

# PARYAVARAN MITRA

(Regd No. E/20934/Ahmedabad)

502, Raj Avenue, Bhaikaka Nagar Road, Nr. Thaltej Cross Road, Thaltej, Ahmedabad - 380 059

Phone : (079) 26851321

Email : paryavaranmitra@yahoo.com Website : <http://paryavaranmitra.org.in>

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Ref: PM/MP/2932/2020

1<sup>st</sup> July 2020

To,  
Shri Narendra Modi,  
Hon'ble prime minister  
New Delhi.

**Subject:** Regarding AATMANIRBHAR (Self-reliance) for waste disposal (plastic and household) workers.

**Shriman Narendrabhai,**

**Namaskar !**

**Paryavaran Mitra is a** Gujarat-based advocacy organization working on socio-environmental issues since 1997. It acts as a watch dog and pressure group in the formation of policies and implementation of environment acts and rules.

Green Catalyst (an initiative of Paryavaran Mitra) is a program to nurture and empower the youth to spread environmental awareness among citizens and initiate actions which will help improve the environment in the city. Green Catalyst is a leadership program that focuses on sustainability. Objective of the program is to prepare change agents (Green Catalyst), who will spread awareness and sensitize other youths and community.

We conducted a small study of waste pickers through our Green Catalysts. The study concluded that many waste pickers do not even have Aadhaar card and ration card. We observed that during lockdown they didn't able to get free rations as per the announcement of providing free rations to the people even without ration card by the Prime Minister's Scheme. Deprived and based on this experience we are writing you this letter with hope. We distributed sanitary kits to 100 families and Dry ration kits to 400 families through our Green Catalyst friends in different areas of Ahmedabad.

In the first five years of your tenure as Prime Minister, you emphasized the importance of cleanliness through the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, a commendable work being done across the country. In your second term, you drew the attention of the country and the world to the problem of plastic pollution. You have paid special attention to single use plastics. The Government of India has amended various Waste Management Rules in 2016. We like to draw your attention to the

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ground reality of implementation of Solid Waste Management Rules - 2017 and Plastic Waste Management Rules - 2017.

## **A - Solid Waste Management Rules-2017: Ground Reality in Implementation**

- 1) Door to door collection is done in big cities but the salaries of the cleaners/workers are paid by the housing society / apartment / flats or commercial complexes. These workers are not registered as laborers anywhere by the government / local bodies. So, that they do not get any benefits as laborers as provided by the government.
- 2) Since these cleaners work on a private basis, they are not provided with sanitary kits (masks, gloves, caps, shoes, soap for washing hands) neither do they have facilities for hand washing or bathing at their workplace.
- 3) Household waste is still not segregated across the country. So, these cleaners separate plastic waste in their own way.
- 4) The vehicles of the corporation come to pick up the waste in every society which is mostly mixed waste so that there is unnecessary increase at the solid waste dumping site i.e. even at the dumping site of solid waste the people who pick up the waste separate the plastic waste.

## **B- Plastic Waste Management Rules - 2017: Ground Reality in Implementation**

- 1) Plastic waste management rules are still in the early stages of implementation in the country so the plastic waste management mechanism is not yet properly aligned. In large cities and municipalities, people from the most vulnerable communities who live in slums or on foot path under the open sky are collecting plastic waste from certain areas and also separate multilayer and plain plastic from it. They separated plastic and give to scrap dealers. In current system, there is a lot of exploitation of plastic pickers.

### **Suggestions:**

Waste workers are Corona Warriors:

1. Workers collecting plastic / household waste should be identified as Warriors of Corona and registered as workers by the Government.
2. A welfare fund should be created for the Warriors of Corona from which they can be provided with housing as well as bathing facilities in certain areas of the workplace.

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3. Waste workers Corona Warriors should be provided Aadhar Card and linked with Jan Dhan Yojana and all should be given ration cards and also connect with various social security scheme.
4. Like Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Compulsory Employment Guarantee Act, minimum wage should be given to waste pickers in the city and they also should get fair price of collecting plastic waste.

If the government empowers the waste pickers, they will ensure good health for the whole country.

We are hoping that you will sensitively taking these suggestions forward and this vulnerable group will get proper benefits.

Thank you,



Mahesh pandya.

Director,

And

Member, State Level waste management committee.

Cc.

Dr. Rajiv Kumar  
Vice Chairman,  
NITI Aayog, Government of India  
Yojana Bhavan, Sansad Marg  
New Delhi - 110001