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Sustainability of Environment in the Era of Technology

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ABSTRACT

However coarse it may be development of technology is interrelated with the development of mankind in real life like the invention of mode of transport through land and water. From stone to arrow development of mankind is the development of technology.

Till recently all the technological development has not adversely affected the environment and the bio diversity of the world. Technological development only helped to upkeep the biodiversity.

“Technology can be most broadly defined as the entities, both material and immaterial, created by the application of mental and physical effort in order to achieve some value. In this usage, technology refers to tools and machines that may be used to solve real-world problems.”

In the above definition of technology, it is for the solution for world problems that existed to overcome. But in real life technological advancement poses a great threat to the very existence of the mother the earth. The dilemma of technology to protect environment and destruction of environment is worth to study.

Modern technological development is on geometric ratio. Its nonstop race harms the environment in multiple ways. The great concern is the waste created by the development, especially in electronic and communication field. We must remember that we are living in this mother the earth as guests. We must one day leave this world leaving behind it for our successors. Can we leave the world as it existed when we took the same?

We cannot ignore the fact that the mother earth has its own characteristics and it should be preserved or else the earth will perish. No doubt that nothing in this universe will remain as such for long. But we fear that the destruction of earth in the name of development will destroy the world soon. Forest, river, arctic region, sea and mountain all are to be there for the very existence of the earth. Carbon emission the demon of the technological development poses a huge threat to the biodiversity of the earth.

Whatever may be the reason climate change is of great concern of the day. It may be due to the change of course of earth. Technological development helped us to monitor the

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change in climate.

Earth has to be preserved as it is now. Electronic waste and other non degradable waste produced by chemical factories pose great threat to the environment. Technology has to be developed to resolve the problem of non sustainable products. Decay is the order of the earth. It should be preserved or else we all will perish. Let the technologic strive hard to resolve this problem.

I. INTRODUCTION

Human beings as like any other animals in the world are the off springs of planet earth and the earth is duty bound to protect their children. In the corollary the children is duty bound to protect the nature. All the animals however small it maybe like honeybee performs their duty so as to protect the planet earth. If not the honeybee, the pollination of plants will not happen. So also all the animals performs their duty in one way or other. The extinction of Dudo bird resulted in extinction of Dudo tree.

We may now see that human beings attacking the planet by destroying the resources of the earth indiscriminately. The natural resources of earth has accumulated not by years, it came into existence through a process of millions and millions of years. Human beings came into existence only recently. We now find that the human beings use the resources in indiscriminately destroying the natural resources.

Technological development is fast developing now. The facility now available to a common man is unheard or cannot be imagined even by an emperor of ester years. Mental ability has replaced physical hard work. A man need not bend even to take a pencil from the floor. Information technology has developed in such a way that the world altogether has confined to a room.

The fear of the world is that what will be the result if the exploitation of natural resources especially fossil fuels and other resources will continue as of now. They fear that there is a limit to the quantum of the natural resources. Side to side there is the pollution caused by this development and technological innovations. It is true that we cannot live without electronic instruments. The same electronic instruments popularly known as e-waste causes hazardous threat to us. The question is whether there can equilibrium of technological development and natural resources sustainability. It is very simple. When we eat we must preserve the seed to eat further. Whether this law we are applying in technological development?

In this paper the effect of technology on the environment or to say how far the environment

can sustain in the era of technology is being discussed.

It has been presumed that it took millions of years for planet earth to come into the form that now existed. A lot of species of plants and animals has come and extinct, before such numbers of species that existed now. It has also been admitted that it is only 5000 years ago man started to live in this precious land as of now.

Apart from other species of animals that lived and lives in this earth, man is of special character. All other creatures live in this earth, naturally without any external help or inventions. But man, who has the gifted power to think and conceive is able to make creative inventions for the better livelihood and circumstances for his living in this world.

It is for the past two centuries that would make drastic changes in the lives of mankind. It is understood that, there was a steady development in the evolution of ancient barbaric man to the present civilized ones. It also well settled that the development of mankind to the present stage is a slow one from ape to man, from stone aged man to the present one. But, due to the advent of industrial revolution and the world wars, there was a quick change in the status of man.

