

Improving accountability in management of municipal solid waste

ORF-GIZ Urban Workshop Series 2013-14

The management of solid waste is becoming increasingly difficult in many urban centres of the world. This is observed from the huge waste deposits and unhygienic environmental conditions, which are a common sight. It is most unfortunate that such uninhabitable living conditions are increasingly becoming a way of life for the urban residents.

While on the one hand, the civic agencies responsible for daily cleaning of streets and removal of garbage are not demonstrating the desired level of efficiency in waste management, on the other, many urban residents do not follow any of the waste disposal rules, possibly due to non-availability of facilities, or lack of concern towards their living environment.

These problems were discussed in great detail in the ORF-GIZ Workshop on Improving Accountability in Management of Municipal Solid Waste held on February 24, 2014 at Observer Research Foundation, Delhi. The objectives of the workshop were to:

- (a) Understand the conventional procedures and new methods followed by civic authorities, other agencies and informal workers in the collection, transportation and disposal of solid waste;
- (b) Identify the gaps and constraints in the existing waste management procedures and discuss ideas for strengthening the waste planning and implementation mechanisms.

It was the fifth in a series of urban workshops organised by ORF and GIZ. The previous workshops covered four different urban topics - trends in India's urban population, need for new urban settlements, affordable housing, and effective implementation of urban development plans.



Dr. Amiya Kumar Sahu, president, National Solid Waste Association of India, Mumbai, spoke about his experiences and highlighted the following areas of concern during his presentation.

It has to be understood that each and every person is accountable for waste management, and there is no point in blaming each other. What is needed is a change in attitudes as to how much importance do we give to the issue of handling waste.

Size of the community bins, their placement on roads, availability of segregated bins, collection frequency are major issues. This results in overflowing bins, an unhealthy environment, and mixing of all types of waste.

There exist deficiencies in the current waste collection and transport system. It must be designed using appropriate technology and should be based on road width and distance to be covered. Installation of a shredder within vehicles could help in reducing the volume of waste to be transported.

Political leaders need to play a more proactive role. The problems of ULBs are very well understood, but

the motivation to get things done seems to be lacking.

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Reference: Observe Research Foundation

Link:<http://www.observerindia.com/cms/sites/orfonline/modules/report/ReportDetail.html?cmaid=64193&mmaid=64194>