

GOOD EARTH

Think before you toss

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When you throw garbage out of the train have you thought of the damage it does to the environment?

Photo: G.P. Sampath Kumar



One journey: A mountain of garbage.

The basic purpose of a window is to provide ventilation — to circulate the air and to bring in light. But there is another purpose as well — to throw things out. What is the connection between pollution and windows?

Take trains for example: Trains are the lifeline of our transport system. Travelling long distances one gets a beautiful view of picturesque landscapes and rural themes. Have you noticed lately how such beautiful views are being marred by plastic and paper garbage that gets thrown out of trains? One gets to see a lot of this between Mumbai and Pune.

Garbage

While all the *chai* and coffee gets consumed by us at a small price, we are unaware of the price someone or something else has to pay when we throw a cup out of the window. I remember when a group of us were travelling to Orissa from Pune, we collected two plastic bags full of garbage, and this after limiting the amount we picked up. We also requested our fellow passengers not to throw the garbage outside but put it in the bag, which they did.

Before getting rid of waste through the window, does it ever cross our mind what the farmer or the villager might have to be faced with all the garbage strewn in his farm? How much time and effort would the farmer and his family have to take to clean up every day? Do we ever think of the soil and trees that get choked and polluted just because they happen to be in the way? Would you have liked it if everyone kept dumping their waste in your house or land?

What can I do?

Unfortunately, trains do not provide garbage bins in the compartment. If you think that you would be buying things on the train then keep a bag handy so that you could put your garbage in it. You could throw it away at any station – in a bin of course. Carry your own plate and glass,

this is an effective solution. If you really feel for the environment, then a small change is a good start.

In collaboration with Kalpavriksh Environmental Action Group