

Eco-warriors in India, like the author of *Let's Talk Trash*, Shubhashree Sangameswaran, say that the pandemic has forced a re-evaluation of choices. "I used to take my own cans to buy oil from a grocery store but the pandemic made me hesitate since the stores might not be appreciative of it. But on the brighter side, the pandemic has made us slow down. The dependence on food delivery apps has come down and thereby, plastic and other packaging material," she notes.

Nidarshana Saikia Das, co-founder of The Bartan Company, which rents out steel utensils for events in Hyderabad, concurs. "When I take a breather from cooking and place an order with one of the home chefs in our gated community, I take my own dabbas and avoid plastic," she says, adding that she encourages people in her community to compost biodegradable waste. She's working on partnering with the Bengaluru organisation Daily Dump to introduce their 'Kambha' terracotta composters in Hyderabad.



Vani Murthy | Photo Credit: Nimisha Jain

Vani Murthy, who is often labelled Bengaluru's 'compost queen', says cutting down plastic waste takes commitment: "We are all on a journey and the Plastic Free July challenge is an opportunity to scale up our sustainability. For example, switching to reusable cloth sanitary pads or menstrual cups can reduce our plastic waste on a monthly basis," she points out.