



Environmental Hazards of Plastic

By

Shri.Sridhar
Green Rameswaram Project



Entry into Our Life in the Name of Style

When I entered Big Bazaar with my wife, I always end up in purchasing extra items against the Budgeted items. I tried it with all the Super Markets but could end up in purchasing more than the budgeted items. Among the extra items purchased I could sense the entry of more plastic items like buckets (on offer), Mugs, storage containers, Jars, Water Bottles etc. It has become part and parcel of our life style. It is symbolized as part of our modern culture. One who uses the Plastics are symbolized as tycoons and the most cultured. This mammoth growth is witnessed very recently.



Essential Replacements

Plastics have replaced most of the very basic essentials in our life. When my mom wanted me to purchase something from Annatchi stores (We don't have Super markets at that time) she gave me a cloth bag (Popularly known as Manjal Pai (Yellow Bag)). Annatchi – shopowner fondly called as packed it in the paper and gave it in our cloth bag. Slowly when I entered college – Shops started using the packaged items. Now all the essentials come only in Plastic bags essentially. Or else people started doubting the quality of the product. That is how the branded Tuvar Dal was packaged nowadays and now annatchi to make his Tuvar Dal as branded one he also weighs and packs in different weights 100 Gms, 200 Gms, 250 GMs, 500 Gms. A common man gets satisfied if he sees a packed product in plastic.



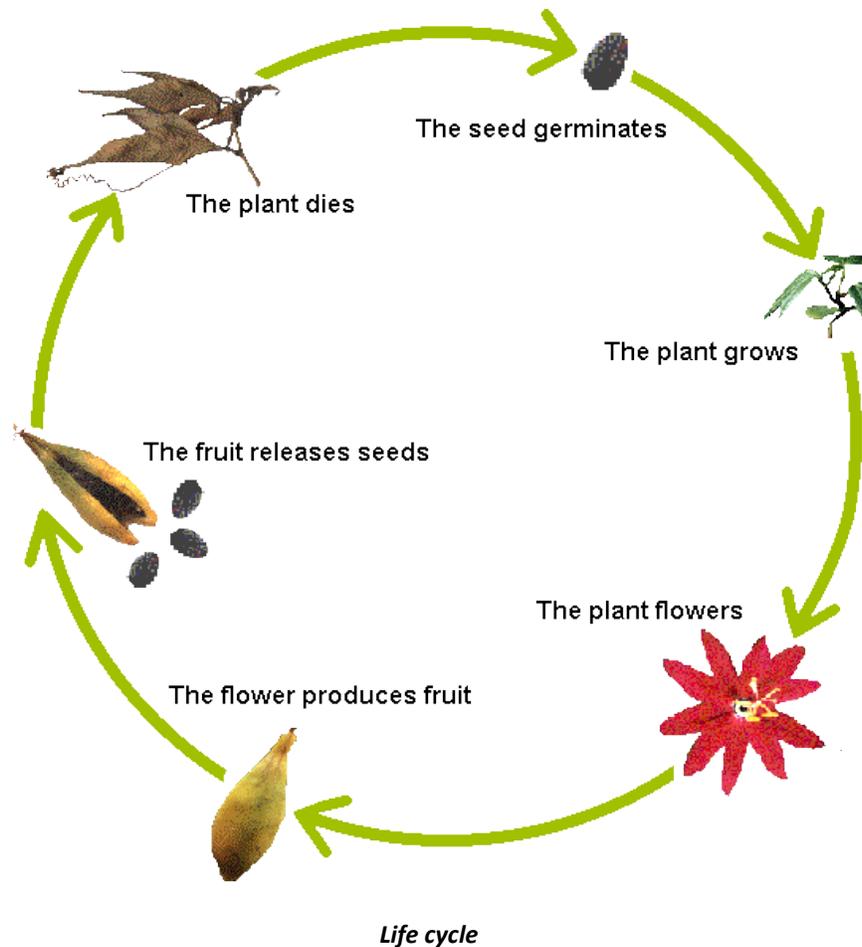
Shop keeper packing items in Plastic bag



Cloth Bags used for shopping

Law of Existence

When a life take birth it creates into several forms and finally forms a life and ends life.



This is the law of existence for anything on the earth. But the invention of Plastic challenged the law of existence and it has acquired immortality as said in the Vedas and Puranas. From the Shopper bag to Sitting Chair every-where Plastic dominates. More advanced is that a human brain has invented how to produce Rice in Plastic. This series on plastic attempts to explore the evolution of Plastic, its effects on land, water, air and the successful peoples' movements against plastic.

The first man made plastic was created by Alexander Parkes, who publicly demonstrated it at the 1862 Great International Exhibition in London. The material is called Parkesine, was an organic material derived from cellulose that once heated could be molded and retained its shape when cooled. However, it passed through several historical marks to reach to the current status. Marry Bellis in her article History of Plastics has given in a short form which might be of good use to understand the evolution of the Plastic.

The entire process started in 1839 when the method of processing the natural rubber was invented by Charles Goodyear and in the last 75 years, plastic has taken various shapes and forms including Liquid Crystal Polymers in the year 1985.

Source: <https://www.thoughtco.com/history-of-plastics-1992322>

Once fancied mass invention of plastic has now regarded as hazardous items, but we should not forget even now the production has not stopped as a business it continues but there were peoples' movements which advocates Say No to plastic.

Why Plastics are harmful?

Plastic never goes away or degrades. It is a material used for lasting forever, however we throw the plastic after using once i.e., straws, spoons, bottles, etc. But these items will have a long life span and it is not degradable.

Usage of plastic have health hazards

Several Research has proven "Usage of plastics results in Asthma in Children, Disfigure Genitals, Kills Female Libido, Destroys immune system etc."

Plastics are destroying our Water ways

It is estimated that 8 million tones of Plastic waste are littered in a year to India's Seas/Oceans. It is only a rough estimate. Its effects are getting more and more vulnerable. Adding to the woes are that most of the Coastal town Sewage water gets mixed with the Sea water. What if the Sewage water gets connected to Hazardous Plastic? The Consequences are enormous.

Plastics are destroying the Soil

Plastic wastes deposited in land results in erosion of soil quality. Plastics helps the plants become impotent. But still the plastic wares are used for planting in house plants. Human brains may invent a plastic fertilizer which may yield 10 times the current productivity of land and permanently injure the land. Before that we need to identify measures to prevent the disaster.

