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A Fatal Eco-Bio Crisis Hangs Over Our Planet; The Writing On The Wall Is Quite Clear; Reform Or Get Perished

Theme Of Modern Civilisational Crisis Is Only A Diversion

1. A Fatal Eco-Bio Crisis On Our Planet

Today humanity is faced with the most serious eco-bio crisis on our earth. Given this reality, if humankind continues on its present path, it will (along with other bio-phenomena) get perished in no time. If it takes a right path, there is still a possibility of building a bright future for humankind.

(A). State of Environmental Crisis

A January 2004-article published in the scientific magazine Nature says that "Climate change over the next 50 years is expected to drive a quarter of land animals and plants into extinction." The other scientific experts who have not committed themselves to any timetable, do admit that the environmental situation is highly alarming.

The March 2004-UN report says that the "Smokeless Industry" of information technology is a major global pollutant. According to it, a 24-kg computer along with 27 centimeter cathode ray tube monitor required at least 230 kg of fossil fuel, 22 kg of chemicals and 1,500 kg of water—a total of 1.8 tonnes.

The March 2004-report of the Natural Environment Research Council Centre for ecology and hydrology in Dorchester, UK, says "A sixth massive extinction event in the history of life is upon us yet again." Such mass extinctions of living species of flora and fauna have periodically occurred during the five gigantic pre-historic extinctions. The Dorchester Centre says that previous five extinctions occurred due to the inter-play of natural causes, while the sixth one seems to be due to human activity.

The 2003-Rome Conference of the world noted scientists has cautioned that if the worsening process of environmental degradation is not reversed within a short time, the earth will become totally unsuitable for bio-living in the near future.

The 2002-study made by the-UN World Wildlife Fund has warned that if the human community (especially the rich nations and the rich persons) does not change its extravagant and wasteful life-style, our earth will become unsustainable by 2050.

The 2000-UN Johannesburg World Summit on sustainable development was held to consider the fatal problem of environmental degradation and human resources degeneration.

The 2000-statement issued by 6,000 internationally prominent scientists has emphasised that if the human community did not stop the production of green house gases (GHG) in a short span of time, the global warming world make the earth uninhabitable for bio-!ife by the end of the 21st century.

The public perception is also running on similar lines. The people have a feeling that the constantly increasing volume of GHG, depleting global water resources, large scale deforestation, degradation of more than 60 percent of arable land, dying out of many bio species and unsustainable use of other natural products is creating a very serious threat for them.

(B). State Of Humanitarian Crisis

Almost all the global institutions concerned with human growth, i.e., the UNO, WB, IMF, WTO, etc., have now been stressing the unsustainable mode of our existing development model, mainly characterised by unendurable inequality, inequity, poverty, injustice, crime, violence, etc.

The January 2004-report of the World Watch Washington has remarked that the extravagant and unsustainable lifestyle of the world's rich and upper middle classes (constituting one-fourth of the world) is pushing the human community towards a dangerous crisis.

The 2002-UN Human Development report expresses: the world's richest 1 percent receive as much in terms of income as the poorest 75 percent. The 2001-UN Human Development report writes: "of the 4.6 billion people in the developing countries, more than 850 million are illiterate, nearly a billion lack access to improved water resources, and 2.4 billion lack access to basic sanitation. Nearly 32 million boys and girls are out of school. And 11 million children under age of five die each year from preventable causes, equivalent to more than 30,000 a day. Around 1.2 billion people live on less than (the equivalent of) $1 a day (1993 PPP US$), and 2.8 billion on less than $2 a day. Such deprivations are not limited to developing countries. In OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries, more than 130 million people are income poor, 34 million are unemployed and adult functional illiteracy rates average 15 percent." This report further states that the richest 10 percent of the US population (around 25 million people) had a combined income greater than that of the poorest 43 percent of the world's people (around 2 billion people). The 1993-Human Development Report says: that, by the late 1990's, the fifth of the world's people living in the highest income countries had: 86 percent of world GDP, the bottom fifth just 1 percent, 68 percent of foreign direct investment, the bottom fifth just 1 percent, 82 percent of world export markets the, bottom fifth just 1 percent and 74 percent of world telephone lines, today's basic means of communication, the bottom fifth just 1.5 percent. The 1996-UN Human Development Report tells: just three of the world's richest people have the combined GDP of the 48 least developed countries. The world's 225 richest people have a combined wealth of over $1 trillion, which is also the total income of 57 percent of the poor who number 2.5 billion. The world's richest persons exceeds the GDP of South Asia (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives) plus Iran and Afghanistan.

