



FUTURE OF PLASTICS AND COMPOSITES! DON'T WORRY

With almost 98% of composites produced today all over the world are based on polymer matrix binders, the survival of the composites industry depends mostly on the survival of plastics. At this time of high price and depleting supply of petroleum, many are worried about what will happen to plastics which are fossil fuel based. The recent developments in the plastics production from non-petroleum sources show that the future of plastics is in tact and there need not be any worry. Whatever changes that can happen, it will be better for the plastics and plastic based composites because they will be more environments friendly and more of them will be used for saving fossil fuel.

More and more plastics are being made from natural vegetation. Corn based polylactic acid (PLA) filled with natural fibres is being developed for car interior. Experiments are underway to make plastics from feather and other animal waste. Resins are already being made from Soya been and corn oil. Bio fillers and nano-particle fillers can enhance the properties of plastics cutting down the amount of plastics required in the composites and thereby saving costs.

These show that a shift is gradually taking place from the conventional synthetic polymers from chemically made raw materials to the natural bio-materials. It brings composites close to the way nature has been making composites. It also shows that farming will become a more important source for "harvesting" plastics and composites.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N.G. Nair', written over a faint circular stamp.

Dr. N.G. NAIR
Honorary Editor