

Plastic water bottles will stay till substitute found: Ram Vilas Paswan

Says research under way into alternatives, flags large number of possible job losses in case of ban

By [Rituraj Tiwari](#), ET Bureau | Sep 18, 2019, 07.05 AM IST



NEW DELHI: The government will not ban use of plastic bottles for water unless there is a practical and affordable alternative available, said food and consumer affairs minister [Ram Vilas Paswan](#).

"A large number of jobs are associated with this industry. We can't disrupt it like this. The ban will come into effect only when we have a proper alternative and something to compensate the loss of jobs," Paswan told

ET.

He said the government was exploring suitable alternatives for packaging of water. "Based on feedback and suggestions from the industry, we have deliberated on a few alternatives that include use of compostable plastics and permitting recycled PET for packaging of water. We may also encourage paper-based packaging layered with ecofriendly compostable plastic," said the minister.

However, Paswan said compostable plastic made from biodegradable bagasse ([sugarcane](#) fibre) or corn is an expensive alternative. "The cost is roughly double (that of) plastic packaging, as production is low. The price may come down if it is used on a large scale," he said.

Paswan said the [Bureau of Indian Standards](#) (BIS), the national standardisation body, has already set standards for compostable plastic.

"However, law doesn't permit reuse of PET bottles. The FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of [India](#)) and BIS will have to make new rules if use of recycled PET is allowed," he said.