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## Plastic ban comes into force in city

‘Awareness about the ban low among residents’

With the plastic ban of the Corporation coming into effect on Monday, shopkeepers in the city have started giving goods in cloth bags and paper bundles.

City Health Officer V. Satish Raghavan said at least 6,000 commercial establishments such as marriage halls, departmental stores, retail grocers, restaurants and eateries would have to stop using single-use plastic goods.

Shopkeepers should not keep or sell plastic carry bags, non-recyclable plastic ware and use-and-throw cups. The ban was also applicable to manufacturing, storing and selling of plastic goods below 50 microns.

First-time violators would be issued a warning by sanitary inspectors who would be raiding shops in the four zones at random, he said. “We have been issuing these instructions to eateries and bulk waste generators who use plastic as packaging material over the last two months. If they have

already received notices, they would need to pay a fine ranging from Rs. 500 to Rs. 5,000. If they continue to defy the ban, their licences will be cancelled,” he said.

Government offices stopped using plastic goods from July 3. Corporation Commissioner S. Aneesh Sekhar had been conducting awareness programmes in schools and administering pledge against plastic use since September 15.

Despite these initiatives, the awareness about the plastic ban was low among city residents, shopkeepers said.

J. Manimaran, a shopkeeper who welcomes the ban, said, “We spend about Rs. 1,500 each month on plastic bags. In order to reduce the dependence on plastic bags, we have been urging our customers to bring cloth bags. Some do, but many are still unaware of the ban,” he said. The plastic ban could lead to a dip in sales initially, but people would soon adjust themselves by and by, he said.

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## ***End of a scourge***

***First-time violators will be issued a warning by sanitary inspectors***

***Raids will be conducted on shops in the four zones at random***

***Those who received notices already must pay a fine of Rs. 500 to Rs. 5,000***