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The Implications of the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026 for Mizoram

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Abstract

The notification of the Solid Waste Management Rules (SWMR) 2026 marks a remarkable legislative shift towards sustainable waste governance in India. The policy provides a strong blueprint for a transition to a circular economy, yet its success is deeply rooted in decentralized institutional capacity and localized political realities. This paper offers a brief overview of the SWMR 2026, analyzing the underlying implications and inherent friction between top-down regulatory mandates and bottom-up administrative capabilities. A special focus is placed on the state of Mizoram to illustrate the geo-specific challenges of the policy implementation, bringing to light the logistical and topographical barriers to conventional waste collection and the establishment of large-scale material recovery facilities and arguing for the empowerment of local civic structures in the management of waste collection. Lastly, this paper aims to provide a critical evaluation to highlight the challenges faced by Mizoram.

1. Introduction

The Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026, came into force on 1st April 2026, officially notified by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change on January 27, 2026. It is landmark legislation that aims to shift towards sustainable waste governance in India. Under the revised rules, the principles of ‘circular economy and extended producer responsibility’ are being integrated. Similar to the previous rules of 2016, efficient waste segregation and management remain a specific focus, albeit with more ways of segregating waste.

The ministry directs the Central Pollution Control Board to prepare the relevant guidelines and the state pollution control boards and pollution control committees to levy the environmental compensation. In this article, key features of the SWMR, 2026 are discussed in brief. As the new rules are to be followed all over India, within the context of Mizoram, some implications that are bound to be followed are evaluated. The objectives of this article can be summarized into three points: firstly, the study aims to highlight some key features of the newly enacted Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026. The second aim is to study localized operational and infrastructural implications for the State of Mizoram. The paper also aims to analyze the friction between top-down regulatory mandates and bottom-up administrative capabilities.

In this article, firstly, a brief overview of the new Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026, is provided. This will lay the groundwork for the next point, which is to forecast the implications of the various principles mandated by the new rules in the state of Mizoram. As per the mandates of the rules, several provisions will have to be undertaken in Mizoram, just like any other States and Union Territories of India, in relation to waste management. This article provides an analysis of the applicability of such principles in the context of Mizoram, by highlighting some key features that can align perfectly with the State, and those that may pose a problem for the state. In the discussion section, a critical evaluation is made in order to further understand the rules' applicability, as well as the challenges in the state's waste management.

For better understanding of waste management in Aizawl, the Solid Waste Management Centre in Tuirial was selected for field observation.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Description of the study area

The study was conducted in the State of Mizoram. It is among the Seven Sisters, forming the Northeast states of India. Mizoram spans an area of approximately 21,087 sq. km, bordering Bangladesh to the west and Myanmar in the east and south. The state is predominantly mountainous (2157 metres above sea level) with nearly 90% forest area (Authors, 2026). The capital city of Mizoram is Aizawl. Field observation was conducted in the Solid Waste Management Centre, Tuirial, Aizawl on 6th July, 2026. The centre is located approximately 20km from the city of Aizawl and has been in operation since 2019, it is currently under the authority of the Aizawl Municipal Corporation. The reason for choosing the SWMC in Aizawl is because other districts of Mizoram do not have a proper functioning and established waste management centre (some are still under construction).

2.2. Data sources

2.2.1 Qualitative sources

Qualitative Data include: interviews with key informants, observation and document (policy) reviews. Interviews were conducted to obtain the primary data, they include: Supervisor from the SWMC, Ragpickers, and Private Waste Collectors. The interview was conducted in an unstructured manner, the participants will be addressed by their job titles as per their request.

Field observation was made to understand the nature of the SWMC. The secondary data were mainly obtained from extensive reading of newspapers–national and local (mostly from Vanglaini, the largest newspaper network in Mizoram), as well as from government websites and other online blogs.

