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Finally, a solution to Capital's malba mounds

- [Damini Nath](#)

The mounds of debris along roads, which block traffic and eat up parking space, may finally be put to good use with government agencies being asked to use recycled construction and demolition (C&D) waste for their projects.

The country's first C&D waste recycling plant, with a capacity of 2,000 TPD (tonnes per day), was set up in North-West Delhi's Burari in 2009. Since then it has processed 20 lakh tonnes of debris or *malba*. But, due to lack of planning and coordination the recycled material — ready-mix concrete, kerb stones, cement bricks — have just been piling up here.

Delhi got its second such plant in East Delhi's Shastri Park last year, which is yet to work at its full capacity of 500 TPD. Two more C&D waste recycling plants are being planned by the Public Works Department.

Since the recycled material was not covered by the National Building Code and did not comply with Bureau of Indian Standards norms, they couldn't be used in government projects.

But, this is set to change with the Union Urban Development Ministry making it mandatory for the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) and the National Buildings Construction Corporation (NBCC) to use the recycled aggregate in their projects.

Praveen Prakash, Joint Secretary in the Urban Development Ministry and director of the Swachh Bharat Mission, told *The Hindu* on Tuesday that a notification had been issued on the use of recycled aggregate by the CPWD, and the same was suggested to the States' Public Works Departments.

"Every day 40,000 metric tonnes of C&D waste is produced in the country. We have made it mandatory for all projects of the Government of India to use 100 per cent of the aggregate produced by a C&D waste recycling plant that is within a 100-km radius," said Mr. Prakash.

The norms for the aggregate or *bajri* used in construction have been changed to allow the use of recycled material. "There is now a captive market for the recycled C&D waste products," he added.

For Delhi, which produces 3,000 tonnes of C&D waste per day, this move will help the municipal corporations, the PWD and the Delhi Development Authority to use recycled products that have been lying unused.

The North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC), which set up the plant in Burari, had earlier made it clear that it would like to use the recycled tiles, kerb stones and concrete.

At the plant, over 50,000 tonnes of precast products, 1.3 lakh tonnes of ready-mix concrete, 3.5 lakh tonnes of brick sub-base, 13 lakh tonnes of recovered soil, 1.2 lakh tonnes of stone aggregates and 1 lakh tonne of recovered sand has been produced.

"But, we couldn't use the products as they did not comply with BIS norms. We would be happy to use recycled materials if the standards have been changed," said North Corporation Commissioner Pravin Kumar Gupta.

Recycled products have already been used in small or pilot projects in Delhi, but the scale has been minimal.

A spokesperson of Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services (IL&FS), the company that operates the two plants, said that the new Supreme Court complex being constructed by the CPWD has used about 16 lakh solid concrete bricks from the Burari facility.

Another 3.4 lakh concrete brick blocks have also been used.

A 5-km-long pilot expressway in North Delhi's Bakkarwala being made by the DDA has used 1.25 lakh tones of graded C&D waste and will use a total of 3 lakh tonnes in the first phase.

The IL&FS spokesperson said the move to use more of the recycled products will also help the environment.

"In light of the increasing air-pollution and related health problems, there is an urgent need to generate awareness among people to avoid illegal dumping of C&D waste. This notification by the CPWD will improve acceptance and standardisation of recycled products," said the company spokesperson.

Government agencies have been asked to use recycled construction and demolition (C&D) waste for their projects

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