

## **The Interplay of Human Development and Environmental Degradation: A Critical Analysis**

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### **Abstract**

For the entire mankind, the negative impact of consumerist mechanical life, i.e. luxurious modern technology, is the degradation of the environment, whose common name is environmental pollution. Generally, the unexpected change in the physical, chemical and biological properties of the environment that destroys the life of living beings is called pollution. When harmful substances are mixed with the elements of the environment, it is called environmental pollution. Due to some evil attempts and unwholesome efforts of civilized people, the 'land of birth' has become 'land of death', the pure sky has become polluted, the air has become blackened, the soil and water have become terribly polluted. In the 21st century, whether it is an intellectual, a scientist, a writer, or a state leader, everyone is worried and concerned about the environment. As a result, constant research, constant search, constant efforts and efforts are being made to get rid of this terrible pollution. But there is a two-fold gap between expectations and reality. As a result, the search for an alternative path to salvation has emerged. In the context of the discussion, that alternative search is presented as the source of all pollution, 'human pollution', and the means of salvation and liberation from it.

**Keywords:** Environmental pollution, alternative thinking, human pollution, degradation of humanity, awakening of humanity.

**Introduction:**

Just as wildfire spreads rapidly and creates relief and fear in the minds of people, similarly in modern times, a word that is spreading rapidly and creating fear in the minds of people is environmental pollution. Environmental pollution includes water pollution, air pollution, soil pollution, etc. pollution of the five elements, as well as food pollution, noise pollution, and material pollution. In fact, environmental pollution is the combined form of all types of pollution.

Global warming is accelerating today due to the wasteful use of science and technology - which is affecting people and the entire ecosystem of the world. As a result, there is a fear of changing the geographical map of the world and the geological infrastructure, coastal cities and deltas are under threat. The American Journal of Science has published the word of geographical change. In this regard, an editorial in a daily newspaper wrote, "Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique and Madagascar in East Africa may join India in 200 billion years to form a new subcontinent. The study has revealed that a mountain range will be formed along the western coast of India." 1(Trans. Bengali to English).

We have seen the terrible effects of air pollution in Delhi and Haryana a few days ago. Due to air

pollution, all kinds of institutions had to be closed for a few days. Air pollution is affecting human society every day. Industrialized countries are largely responsible for this air pollution. A recent international the study has revealed alarming data on air pollution (the list of how much carbon dioxide is emitted every year in developed countries is as follows: 2

Name of the Country	The amount of Carbon emissions
Australia	18. 6 tons
United States	18 tons
Canada	16. 3 tons
Russia	12 tons
Germany	9.6 tons
Italy	7.5 tons
France	5. tons
China	5.5 tons

It is worth noting here that India's annual carbon emissions are 1.5 tons. Water scarcity has been created as a direct and indirect effect of environmental pollution. Just as the amount of water stored on the ground is decreasing day by day, the groundwater level is also decreasing day by day. There is a clear shortage of fresh water on the surface of the earth. About 99 percent of the world's fresh water is from groundwater. But due to misuse and mismanagement of that water, almost all the people of the world are facing losses. This was the reason for water scarcity in many parts of India in 2018. According to government research data, "40 percent of India's population of 1.3 billion people will not have reliable access to drinking water by 2030. You will not get access to the source. 3 (trans. Bengali to English).

Another tangible form of environmental pollution is noise pollution. The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) conducted a survey to reveal the severity of noise pollution in 15 cities around the world. It shows that most of the noise polluted cities are in Asia. The list is topped by Dhaka city in Bangladesh with a noise level of 119 decibels. Moradabad city is in second place with 114 decibels, and Islamabad is in third place with 109 decibels. Kolkata and Asansol are in the list at 14 and 15 respectively. However, according to WHO guidelines, tolerable noise levels in public areas should be limited to 55 decibels and 70 decibels in commercial areas. But noise pollution has crossed its threshold in many cities. And this excessive noise pollution can cause hearing loss. Various physical problems are occurring, such as

loss of energy, pain, and loss of concentration. 4 (trans. Bengali to English).

Expectations and Reality in Preventing Environmental Pollution: Various discussions have been initiated in the country and abroad to prevent environmental pollution and to sustain the existence of the world. Even various plans and action plans have been taken by government and private initiatives. 'Environmental Pollution ' is being celebrated and ' Bashundhara Baithak ' is being organized. This initiative and effort is undoubtedly a great one. As a result of the effort, many people have become aware all over the world. They It is necessary to save the world from disaster by any means necessary. But it is also true that there is a huge gap between expectations and reality. On the one hand, billions of dollars are being spent to prevent pollution, while on the other hand, the level of pollution is increasing.

