

From Susmita Roy Maiti<sup>1</sup> and Kiran Sankar Maiti<sup>2</sup>

## A Neat and Clean Society

### What Belongs to Where?

**Brown bin:** (Biological waste) - Kitchen waste: vegetable and fruit peel, old bread .....

Garden waste: soil, dead flowers, leaves...

Others: hair, feathers....

**Blue bin:** (Paper) - Envelops, news papers, books, any cartoons without plastic....

**Yellow bin:** (Plastic etc) - Any types of Plastics, aluminium foil, soap/cream plastic bottles, milk pack.....

**Gray bin:** (miscellaneous) - ash, carbon paper, nails, rubber....

Yes, putting this list at a very common place at home is a "first do" task and following this list is a "must do" task in every day's life, if you are living in Germany. In general, every household has 4 coloured bins, where you must follow the rules what goes to where. The above mentioned list is just an example. Although the picture is almost same all over Germany, but the bin colours and containers are different from city to city. Because, local authorities are in charge of the waste management. Municipality collect the bins following a regular intervals.

In every city a huge percentage of waste product comes from residences. The core of the excellent waste management of a developed country like Germany is coloured bin system. We are trying to give a general picture of the procedure taking as an example of a city, Munich in Germany.

These coloured bins are stored in each and every building's common space or in a common place of every residential areas. The cost of the bins and disposals are usually included in maintenance cost that everyone needs to pay in their municipality. Every one or two weeks or even one or two days, depending upon the population of this area, municipality collect the bins and

drive them to the nearest recycle center. Additionally, every neighbourhood has several garbage collecting island, where large different coloured containers are placed for clothes and shoes. One of the most important recyclable materials are glass and plastic bottles which usually individuals produce a few amount in every day's life. The garbage island also have different coloured containers for them. A point to be noted here, most of the plastic bottles are returnable, on which you did pay a deposit when you brought it and get back that deposit money when you return it.

Nevertheless, you are not allowed to throw away any bulky waste in those mentioned bins because that might create a bin space problem for your neighbour.

Bulky piece of wooden furniture, computers, broken appliances can be carried out into recycling centers which are situated in and around every cities and villages. Or municipality also pick up those bulky things from locality two or three times in a year. It is obvious small and bulky electrical and electronics has to be separated. At the beginning of every year every letter box receive a booklet for free which contain all those information about dates which varies from location to location in a city. Maybe by this time, you are worried about batteries, toxic wastes and medicines. There is a clear instructions about these. Every shops and super markets which sells batteries, always provide a place for used ones. collection of toxic wastes like paint, cleaning materials occur at regular intervals and pharmacies are bound to take back unused and out dated medicines.

Probably this list covers almost all of the household wastes which a normal house produce and you are now thinking, this practice is strange! But truly speaking, the secret of gorgeous neat and clean Germany's beauty lies behind this practice. In Munich, almost 60% of collected waste is recycled in some way and the rests are turned into power and heat at power plants.

<sup>1</sup>Department of Theoretical Physics

<sup>2</sup>Department of Physical Chemistry



FIG. 1. Coloured bins in front of every house



FIG. 2. Accumulation of yellow bins in front of a locality before collection.

Hardly anything is left over. A major part of the success of this program is the proper sorting of garbage from your house. And this is where the lesson starts!

We can assure you this is not a difficult job at all.

Only you need three or four bins inside your home and within couple of days you will be used to with the system.

What happen if you don't follow the rule? Firstly, you have to pay a lot of maintenance cost which will come for the whole building if you are living in a flat, or individual if you are living in your private house.

Secondly, if somebody does a big mistake for sorting, somehow from the type of garbage municipality will identify the guilty person and a huge amount of fine will be charged. So no way, you must have to follow the rules.

According to a recent report Germany leads the European nations in recycling, with around 70 percent

of the waste the country generates, successfully recovered and reused each year.

A major part of the beauty of European Countries are due to cleanness. You really don't need any big sculpture or any beautiful castle, if your surroundings are neat and clean nature will provide you beautiful visiting spot. Not only beauty, lots of diseases can be avoided due to a neat and clean surroundings. Just a little bit change in our every days practise can provide a healthy environment to our next generation.

**Susmita Roy Maiti**

Department of Theoretical Physics, University of Bayreuth,  
Germany. Email: sushrits@gmail.com

**Kiran Sankar Maiti**

Department of Physiscal Chemistry, University of Bayreuth,  
Germany . Email: kiran.maiti@ch.tum.de