

## Young change makers: 4 students set out to lay down plastic roads

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**MUMBAI:** Four students of a Kandivli school have taken up a unique initiative – they plan to use plastic bags to lay down a pothole-free road.

The Class 9 students of Ryan International School have taken cue from an experiment in Bangalore, where a mix of shredded plastic was used with asphalt to provide a road layer.

In the next two-three days, they will re-lay a 50-metre, single-lane stretch of road at Thakur Village, Kandivli (East).

They earned Rs50,000 grant money for the project through 'Happy India', an initiative to encourage young change makers. Theirs is one of the six teams from the city selected for the nation-wide initiative.

The students have generated around 52.8 kgs of shredded plastic through collecting plastic bags,

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cups, plates, chocolate wrappers, X-ray films and so on. "We needed low-density plastic that can easily melt. Most of it we collected by carrying out drives in our neighbourhood and the rest we are buying from scrap dealers and shredders," said Andriya Tiwary, one of the students.

Saurav Hiremath came up with the idea when he visited Ooty recently. "As the roads have a plastic layer, they are water-proof and pothole-free," said Saurav, whose father is a civil engineer and is helping them with the project.

Similar roads have been laid down in cities such as Bangalore and Delhi in the past. "Many states already have plastic

roads, we want to inspire our local authorities to take up the project for the entire city," said Vighnesh Pai, another student.

Students have acquired a verbal consent of the civic body for the project. "We are just waiting for a final proposal, after which they can go ahead with the work," said Sunil Pabrekar, executive engineer, R south ward, BMC.

Another team of students from Podar International School, Santacruz, have started a project to make healthy foods available at reasonable rates for slum-dwellers. "We buy good quality vegetables in wholesale and then sell them in the slums," said Sakshi Haria, 15.