Inequality and deprivation in human society is proceeding at an unprecedented pace. Just look at this simple fact. In 1820, the gap between the richest and the poorest countries was about 3 to 1. It became 11 to 1 in 1913, 35 to 1 in 1950, 42 to 1 in 1973 and 72 to 1 in 1992. In 1997, it was roughly 74 to 1—a heart rendering figure. Earth-shaking is the disparity that today exists between a richest and a poorest person in the world. While Bill Gates, the richest American of our world, owns a total wealth of $80 billion and Azim Premji of India possesses assets worth $6 billion, a starving person, with an empty pocket and deprived of every source to get even a loaf of bread has no option but to go begging subsist for some time on alms and then quit for the next world. The medical experts pronounce such deaths as a result of defective stomach bowls or some other physical ailment.

Everywhere the people are feeling that their everyday problems— hunger, poverty, unemployment, houselessness, diseases, lack of drinking water and health care, delayed and high cost justice, atrocities against women, communal and caste riots, power breakdowns. corruption, crime, violence, human rights violations, etc.— are getting worse. The political leaders and business circles are exploiting the public funds and filling up their pockets by fair means or foul

(C). Issue Of Modern Civilisational Crisis

Turning to the issue of crisis of modern civilisation, the fact is that civilisation essentially represents only the culture of a given society (or system). As regards culture, it is based on the fundamental principle of the politics and economy of that society (or system). Feudal culture upheld the basic principle of the feudal politics and economy, that is, the principle of loyalty to the monarch. Accordingly, the feudal civilisation preached the principle of feudal politics and economy. Similarly, in the present corporate capitalist society (or system), its politics and economy uphold capital as the supreme thing and measure human development, prosperity and progress in terms of capital (money or wealth). This is why the present corporate capitalist culture projects the same principle in its various sectors, (i.e., education, economics, commerce, philosophy, sociology, psychology, political science, home science, defence and strategic studies, ecology and environmental sciences,

communication and journalism, computer science and information technology, geography, history, archaeology and culture, agriculture science, biomedical science, social medicine, and community health, biotechnology, anthropology, international relations, linguistics, population science, science and technology policy studies, social work, statistics and mathematics) and this is why the operators of different sectors of culture entirely act upon money-based norms. The whole science, technology and research is geared to MNCs and maximisation of capital, money or wealth.

That is why we say that the issue of modern civilisational crisis, being already a part of the Eco-Bio crisis, constitutes only a diversion which, by posing an unnecessary agenda, distorts the focus to be concentrated on the principal crisis

2. Cause Of Eco-Bio Crisis

Primarily, the general cause rests with the wrongful understanding of natural and human resources.

In particular, it lies in the unsustainable lifestyle of the rich classes and their hangers on.

Basically, it resides in the sociology of corporate capitalist and communist systems. The first fundamental sociological reason lies in the one-sided philosophical understanding of the Adam Smithean and Marxian development models that man constitutes the supreme phenomenon in the system of nature on our planet and even in the universe. Obviously, both these models project people as the sole builder of human society and everything in it, disregarding the social truth that the change and development in human society takes place due to a two-sided inter-action—that between nature and society, on the one hand, and within human society itself, on the other.

The second fundamental sociological reason rests with the one-sided understanding of the corporate capitalist and communist theories about the human nature. Corporate capitalist theory thinks that humankind is selfish by nature, while the communist concept holds that it is social by nature, thus both neglect the social reality of the two-sided character of man. That is, self-interest, on the one side (originating from man's biological existence), and social, on the other (arising from man's social entity as a member of society), thereby meaning that man is a bio-social being.

Wayout Of Eco-Bio Crisis

Short-Term Wayout

A short-term wayout lies in establishing a justice-based society on the basis of the principles, i.e., (i) empowerment of the people in place of corporate capital supported political parties and business circles; (ii) social security to every deprived and needy person and (iii) the rationalisation of irrational income differences in the proportion of 1:5.

Nature-Human Centric Wayout

The basic solution resides in the replacement of present Corporate Capitalist system by the Nature-Human Centric system whose objective, principles, styles and organisation stands for two top priorities, i.e., environment and man and which follows five basic principles: i.e., environmental promotion, fair equality (i.e., social security to every deprived and needy person and the rationalisation of irrational income differences in the proportion of 1:5), productivity (or growth rate), peoples led democracy (i. e., empowerment of the people in place of corporate capital supported political parties and business circles) and all sided transparency.

The main points of Nature-Human Centric system comprise as under:

Nature-Human Centric Model of Human Society

1. Nature-Human Centric model of human society holds environment and humankind as the two most precious phenomena in human society, considers the two as its social capital (supreme thing in human society) whose (i.e., environmental-human resources) growth brings development, prosperity and progress and maintains them as its guiding principle in thinking, saying, doing and organising.

