

# FOCUS ON DECENTRALISED WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS FOR LONG-TERM SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION

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Last month, the Task Force on 'Waste to Energy' submitted its report to Planning Commission emphasising on the need to set up centralised or decentralised waste processing facilities keeping in view the quantity and quality of waste generated and financial viability of the processing technology. The fact that the decentralised system got the recognition in the report is the right way forward.

There are many regulations concerning waste management in the country (at local as well as national level), most of them give emphasis on centralised waste management with local municipality playing a pivotal role. Given the amount of waste generated in every city, local

bodies have been unable to handle the waste with limited technology and financial support. To extract useful ingredients from any waste, the first step (more often the critical one) is segregation of waste into organic and non-organic (such as



plastics, electronic, metals, glass etc) at source.

The decentralised system can provide feasible solution to the challenge of mixed garbage and, at the same time, save resources re-

quired to transport waste to the centralised plant. "It is important for the government to recognise that in addition to big, centralised solutions for waste treatment, decentralised systems can also play a big role in addressing the waste handling challenges," opines Ashwin C Shroff, CMD, Excel Industries Ltd.

For the success of decentralised plant it is important for the government to recognise it as public utility infrastructure and provide incentives accordingly. Also, bulk waste generators such as industrial areas, housing complexes, hotels and restaurants, food joints, etc, which are major contributors of waste in the city, should be encouraged to use decentralised solution. For example, in Bangalore, BBMP has made it mandatory for all bulk gen-

erators, which contribute more than 40% of the 4,000 tonnes of waste that the city produces per day, to manage their waste on-site or use shared services for the purpose.

Urban India currently generates 1,70,000 tonnes of municipal solid waste (MSW) each day, of which only 19% is treated and rest goes to dump sites causing serious problems to health and environment. The situation is assuming alarming proportions in the country.

With the new NDA Government announcing its plans to build 100 smart cities across the country, due emphasis should be given on integrated waste management. "While there is no magic pill for solving the waste problem, every smart city will have to look at a gamut of solutions to meet its waste handling challenge," says Shroff.