3. Analysis of results

3.1. Key Features of the SWMR, 2026

The Solid Waste Management Rules (SWMR), 2026, override the older Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016, and came into effect on April 1, 2026 (gazette notification—S.O. 388(E)). By establishing a more integrated framework that is designed to modernize waste management through increased accountability and technological integration, these rules introduce more rigorous principles and standards for the segregation of waste, leaning more to digital governance and decentralized processing to effectively complement the growth. By integrating digital governance and stringent compliance mechanisms, these rules empower local bodies and bulk waste generators to transition from passive waste disposal to active, decentralized resource management.

The 2026 rules contain 5 chapters and 4 schedules, wherein Chap. 1 deals with the application and definition of keywords used throughout the rules; Chap. 2 concerns the 'environmentally sound management of solid waste.' Chap. 3 discusses 'sanitary landfills.' Chap. 4 contains the 'Implementation Framework,' and Chap. 5 provides the 'Roles and Responsibilities.' Schedule 1 provides the 'Timeline for implementation'; Schedule 2 deals with the 'Specifications for Sanitary Landfills'; Schedule 3 provides the 'Standards of processing and treatment of solid waste'; and Schedule 4 contains the 'Measures for fire prevention and management at waste dump sites.' As all the major points of the SWMR, 2026, cannot be discussed here, some major features that are of importance that one might be required to know can, nonetheless, be briefly highlighted as follows:

1. Four-Stream Waste Segregation (Ch. II, No. 5): This is a major feature of the 2026 rules. Generators are now legally required to segregate waste into four streams at sources, namely wet waste, dry waste, sanitary waste, and special care waste.
2. Bulk Waste Generator (BWG) Responsibilities (Ch. II, No. 6): The rules give a criterion for large-scale waste generators (for example, buildings with a floor area of 20,000 sq. m. or above, etc.) by mandating that these entities register themselves with the concerned local body through the centralized online portal and that they process biodegradable waste on-site or obtain an Extended Bulk Waste Generator Responsibility (EBWGR) certificate for off-site processing.
3. Industrial Fuel Replacement (Ch. II, No. 11): Industries utilizing solid fuel and located within a specified radius of a waste-derived fuel plant must mandatorily replace a percentage of their fuel consumption with Refuse-Derived Fuel (RDF) or a high-calorific combustible waste fraction (> 1500 kcal/kg, etc.).
4. Environmentally Sound Management (Ch. III, No. 15): This part empowers local bodies to identify and assess dumpsites or garbage vulnerable points and to prepare time-bound action plans for bio-mining and bioremediation of dumpsites and to ensure environmental safety wherever possible. The State Pollution Control Boards are also empowered to enforce environmentally sound measures as prescribed in these rules.
5. Centralized Digital Governance (Ch. IV, No. 16): Under this, the rules mandate 100% digital governance to all local bodies, BWG, and processing facilities. They are required to register and file annual returns digitally through the centralized online portal that must be established within six months of the rules' enforcement by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).
6. Principle of Polluter Pays (Ch. IV, No. 17): An important feature of the rules is the principle of polluter pays, a strict guideline on environmental compensation. Under this, penalties will be levied for non-compliance, improper waste management practices, operating without registration, or providing falsified data.
7. Institutional Framework and Special Provisions (Ch. V): The last sections describe the roles and responsibilities of various authorities, including Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs), and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). It also provides specialized provisions for waste management in hilly areas and islands, allowing for unique measures such as tourist user fees and inflow regulation.

Therefore, the SWMR, 2026, will be applicable to all urban and rural local bodies, government or private institutions, commercial establishments, residential societies, public transport entities (railways and airports), and individual household generators. It should be noted that waste generated by industries, biomedical waste, e-waste, battery, and radioactive wastes remain excluded as they are governed by separate specific environmental acts.

3.2. Comparative Study: SWMR, 2016 and SWMR, 2026

The 2026 rules sharply differ from its predecessor, the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016. While the 2016 rules laid foundational mandates for source segregation and decentralized processing, the 2026 rules shift the paradigm towards a circular economy, centralized digital accountability, and rigorous enforcement mechanisms. A brief comparative study between the two can be discussed below.

