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Date: 27/12/18

Ban is not against plastic, but pollution caused: Panel

CHENNAI The regional level awareness conference 'Plastic Pollution-Free Tamil Nadu' was held in the city on Wednesday, with several stakeholders taking part in it.

Reinstating the state's seriousness about implementing the ban on single-use plastics from January 1, 2019, the regional level awareness meet ahead of the ban was held in the city at the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board Office.

Several representatives from the government, including the Minister for Environment and Pollution Control Department K C Karuppanan, the TNPCB Chairman Shambhu Kadlotkar, D Karthikeyan, Commissioner, Greater Chennai Corporation, and Collectors of districts like Thiruvannamalai, Villupuram, Kanchipuram, Tiruvallur and Cuddalore, along with the SPs from each of the districts were present at the meet.

Several representatives from resident welfare associations, hotel associations and manufacturers associations were also present at the event. Santhosh Babu, who is part of the three-member coordination committee for the implementation of the ban said, "Let us make it very clear that the ban is not against plastic but against plastic pollution. The plan is to impose the ban and resort to carrot and stick policy wherever needed to ensure effective implementation." P Anantha, another member of the committee and commissioner, Food Safety Department, added that mindless consumption of plastics has made people blind of its harmful effects.

Various Collectors shared the ways in which they have been preparing their respective districts for the ban. In Cuddalore, there is an ongoing experiment to see how maravallikizhanga can be a durable alternative for plastics. V Anbuselvan, Cuddalore Collector, said,

"We have them growing in abundance and we are looking at making plates and cups out of them. Only concern being the growth of fungus on them and we are studying the ways in which they can prove to be an effective alternative."

