

Editorial

Thursday, October 4, 2018

'Chadong' - the victim of development

There are all sorts of reactions in chemistry and the speed of reactions is an important area of research. Many reactions, such as rusting of iron, are slow reactions. Years ago, reactions that took a few seconds were considered as fast reactions! But now reactions taking milliseconds may be called medium fast! The concept of fastness has changed standards! Life is also a field of actions and reactions! Some are slow and some are fast etc! If we touch a flame, the reaction of feeling the pain (of hotness) is immediate while ageing is a slow reaction. We do not touch the flame again but people do not care much about ageing! People learn to adjust fast in the case of fast reactions while the response is slow in the case of slow reactions! Heavy drinkers and those who indulge in excessive sex (with different partners) get fast reactions in terms of short-lived pleasures. One can see such people in millions all over the world with the associated crimes, diseases and deaths! These actions have other slower reactions such as damage of brain, kidneys, liver and venereal diseases. Such slow reactions are ignored by the millions to end up in untold pain, miseries and premature death! The human mind tends to ignore slow reactions and so does not learn! Had the reactions been fast, people would have learnt to make the world a better place to live. Excessive tapping of underground water, polluting the rivers, atmosphere, oceans etc are ignored (being slow reactions) that will certainly entail dangerous consequences for the planet! Who cares about slow reactions that are dangerous! The human mind is getting more polluted by such reactions! The future is indeed frightening!

The way the society is marching toward development is also an irony for human kinds. Some of the most beautiful places in Manipur's Ukhru district have been submerged under water as an impact of the Maphou Dam constructed in the name of development. Chadong Village under Litan Police Station of Ukhru district is now history. The next generation will never know that there was once a peaceful village called Chadong inhabited by some 1000 household in the state of Manipur. After the entire has gone under water, some villagers managed to find alternative villages and started new live from the beginning but some are left with no choice but to fight for their survival along with their little ones who are forced to leave the school (at a time when govt. talk about RTE) as the school they attended no more existed because of the situation created by the Mega Dam.

This newspaper had reported about some pregnant women being shifted to neighbouring Yanggopki area at a time when they are supposed to provide best form of relaxations.

The construction of the Maphou Dam may have been due to the requirement because the process of development cannot remain stagnant. But when the kinds of development are meant to sabotage the lives of common man and extinction of some of the precious place, there is reason to put up this question - Why and for whom the development are meant for? It is pertinent to note that who is paying the costs and who is receiving the benefits of these sorts of constructions being taken up in the name of development.

The modern definition says that "Development is a process or set of processes characterized by the consequence of general sustained economic growth, and sets of natural, human, technological, cultural, financial, and organizational conditions."

"Development" in a common sense is the systematic use of scientific and technical knowledge to meet specific objectives or requirements. But these are for the benefit of the people. If the so called development works failed to benefit the people then the kind of constructions cannot be counted as developmental works.

Chadong was a small village with a population of not more than 3000 people. It is already known to the planner of this mega Dam that the village will no more exist once the Dam started commissioning. So, why did the government failed to shift this village to some other location where they can make a better living. A mere compensation to please them will not make their live better - this is a common sense. Everyone knows that money is important but it is not everything. When the folks they have been living from a very long time cannot gather to continue the kind of happy life they shared, the so called money provided to them in the name of compensation are valueless.

This senseless government has failed to understand that 'Development' is not the construction of costly project but it is to provide better living to the citizens. If the construction is to suffer the people, it is not called developmental project.

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In harmony with Mother Nature

By: Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India

Courtesy: The Hindu

We need a clean environment for human empowerment, writes Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Yesterday, the United Nations honoured me with the Champions of the Earth Award. While I was extremely humbled at receiving this honour, I do feel that this award is not for an individual. Instead, it is recognition of the Indian culture and values, which have always placed emphasis on living in harmony with Mother Nature.

A proud moment

It was a proud moment for every Indian to see India's proactive role in mitigating climate change being acknowledged and appreciated by the United Nations Secretary General, António Guterres, and Erik Solheim, the Executive Director of the UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme). Human beings and nature have a very special relationship. Mother Nature has nurtured and nourished us. The first civilisations were established on the banks of rivers. Societies that live in harmony with nature flourish and prosper.

together Ocean and River Waters; in Her is contained Food which She manifests when ploughed; In Her indeed is alive all Lives; May She bestow us with that Life.

