

It's never too late to Mend!

By Anuj Kumar Verma

We all know, rather this has been taught to children all over the world, since last so many decades, during their schooling days that trees are Lungs of earth, water is life of earth; that we need to save and plant more number of Trees, develop dense forests. But where do we stand today? As per a survey, in every one second, one and half acres of forest land is being denuded of trees, which means 15.3 billion trees are cut down every year. Hills and mountains have been dug badly to connect even remote and far away areas in the name of progress, causing a great damage to green cover, natural flora and fauna. A number of green hills in Srinagar stand encroached upon by those moneyed & powerful by constructing big hotels, palatial mansions there. River bunds have been denuded off green covers & flood channels and a number of residential & commercial buildings are constructed illegally in Srinagar, Jammu and other parts of the Union Territory. Thousands of acres of forest land stands occupied, illegally, by people in whole of J&K. In Jammu only, green cover areas like Bhatindi, Sunjwah, Mohmaya, Raika, Qasim Nagar, Roop Nagar, Janipur, Beli Charana, parts of Marh, Jagti, Nagrota were converted into legal/ illegal housing colonies, flyovers & bh institutions built up, there, without compensating the nature. A number of forests on Jammu Udhampur National Highway were also sacrificed. Have we taken sufficient measures to develop more forests do as to compensate enough to nature & wildlife.

One tree produces 206 pounds of oxygen in one year & one tree produces oxygen for 4 persons (humans) everyday. A single Tree can absorb as much carbon-dioxide as produced by a car after running for 26000 km. Increasing rates of deaths of all kind of lives on earth including human being is connected with cutting of trees on a large scale and stealing away our green cover by timber smugglers as well as an unsustainable infrastructure development. Due to cutting of forests at this high rate, 20% rainfall stands disturbed, reduced. Glaciers are melting down fast with increase in heat waves during summers, every year. Sea levels are rising up, putting into danger existence of a number of seaside prominent cities. Though more than 2/3rd part of earth is water yet many ranges of earth have severe shortage of water. We, all, need to take a pledge to conserve water in order to save our planet. Let's all among us eat only vegetarian food. Water use for broiler processing typically ranges from 3.5 to 10.0 gal./bird; for goats & sheep, 11 to 23 gal./animal. Flow rates between 187 to 458 gal./animal have been reported for beef slaughtering plants. Our ground water table is receding fast; the situation stands aggravated by digging of water bores/ tubewells by those rich in their bungalows and factories for gardening or washing purpose. Gallons of precious ground water is wasted in each such palatial bungalow or factory, every day. Rivers and springs are polluted/ contaminated daily by discharging of city sewerage and untreated industrial water wastes. Apart from receding levels of good air quality due to diminishing forests & trees, the major causes for air pollution are factories/ industrialization, thermal power projects, Transport sector whether it is surface or air transport, increasing use of air conditioners, burning of crops, leaves, subtle and high noise/ high smoke crackers on festivals & other occasions. No doubt, there are laws but

the authorities responsible for implementing rules and the stake holders either don't or half heartedly implement these laws.

Ecological balance of soil of earth is badly disturbed due to excessive use of toxic & synthetic chemical fertilizers, insecticide, herbicides, fungicides. The "Green Revolution" with its serious side ill-effects has damaged our agricultural fields lands, killed the nature friendly micro organisms, micro nutrients, also, contaminating our water bodies by seeping poisonous chemicals through the soil of earth. Human lives are also endangered. Today, we have more number of persons struggling hard to save their lives due to serious diseases like, cancer, tumors, ulcers, kidney & liver ailments; most of them are ill because of unrelenting high use of toxic chemicals in our Food Chain ie., right from Farm to Table.

Another major challenge having emerged in J&K UT is about disposal of daily domestic/ commercial & industrial garbage, plastic wastes and bio medical wastes in a scientific manner. Today, the whole world is shattered, under fear, panic due to devastation caused by the Pandemic COVID19. Number of deaths are just to touch fifty thousand mark. Big economies like US, UK, Italy and other European countries are confused and finding no end to miseries caused to people by this Pandemic. World economic order is falling day by day. Let's pray we shortly come out of this cycle of devastation. But, the world has to change its habits, its approach towards Earth Planet, towards other species living on earth and we all have to prepare ourselves for upcoming chains of catastrophic reactions which might start occurring shortly in coming years. The world leaders have to work sincerely to contain & reverse "Climate Changes" and rising temperatures need to be brought back to those in year 1970.

Let's train and aware our new generations also, while in schools and colleges, as they are future of the nation and about to come face to face with all such environmental challenges. "Climate changes" need to be incorporated as a compulsory subject, by the governments, in all schools and colleges.

#### THE PLEDGE:

Let's all of us, together, take a pledge to: 1. Plant more number of trees;

2. Save our forests;

3. Plant more number of fruit plants in forests to save our forest life;

4. Conserve water;

5. Close down all water bores/ tubewells dug by those rich in their bungalows for personal use;

6. Adopt organic & traditional ways of agriculture;

7. Go for organic and vegetarian food;

8. Avoid the modern poultry or dairy farming culture wherein birds/ animals are brought up using unnatural ways by injecting in hormonal growth agents & heavy dosages of antibiotics & other medicines;

9. Go for Green Industry, Green Crackers;

10. Don't pollute our rivers with sewerage, garbage and bio medical waste.