

GOVERNMENT STRENGTHENS DEFENCE



JANUARY 2018: UIDAI introduced a 16-digit virtual ID to mask Aadhaar numbers



SEBI released note on cybersecurity and cyber resilience framework for registrars to issue/share transfer agents



JUNE 2017: RBI released IT framework for NBFC sector



APRIL 2017: IRDA released guidelines on information & cybersecurity for insurers



MAY 2017: Ministry of Power announced the setting up of 4 sectoral CERTs (Computer Emergency Response Teams) for power transmission and distribution



JUNE 2016: RBI came up with notification on cybersecurity framework for banks

Snag: RTPS 8th unit shuts down

RAICHUR: The 8th unit of the Raichur Thermal Power Station (RTPS) at Shakthinagar halted production on Saturday owing to a technical problem. The officials said the eighth unit, which has the capacity to generate 250 megawatt of power, had developed a minor glitch. The repair works were already under progress and the unit will resume power generation from Sunday. Earlier, due to annual maintenance, the first and second units were shut down. Also, the sixth unit was shut down due to fall in the demand for power. DH News Service

Power issue: Haryana to compensate farmers CHANDIGARH Determined not to let consumers of power in the agriculture sector suffer in the State, the power utilities of Haryana have decided to compensate farm feeders in the eventuality of any breakdown. IANS

Cash from Trash. Anyone?



Waste-to-wealth will remain a sarkari slogan unless electricity made from garbage can be monetised. The question is, who will pay for it, and why

Delhi MSW Solutions plant that converts garbage to power in Bawana, Delhi

Shantanu Nandan Sharma

Locals in Bawana Industrial Area will be confused if you ask for the location of Delhi MSW Solutions plant – a combination of compost production and a 24 MW power project. But the moment you say “kachra karkhana” (garbage factory), anyone will guide you to the site. Every morning, about 2,000 tonnes of municipal solid waste (MSW) or one-fifth of Delhi’s garbage is transported to this site, located in the west of the city, in 80 trucks and compactors. Three-fourths of the garbage is burnt to produce electricity, the rest being kept aside for making compost. There is a big difference, though. Unlike Delhi’s three major dump sites – located in Bhalswa, Okhla and Ghazipur – all 2,000 tonnes of garbage in the Bawana site is used up by evening, providing a solution and a hope that urban India can avoid creating more and more Ghazipurs. The Ghazipur dump site, commissioned way back in 1984 and should have been shut down in 2002, is now more than 50 metres high, with 3,000 tonnes being added daily, becoming a symbol of garbage mismanagement in India.

“The government’s policy is, if you convert waste into energy, there’s a buyback system. We must quickly move to converting garbage either to compost or to energy,” says Hardeep Singh Puri, minister of state (independent charge) for housing and urban affairs, to ET Magazine, conceding that garbage is a problem.

It is, in fact, a humongous problem. India’s 377 million urban population is generating 62 million tonnes of waste every year, and if the growing urban population coupled with the nation’s burgeoning economy, purchasing power and consumption patterns are factored in, the total urban waste in India is likely to rise to 165 million tonnes by 2031, according to a government task force report on waste to energy published in 2014. What does this mean for Indian cities? If waste materials are left untreated, and the dump site is of 10 metres in height, India will need 454 sq km, or one-third of the size of Delhi, for dump sites alone. As the country can ill afford to turn swathes of cities to stinking, polluting garbage mountains, Bawana could be a model where the garbage is burned in a controlled environment to produce electricity, with the remaining ash being placed in a scientifically created landfill, a part of which remains underground?

THE PROBLEM

377 million
Total urban population in India

62 million tonnes
Yearly generation of municipal solid waste (MSW)

1,240* hectares
of landfill needed per year if the waste remains untreated



454 sq km**
or area equivalent to a third of Delhi will be consumed as sanitary landfill across India in the next 20 years

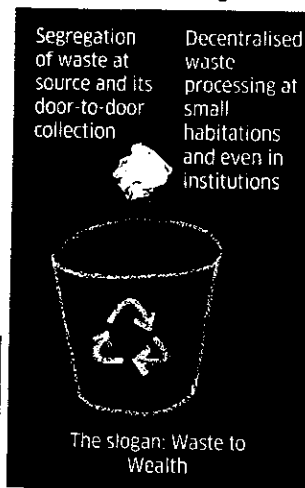
* Assuming the landfill is of 10 metres in height, with a density of 500 kg/cubic metre
** Assuming the total waste rises to 165 million tonnes by 2031
Source: Task Force on Waste to Energy, 2014

THE SOLUTION

Armed with Municipal Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016, the government policy stresses on the following:

Segregation of waste at source and its door-to-door collection

Decentralised waste processing at small habitations and even in institutions



THE OPPOSITION

Putting the onus of segregation on individual households may be a tall order

Waste-to-energy plants are costly at ₹16-17 crore per MW. Who will pay ₹8,500 crore for 500 MW, India’s immediate potential?

More and more compost plants are being built without considering market viability



“The government’s policy is, if you convert waste to energy, there’s a buyback system. We must quickly move to converting garbage to either compost or energy”

Hardeep Singh Puri, MoS (independent charge), Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

“Public health protection is paramount. Anything to do with waste-to-energy or waste-to-wealth is incidental. Waste-to-wealth has to be paid for, it can’t pay for itself”

Asit Nema, founding director, Foundation for Greentech Environmental Systems