The ancients write about the *Panch Tatvas - Prithvi* (Earth), *Vayu* (Air), *Jal* (Water), *Agni* (Fire), *Akash* (Sky) - and how our life systems are based on the harmonious functioning of these elements. The elements of nature are manifestations of divinity. Mahatma Gandhi wrote extensively on the environment and even practised a lifestyle where compassion

towards the environment was essential. He propounded the Doctrine of Trusteeship, which places the onus on us, the present generation, to ensure that our coming generations inherit a clean planet. He called for sustainable consumption so that the world does not face a resource crunch. Leading lifestyles that are harmonious and sustainable are a part of our ethos. Once we realise how we are flag bearers of a rich tradition, it will automatically have a positive impact on our actions. Need for public awareness



Swachh Bharat Mission, which is directly linked to a sustainable future. With the blessings of the people of India, over 85 million households now have access to toilets for the first time. Over 400 million Indians no longer have to defecate in the open. Sanitation coverage is up from 39% to 95%. These are landmark efforts in the quest of reducing the strain on our natural surroundings.

We see this proactiveness in the success of the Ujjwala Yojana, which has significantly reduced indoor air pollution due to

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We have integrated objectives of Skill India in the environment sector and launched the schemes, including Green Skill Development Programme for skilling about seven million youth in environment, forestry, wildlife and climate change sectors by 2021. This will go a long way in creating numerous opportunities for skilled jobs and entrepreneurs in the environment sector. Our country is devoting unparalleled attention to new and renewable sources of energy. Over the last four years, this sector has become more accessible and affordable.

The Ujala Yojana has led to the distribution of nearly 31 crore LED bulbs. The costs of LED bulbs have reduced and so have the electricity bills and the CO2 emissions.

India's proactiveness is seen internationally. It makes me proud that India remained at the forefront of the COP-21 negotiations in Paris in 2015. In March 2018, world leaders of several countries converged in New Delhi to mark the start of the International Solar Alliance, an endeavour to harness the rich potential of solar energy and bring together all nations that are blessed with solar power.

Climate justice

While the world is talking about climate change, the call for climate justice has also reverberated from India. Climate justice is about safeguarding the rights and interests of the poor and marginalised sections of society, who are often the biggest sufferers from the menace of climate change.

As I have written earlier, our actions today will have an impact on human civilisation much beyond our time. It is up to us to take on the mantle of global responsibility towards a sustainable future. The world needs to shift to a paradigm of environmental philosophy that is anchored in environmental consciousness rather than merely in government regulations. I would like to compliment all those individuals and organisations who are working assiduously in this direction. They have become the harbingers of a monumental change in our society. I assure them all possible support from the Government in their pursuits. Together, we will create a clean environment that will be the cornerstone of human empowerment!



Today, human society stands at an important crossroads. The path that we take hereon will not only determine our well-being but also that of the generations who will inhabit our planet after us. The imbalances between our greed and necessities have led to grave ecological imbalances. We can either accept this, go ahead with things as if it is business as usual, or we can take corrective actions. Three things will determine how we as a society can bring a positive change.

The first is internal consciousness. For that, there is no better place to look than our glorious past. Respect for nature is at the core of India's traditions. The Atharvaveda contains the Prithvi Sukta, which contains unparalleled knowledge about nature and the environment. It is beautifully written in Atharvaveda: Salutations to Mother Earth. In Her is woven

The second aspect is public awareness. We need to talk, write, debate, discuss and deliberate as much as possible on questions relating to the environment. At the same time, it is vital to encourage research and innovation on subjects relating to the environment. This is when more people will know about the pressing challenges of our times and ways to mitigate them.

When we as a society are aware of our strong links with environmental conservation and talk about it regularly, we will automatically be proactive in working towards a sustainable environment. That is why, I will put proactiveness as the third facet of bringing a positive change.

In this context, I am delighted to state that the 130 crore people of India are proactive and at the forefront of working towards a cleaner and greener environment. We see this proactiveness in the

cooking practices that were causing respiratory diseases. Till date, over five crore Ujjwala connections have been distributed, thus ensuring a better and cleaner life for the women and their families.

India is moving at a quick pace in cleaning its rivers. The Ganga, which is India's lifeline, had become polluted in several parts. The Namami Gange Mission is changing this historical wrong. Emphasis is being given to proper treatment of sewage.

At the core of our urban development initiatives such as AMRUT and the Smart Cities Mission is the need to balance urban growth with environmental care. The over 13 crore soil health cards distributed to farmers are helping them make informed decisions that will boost their productivity and improve the health of our land, which helps the coming generations.