

Module-4/4

Garbage in, Garbage out

Plastics – Boon Or A Curse?

Benefits of plastics-Boon:

The considerable growth in plastic use is due to the beneficial properties of plastics. These include :

- Lighter weight than competing materials, reducing fuel consumption during transportation.
- Extreme durability.
- Resistance to chemicals, water and impact.
- Good safety and hygiene properties for food packaging.
- Excellent thermal and electrical insulation properties.
- Relatively inexpensive to produce.

Plastic makes up around 7% of the average household dustbin.

Plastic as a Curse:

Plastic was thought to be a boon but it turned out to be a curse.

- Plastic can be very harmful as it produces harmful gases when it is burned. As it is non bio degradable, it is harmful to the soil and takes hundreds of years to degrade or decompose.
- A huge amount of plastic is thrown away carelessly on the street and in water bodies and such irresponsible disposal of plastic can cause a number of problems.
- Animals and birds alike, in search of food, end up consuming some amounts of plastic due to which many of them end up choking on these.
- Although plastic bags seem convenient to store food items, consuming these are very harmful to our health.
- It gets worse when dirty and thrown away plastic bags are re-used upon mere dusting and washing them which is also very harmful.
- Upon burning or heating, plastics give rise to toxic and dangerous fumes and gases, which can potentially cause cancer in humans.
- Careless disposal of plastic on the roads also ends up choking the sewer and drainage systems.

After learning so much, it should be everyone's top priority to do their bit in saving the environment:

- ❖ 3Rs- Reduce, Re-use and Recycle. Reducing the use of plastic and re-using harmless plastic to help reduce its over-production. Recycling paper and such articles whenever possible.



- ❖ Carrying jute and cloth bags when carrying out errands to avoid the use of polythene bags.
- ❖ Properly disposing plastic and polythene bags
- ❖ Not using plastic products and bags to store eatables.
- ❖ Never burning plastic or dry leaves etc. and disposing them properly.
- ❖ Using registers and notebooks made of recycled paper as much as possible.
- ❖ Avoid putting waste materials in polythene bags and throwing them on the street.
- ❖ Adopting practices like recycling paper and vermicomposting to make the best use of biodegradable waste. This not only helps to reduce the waste that we produce but also becomes a valuable addition to the soil and helps in the nourishment of crops and plants.

The most important point to know and think about is that — more garbage we generate, more difficult it will be to get rid of it.


