

IVORY & INK

"Truth in every shade."

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"WHY STUDENTS SHOULD CARE ABOUT CHEMICAL SPILLS: LESSONS FROM OUR GEOGRAPHY BOOKS TO REAL LIFE."

Chemical Pollution, the most underrated and underreported risk of the 21st century that threatens every form of life on this earth.

Chemical pollution, in simple words, is an environmental risk that poses threat to human life and ecosystems. It includes the release of harmful chemicals in the environment that originate from various industrial activities, agricultural practices and household products.

Industries and Manufacturing Plants :

They tend to release harmful chemicals, solvents, toxic materials either in rivers or lands or water and air without even filtering the refuse properly.

Agricultural Practices:

The use of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers in agriculture contributes to chemical deposition into water bodies and soil, affecting both aquatic life and human life.

Household Products:

Everyday items such as cleaning agents, paints, and personal care products contain chemicals that can pollute indoor and outdoor environments.

The Key Pollutants Threatening Life on Earth are as follows :

- **BENZENE** : Found in Paints, industrial solvents.
- **PHENOLS (Oxybenzone, Hydroquinone, Coal-tar dyes, Benzophenones)**: Found in cosmetics as disinfectant, antiseptics etc...
- **HEAVY METALS** : Found in Polluted food and water, cosmetics.



**ARE WE SITTING ON A TOXIC TIME BOMB?
INDIA'S CHEMICAL SAFETY CRISIS!**

- **PARABENS** : Used as preservatives in cosmetics, foods, drugs and shampoos.
- **ACRYLATE** : These include Industrial solvents used in cosmetics, paints, adhesive.

STUDENT DIARIES

"THE NEVER ENDING SELFISHNESS"

Human beings, as much as they love to play pretend, they are just negligent homosapiens. They are the main cause of environmental destruction, for they are blinded by their greed and selfishness in a world full of materialistic things. They are so lost that they don't even realize how badly they are damaging the nature. But we all know how it goes, we reap what we sow. If we sow chemicals, we get chemicals. It is as easy as that.

~ Gaurika Chaudhary

“The Textile Industry of Bhilwara”



Bhilwara is home to 450 weaving, 18 processing, 20 spinning, and 10 denim industries, which employ over 65,000 people directly and about 1,50,000 workers indirectly. For years, Bhilwara has exported 50 per cent of its yarn and denim to Bangladesh. The textile city of India has a systemic, normalised and oppressive work culture to offer the workers. The scope for jobs keeps decreasing as technology improves, and the standard norm in the city is that the workers must work 12 hours a day. As the elections come closer, the city gears up, and all the candidates continue to find ways to lure their voters. In Bhilwara city, the urban poor who are associated with the city's textile industry failed to find a place in the manifestos of all the candidates. However, few courageous workers stepped forward to tell their stories. According to Bablu Singh, former senior operator, the workers asked for a raise in salary because the workers were getting paid only Rs 470 per day, and the only demand was to make it Rs 500, seeing the market inflation. However, he and the other workers were not given the money. Instead, Bablu Singh was thrown out of the factory. Eventually Bablu Singh was threatened and wasn't given justice. As if threats and lack of justice were not enough, new technology that helps increase production has manufactured new problems for the workers.

Ganesh Gehlot is one of the workers at the loom; he works on the main machines that produce the finest material in the country. There is a machine called the Air Jet, which is used to refine the cotton.

In the process, a lot of dust is released, so much so that it chokes up the worker's throat and lungs. "We do not ask for much, but the least that could be done is we get some jaggery after working at the air jet. Working there even for minutes chokes us up. Many of us have respiratory problems, and our life span is decreasing." Little heed is paid to the safety of these workers inside the loom.

Gehlot lost an eye working there but was given no compensation. Workers at the air jet are not even given masks and work under constant threat.

The city is not fulfilling the basic criteria of working conditions for the work it is famous for.

Candidates call the elections a war of dharma, preaching to the citizens that life is about nothing but dharma, but then they turn a deaf ear to the workers and their plight. Many of these workers are migrants and end up becoming the bait of cheap labour for these industrialists who make a profit out of their problems.

