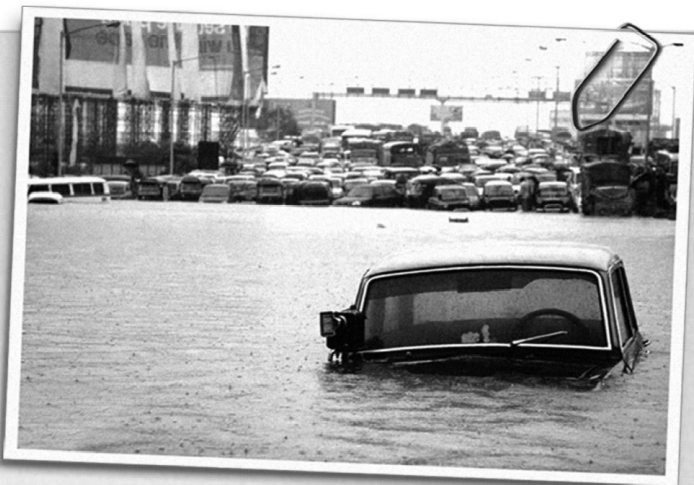


Honestly Sir,
was this caused
by plastic bags?



Respected Chief Minister Shri. Vilasrao Deshmukhji and fellow Mumbaikars,

We sincerely appreciate the flood relief and the rehabilitation efforts put in by the government to bring the city and state back on track. However, as the city limps back to normalcy, a myth has been perpetrated and allowed to grow. As per this myth, plastic is solely responsible for the collapse of the city's drainage system.

The reality is far removed from this. According to the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), plastics form less than 1% of Municipal Solid Waste in Mumbai. The primary cause of the flooding is the rampant littering and dumping of all types of waste into open sewers and drains. Scientifically speaking, plastic bags are lighter than water; which means that left to itself, plastic will float. Obviously then, the open drains could not have been choked by these plastic bags alone.

Plastic garbage bags can't be blamed either. Globally, this is the only method for collecting wet and dry garbage. However, the question to be addressed is the method in which garbage bags have been disposed in Mumbai city.

Today, life without plastics is almost unimaginable. Here are some other, lesser-known facts about plastic:

- **Plastic protects** food, medicines and personal products in the most cost-efficient manner. Plastic makes life simple and secure.
- **Plastic prevents** us from death, diseases, and adulteration with life-saving devices and packaging. (Sliced bread bags, milk pouches, edible oil pouches, blood bags, diapers ... all of them use plastic.) Plastic makes our life safe and healthy.
- **Plastic improves** energy efficiency, provides employment for people and generates revenue for the country.
- **Plastic prolongs the life** of our forests, conserves fossil fuels and through recycling, it helps India remain strong in the global arena.
- **It's not plastics but the people who pollute:** Less than 1% of the waste in Mithi River was found to be plastic. After the ban, 99% of Mumbai's problems will remain and 100% of the plastic industry, trade and employment will suffer.

In view of the above facts, the solution lies in proper waste management. The solution lies in timely cleaning of sewers and drains before the monsoons. It has very little to do with plastic bags. A ban on plastic bags will only be a retrograde step. It will not in any way address the deeper environmental issues that need to be tackled.

The plastic industry is a responsible one. Over the years, it has taken a number of initiatives in addressing environmental and socio-economic issues. This includes the promotion of bags with minimum thickness of 20 microns. We are also working actively to recycle plastic and are already running pilot recycling and waste management projects in Maharashtra.

We request the respected Chief Minister and all Mumbaikars to seriously consider all these facts. Will making plastics the sacrificial goat really help? We strongly feel that a better civic sense and efficient cleaning of the drainage system will help prevent a future 26/7.

The plastic industry is fully committed to partnering the city to build awareness to curb littering and provide global knowledge on waste management solutions. We request you to visit www.envis-icpe.com and www.plastindia.org to get the full picture on plastics.

Thanking you for your time,

Yours truly,

K. G. Ramanathan
President - Governing Council

Mahesh K. Shah
President - Plastindia Foundation

Ashok Goel
President - For and on behalf of
Organization of Plastics Processors of India

Harpal Singh
President - The All India Plastics
Manufacturers Associations



Indian Centre for Plastics
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PLASTINDIA FOUNDATION



Organization of Plastics
Processors of India