1. Scope of Applicability: The 2016 rules applied primarily to urban local bodies, census towns, later extending to villages with a population of over 3000. It covered standard residential, commercial, and institutional areas. The 2026 rules vastly expanded its legal footprint, covering every urban and rural body, explicitly encompassing special economic zones (SEZs), food parks, Indian Railways, airports, ports, defence establishment, religious pilgrimage sites, and all public/private land owners. The 2026 rules bridges the urban-rural divide entirely, ensuring uniform applicability across all territorial entities in India.
2. Segregation Streams: The SWMR 2016 proposed the segregation of waste into 3 streams: biodegradable, non-biodegradable, and domestic hazardous, while sanitary waste should be wrapped and mixed into dry waste bins. The SWMR 2016 now proposes 4 streams of waste segregation: wet, dry, sanitary, and special care waste. Sanitary waste is now handled as a completely independent stream.
3. Hilly Terrain Framework: The 2016 rules provided a basic directive to avoid landfills on hills and mandated identifying plain land within 25 km for final disposal. While the 2026 rules retain the 25 km mandate, it encourages regional pilot projects for decentralized waste and also grants legal power to levy fees on tourist influx based on active processing capacity.
4. Bulk Waste Generators (BWGs): The 2016 rules broadly defined BWGs. BWGs are advised to manage organic waste on-site “as far as possible.” The 2026 rules rigidly quantified legal definitions (e.g., > 100 kg/day or > 20,000 sq m) with a strict mandate on-site composting/biomethanation.
5. Monitoring & Governance: The 2016 rules emphasized manual oversight via an annual meeting of a Central Monitoring Committee; it promoted local enforcement via municipal bylaws. The 2026 rules, on the other hand, shifted to 100% digital governance via a mandatory CPCB portal, requiring online registration, digital annual returns, and formalized environmental compensation penalties.

6. Informal Sector & Worker Safety: The 2016 rules gave soft directives to integrate informal waste pickers (raagpickers) into local municipal systems or self-help groups. The 2026 rules mandate digital enumeration/registration of waste pickers and create a legally binding obligation for facility operators to provide complete, heavy-duty personal protective equipment (PPE) (Ch. II No. 8(h) (vii)).
7. Environmental Compensation and Enforcement: In the 2016 rules, enforcement mainly relied on local municipal bye-laws, spot fines, and penal provisions under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, which often lacked uniform execution teeth. Now, the 2026 rules formulate an explicit Polluter Pays Principle that is backed by mandatory Environmental Compensation (EC). The fine is levied by the SPCBs or CPCB against entities operating without registration, submitting falsified data, or failing to process waste properly. Such fines collected are sequestrated into dedicated accounts exclusively earmarked for restoring waste management infrastructure.
8. Legacy Dumpsites and Landfill Management: The 2016 rules mandated the bio-remediation or capping of old dump sites within a 5-year window, but progress varied widely across states. The 2026 rules set a hard deadline of October 31st, 2026, for all urban and rural local bodies to complete comprehensive geographic mapping and waste-volume estimation of legacy dumpsites, enforcing continuous quarterly digital updates on bio-mining progress. Furthermore, operational Sanitary Landfills (SLFs) are strictly restricted only to non-recyclable, non-combustible, insert residual rejects.

The transition from the 2016 rules to the 2026 framework marks India's maturation into a system-driver, data transparent waste economy. While the 2016 rules successfully habituated citizens to sorting trash, the new 2026 rules leverage advanced enforcement, mandatory digital tracking, robust industrial assimilation of refuse-derived fuels, and strict polluter liabilities to target absolute waste minimization and a functional economy.

3.3. Implications for Mizoram

A hilly state like Mizoram faces unique challenges in terms of its waste management. Under rule 12 of the SWMR 2026, the hilly and island regions are given distinct operational frameworks for waste management, which can also apply directly to Mizoram’s topography. Rule 12(ii) explicitly mandates that the construction of landfills in hilly areas must be avoided. Accordingly, residual/inert waste must be moved to a transfer station from which it travels to a functional sanitary landfill in plain areas within 25 km. In case of non-availability of such land, regional sanitary landfills must be established (iii). Throughout Rule 12, local bodies are empowered to levy fees, make provisions, frame by-laws, etc. The hilly/island local authorities are empowered to regulate the number of visitors based on waste management capacity and levy fees specifically at entry points to make services sustainable in accordance with Rule 12(vi),. For localized decentralized processing, they are also encouraged to adopt regional pilot projects to optimize waste management infrastructure within steep hilly terrain.