2. It strongly advocates the fundamental task of environment (i.e., air, water, land, forests, bio-diversity, etc.) promotion at all times and places.

3. It maintains the fundamental right of every human to bio-social existence, ensured through a network of social security with regard to clean air, pure drinking water, nutritious food, housing, clothing, free health facilities and education.

4. It stands for fundamental human right of fair equality, based on 1:5 income differences.

5. It firmly upholds the principle of world peace and steadfastly follows the path of peaceful resolution of all disputes in the world, particularly Jammu-Kashmir, Palestine and Sri Lanka, etc. In the case of a just solution to Jammu-Kashmir problem, it advocates that a joint Indo-Pak condominium be entrusted to handle its (Jammu-Kashmir's) defence and foreign affair; in all other matters (except defence and foreign affair), Jammu-Kashmir should have independence, while each of its nine ethnic regions be given maximum possible autonomy. A similar type of just arrangement be worked out in case of Israel, Palestine and Jordan also.

6. It demands the restructuring of the world order by ending the veto powers to the five permanent members of the UN security council and by giving the absolute power of deciding any issue to the UN general assembly on the basis of simple majority vote. In due course, UN be restructured on the basis of a constitution framed by a constituent assembly elected by the people from various constituencies in the world.

7. It argues for the restructuring of WTO, WB and IMF on the basis of substituting their free market economic perspective by Nature-Human Centric perspective and their (i.e., WTO, WB and IMF) development strategy favouring money and money-owners by a Nature-Human Centric development strategy, comprising twp top priorities, i.e., human and environmental, and five principles. i.e., environmental promotion, fair equality, productivity, peoples-led democracy and all-sided transparency.

8. It champions the women's cause and demands their empowerment, ensuring them 50 percent representation in all social institutions at all levels.

9. It promotes the organising of agriculture on co-operative basis ensuring the livelihood security of all concerned.

10. It forcefully speaks for labour (both physical and mental) empowerment, ensuring workers one-third elected representation in the management of all institutions, projects and factories.

11. It pleads for the decentralisation of all industrial and services sectors by ending their corporate and state monopoly control and managing them through ordinary shareholders (with two-third representation) and workers (with one-third representation).

12. It proposes for a democratic management and control of finance. While the corporate sector upholds the monopoly corporate management and control and the state sector supports the monopoly bureaucratic management and control the Nature-Human Centric Development model stands for democratic management and control of public companies by elected joint committees, each comprising two-third elected members from ordinary share-holders and one-third elected workers representatives in place of permanent corporators. All promoters' shares purchased at cheaper rates (than the market rates) and owned by the corporate management be ended.

13. It encourages the spending of all development funds through elected peoples development committees (including the gram sabhas and not above that), abrogating the current rule of allotting Rs. 2 crores to each MP and lakhs of rupees to each MLA for development spending in their constituencies

14. It proposes the restructuring of corporate capitalist oriented constitution and jurisprudence in each country on the basis of Nature-Human Centric outlook.

15. It strongly favours the fundamental principle of safeguarding and protecting the interests of environmental and human resources. Any disregard of the foregoing principle to be dealt with the aim of reforming the offender, while prescribing punishment according to the severity of the offence. Punishment may include all humane forms that have existed in history except the sentence to death and human cruelty.

16. It firmly believes that all the constituent processes of human society, i.e., environmental, human and scientific-technological should be controlled and conducted by the people.

17. It propounds the empowerment of people (or people-led governance) at five level from the village/ward to national level with powers to manage the three basic facets of social life—political economic and cultural.

18. The process of empowerment be decided through the method of election, which will be entirely free where everyone has the right to participate as a candidate and to express his opinion as a voter. It urges for ending the state power monopoly of the corrupt and money and power-hungry political parties by introducing the rules of the state funding of elections of each individual candidate (who is required to produce 1,000 signatures of his electors in state assembly and 5,000 in central assembly elections), without any consideration to his party affiliation. Concerned voters right to recall any assembly member if one-fifth of voters demand in writing a repoll on the ground that the afore-mentioned member has lost the confidence of his electorate.

19. Political aspect demands the establishment of Political Assembly at five levels: (i.e., national, state or regional, district, block and gram) which stands for a democratic order and is based on fully democratic principles, functioning and structure. Such a model necessitates the introducing of the principles of the maximum possible empowerment of the people in decision-making.