The news that has already been received has revealed the earth is the only home where the seeds of life have sprouted and developed, and even on this earthly planet, the space for life is very limited. Why is it possible to keep life alive in a limited area, seven miles above zero and two to nine miles below the earth? 4 But with the innovative help of science and the immense greed and lust of man, the way in which all the resources of nature are being used, the existence of the earth and the preservation of human nature are facing serious question marks. Hence this alternative blindness.

It is universally agreed that the environment never destroys itself. It does not have the power to pollute

itself. The environment is polluted by humans and humans are responsible for it. Therefore, to prevent environmental pollution, it is necessary to prevent and remedy all forms of pollution, namely human pollution. The term human pollution is a modern addition to the word "human pollution" and is the only tool to remedy environmental pollution and save the earth.

We have witnessed the degradation of humanity and humanity in the world time and again. We have seen the horrific forms of the 1st and 2nd World Wars in the past. Recently, the month-long war in Russia-Ukraine and the change of power in Afghanistan are unfolding before our eyes. Besides, whenever we open our TV, mobile, e-tube, etc., we constantly see the terrible appearance of evil forces. Far from stopping the horrific forms of killing, the black smoke of war in the sky, the cries and cries of displaced people, the imperialist superpowers are not deterred but rather remain steadfast in the intoxication of proud arrogance. They are constantly competing to invent new weapons of death in the name of knowledge and science. Seeing this situation, Rabindranath Tagore wrote with regret long ago:

“J din Chaitanya mor mukti pelo lupti guha hote

Niye alo dusha bishmay jhare darun duryoge

Kono narakagni girigahavarer tote, tapta dhume

Gorji futi fusiche se manusher tibra apoman

Amangal dhani tar kampanitwa kare dharatal,

Kalimamakha l dekhilam akaler

Athmagati mura unmotata, dekhinu sarbange tar

Bikritri kapat bidrup."5 (Bengali)

Not only that, but the poet also said:

"Naginira charidike feliteche bishakta niswash,

Santir lalita bani sonaibe byartha!" -6 (Bengali)

The poet's words are literally true. The irony of ' the beautiful words of peace ' can be understood only by looking at the workings of the imperialist and selfish classes. Needless to say, the result of the poisonous breath of inhumanity is environmental pollution.

Due to the lack of proper development of humanity, humanity is humiliated, trampled, neglected today. Individual life, family life, social life, country life and world life are not worthless at all. A beautiful example of where humanity has fallen is found in the writings of writer Sanjeev Chatterjee:

"Education has gone from education, ideals from life, governance from administration, corruption has come in place of principles, caste discrimination has come in the name of caste, and opportunism has been used to the exclusion of all."7 (trans. Bengali to English). In this way, various diseases have appeared in society and the individual body, the possibility of cure of which is not very visible. All kinds of worldly needs, unrest, and anxiety in human life are rooted in the cry of a hungry soul. Analyzing the consequences of the soul's cries, Mahanambata Brahmachari wrote, "Wars between nations for political reasons, fights between employers and workers, Hindu-Muslim and white-black suicidal conflicts, social caste hatred, jealousy, hatred, family unrest, and strife are all rooted in the soul's dissatisfaction. When the blood of the body becomes

contaminated, various diseases manifest in the body. Even if a poorly educated doctor is able to provide temporary relief by applying external medicine, the disease is not cured. It causes the outbreak of disease in the body in other forms. Similarly, our society has endless types of diseases in the body. State leaders and social leaders are trying to cure it. Sometimes, if they get some temporary results and the root of the disease is not eradicated, the disease manifests itself again in the social body in other forms. Spiritual theorists say that if the hungry soul is not satisfied, there is no suitable food. Giving will not cure diseases, on the contrary, the eternal cure for all diseases lies in the satisfaction of the soul. "8 (trans. Bengali to English).

Within this dissatisfaction of the soul lies the root cause of human unrest, the seeds of environmental pollution. As mentioned earlier, the word human pollution is an addition to the modern era. When human character slips under the impact of various defects such as unlimited greed, lust, jealousy, narrow-mindedness, pettiness, selfishness, lying, aggression, injustice, injustice, injury, hatred, jealousy, etc., it can be called human pollution. Now the question may arise in which way human pollution can be prevented? Some think that by enacting laws, some think that by introducing diversity in the state system, some think that by giving severe punishment. In this way, the predominance of three main views is seen for the purpose of establishing peace in life and society. For example:

- 1) The perspective of a group of pacifists is political. They believe that the failure to establish political



independence, the lack of independence of the people in running the state, and the expansion of domination over foreign countries, etc. The root cause of suffering. Permanent peace requires the independence of all states, the prevention of the expansion of dominance by other larger powers, and the formation of states based on equal political rights, free from group and factional influence and dominance.

