



TAGORE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT:

During the last few decades, the Environment has posed a great hazard to human society as well as Mother Earth. The massive misuse of natural possessions has left us on the brink of a trench. The rainforests are cut back, the fossil fuel is fast diminishing, the cycle of the season is in chaos, ecological disaster is recurrent now around the globe and our environment is at the edge. India is a nation with a variety of ecosystems that arrays from the Himalayas in the north to plateaus in the south and from the vibrant Sundarbans in the east to the arid Thar of the west. With time, these ecosystems have been poorly affected due to mankind. Literature could not remain unaffected by this depletion.

Key Words; Environment, Rainforests, Ecosystems, Himalayas.

Nature runs as a reliable motif in all of Rabindranath Tagore's oeuvre. He was an environmental pioneer and pursued harmony between evolution and preservation. He had been expressive about the mistreatment of the natural environment even a century ago. His works help to evaluate the relationship between man and nature /environment

Ecological sustainability cannot be a drive without compassion toward the Spirit. The Latin origin *Spiritus* means inhalation. There is a breath of life unending in the glow of the sun, the run of the water, the propelling of the wind, and the dancing of the leaves and birds. Are we ready to perceive these movements of Nature that also keep us alive?

In the mountains of Uttarakhand in India are many places of pilgrimage adding Kedarnath and Badrinath. Followers from all over the country and abroad flock to these age-old shrines for divine solace and sublimation for thousands of years. For centuries pilgrims would bear all hardships to visit these places mostly on foot.

Then one day it occurred just a few years back. One still has horrific memories of that devastation. It was the peak time for tourists to visit these shrines. And then the tragedy took place. Never before in the current history did clouds burst and floods hit all over this



region. Uncountable misery transpired in the families afflicted. Many corpses were to be recuperated months later. But the question arises what was the reason for this disaster?

The mechanical construction of buildings and dams had been going on in this province for a long in the name of development and growth. Meticulous experts and appraisers strongly suggested that this catastrophe was man-made! The self-sustaining reserves of Nature were being ruined to cater to the greed of man to such a maximum that finally the misfortune came back. So, let's ponder over where are we proceeding in the name of progress and development.

Rabindranath Tagore, the Nobel Laureate writer, and philosopher from India could measure these throbs as evident from all his ingenious masterpieces.

Tagore first became worried about man's influence on the environment after viewing an oil spill at sea on his way to Japan in 1916, years before an environmental movement occurred in the West.

The experience provoked him to write at length about his annoyance at the way modern man was flopping to respect nature. Though, Tagore did not simply view a solution to the problem; he made it somewhat creative out of his environmental movement. Today, many are calling for an emphasis on his deep understanding of the environment.

Mukktadhara (The Free Flow) is a play by Tagore where one finds the human campaign bold and clear against mechanical dam construction that seizes the natural flow of the river for power and control over others, counting nature. Abhijit, the protagonist of substitute voice finally lays down his body and life in the overflowing waters of the dam to oppose this inhuman act of misuse of nature and the human spirit of free-flowing normal life.

In his famous play *Roktokorobi*, Tagore portrays a brutal king, the possessor of a mine, as a channel of exploitation and mechanization as evocative of Chaplin's *Modern Times*. On the other hand, the child of nature, Nandini makes her wonderful and lively advent into that kingdom with her love, independence, and naturalness. People could sense their restraints in the system and learned to sing and dance in celebration of life – Nandini's worship (Puja). The representation of power and specialist, the royal flag (*Dhwoja*) was still upright in the way. The grand finale was accomplished when the King himself broke down his flag to unify



the celebration of Nandini. The core of sustainable self and life is in this capacity to encounter and demolish one's outdated beliefs and principles that devour life's nature!

Any teacher and learner of core and eminence will never be willing to contest the self. The origins of sustainability lie in our Self. It dangles on whether we are brave enough to raise the deeper and more critical questions about the way we reflect and live. Otherwise, the system of learning becomes paralyzed and petrified with heat and dust around but no Beam.