Mizoram would now also have to integrate the rules’ four-stream waste segregation; there are private waste collectors who collect hazardous wastes like medical waste, and there are private-run businesses that collect dry waste and sell it for profits. As Mizoram is preparing to be a fully digitalized state in its governance, the new SWMR would provide a huge opportunity in its transition to a full-fledged digital

state. All concerned departments and boards under the Mizoram Government, specifically the State Pollution Control Board, would have to follow the rules' guidelines in monitoring activities—including registration, filing of annual returns, and tracking of waste management activities—via the Centralized Online Portal developed by the CPCB. Local bodies would also have to monitor activities—including the use of GPS-enabled collection vehicles—and ensure that audit reports and compliance data are accessible in the public domain. On the contrary, local bodies, the SPCB and Bulk Waste Generators (BWGs) will require intensive technical training to transition smoothly from manual record-keeping to real-time digital filing of annual returns and tracking compliance. As regions are encouraged to initiate pilot projects to test decentralized waste management models, it provides an opportunity for neighbouring villages having scattered dumping grounds to identify common land for shared dumping ground.

For smooth running of waste segregation, the state would also have to develop more dumping grounds (and that by following the guidelines as laid out in the rules) in its district headquarters and town areas. As per the rules, it would also be required for the state to provide PPE to those ragpickers working within the vicinity of the waste center. As these rules emphasized the empowerment of local bodies, the state government would also need to build a stable relationship with the local bodies to ensure the success of the rules. Such dumping grounds are being constructed at various districts, in which some of them are nearing completion.

Following the enforcement of the new rules, the state government, specifically those of the municipal and district level officials, organized official meetings and discussions relating to the successful implementation of the rules. In the State's capital, Aizawl, the Municipal Corporation (AMC) held two meetings in one week, specifically for discussing how the new rules can be successfully implemented at the local and municipal levels. In their first meeting held on 2nd June, 2026, the corporators, along with the local council members of Aizawl, studied the new rules. According to the mayor, H. Lalremtluanga, in order to ensure the success of the rules, a joint collaboration from all stakeholders is required, and the AMC is open to any suggestions from the people. The second meeting on 5th June, 2026, was exclusively for the Board of Corporators (BoC), on the request of the National Director, Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U), for the World Environment Day, where discussions were held for implementing the rules under the guidance of the Corporators in their respective wards and to carry out Special Drive Campaigns in educational institutions and churches to raise awareness. On 17th September, 2026, the '4-Stream Waste Segregation and Door-to-Door Collection' initiative was spearheaded by the AMC and launched by the Minister of the Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation Department (UD&PA). At the launch ceremony, the UD&PA Minister K. Sapdanga commended the ongoing implementation of the '4-Stream Waste Segregation and Door-to-Door Collection' across seven AMC Wards as exemplary. The AMC Mayor H. Lalremtluanga also urged the 32 localities within the 7 covered wards 'to lead by example and set standards for other wards to follow' (Directorate of Information & Public Relations, 2026).

In Siaha district, the district Special Cell held a meeting with the Additional Deputy Commissioner (Addl. DC) Abraham Beirazi Khithie in early July, and among the meeting proceedings, emphasis was given on

establishing, at every village level, a solid waste management committee for monitoring waste management, spreading awareness campaigns as much as possible among the people, and strictly monitoring the construction of the district's Solid Waste Management Centre. In pursuant of the new SWMR, 2026, in October, the Siaha district DC Mrs, Saizikpuii also issued and order instructing all government offices and schools in Siaha district to segregate waste into different types and to construct compost pits for biodegradable waste. She stated that this order has been issued to enable better initiatives in proper waste segregation and processing. She added, "Department/office heads and school principals/headmasters will bear the responsibility of properly maintaining waste segregation and compost facilities" (Vanglaini, 2026). Similarly, in Lunglei district, under the guidance of the Lunglei Municipal Corporation (LMC), street demonstrations were held on 18th July, 2026 to teach waste segregation to the residents of Lunglei town. The Champhai Town Sanitation Task Force Committee, under the chairmanship of Mohammad Aaquib (DC), in its meeting on July 29, 2026, decisively agreed to put up four dustbins to segregate waste, mandated by the 2026 rules, in every government office within the Champhai district, starting on July 31, 2026. The meeting also discussed how the Champhai district Solid Waste Management Centre will be utilized as well as other aspects of the new rules.

