Bathinda Thermal Power Plant – A Source of Disease

The coal being burnt in the Bathinda Thermal Power Plant is polluting air around Bathinda. The toxic gases mixed with air are inhaled by people while breathing, which forms a thin layer in lungs over a period of time, and according to doctors is the cause of cough, phlegum, asthma, TB and other dreadful lung diseases. Skin infections can also not be ruled out as a result of the harmful effects caused by this toxic waste. The fine ash belching out of the chimneys of the plant goes into the people's, eyes and causes dreadful eye disease. Many people have been heard saying– "Friend, what kind of city is this where there is no fresh air to breathe." Beside diseases, the smoke coming out of the chimneys of the power plant spreads over everything in the city. Clothes hung for drying in open space are covered by ash. The ash deposited over roof-tops and open courtyards is swept every day by the people. It looks like sand. The buildings in the city have started looking gray. So much so, that the clouds of ash have not spared even the green vegetation in and around the city. In the fields around the power plant, the rain of ash continues over the green shoots of tender plants. Many times, these tender shoots can't bear the brunt of attack by this ash and wither away. The owners of these fields are sore about damage caused by this power plant.

The thin ash given out by the rock like coal burnt in this plant has made the lives of people, living within 5 km radius, miserable. It is also contributing to two other

dangerous processes. The first, of course, is the mixing of these toxic gases in the atmospheric air. They are making the air poisonous, so much so, that even the survival of mankind is threatened. The danger posed by Carbon dioxide is so serious that it could become a danger to our very existence on this planet. The second harmful effect is the rise in global temperature. The burning of coal produces heat, which is increasing the average temperature. The rise in global temperature has posed many dangers. The melting of the polar ice caps could cause a rise upto 30ft in the average sea level by the year 2020. Many cities and other settlements along the sea shore would get submerged. These cities would include Mumbai. The homes of one and a half crore people of Bangladesh would be destroyed, and the refugees from there would come to India and cause havoc. These dangers are preventable. They have arisen because of ignorance on the part of the people. It has been proved that the use of electricity is giving rise to these dangers. If the use of electricity is discontinued, no such danger will occur. The housewives should grind their own flour instead of using the machine-ground flour, (Shriman Master Tara Singh's mother herself ground flour on hand-driven chakki). The kitchen utensils such as tumblers, glasses and thals should only be purchased if they are hand-made, and not machine-made. The hand-spun cloth made by village women and poor weavers should be used, while that made by the factories should be consigned to flames. (The wife of Bhai Parmanand, a great man, and a descendant of Shahid Bhai Mati Das, spun on the charkha every day.) The edible oil made in factories should be shunned; only that made by the bullock-driven kohlu should be used. The jaggery made by bullock-driven sugar-cane crushers in the villages, which is more nourishing, should be used. The factory manufactured sugar is a poison. Do not use electrically operated churn to extract butter; use the one turned by hand. (A woman had got electrical churn in her dowry. She died the very first day from electric shock while trying to use it.)

Do not use refrigrator to preserve eatables. If a building has a lift, (as large office complexes have in Chandigarh), do not use it if you have to go up to only the second floor. Do not use electric heaters for heating at home. Those who use electric fans at home, and do not use the tree-shade in summer, should sit under the tree and cool themselves with hand fans. I myself can even do without a hand-fan, however hot it may be. I sit under the porch or in the shade of a banyan tree. People can go to the countryside. The open spaces of villages do not need fans. There are large peepal and banyan trees which absorb heat from the sun-rays and air under their shade is cool and fresh. Do not use electric pumps to extract water from the ground. The chips flours at home should not be ground by electrically driven machines; this work should be done by manual labour. The women who consume flour ground by electrically driven machines and do not grind it themselves, are afflicted with rheumatism and knee-pains for want of physical exercise. My mother made so much hand-spun cloth that our trunks were always full of cotton sheets. We were a family of three, but my mother could always make much more cloth than we needed. Now a days, people are reluctant to use their legs for walking; they waste their money by using motorcycles, cars and buses; they are also endangering their own lives by spreading toxic gases such as carbon-dioxide and carbon-monoxide. The increase in the emission of carbon-dioxide is endangering the very existence of human race. One crore inhabitants of Africa live in shanty-towns for want of water and food and in the course of only one year, about 59 lakh children have died from toxic air and lack of food. Water, air, soil, trees and many species of bushes and animal life have been destroyed. Those who are responsible for their extinction will die a painful death. About 12,000 animal species perish every year because of deforestation, air pollution and contamination of river and sea water. The day is not far when out of the 84 lakh animal species, only about 4000 will remain. The animals which are dying from the emission of