20. Economic aspect needs the establishment of development assembly at five levels for a rational and realistic economics whose concepts, laws and rules are required to be framed in the light of former's two top priorities (i.e., humankind and environment) and five principles (i.e., environmental promotion, fair equality, productivity, peoples-led democracy and all sided transparency). In view of human's bio-social nature, both Adam Smith's basic economic principle of "self-interest" and Marxian basic economic principle of state nationalisation of everything are one-sided. But, ironically, both measure development, prosperity and progress in terms of monetary growth and not in the context of human and environmental development.

21. Cultural aspect requires establishment of cultural assembly at five levels that calls for way of life (or life-style) that is embedded in basic human and environmental value and promotes rational humanist and environmentalist thinking, behaviour and organisation among the people.

22. The political, development and cultural Assemblies at five levels elect their respective political, development and cultural commissions of specialists to implement the agendas and policies framed by them (i.e., Assemblies). The commission of political specialists may deal with political issues like law and order, crime prevention, judicial working; the commission of development specialists may handle economic, financial matters like development planning, agriculture, industry, services, finances and budget; and the commission of cultural specialists attend to education, health, moral-ethical values and other cultural subjects like languages, music, dancing, cine industry, etc.

23. Every elected body whether at the lower or the higher level will be sovereign within its respective domain. If at any time there is a difference of opinion between the two elected bodies or public institutions the concerned units' will appoint their respective representative groups to settle the concerned question through talks. If the matter is mutually settled, that will be accepted as a valid decision. In case the two cannot agree on a common decision, the matter will be got resolved through a referendum of the concerned people.

24. It maintains that the question of internal security of any territorial unit will be handled by the people concerned. The issue of border defence of different territorial units will be conducted by the defence agency formed by the concerned people according to the rules approved by the UN.

25. It will forbid every polluting technology, however productive capacity it may have, to operate in society.

10.01.2005

Problem Of Burgeoning Population Growth May Soon Outstrip Fatal Environmental Threat And Destabilise Human Community By 2050

It is now an admitted fact that the problem of burgeoning human population has today assumed a threatening posture. The fast pace with which it has recently been galloping forward, it may outstrip the most serious challenge of environmental degradation to human community and other bio-species.

2

As is evident from its past and present state, population growth is an issue of recent origin, which did not exist before 1950.That is why mankind has, from his beginning to the first half of this century, desired and worked for increasing his number.

3

For over a million years, the human population grew at a snail's pace. It reached only a billion mark in 1800 AD. Next, it doubled itself in 130 years (i.e.,1930); the third billion was added in 30 years (i.e.,1960); the fourth in 15 years (i.e., 1975) and the fifth in 11 years (i.e., 1986). Today the world population numbers over 6 billion (1.3 billion in developed and 4.7 billon in the developing countries). Over 90 million people are being added to it per year. The estimate is that the world population is growing by 179 people a minute (for every 100 addition, 97 are added to the population of developing countries). By this speed, it is expected to double itself (i.e., 12.5 billion) by the year 2050. The world's carrying capacity is believed to be eight billion people. If the present population growth rate continues, human being will get only a standing space on the globe within three centuries

The reason for low population growth rate in the past rested, in our view, with the joint family system prevailing in the pre-capitalist times, which guaranteed social security to everyone in times of distress. This deduction is further substantiated by the post-1950 behaviour pattern of population growth.

4

The post-1950 problem of population growth provides us five types of experience.

The first experience, coming from the developed countries, shows that both the high birth-rate and high death-rate declined in an improved state of material and psychological development where man begins to feel certain degree of social security in regard to inscure economic life and old age.

The second experience available in the former Soviet Union, Germany, Japan and some Scandinavian countries indicates that, in the conditions of full social security and better medical-care, the population growth rate even drops to zero.

The third experience, obtained from the South-East and East Asian countries, shows that the movement towards economic development combined with education, health-care and family control, also brings down the population growth rate.

The fourth experience, drawn from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, etc., shows that an effective programme of family planning too causes some fall in the population growth rate.

The fifth experience, arising from the more backward countries located in Africa and South Asia, shows that ineffective system of birth-control in low economic conditions keeps the population growth rate at a higher level.

5

From the above experience, it is evident that, with the guarantee of a certain degree of social security, it is possible to achieve a balanced population growth rate. The experience further demonstrates that, under conditions of full social security, man does not much bother about producing his own children.

6

The world became conscious of the growing population menace in the late 1960s. Since then, three international population conferences—Bucharest 1974, Maxico 1984 and Cairo 1994—have taken place. The first conference made development, i. e., the role of woman, education, health-care, etc., as the focus for population control, relegating the social factor to the secondary place. The second conference laid more emphasis on economic factor and made "eliminate mass hunger" in the

interest of peace, security and environment as the central issue, again laying less stress on social factor.

