the House for scrutiny by members.

Reacting to a remark by Saldanha that the government will give priority to tourism areas in clearing plastics, opposition leader Pratapsingh Rane urged the government to give equal importance to the entire state. The environment minister agreed.