4. Discussion

As the rules offer well-rounded guidelines that aim at a better and smoother management of waste, they, however, pose certain challenges that pertain to the state of Mizoram. Despite the rules covering hilly areas and islands, some features of the guidelines may become a burden for some states like Mizoram. Being in hilly terrain, the enforcement of the 25 km plain-land landfill rule or establishing regional cluster landfills will face immense geographical resistance due to the state's highly rugged landscape and lack of contiguous plain land near heavy waste-generating urban centers like Aizawl. To build such infrastructure would require a heavy sum of money and mass leveling of hilltops, which would pose a big burden for the state government's financial budget and also the environment. Regarding why there are no proper waste disposal facilities, according to the State's Home Minister K. Sapdanga, at the Assembly Session in February 2026, being in hilly terrain, Mizoram lacks proper field and plain areas for such infrastructure, and those that are plains are either private or government property. A critical policy discussion is needed on how regional exemptions or localized terraced containment engineering can legally replace the standard plain-land landfill model.

The door-to-door waste collection prescribed by the rules would also create mass polarization, as Mizoram, again being a hilly terrain, would require an extra workforce for such a task. Currently, the door-to-door LPG gas delivery has been carried out in the capital city of Aizawl and received a number of praises among the citizens; yet, the same may be difficult to apply in this case. The door-to-door collection of waste would require extra efforts and regularity (timely collection) and proper pay for the collector, as the collector would have to go door-to-door in every household of the streets in every locality. The best way to effectively utilize this principle is to create new jobs for the respective local youths (similar to the LPG gas delivery boys). Under the management of the local bodies, local youths may be selected for the post of collectors, easily solving a possible irregular or untimely waste

collection. One problem that may arise is the salary. It would be essential for the local bodies or the Municipal Corporations (or District level committee on Waste Management) to slightly increase the sanitation fees to meet the salary of the waste collectors, as the waste management in Aizawl is carried out under a public-private partnership.

The four streams of waste segregation may pose infrastructure limitations. Aizawl has been segregating waste into two since November 2020. The current status of the Aizawl dumping ground is that it is partially following the segregation of waste—partially because sanitary waste is yet to be segregated and the segregation of waste into two has been partly successful from the city dwellers. A site visit to the Tuirial dumping ground (Solid Waste Management Centre) in the outskirts of Aizawl (on 6th July, 2026) shows that despite the dumping ground following the segregation rules, specifically the segregation of biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste, city dwellers from the city would often mix up waste when dump trucks came to collect the waste.

According to the center's supervisor, every day, around 200 dump trucks would enter the center for dumping. It is also observed that as far as possible, wet and dry waste are being kept separated far away from each other. The centre's supervisor also provided that wet waste is left to fully decompose until it is ready to be converted into bio-fertilizers, which are then sold by the AMC for profits. However, the improper waste segregation from the city makes it an arduous task to properly utilize this, as dry waste would be in the mix with wet waste, making segregation much more difficult for the Centre's workers. In order to manage spaces in the landfill, wastes are being compacted by a machine and are incinerated before being dumped into the landfill. Two problems arise in these processes: the dumping ground has only one incinerator for dissolving waste into bits, but the machine cannot be fully relied upon as it is currently broken; in a recent insight television programme by Zonet TV Pvt. Ltd. called ‘Zoram Kalsiam’, and later by the Centre for Environment & Social Justice (CESJ), the unfixed incinerator problem has been brought to the public which will be discussed later. During rainy days, processed waste disposed of in the landfill, when softened by the rain, would reveal chunks of waste not properly turned to bits or not properly compacted. These, according to the supervisor, are often taken out again for reprocessing. The biomedical waste is being managed separately in the Biomedical Waste Treatment Facility, under the Aizawl Smart City Project within the dumping ground itself but operates outside the Solid Waste Management Centre’s (SWMC) jurisdiction. Accordingly, from April 1st to March 31st, the Biomedical Waste Treatment Facility has managed 299,170 kg worth of biowaste.