toxic gases from motor-cars and motor-cycles, and those who die from the pollutants from factories and contminated water of the canals, rivers and the seas, the fish which are dying, the animals which perish because of deforestation, will all complain to the Almighty; and He will surely punish the human race as he has punished the people of Africa. If the new-born children want to be spared from Africa-like destruction, they should leave home and, like Guru Nanak Dev Jee, should travel around the earth, on foot, to warn people about the perils facing them; and the money they get from their parents to start business, they should use for feeding hungry Sadhus, as Guru Nanak did. They should spend their money to help the work of those sages who are teaching the people to lead virtuous lives. By the year 1991, one out of every three persons living in Bathinda will have chest disease. The hydro-electric projects such as the Bhakhra Dam and the canals which originate from them have already destroyed 71 lakh hectares of excellent farm land by making it marshy and covering it with salts. The new dams that the government is constructing willirrigate about 5 lakh hectares of land, but they willalso turn these 5 lakh hectares into swamps. The people who are displaced due to the construction of these dams willhave their lives ruined, even if they are provided with alternative land. The people displaced due to the building of the Theen Dam are yet to find homes. Some wise man has rightly pointed out that so many thousands of families will lose their homes in the hills due to the building of these projects, that is willbe impossible to rehabiltate them all The only benefit accruing from these projects willbe the production of electricity. To use this electricity as alternative to such tasks as hand-weaving of cloth, shoe making, making brass utensils and climbing stairs, is foolish. The television, which is operated by this electricity, produced by paying such a heavy price, shows women dancing, and dirty and vulgar films; it is used to advertise luxury goods such as motorcycles, refrigrators, cars, television, costly soaps and lipsticks

used by the rich; and these things are advertised in a country where 27 persons out of 100 are living miserable lives. This is nothing but making fun of these people and putting them on the path of destruction.

Regions of the earth where strife for the control of natural resources is taking place.				
Country	*People involved*	*Natural resources*	*year*	*Money value (dollar)*
1. Angola	UNITA rebels	diamond	1992-2001	400-420 crore every year
2. Sierra Leone	RUFF rebde	diamond	1990	2.5-12.5 crore every year
3. Liberia	Govt.	Wood	1999	10-18.7 crore every year
4. Sudan	Govt.	Oil	1999 till today	400 crore every year
5. Afghanistan	Taliban	Opium	1990-2001	9-10 crore every year
6. Cambodia	Govt.	Wood	1990-2000	22-39 crore every year
7. Myanmar	Govt.	Wood	1990	11.2 crore
8. Columbia	FARC rebels	Cocaine	1995-2000	14 crore every year

Nation-Building

Food in essential to life. If children are taught from early childhood about things that sustain life, especially about the importance of food and how it is produced, they will grow up with concern about the nation-building in their hearts and will work with zeal towards this end, especially if they know the following :

1. What is the amount of total land on this earth ?
2. How much land is fit to produce food?
3. How much additional land could be made available for food production?
4. Is a part of the fertile land being ruined and becoming unfit for food production?
5. Can the fertilty of soil be enhanced further?
6. What are those materials and means by which the fertilty of the soil can be enhanced?
7. Is everyone being made aware about the manure that could be obtained from animal dung? Are these materials being wasted due to the ignorance of common man?
8. What is the total human population on earth ?
9. For how large a population the present production of food is sufficient?
10. Is the total population increasing every day or decreasing? If it is increasing, then what is the rate of increase ?
11. The rate at which the human population is growing, can the food-producing capacity of the earth keep pace with it?
12. If the food-producing capacity of the earth cannot be increased, do the people of this earth know about this painful truth ? Are adequate efforts being made to make them aware of this fact?

