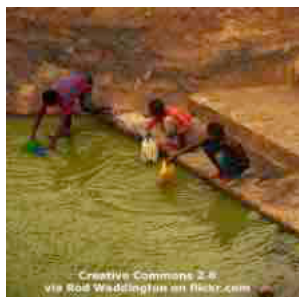


Teenagers win Earth Prize for microplastic 'magnet'

4th June 2026



Three sixteen-year-olds from India have won this year's Earth Prize. This award is the world's largest environmental sustainability competition for teenagers. Teens can win by developing innovative solutions to global eco-

challenges. The three Indian teenagers won by inventing a biodegradable powder made from old tamarind seeds. A tamarind is a tropical fruit that is used in sauces and desserts. The powder attracts microplastics when it is put in water. The microplastics stick together and form a mass that we can see. The mass of microplastics and powder can then be removed from the water with a magnet. The powder is a simple, cheap way to make water safer to drink in rural areas.

The three teenagers called their invention 'Plas-Stick'. They were extremely happy to win an award for it. They said: "Being named the global winners of the Earth Prize is incredibly special for all of us, especially as the first team from India to receive it." They added: "Tiny bits of plastic hide in our drinking water, but they're too small to see. We made a special powder from thrown-away tamarind seeds that acts like a magnet for these tiny plastics." Their website outlines another benefit. It said: "The collected plastic is safely turned into small useful items... so it can't return to nature. This simple method helps protect people, animals, and our planet from invisible plastic pollution."

Sources:

goodnewsnetwork.org / ndtv.com / telegraphindia.com

Writing

We should ban all plastic. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

sixteen-year-olds / award / sustainability / teenagers / biodegradable / microplastics / invention / extremely happy / drinking water / tamarind / return to nature / planet

True / False

- 1) The winners of a prize are three sixteen-year-olds from India. T / F
- 2) The Earth Prize is a sports competition. T / F
- 3) The teenagers made a special powder from seeds from a tropical fruit. T / F
- 4) The powder makes water look dirtier. T / F
- 5) The powder the students invented is called "Plastic Stick". T / F
- 6) The teenagers were not so happy about winning the award. T / F
- 7) Tiny bits of plastic in our drinking water are easy to see. T / F
- 8) The collected microplastic is turned into useful items. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. won | a. biggest |
| 2. largest | b. very, very small |
| 3. innovative | c. used |
| 4. old | d. easy |
| 5. simple | e. very |
| 6. called | f. keep safe |
| 7. happy | g. received |
| 8. extremely | h. named |
| 9. tiny | i. creative |
| 10. protect | j. pleased |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you think of the name 'Plas-Stick'?
- c) Would you use this new invention?
- d) What can we use instead of plastic?
- e) What other types of pollution are you worried about?
- f) What will the world be like if we use even more plastic?
- g) What can we do to protect our planet from invisible pollution?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the teenage prizewinners?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Three sixteen- | a. bits of plastic |
| 2. A tamarind is a tropical | b. microplastics |
| 3. The powder attracts | c. in rural areas |
| 4. be removed from the water with | d. people |
| 5. make water safer to drink | e. away tamarind seeds |
| 6. They were extremely | f. a magnet |
| 7. Tiny | g. useful items |
| 8. We made a special powder from thrown- | h. fruit |
| 9. plastic is safely turned into small | i. happy to win an award |
| 10. This simple method helps protect | j. year-olds from India |

Discussion – Student B

- Have you ever won a prize?
- Should there be more awards for sustainability?
- What eco-challenges do you know of?
- What do you know about tamarind?
- What do you think of the tamarind-seed powder?
- Should teenagers be encouraged to invent things at school?
- What problems do microplastics cause?
- Do you worry about the safety of your drinking water?

Spelling

- this awdar is the world's largest
- environmental utaibinliaysst competition
- win by developing innovative isosuonlt
- a tamarind is a oirtcapl fruit
- the powder tatscart microplastics
- make water safer to drink in rulra areas
- teenagers called their noniivetrn 'Plas-Stick'
- they were xtremleye happy
- iclyebridn special
- their website outlines another ientfeb
- so it can't return to nrteau
- invisible plastic toolnuipl

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. a	3. i	4. c	5. d
6. h	7. j	8. e	9. b	10. f

Comprehension Questions

Listen to / read the news article. Answer these questions. (Answers are on p. 27 of the 27-page PDF.)

1.	Who can enter the Earth Prize competition?
2.	What did the three Indian teenagers invent?
3.	What is a tamarind?
4.	How are the microplastics and powder removed from the water?
5.	Why could this powder be useful in rural areas?
6.	What is the name of the teenagers' invention?
7.	How did the teenagers feel about winning the Earth Prize?
8.	How many times has India now won the Earth Prize?
9.	What do the collected microplastics not go back to?
10.	What is the collected plastic turned into after it is removed?

Speaking – Drinking water

Rank these with your partner. Put the biggest threats to drinking water at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| • Microplastics | • Farm chemicals |
| • Factory waste | • Sewage |
| • Oil spills | • Garbage |
| • Dirty rivers | • Not enough rain |

Answers – True False

1	T	2	F	3	T	4	F	5	F	6	F	7	F	8	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.