In relation to the ragpickers, according to the supervisor, almost all of them are from the nearby locality, Tuirial Airfield; they were once given a personal identification card, but the validity has ended in early 2026, and their status is yet unknown. The SWMC Supervisor told the researchers that ragpicking also generates a good sum of wealth for the local people; this statement is further supported by the local ragpicker, who said that every day, a person can earn between ₹700 and ₹1000 from ragpicking. Regarding the personal protective equipment (PPE) for the ragpickers, there is yet to be a notification from the AMC. Ironically, the supervisor also highlighted that in terms of the health of the ragpickers, there are yet to be records of ragpickers who died from health hazards caused by their unhealthy works.

It is learnt from the local ragpicker within the centre that the mounds of dry waste are to be made a pathway for vehicles and are to be tilled and leveled; however, due to limited working vehicles, such work cannot be easily completed.

On the road leading to the SWMC, there are several private-owned dumping grounds, which are observed to collect dry waste and process it for profits. One major issue that was learned from the field visit is that the Tuirial dumping ground has only one active landfill, which has been used since early 2026. Another major problem faced by Aizawl is that despite the government inaugurating the Aizawl West dumping ground in Luangmual early in 2026, the nearby localities raised questions of health concerns, as a result, the dumping ground is yet to function. Similar to what the Lawngtlai District officials have performed, in order to create a healthy competition among the people of every locality in segregation of waste, selecting a 'model locality' might be necessary, under the criterion of proper segregation of waste as mandated by the 2026 rules.

The side-effects of the newly inaugurated railway station in Sairang can be seen in the railroad tracks. Chunks of plastic and other waste discarded from the trains are beginning to fill the sideways of the railway tracks, similar to those in mainland India. As the new rules also provide legal footprint, even on railways and airports, it is necessary for government official levels—both local and state—as well as civil society organisations to remain vigilant in dumping waste from running trains; proper waste management would be required as despite their being a trash bins within the trains, it is found that train coaches are discarding waste along the railway tracks, proper awareness of sort would be necessary for both coaches and passengers to discard their waste in the trash bins as much as possible. Such improper waste disposal also pollutes the environment, as discarded plastics take more than a thousand years to fully decompose. In a hilly state like Mizoram, discarding plastics can act as a threat to the environment, creating landslides and soil degradation, as well as harming the nearby wildlife. Similarly, maintaining roadside cleanliness along the airport—Lengpui Airport in Aizawl—by organising mass cleanliness drives is also necessary. As the villages of Sairang and Lengpui, where the Railway station and the Airport are situated respectively, are the first places that foreigners from outside Mizoram first step foot, it is necessary to maintain first impressions, and the only way to showcase this is by maintaining waste-free roadsides. For proper disposal of waste, specifically in tourist places, it is necessary to put trash bins in every few metres of each other, thereby preventing improper discarding of waste due to limited or no bins. Local bodies or non-state actors which look after the tourist sites should also prohibit burning of waste on such sites, mainly by visitors and campers. A proper workforce and efforts must be given when looking after such sites, as such sites also mirrored Mizo people's waste disposal ethics.

The state government and the district-level official authorities are highly anticipating the complete construction of the district waste management sites, as the district officials often visited the sites. The Lunglei Solid Waste Management Centre-I is expected to be completed soon as essential machinery has started arriving, while the SWMC-II construction work is also 70% completed; efforts are underway to clean up accumulated garbage at dumping sites, and cleaning work is currently underway. In relation to

environment and public health and safety, the LMC has formulated plans keeping the future environmental well-being of the land in mind. The SWMC in Siaha is also 60% completed; accordingly, in order to reduce single-use plastic, single-use plastic bags are brought from the public at ₹30 per kg. The authorities also urged the public to do their utmost in separating the four types of waste.