By now, we all know that the safety rules and regulations have been violated and their lives have been compromised. But the question is, why isn't there any governmental action against the industries that violate these safety rules and rights of labourers? For we all know about the tragic Bhopal Gas Tragedy. How much longer do they have to suffer?

In the end, the only thing that remains now is how they will answer such questions once the voice of the people starts to rise louder than correspondingly to the fake promises of political leaders.

“Young Environmentalists: Plastic Pirates of Kochi.”

“Learning by doing is the best way to foster positive action in students.”, we have all heard it before. Haven’t we? Well, it is now time to meet students and teachers who have turned kayaking into a weekly mission to collect waste and keep the backwaters of Kerala clean - one paddle at a time.

For context: A school in Kochi, Kerala - **‘SBOA Public Senior Secondary School’** - has struck the perfect balance between learning and fun through their unique initiative. Every week, school students and teachers, under the guidance of trained professionals, kayak through the backwaters of their school, collecting plastic waste along the way.

Isn’t that a wonderful approach? Apparently, this school has started creating awareness about marine litter and plastic pollution among students and the rest of the community. This school also organised visits to the ‘Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMRFI)’ to help students understand marine biodiversity and its importance, along with how plastic waste in water bodies is mistaken for food and ingested by fishes and other aquatic animals, potentially leading to their death. But the damage doesn’t stop there - this waste further breaks down into microplastics and enters the food chain, making its way to our plates. The excitement and dedication of the students led the school management to form an official Kayaking Club and invest in 12 kayaks. Now, in partnership with Scuba Cochin, students receive professional kayaking training and set out every Friday morning for 1.5 hours to collect plastic waste from the backwaters. The collected plastic waste is then handed over to **‘Haritha Karma Sena’**, who then take it to shredding units for proper segregation and recycling.



Therefore, this initiative is a very powerful example of the role of youth in actions for the welfare of our environment. Kayaking not only offers a fun and healthy experience to students but also provides purpose to paddle forward and keep fighting the plastic pollution because, then again, ‘One paddle at a time’ is all it takes.

STUDENT DIARIES

“THE REAL BEACON OF HUMANITY”

Ain’t it wonderful? How these people have woken up to the reality of this world and are trying to change it! What they are doing is truly commendable and praiseworthy. As we all know that, “Drop by drop, the pot fills up”, I believe that their actions mark the start of a new beginning.

ONE PADDLE AT A TIME TAKES US TOWARDS NEW IDEAS AND A NEW WORLD.

~ Gaurika Chaudhary

“Is Climate Change Making Our Food Less Nutritious?”



Scientists have warned us about the effects of global warming. There is robust evidence that the ecosystem of plants will become more hostile as carbon dioxide's (CO_2) concentration in the atmosphere is increasing rapidly. We are well aware of the common consequences of global warming, such as droughts, ice melting, floods, heat waves and rising sea levels, etc. However, climate change is having another daunting effect on the very fuel that makes us live and work. And that fuel is our food. From the chapatis we eat to the rice we cook, the fits.

harmful impact of climate change is very concerning, as it should be.

Recently, two landmark research papers were published. Both investigated the effects of atmospheric CO_2 levels on the nutritional properties of our food. For instance, Samuel Myers from ‘Harvard School of Public Health’ found something really distressing about wheat.

The study showed wheat grown at an elevated level of CO_2 had 6.3% less protein, 9.3% less zinc and 5.1% less iron. The deficiency of protein, zinc and iron can prove to be detrimental to your health. As studies shows well aware of the common consequences of that zinc deficiency can cause pneumonia and malaria, linking it to somewhat around 800,000 deaths. Meanwhile, iron deficiency primarily contributes to one in five maternal deaths world wide. Even the rise in carbohydrates will cause diabetes and cardiovascular diseases and even the chapatis we eat to the rice we cook, the fits. Now, in the case of rice, a recent study shows that rice grown in increased CO_2 levels contains 17% less Vitamin B1 and Vitamin B2, 13% less Vitamin B5 and 30% less Vitamin B9. In other words, our rice will be devoid of its vitamins, which clearly means that our metabolism, cells and our tissues come under a great dark cloud of threat. In the end, the choice is ours to make. Fossil Fuel or Food?

NOTE:

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