Do Not Buy Sweets Packed in Cardboard Packets

The paper has become very costly. It is being imported from abroad at a huge cost. Poor parents are finding it increasingly difficult to pay for school notebooks of their children. Paper is made from trees. Trees in the country have been reduced to a worrisome level, due to which the land is turning into desert. Due to deforestation, soil erosion is taking place, and the dams like the Bhakhra Dam are filling up with silt due to the soil washed down from the hills. Canals emanating from these dams are also silting up. Thoughtless cutting down of trees has already produced many serious dangers and is likely to pose still more problems. There is serious possibility that all the fertile land in India will turn into deserts in the coming 100 years. You should therefore take a thal, tray or other container from home with you while going for the purchase of sweets from market. Do not pack sweets in cardboard packets. And remember that the packet is not free, but you pay at least Rs. 2 for each one. A man who brings home four or more packets of sweets is not wise. One man crossed all bonds of foolishness : he sent about a hundred packets of sweets to us on the occasion of Diwali. What use were these packets to us?

The empty packets find no use at home. Children crush them and they litter our courtyards. You can clean a thal by rubbing it with ash but you cannot do so with a card board box. It might have been contaminated by the touch of a sick person. The gum and water used for making the box might have been dirty. You know nothing about it.

People use these cardboard boxes only because they see others using them, and the coloured paper used to decorate them is an added attraction. It is not the value of the sweets of which the giver is proud but of the fact that it is packed in attractive looking packets. Do not blindly do what others do; you should think a hundred times before indulging in these harmful practices. Couldn't the container of gum be lying uncovered in the factory where these packets are made? A cat or dog might have licked it. A lizard might have urinated over it. Dust might have fallen over it while the floor was being swept. Even a minute layer of dust can be detected over the shining surface of a brass thali. One can again wipe it clean. But the dust over the card board boxes is invisible and cannot be easily detected. There is no nourishment in the grains of refined sugar. This gives only a temporary burst of energy to the body. The jaggery has many nourishing elements in it beside sugar. The refined sugar is rightly called a poison.

Do not adopt new customs and practices. Do not let the old customs die; instead of sweets, give the gulgulas (balls of mixed flour and jaggery, fried in ghee) and Mathis (flour cakes). You can eat rice cooked in jaggery or krah (porridge) made with jaggery. Now a days the jaggery has come to be regarded a thing of no value, while the use of sugar is regarded as a symbol of wealth. We have to sometimes import sugar from other countries.

The forests stabilize the climate and create subtle atmosphere of their own. Deforestation has caused an increase in the greenhouse gases such as the Co2, Methane and Nitrogen Oxides. Deforestation accounts for 25% of these greenhouse gases. The greenhouse effect is causing global warming.

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Dangerous X-rays Given out by Television

A monthly Hindi magazine published from Delhi, called 'Jeevan Sahit', has an article by V.P. Gidwani, titled: 'Is the television harmful to health?' in its April 1986 issue. In that article, the writer has referred to some important facts given in a book written by a devout lady doctor in America, N. Wigmore. These facts concern diseases that are caused due to viewing of television. The title of the book is 'Why Suffer?'