Even after months of the field observation study, the sole incinerator has not yet been fixed or replaced. The prolonged breakdown has begun raising questions among some people. As per the Right to Information (RTI) inquiries via *Zoram Kalsiam*, the AMC is planning to take legal action against the machine supplier, and due to the machine being unusable, the remaining 10% of the total price (roughly 26.7 lakh) has not yet been paid to the supplier. According to the AMC officials, during the test running of the machine, it does not live up to expectations and that there are multiple defects that require fixing. Similarly, the CESJ has also filed a first information report (FIR) on October 12, 2026 to the Lokayukta. According to the FIR, the CESJ suspect that there are some irregularities in the installation of the waste incinerator at the SWMC; they requested the Lokayukta take steps to hold the wrongdoers accountable. They also claimed that since the SWMC is packed, it cannot properly accommodate the waste of 3–4 lakhs residents of Aizawl. Despite this situation, the incinerator needed by the SWMC—for which a supply order was issued back in August/September 2022—has not been put to effective use to this day. Therefore, this strongly indicates that major irregularities have taken place, and the Lokayukta needs to take action and investigate the issue (Vanglaini, 2026).

5 Conclusions

Despite the new rules coming into force on 1st April, 2026, it is found that the SWMC in Aizawl has been trying to follow the rules as much as possible, despite certain setbacks within and outside their jurisdiction, whether administratively, technologically, or infrastructurally. Several dumping grounds are currently being developed in other districts of Mizoram, and when all these come into operation, it would be necessary to make proper planning and management for their usage by learning from the improper waste management and planning from the centre dumping ground in Aizawl. Similarly, as per the encouragement by the rules for pilot projects for decentralized waste management, those neighbouring villages having a separate dumpsites on the outskirts of their village can be clubbed together in one formalised and eco-friendly place where the villages can use conjointly. Urban and rural areas must also be properly informed regarding waste segregation, and local bodies must strictly police waste collection. Awareness of sorts must be carried out as much as possible among the masses.

Alternatively to what is mentioned in the paper, regarding door-to-door waste collection, certain parts of the streets should be saved for large garbage bins, where segregation is followed and maintained, and waste collectors can easily collect the waste from such bins. A proper garbage collection truck is also required, as during the journey to the Tuirial SWMC, it is noticed that some junks falling down from the trucks can be found in certain parts of the road. However, as the new rules now demand, the state government or city’s municipal corporation must ensure the health and safety of these ragpickers by

providing them with proper equipment. By utilising the door-to-door principle, local bodies can create job opportunities for local youths in garbage collection.

In conclusion, waste management requires a joint effort between the citizens and the government. It is the job of the government to ensure that waste management rules are being properly enforced and prevent any loopholes and unlawful acts that can arise and to ensure proper segregation of our waste at the dumpsites. From the discussion in this paper, we can see that the Government and every level under it are zealous to ensure the rules' success, the citizens must also support the government and to follow the rules as much as possible. Dumping grounds must be given administrative attention as much as possible, providing the needs and proper maintenance of the sites for the smooth running of the waste management process. As per the new rules, citizens must try and follow the circular economy approach – by refusing to use items that cannot easily decomposed, such as single-use plastic; reducing the amount of waste and materials that we consume; reuse and recycle as much as possible or repurposing old or unwanted items by finding a new creative use, segregating at sources is also important. As one proverb says, "How you dispose of your garbage directly reflects your personality."

Declarations

Author Contribution

LN wrote the main manuscript text, did all fieldwork and data collection. SLJ review the manuscript and supervise LN.

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Data Availability

The qualitative data (interview voice record and field observations) supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. Because the interviews were conducted in an unstructured and impromptu manner, participants are referred to only by their job titles to protect their anonymity, as requested. All other findings are supported by publicly available reports, policy documents, and secondary literature comprehensively cited within the reference list. Any further inquiries regarding the sources used can be directed to the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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