Tagore was admitted to six schools but could not 'sustain' any of them even for a few days as the education was designed, repetitive, and lifeless! Lastly, at the age of 40, he established a university at *Santiniketan* (Abode of Peace) in the core of nature far from the monotonous city life of Calcutta. He named it *Vishwa Bharati* meaning Global India. The poet could listen to the call of the desolate tract for sustainability and spiritual transformation. In his famous play *Achalayatan* (The Stagnant Chamber) the poet depicts the worst possible dilemma as is observed in modern education. But then he also gave the clarion call to liberty: "In which dawn did you give that call? / No one will ever know."

Environmental problems like river erosion and deforestation may be hot issues today, but Tagore had been cognizant of the mistreatment of the environment even a century ago. Tagore believed that it was difficult to achieve overall development without countryside growth.

Tagore not only wrote broadly on man's relationship with the environment but executed it too by building Santi Niketan. It is enclosed by greenery on all sides. He crafted an example for the whole world in stretches of the relationship between nature and humans.

His love for the normal world got a lift from his sojourns across the lush green nature of east Bengal and amidst the sylvan natural environment of Santi Niketan. To capture his entire philosophy on his surroundings, we have to go back to his views on Santi Niketan's architecture, his concern for the benefit of the residents of Sri Niketan, his compassion towards his tenant-peasants, his induction of the plowing season, his views on cooperation, and the varied thoughts and mindfulness of Tagore, the author of "*Aranyadebata*" and an innovator in coordinating village fairs.



Tagore began the festival of the Earth in Shanti Niketan through *brikharopan* (planting of trees) in 1927, where the students would recite and read his poems. This method gave his environmental campaign a very optimistic aspect so that it was not a harmful movement about what man should not do but rather it was a sensitive reminder conveyed through innovative expression. This act reinvigorated more people to get enmeshed in supporting his campaign

Humans have the habit of obliterating something to produce something for themselves. He meant in clear terms that the boundless greed of human beings is the foremost enemy of nature. In the essay "*Aranyadebata*" (The god of the forest), he surfaced how man became uncontrolled in his activities. He also inscribed about the method in which the relationship with the forest was spoiled.

He did not grind words in categorically blaming the all-consuming greed and profit motives of human beings for this. "It is a universal problem to save forest properties from man's extreme greed...The Creator sent life, he made provisions for cultivating it all around -- but a man with his voracity has provided the instruments of death. Human society is bothersome for its disobedience of God's scheme. Greedy humans have summoned their ruin by extinguishing the forest. Man has evacuated the trees and flora which purify the air, and the dwindling leaves which make the land generative. Tagore narrated an instance of a domestic fowl being chased by its owner and finally being caught by its neck. That animal cruelty made Tagore decide to give up eating meat and turn out to be a vegetarian. Vegetarianism, thus, is an integral part of environmentalism as it ends cruelty to animals and maintains the balance of the ecosystem.

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Tagore's philosophy on the environment is linked with sustainable rural growth which is closely connected between nature and human beings. He imagined an interrelated approach to sustainable development through the revival of rural industry and increasing agricultural growth with community development.



Tagore's memo to environmentalists today is that the lone way to save the world is to act locally, rewire with place and society, nature and culture, craft and innovation. How is that conceivable now that more than half the world's population resides in cities? There are international movements and networks today aimed at relocalization, in particular encouraging local food production and community building.

To respond to the call of nature, we need to create space for silence and solitude amidst the blast and speed of modern life. Spirit can be awakened, sensitivity can be revived only in the heart of silence when we learn to see and listen properly, feel noble, and love abundantly

For our endurance, we have to be ecological with nature and humane with human society. The embargo lies in developing harmony with nature and not misusing the resources of nature for one's self-centred purpose. For our endurance, we have to be genuine with nature and humane with human society. The sanction lies in fostering harmony with nature and not exploiting the resources of nature for one's venal purpose.

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