Dr. Wigmore has mentioned an experiment carried out by Dr. H.P. Soen in her book. The doctor kept a pregnant bitch confined to a room for two months, in which a television was kept on every day. The rays given out by the television during this period had the following effect on the health of the pups which were born to the bitch : three of the four pups were afflicted with paralysis and were born blind. Another man had purchased two parrots. He put them in a cage, which he kept on top a television set in his house. The result was that both parrots had blood cancer; it was found that the x-rays emanating from the television set were the culprit.

The children are very found of watching television. As a result of prolonged viewing of television, six hundred children having blood cancer are lying in a Boston Hospital in America. In a city of the Arizona state, there are 2500 Children afflicted with blood cancer as a result of viewing television. According to doctors, electrical devices like the television transform ordinary electricity into X-rays, which affect the body tissue and cause damage to human health. The danger from television has become very serious. Television sets may be big or small; they all give out X-rays.

These harmful rays affect the brain of the viewer in such a way that he either becomes blind by blood cancer, or dies as a result. Dr. Wigmore has written that the X-rays given out by electrical apparatus like television have adverse effects on the health of persons viewing them. This harmful effect can last up to the second or even the third generation. Few days ago, a buffalo was killed because of contact with a telephone pole near the Pingalwara. An engineer from the electricity department told me that cattle and other animals die of even mild electric shocks, but a human being gets killed only if the shock is strong enough. The animals, and birds like the bitch and the parrots, can die of a mild electric shock because they are weaker than humans. But those who are inordinately pround of their superiority in knowledge and ignore this warning, continuing to watch the television, should not forget what Dr. Wigmore has said: the harmful effects of viewing television keep accumulating in the bodies of the viewer; these accumulated effects usually affect the next generation; if not, it will surely have adverse effects on the new-borns of the third generation. To comprehend this danger, we have to keep in mind the rotted feet of the parrot and the paralysis and blindness of the pups. The ten year old boy who is watching the television today, will be cursed with a deformed child when he is married at the age of 22 and his wife gives birth to a deformed child. If the boy is strong and his child escapes this deformity, his grand-children may have genetic defects. The television is like a time bomb; it may explode in 20 years or 25, but that it will explode is almost certain. The bribery, adulteration of food materials, cheating, embezzlement, thefts and robberies are rampant in society today. The main cause of these evils is the craving for luxuries such as the television, refrigrators, scooters and motor cars etc. The nation can survive only if the people will lead simple lves based on truth; if they don't cheat each other; if they embrace virtues such as temperance and compassion; and start using goods made by hand in the villages; these include

hand-spun and weaved cotton cloth, shoes, and utensils made of brass and clay. The craze for luxury goods like television, refrigrators, motor-cars, scooters and air conditioners as status symbols can lead the country towards destruction. The craze for television and scooters has caused the deaths of many newly-wed girls. Wigmore has written that the X-rays emanating from television have a range of up to fifteen feet. Very few homes have rooms which are large enough for people to sit beyond 15 feet of the television. Her book says that in the factories where television sets are manufactured, owners give each employee a small booklet that contains instructions to avoid harmful effects caused by the deadly X-rays. But the owners warn their employees not to show these booklets to the customers, otherwise they will not buy these TV sets. The lady has written that the X-ray machines used by doctors have safety devices incorporated in them to protect the doctors and patients from harmfule ffects of X-rays. But the commercial television sets have no such safety device fitted in them. One doctor who was an X-ray expert died from exposure to these deadly rays. Before dying, he had written that it seemed the X-rays look forward to trapping their prey and as soon as he comes within range, they strike and kill him.

Pregnant women should not venture out of their homes during a solar eclipse. They should sit in a sheltered place within their homes, so that they are protected from harmful radiation such as the X-rays. The solar eclypse that occurred on 19 Feb. 1980 was one of the greatest. It was a totaleclypse, which can make a person blind.