2) Economic socialists believe that peace requires the elimination of unequal access to wealth and its equal distribution among all. There will be no owners and workers, landlords and tenants, rich and poor. People will enjoy the wealth of the world with equal rights and entitlements as human beings; only then will peace be established in the world.

3) There is another group whose ideology and analysis are sociological. They believe that all are equal in social rights and that discrimination is a human creation and is just a tactic to trample on others.<sup>9</sup>

Although the views of the above ideologists are different, they are all peace-loving. Their main message is that it is possible to establish peace in society and individual life even if the inequality of human life is eliminated and state, social and economic equality is established. But even in the 21st century, we see It seems that there is a gap somewhere --- the desired results are not seen. In this context, the logical words of Swami Purnatmanandaji Maharaj are very relevant:

"Socialist thinkers or communist statesmen proudly declared that they would introduce such a system of

government that people would naturally become disciplined, honest, hardworking, free from corruption, and free from greed. The poor would be removed from society, exploitation and oppression would be eliminated, discrimination would be abolished, and equality would be established. But after several decades of experimentation, it is now clear that their declarations were mere declarations; the actual events have presented a completely different picture. In socialist countries, corruption, dishonesty, luxury, greed for power, and chaos have not only not been eradicated, but they have also manifested themselves in their final form."10(trans. Bengali to English).

The Western education system is largely scholarship-oriented and financially oriented. However, the path to self-development is blocked there too. Dr. Mahanambata Brahmachariji has lived in America for a long time, from the University of Chicago. Ph.D., He gave a speech there a year after Swami Vivekananda's Chicago speech and he himself understood the education and society there deeply. Therefore, from his feelings and understanding, he wrote about the education system there, "This measurement is not made by passing exams, the standard of education is not found in schools, colleges and universities, it is found in the police station. A clear picture of society is found in the police station itself. So much education, so much wealth, yet the graph of crime in the police station is only going up."11 (trans. Bengali to English). From this, it can be understood that morality and humanity have declined in the Western countries. Amidst the limitless divisive abundance, the suffering people are searching for the path of liberation and peace. Alolika

Mukherjee wrote in his “Letter from the Expatriate” that “a great movement has started from the National Council of Churches regarding freedom of religion. Not only in the field of Christianity, but also in the field of different communities, the interest in religion is increasing at a rate that has had an impact on the world of work as well.” (Trans. Bengali to English).<sup>12</sup> Many employees have even demanded sometime during their working hours to practice their own religion.

From the disgust of consumerist life, various The Experiment of Consumerism- from Experimentation to Humanity The new consciousness is spreading - the resonance of peace and equality is awakening. That is, people are leaning towards the path of freedom from pollution, the path of spiritual advancement, towards human glory. However, it is true that expecting 100% pollution-free pure human beings and wealth is an unrealistic fantasy. However, it is possible to have a largely pollution-free society and people, it is not impossible.

It is necessary to create pollution-free people and an environment. The observance and maintenance of the right religion. But the condition of our society and country is such that there is only one-word discussion, excluding the topic of religion. However, the right religion teaches people to abandon the path of evil and unwholesomeness, conquer greed and lust, and abide by moral and human values. Great men and apostles have shown this throughout the ages

“Bhagavan! Tumi yuge yuge dut pathayecha bare bare

Dayaheen sangsare,tara Bale gelo khama koro sabe, bole gelo bhalobasha,

Antar hote bidwesh bish nasho."13 (Bengali)

The religion that the apostles or great men spoke about is not one of division - not of violence - but rather a message of humanity and unity. They gave importance to establishing the quality of life, the richness of character, human dignity, and spiritual heroism. And through this, the awakening of humanity occurs, humanity and harmony develop.

Today, it is unfortunate for the country and the nation that in place of following the true religion, a madness has come, religious fanaticism, sectarian division, ethnic disunity, fundamentalism in the name of religion, and the skilful exploitation of irreligion. Some self-interested people are trying to run the community as religion and are busy calling the external cover as the shell of religion. Rabindranath Tagore has long ago stated that this is not a true religion:

"Dharmer beshe moha kare Ashe dhare

Andha sejon mare ar sudhu mare." 14 (Bengali)

In true religion there is the chariot of survival and growth, and in religious delusion there is the path of ' death ' and ' death '. That is, the religious practice that does not make one's own life and the lives of others glorious and beautiful, whatever it may be called, cannot be called religion. The most excellent Sri Sri Thakur Anukul Chandra has clearly told us:

"Tumi dharmik

Niyata bhagabaner aradhana karitecha,

Puja sandhya anhik laiha bibrata,

Athacha seba artha aisharya jiban

Jash, briddhi, tushti, pusti ithyadi  
Tomake abhinandita kariteche na  
Aar tomar pariparshik tomate  
Upayukta parimane aiguli paia  
Samriddha hoitechhe na,  
Bujhio--tomar dharma arambare  
Beche thaka o briddhi powake amantran kare nai  
Tai Tumi o Tomar pariparshik  
Ubhaei

Dharma hoite banchita hoitechhe."15 (Bengali)

-These simple words contain the fundamental significance of religious practice. The real thing is to inculcate religion in one's life. No matter what I do - worship, meditation, chanting - if my skill and agility do not increase, and the surrounding does not become cheerful - then my religious practice is bound to fail. Rabindranath Tagore has established this very thing in the poem ' Deul ' and says in song number 119 of ' Gitanjali':

"Bhajan Pujan sadhan aradhana  
Samasta thak pare  
Ruddhadware debaloyer Kone  
Keno achis ore.  
Andhakare lukie apon-mone  
Kahare tui pujis sangopone,  
Nayan mele dekh tui cheye  
debata nai ghare."16 (Bengali)

Work-oriented life, joy-oriented life, and service to the environment. - This is the path of life." I was born with an endless enthusiasm. I understand that being practically engaged in the effort that is possible with enthusiasm, constantly creating new life bonds, this is the abode of life, the enjoyment of life. Doing this for the sake of life is religion. Therefore, laziness or inertia has nothing to do with religion. Yet in our country, some kind of aversion has crept into religion. That is why we emphasize so much on action." 17(trans. Bengali to English)

This form of action-oriented religion resonated in the thoughts of Swami Vivekananda. He said, "Religion is action oriented. The mark of a righteous person is constant action. In his meditation, all things are accomplished, ' all sins are destroyed in the Name of the Lord ', ' all satisfaction is attained by those who take refuge in Him ' - all these scriptures are certainly true , but you can see that millions of people are dying by chanting the Name of the Lord , are intoxicated by the Name of the Lord , day and night saying ' what the Lord does ' and are getting horse eggs. He should understand whose chanting is correct, whose mouth is filled with the colour of thunder, who can take refuge properly - whose heart has been purified by doing work, that is, who is righteous."18 (trans. Bengali to English).

There are various opinions and explanations about religion and righteousness. Purushottam Sri Sri Thakur Anukulchandra The metaphysical and morphological explanation of religion given by him is relevant here. In the ' Shabdaratnakosh ' campaign published by

Satsang Deoghar, it is said that religion comes from the word 'dhri-dhatu' which means 'to hold' or 'to nourish' - that is, to 'hold ' the being. Taking the metaphysical meaning of religion into account, Sri Sri Thakur Anukulchandra gave the following definition:

1. "annye bachay nije take

dharma bolle janish take."

2. " ja karle bacha- bara

Samanwae berei chale

Takei janish dharma bale

Dharma take ar kothay?" 20 (Bengali)

It goes without saying that actions, behaviour, and practices that make people moral, social, mental, and spiritual values are what make religion so important. As a result, the topic of religion naturally comes up because there is no life without religion.

Without going into a very deep analysis of religion, it can be said that any system adopted without giving importance to religion in a general sense is bound to fail, just as the system of socialist states has failed. Especially the wise thinkers of the Soviet Union. Those who once gave the utmost importance to class struggle and class conflict and hoped for equality, peace and prosperity are today loudly declaring that human success cannot come without struggle - harmony, not conflict - coordination and cooperation. And the source of the creation of this mental harmony, coordination and cooperation is religion.<sup>21</sup>

Protecting religion means protecting life, preserving the environment. Just as humanity has been degraded

by keeping religion in a cage and removing it from life, the environment has also become ugly. It is necessary to remember that "the environment is a major part of our lives. Since the day we became indifferent to this environment, we have become very religiously corrupt. Therefore, today we think that religion is done only by personal meditation, what is its relationship with the state or the world? But if religion is all about survival and growth, then that religion will not be possible without the environment. And if religion has no relationship with the all-round growth of man, then man has no relationship with that religion."<sup>22</sup>

When creating a polluted environment, the first thing we need is to awaken humanity and humanity through religious practices. "Today, at the moment of the ultimate development of society, the most important thing is to awaken the consciousness of humanity in people. The pollution that we see in nature, the pollution that is destroying the balance of the environment today, the root of all pollution is human pollution." <sup>23</sup> (trans. Bengali to English). The cry of unrest among people is being heard in everything worldly and human pollution is at its root. Therefore, there is an urgent need to prevent human pollution - and that is possible by observing, nurturing and protecting the right religion.

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