

Chapter – 3

Polythene Bag

Durga Prasad Panda

About the Poet:

Durga Prasad Panda is an Indian poet of English. He writes poems in Oriya and English.

Main idea (s):

- Polythene bag, if uncared for, is harmful to the environment.
- Negative human feelings like 'hurt', if uncared for, harm the hurt person and the people around him.

Presentation/ Style

- The poem "Polythene Bag" touches on the pressing environmental issue metaphorically. It correlates human emotion like 'hurt' and a mundane thing like a polythene bag. Thus, two dissimilar things are compared and correlated in a highly suggestive manner.

Correlation between polythene bag and human feelings

- Non-dissolving:
 - Hurt and polythene bag are never dissolved.
- Both of them respond to touch, burning and the case of left alone
 - A polythene bag is as touchy as a hurt person
 - When touched, polythene bag makes a squeaky noise and a hurt person moans or groans.
 - A polythene bag is as stinking as a hurt person
 - A burning polythene bag gives off a sharp, strong smell.
 - Similarly, a hurt person burning in anger speaks out foul words.
 - If a polythene bag is left alone, it pollutes the environment.
 - Similarly if the feeling of hurt is left uncared for, it continues to pollute the heart and mind of the hurt person as well as the people around him.
- Warmth as a remedy
 - A little heat can melt a polythene bag.
 - Similarly, a little warm feeling of love can soften the hurt.
- Uncared state harmful
 - When a polythene bag is thrown into a dustbin, it is attacked by germs and so pollutes the environment.
 - Similarly, hiding the feeling of hurt is no remedy, as it keeps on hurting the person again and again.
 - That person proves harmful to the surroundings.

Conclusion

Pollution is a big environmental problem. Polythene bags are a major source of pollution. The poet uses this issue to underline the danger of negative human feelings like 'hurt'. Man can have proper environment only when the surroundings and the feelings both are properly taken care of.

Questions

Now, on the basis of your understanding of this poem, try to answer the following questions:

1. Why does the poet compare 'hurt' with a 'polythene bag'? Give any two reasons.
2. How does a polythene bag pollute our environment?
3. "The polythene bag remains within." Explain.
4. Have you ever been hurt? Write your feelings in your own words.