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Watch Your Step

The modern civilisation is wasteful civilisation. It is destroying land, water and air. During summer, people prefer cold drinks packed in quarter litre bottles, while scoffing at such nourishing drinks as the lassi (mix of water and milk), butter milk, shardai made of khaskhas and almonds, lime water and aromatic sharbats scented with sandal and Bansfa flowers, and thus waste money. Cold drinks, like Pepsi and Thumbs Up are not nourishing. These are luxuries for people with black money who want to show off their wealth. This habit of taking cold drinks aught to stop immediately. These are bitter in taste; some people even feel like vomiting after drinking them. Sometimes one feels gagged and the liquid sticks in the throat; it can even suffocate a person to death. Sometimes, tears come out of eyes while swallowing them. Doctors say that the pupils of the eyes get swollen. But yet the practice of taking cold drinks, out of these colourful bottles, is on the increase. This evil disease has even reached the villages. Families have started keeping a stock of these drinks at home as a status symbol We live in a hot country. The heat dries up the moisture from our bodies. The people in a hot country can escape from sickness caused due lack of water in their bodies only if they have frequent drinks of water. The disease of hiccup also affects those who drink less than the required amount of water. These colourful cold drink bottles will only help in spreading diseases caused due to the lack of body fluids to every home. The corruption is fast becoming a way of life in the country. The money spent on such useless things has compelled a large number of people to use dishonest means in acquiring it.

The government employees in cities take bribes, and the shopkeepers resort to large-scale blackmarketing and adulteration of food material The coming of large scale industry has destroyed many cottage industries and made the people destitute. The blood of innocent villagers has been sucked up by factory owners. They derive huge profits from these ventures and encourage wasteful expenditure among the common people. By doing this, they are ruining the country's economy. You, the rich, and the officers! by popularising wasteful new practices you are spoiling the people. The poor are trying to emulate your style of living and incurring additional expenditure which they can ill afford. You must decrease your expenditure. Buy cheaper cottage made goods like shoes, oil, brass utensils, potter-made containers, hand-spun flex rope, hand-weaved cotton cloth and village-made jaggery. You cannot continue to enjoy luxurious lives by making the village people poor and destitute. You are spreading many wasteful habits, that include cold drinks like Thumbs Up, Campa Cola and Pepsi Cola contained in colourful bottles.

Give up these habits so that the poor people can escape bankruptcy; so that they are not lead astray.

A daughter of Bibi Balwant Kaur of Amritsar is living in Delhi. She, with her daughters and their children, was returning from Dehi to Amritsar. One of the Bibi's granddaughters, a ten year old girl, was found of Thumbs Up. She bought a drink of Thumbs Up at the Panipat Railway Station and drank it. By the time the train reached Amritsar, the girl had 7-8 bouts of vomiting. She was taken to the doctor, who said that further delay could have reduced the fluid content of her body to such a low level that it could have proved fatal Once the railway Sevadars used to offer water to passengers at the railway stations, by going round carrying a bucket of water. After my metric examination, when I had leisure time, I used to stay at the Khanna Railway Station and serve water to train passengers at all hours; I would sleep on the floor of the railway platform after my work. I cannot understand why the

government discontinued serving water to passengers at railway stations. This aught to be resumed again. I have stayed bachelor throughout my life. I have adopted a four-year-old abandoned boy who was not only a cripple, but dumb as well He could not ask for whatever he needed. He was not able to even take and drink a glass of water himself; some one else had to do it. But he is a piece of my heart. I have been taking care of him for the last 53 years, 1934 to 1987. About 15 years back, he had hiccups one day, which continued for three days. I started worrying about his life. He not only hiccupped continuously but had constipation also. His faeces was hard as stone. He had to be administered anima twice a day to clear his bowels. I took the cripple to the top doctors of Amritsar. They tried many medicines but his constipation did not improve. By chance I took him to a lesser known doctor who was not as highly qualified as the top doctors. He did not prescribe any medicine but told me to give him several drinks of water throughout the day. The water gradually softened his faeces, which was earlier rock hard.

