



'Plastic waste imports to India go up'

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Influx of PET bottles quadrupled from 2017 to 2018, according to green body

- In spite of a ban on the import of plastic waste into India, the influx of PET bottles has quadrupled from 2017 to 2018 , because of legal loophole, says a Delhi-based environmentalist organisation, Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Smriti Manch (PDUSM).
- Indian firms are importing plastic scraps from China, Italy, Japan and Malawi for recycling and the imports of PET bottle scrap & flakes has increased from 12,000 tonnes in FY 16-17 to 48,000 tonnes in FY 17-18 growing @ 290%.
- India has already imported 25,000 MT in the first 3 months of FY 18-19.

Wide gap

- Government and industry estimates suggest that India consumes about 13 million tonnes of plastic and recycles only about 4 million tonnes.
- A lack of an efficient waste segregation system and inadequate collection is the root cause, according to experts, for much of the plastic not making its way to recycling centres.
- To incentivise domestic plastic recycling units, the government had banned the import of plastic waste, particularly PET bottles in 2015.
- In 2016, an amendment allowed such imports as long as they were carried out by agencies situated in Special Economic Zones.

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