No doubt industrial revolution lit the light for the gun powder and it continues to burst and fire with the greater ferocity. The ferocity is so fearful that as Sir Albert Einstein feared, one day will come when the technological development will win over the mankind.

It is pertinent to note that even prior to the industrial development; there is technological development, which paved way to the modern development. It is for the day to day affairs and watch he invented machines to ease his work, such as wheels, axils and carts etc. He also invented tools to ease agriculture labor, animal husbandry works and travel modes. These inventions are in slow pace rather to say in snail's speed. It is to see that man in ester years has limited needs and ambitions. But when technological development gained momentum and his ambitions become multifold. He began to dream for unlimited requirements. He is not satisfied with what he has but was in constant search for new ones. He become greedy and began to use the resources in earth indiscriminately.

It has been stated that the technological development gathered momentum on the advent of industrial revolution which started in the early decades of the nineteenth century. But it is also to be noted that the earlier technological development has not paved much threat to the ecological system of earth, but rather in support of the environment.

Now what is the order of the nature and what is the threat posed by the technological development. The order of the nature is that, whatever the product it should perish and must

become part of the earth, be it microbes, plants, trees, and animals. So also the nature and its supporting atmosphere must remain as such. There is vast difference between different parts of earth from equator to poles. If mother earth is not able to keep this equilibrium, which is sole reason to have life, everything in this world will perish, no doubt.

Now let us study what the hazards are posed by the technological development. To begin with, man made several inventions, especially machines to ease his manual work and for journeys. The fuel needed for working these machines and automobiles are fossil fuels, namely, coal and petroleum. Coal and petroleum products were being used in large quantities and its emission from factories and automobiles leads to emission of carbon particles harmful to the living beings and plants. Carbon emission, not only harmful to the living beings and plants but it also harms the very existence of nature itself. Carbon emission in large quantity increases the temperature on earth, destroying the equilibrium between the equator and poles. Rise in temperature is of great concern of the scientists, as they fear that, due to rise in temperature huge ice rocks in the Arctic and Antarctic region may melt and there by the water level in sea may rise, immersing island nations to sea. So also a majority of the ports all over the world will also be taken away by sea erosion.

Side to side to modern technological innovations, especially in the electronic and communication field poses multiple threats to the environment. With a quest to conquer the world by a finger tip, we are able to achieve that aim. It took six months and lost his half of men to Vascodegama for travelling from Portuguese to India, about two centuries ago. But today one can have live conversation with a person in Portugal, Delhi and Sanfrancisco with no loss of time. It is stated that what all the amenities enjoyed by a common man now a days cannot even dream by an emperor a century ago.

The electronic waste generated by the electronic and communication instruments is posing a great threat to the mother earth. As already stated the order of the earth is that whatever may be the product it should perish and decay to the earth or become part of the earth by flow of time. Then only mother can sustain and will be there for future generations.

No doubt technological innovations and development has helped man in various ways. It diminished the manual work to base minimum. It helped him to enlarge his life span, due to the development of modern medicines and innovative medical treatment methodologies.

At this juncture I may try to define the term technology and its impact on human life.” Technology can be most broadly defined as the entities, both material and immaterial, created by the application of mental and physical effort in order to achieve some value. In this usage,

technology refers to tools and machines that may be used to solve real world problems”.

Technology refers to tools and machines that may be used to solve real world problems. Now the question is whether the modern technology is an attempt to solve the real world problems. Decades ago the real world problem is the basic necessities, food, shelter and clothing. The earlier technological developments were to boost production of food and other basic necessities. But when it is achieved to a certain extent, the greed of man showed that there is no end to it. Hence there is a boost in technological innovations so as to make more money and more amenities for him. New versions of the same product came into existence making the old one obsolete within years, rather to say in the recent days within months.

