

Inevitable
evitable

First of all I would like to congratulate the order of Brahma Kumaris for taking up this most urgent and important campaign for creating awareness about the environment ~~is~~ around us. I do hope and wish in the name of mother nature that this campaign does reach every human being not only in India, but also around the world.

We also know of the wonderful work that Mr Kuran Karimk has ~~also~~ done in contributing to the series "The Race to Save the Planet".

We all pray that efforts of all the ~~or~~ various groups are successful so that humans on this planet become aware of the havoc that they have already wrought on this planet, so that they hereafter do some penance for their past horrors that they have committed on this defenceless mother earth. Hopefully they will try to rectify their past mistakes and compensate for them.

However ~~the~~ chances if we look around ~~our~~ the continued human behaviour ~~to~~ his attitude towards nature, his attitude towards his

When we talk of

fellow being, his continued greed to make ~~what~~
~~are~~ just what are nothing more than, literally,
 scraps of paper (what we call money) at the
 expense of the beauty and bounty of nature, then
 I tend to feel somewhat pessimistic about the
 future of nature and about the future of the
 present human civilization.

But we can't afford to be pessimistic. We
 must hope. And we must work hard to
 create that awareness.

Therefore when we talk of environment, we have
 to talk of a "total environment", an environment of
 the a human being ~~around~~ ^{around} of himself, of his
 thoughts, of his mental attitudes and of his
 relationship with nature and with his fellow
 beings.

We have to talk of a total relationship of the
 human being with the various elements of his
 environment: a harmony of man with himself,
 with the society and with the nature - all
 parts of a grand ecosystem.

(which existed in the early times)

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This ecosystem got totally disturbed and devastated when man began to identify himself as separate and distinct from nature and began to pay greater attention to his comforts as distinct from nature and began to exploit it.

His attitude about himself (as exemplified by his intellectual arrogance; there being nothing intellectual about it); his the level of his thoughts and mental ability (being essentially preoccupied with himself); his attitude towards his fellow beings; etc are an important component of his environment.

In retrospect, we realize that we have chosen a wrong path of development. We are essentially following the western model of development and paying the price for it, perhaps more dearly than the west is paying - because of our large numbers which continue to ~~of~~ increase unabated.

Our traditions have taught us love and respect for nature, and for the smallest

creature on earth's surface who, the Jains believe, have the ^{same} equal right to 'live' as anybody else.

Bishnois of Rajasthan jealously protect the wild life in their region (and anywhere else if they had the resources).

Unfortunately, we have gone too far in the along the Western model. However, with population growing as rapidly as it is, putting pressures on all sectors of economy, food, transport etc can we sustain ourselves with this model of development, what with the present oil crisis and consequent ~~increase of prices~~ skyrocketing prices, the continually mounting foreign debt.?

I think there will be a crash some day. May be we need such a crash to instil some sense of sanity in us that either we begin to live differently or decrease our growth rate of population drastically.

But of course, we cannot wait for the disaster. We have to do something to avoid this crash. We need a crash educational program, a crash awareness programme which ought to warn against the dangers of the present

acquisitional values in total disregard of its social and ecological implications.

We must ask pose to people the question as to what kind of life they would like their children and grandchildren to live. A life of peace and tranquility with the beauty and bounty of nature giving them a sense of bliss or a life of constant struggle to only acquire objects and eventually ^{with} only desert like conditions around ~~them~~ - no flora, no fauna, no music of the birds, no butterflies to give that soothing pleasure to the eyes and ^{the} mind. May be some day ~~even~~ not ^{even} enough food to eat and water to drink.

The choice would have to be made sooner than later. The course of development will have to be modified, if not a totally altered

Our education is woefully inadequate ^{and in fact} ~~is not~~ ~~count~~ ~~educative~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~point~~ ~~that~~ it is constantly promoting ~~only~~ ~~the~~ ~~concept~~ ~~of~~ ~~achievement~~ among the children the concept of what may be called as "self-centred achievement". They are asked to achieve their cherished goals without regard to ~~the~~ ~~cost~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~complementary~~ and worrying about the reaction in the system ~~except~~ as a whole. This has encouraged a selfishness and exploitative spirit.

This mental attitude manifests itself in many walk of life.

- Driving on the road - breaking the rules to get ahead.
- Getting into a bus - jumping the Q, etc
- Breaking the rules in many walk of life to get ahead.
- Bribery to get your things done ~~to~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~expense~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~non-briber~~ ~~rights~~.

All ~~these~~ Clearly the effects of such actions are disastrous for the society as a whole and will soon lead to social chaos.

This aspect also I consider an integral

part of the human social environment - a part of the total environment that I talked about earlier.

The degradation of our physical environment is a direct consequence of the degradation of mental and social ~~as~~ environment of the human society.

The concept of environment in its totality must be made ^a_h part of a sound educational programme.

ODE TO MOTHER NATURE

Hail thee
O' kind spirit
O' mother of all beings
Thou art tender and generous
To all thy creatures.
Thou knoweth not
Caste, nor colour;
Thou knoweth only
Love and care
For all thy species.
Thou giveth them warmth
Of thy affection
And joy
Of thy creation,
Of the beautiful flowers,
Mountains and valleys,
Of chirping birds,
And of butterflies
Dancing over flowers and trees.
But the unthinking man
Knoweth not thy love
Trapped in his greed
Destroyeth thee
And thus
Diggeth his own grave

What shall thou be,
If his number multiplies
And his greed continues?
There shall be no more humans
But only worms
As in a putrifying muck.

(2)

And thou shall be dead
And with thee, thy affection
Thy beauty and thy creation
And with it
Will be dead the spirit of
The very motherhood.

Will man ever learn,
And be wiser?
And realize the true richness:
Of thy riches,
Thy flora and fauna
Thy beautiful creatures,
Hills and valleys?

And will he ever learn
To live in
A harmonious relationship
With the rest of nature?

When he does
Will he be truly blessed
And earn the right again
To be called
The "supreme being".

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