The recently held Cairo Conference stressed certain social issues as the basis of its strategy but left out the question of social and economic security. It mainly emphasised the following points:

A). Woman as the most important component of the population policy, aiming at the empowerment of woman, gender equity or, equal family partnership (not confrontation), reproductive rights, reduction of infant and maternal mortality, higher marriage age, increasing birth-spacing, etc.; B). Universal primary education, particularly for girls, in 20 years; C). Universal access to family planning, information and services; D). Concept of reducing fertility even in poverty conditions; E). Futility of some of the traditional family conceptions held by the religious orthodoxy as revealed in the debate on abortion; F). Need for a dialogue between the North and the South on the sharing of world resources, now being overused and abused by the Western development model and living style.

Three contentious issues—i. e., abortion, adolescent sexuality and reproductive health—consumed much of the conference time due to the stubborn opposition from the Christian and the Muslim hardliners.

Finally, it was decided that abortion was not to be promoted as a family planning measure and should be made safe in countries where it is legal. The passage concerning the other two issues was suitably amended to the satisfaction of all.

On the question of funding, a broad based agreement was reached in the estimate $17 billion that the programme of action was going to cost. Many developed countries—US, Japan, Germany European Community, etc.—have promised to increase the amount for population related activity.

7

What have been the significance and the direction of the above-stated population conferences? Have their recommendations and suggestions helped in the process of population control?

The facts show that, despite the high-sounding action-plans proposed by the said conferences and their implementation by various governments all over the world, the state of population problem has gone on worsening. There is not even a single region in the world where the process of population growth has shown any sign of relaxantion or halting.

Why did the techniques and methodologies of the three above-stated population conferences failed to work? The simple answer is that their understanding of the nature of the population problem and the cause of this problem lacked realism. Hence their solutions, not in conformity with reality, failed to work.

The first conference made development as the focus for population control. The second made the slogan of the elimination of mass hunger as its central issue. The third emphasised women as the most important component of the population problem and thus mainly touched women-related issues, like empowerment of women, gender-equity, reproductive rights, higher marriage age, etc. None tried to learn from nearly over a million year historical experience of the human population problem under various social systems and the positive experience of the Soviet Union and some other countries even within the ongoing corporate capitalist system.

8

However, the fundamentals of corporate capitalist system do not reconcile with the concept of zero population growth as well as the norm of universal social security.

The concept of zero population growth represents a disproportion in the working of the corporate fundamental market law of supply and demand where the stagnant population demand will continue to lag behind the vibrant supply factor—thus making the whole system inoperative.

Similarly, the norm of universal social security shows another inconsistency in the working of its another fundamental market law which enables the powerful to devour the weak. If all the weak get the right to social security why should they engage in market competition with the powerful. Ovbiously, the norm of universal social security adversely affects the capital accumulation capacity of the rich—thus lowering the capital rate of growth. However, corporate capitalist system can accept the norm of social security on a limited basis, confined to certain developed countries, while keeping

the overwhelming number of underdeveloped countries out of its purview and thus bound to the market for sale and purchase.

Further, the concept of zero population growth and the norm of universal social security weaken the rationality of other fundamental principles of corporate capitalism, such as, selfishness as the basic nature of humankind, individualism as the main characteristic of a human being, inequality as the law of capital development, and so on and so forth.

From the above perusal, it can be safely presumed that corporate capitalism, like any other dominant social phenomenon, cannot compromise with any proposition that can ultimately result in its liquidation. Hence, whatever the risks, corporate capitalism will pursue its own strategy to manage the problem of burgeoning population—a strategy that, on the one hand, meets the basic food requirements of the additional population, and, on the other, adjusts the additional hands in its social and productive fold. But, both these corporate objectives are likely to end in a fiasco.

9

The additional burden on the existing state of world agricultural resources (i.e., land, water, climate, bio-diversity, forests, etc.) would, whatever the further new technological innovations, make them unfit for any immediate productive use—thus resulting in a serious agricultural crisis not only for the newly-added mouths, but also for the entire human population. The additional population, finding no space in the social and productive fold, will further add to the prevailing confusion. This will be not only an unprecedented food crisis for the human community (reaching its culmination point around 2050 when the world population is expected to reach 12.5 billion, while our planet's carrying capacity is believed to be 8 billion people), but also a highly dangerous unmanageable occasion for the world corporate capitalism. Inevitably, there will be a howl of cries by the starving public for a systemic change.

Will there be a rational force for the proper managing of things, leading to a smooth transition or will the prevalence of total chaos overtake everything, resulting in an inevitable collapse of human and other bio-species. Only time will tell. 12-01-2005