But the question remains. Does the technological development is to solve the real problems of the world. Man, as a sole being want to have a happy and pleasure life. But this is dilemma, what is happiness to me may not be the happiness of you. It differs from man to man, and from region to region. A businessman finds happiness in widening his business and establishing his business firms every nook and corner of the world. An environmentalist has pleasure in protecting the nature. There is probably a conflict of interest between these two persons. Both were happy in their field when they achieve their target. A recent study has showed that, people were living happily in a country where technological development is least. The happiest citizens in the world live in Bhutan, where the technological development is least. Hence the definition of technology that it is to solve real world problems become a mystery.

Now we may come to the real world problems found by the modern technological development. As already stated, the e-waste created by the developments in electronic and communication materials are many fold. It violates the basic law of nature, that every product should be decayed and ecological cycle to be completed. Only when the ecological cycle is completed the existence of the world will be safe.

No doubt that, nothing in the universe will remain as such forever. On passage of time everything will change and ultimately, mother earth will perish. But when? Does the man possess the unique power to destroy mother earth for his greediness? The resources in the world have accumulated in it by the evolution of thousands and thousands of years. Does man have the right to use and destroy it in within years? Doesn't he have the responsibility to leave mother earth to his successors? Does man is the sole power of earth to do whatever he can? He also is a guest of mother earth like any other creation. As a guest he can only live in his permitted period and should leave the world to his successors. But the indiscriminate use

of the natural resources in the name of technological development has almost destroyed mother earth and its atmosphere. Men forget that if and only if earth remains there and it revolves all the creations of earth including man can survive. Survival of man can be linked with survival of earth.

Indeed we cannot go back we cannot think to go back the era of bullock carts, the era of Morse code, to the era of ships powered by winds. But we must know and understand that the percentage of carbon emission and the accumulation of e-waste should be minimized. Man should think positively about the hazards posed by carbon emission and e-waste. It's a pity that the nation which is the major contributory of carbon emission has withdrawn from the Kyoto convention in which the developed nations agreed to reduce carbon emission. Unfortunately, USA blames developing countries like India and China for increasing the carbon emissions. USA is responsible for the lion's share of carbon emission, though its population less than the population of children in India. When developed countries like USA will retreat from the treaties for finding out way to decrease the carbon emission it is a great set back to the forward step for protecting the mother earth.

The present scenario is dismal. Developed nations ought to have taken positive steps at least to have a standstill in the percentage of increase in carbon emissions and e-waste. But they are to blame the developing countries for the increase in carbon emissions. Side by side they are using the under developed countries to dump their waste. In these countries they are causing health hazard to the people of those countries. With regard to carbon emission there cannot be any suggestion other than to reduce carbon emission reducing the use of fossil fuels, introducing electrical locomotives and automobiles. But in the case of e-waste we can suggest positive remedies. What the electronic giants now doing is making their product become useless after a certain period of time thereby prompting the customer to buy a new one discarding the one in use. Throwing away the old one is the e-waste. The producers of these instruments do not worry about the waste created by them but they are happy with the sale of a new product. In the case of electronic equipments, it should be made compulsory to the producer to date back their product when the instrument become non functional. If this is made mandatory the producers will be prompted to enlarge the life span of the electronic instruments and thereby the volume of e-waste can be reduced to a great extent.

Another great concern is the waste dumped in ocean. It is said that an island has been formed in the Pacific Ocean accumulating the plastic and e-waste thrown to sea from ships and other vessels as well as from mainland. The waste so accumulated is a great concern to the marine eco system. Even the ghost nets –fishing nets abandoned by fishermen – are causing threat to

the fishes and other marine creatures. The waste accumulated will destroy the eco system of the sea. The ecosystem in the sea is more fragile than that of the land.

II. CONCLUSION

To conclude, there should be restrictions. Restrictions to save the mother earth from the clutches of greedy. Unless we fail to impose restrictions in carbon emissions and in the use of electronic and innovative instruments the very existence of mother earth will be in danger. It is not being saying that there should not be any technological innovations. Development should be there in every field to ease the life on earth. But for that there should be life on earth. Earth should be kept as it is to have suitable conditions for the survival of living creatures. If the concentration of men is only towards technological development ignoring the mother earth, our children and grandchildren may miss this wonderful world. Hence it is our duty, the duty of every individual who is enjoying the benefits of both this earth as well as that of the technological developments, to preserve our mother earth for the future generations.