The rich are ruining this country. This disease of Campa Cola and Thumbs up in spreading to the villages. The topmost doctor of Amritsar told me that he spends his day sitting below a fan. He also told me that he drinks about 9 glasses of water every day and each drink contains about 375 ml of water. He said that a person who spends most his day under a fan should drink about four litres of water a day so that he passes at least one litre of urine in the course of twenty-four hours.

Gurukul Kangri Principle, Acharya Ram Dev said while addressing a Hindu religious gathering that a civilisation consists of three parts-the ideology, the language and the style of living. As illustration, he said that the inhabitants of one hot country took to wearing boots instead of shoes. Half of them died of heat stroke as the heat went to their heads and affected their brains. Doctors say that a lack of water in the body causes hiccups.

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Trees are Earth's Skin

The total land surface of India is about 32 crore 9 lakh hectares. To protect the earth from erosion due to strong winds and flood water, it should have at least 33 percent of its surface covered with forests. But the existing forest cover in India is about 6 crore 7 lakh hectares, which forms only 20 percent of its land surface, instead of the required 33 percent. Though the government records show this area as 20 percent, but in truth so many trees have been cut down in over this area that the actual percentage may be only 15%. Before the plantation of eucalyptus tree came into vogue, the trees were of varied kinds that included peepal, jujub, banyan, neem, mango, acacia, mulberri and sareenh etc. There trees served multiple needs of the people.

The trees protect soil from being eroded due to the action of strong winds and fast-flowing flood-waters. The banyan and peepal trees absorb harmful radiation from the sun and protect people from getting blind due to its effects. They also absorb noise produced by the running motor cars, buses and trucks etc. and provide protection to our ears. The eucalyptus tree is unfit to provide shelter to birds as they cannot build their nests in its leaves and branches. During heavy rains they fall down to the ground and die. Vultures eat the flesh of dead animals and serve as scavengers, but due to the scarcity of trees such as peepal, banyan, neem and seesam, their numbers have drastically come down. As a result many diseases are being produced. Vultures cleanse the earth by eating the flesh of dead animals, leaving only the bones of the skeleton, which could then be carried away by traders who sell it to

factories to be used for making fertilizers. But where can one take a skeleton with flesh still sticking to the bones. Perforce the farmers have to bury these skeletons in the fields, which makes their ploughing more difficult.

The government has concern only with the factories. It is only encouraging the plantation of eucalyptus tree, as its wood can be used for making furniture and for the manufacture of paper. The government is only proving its foolishness by undertaking such short-sighted work. It should have eucalyptus trees cut down and plant peepal, banyan, neem and seesam trees instead. A forest which has only one kind of tree is like a human body without the soul

Between 1951 and 1976, the trees were cut down so recklessly that forests covering an area of 4 crore 1 lakh hectares disappeared-the wood being used in buildings, agriculture, factories, and for the construction of roads and dams. It is estimated that the amount of wood being burnt for fuel by people living in cities and villages totals between 1 crore 35 lakh tons and 1 crore 70 lakh tons, every year.

For this purpose, trees over an area of 1 crore 30 lakh hectares are being cut down every year. This shortage of forest cover can only be made good if new trees are planted over an area of 2 crore hectares every year. The above given data has been taken from the English daily, 'Patriot', dated 22 Jan 1986.

According to an article titled 'Restoring the forest tribal link' by P.S. Sharma, the forests in Punjab can supply only the one-fifth of the total demand for fire-wood. There is likely to a shortage of 95% in the supply of fire-wood, and there will be riots when people snatch pieces of wood from each other. The above statistics should serve to open the eyes of those rich people who cook several different food items every day. The brick-kilns have shortage of coal and are using wood to make bricks. The coal comes by trucks from the state of Bihar. The smoke given out by the exhausts of these vehicles is polluting the air. Those who are building themselves huge residential buildings, containing several rooms, should ponder whether they really need them or are

merely showing off their vanity by outdoing each other in this activity. They are using fertile land which could be used to produce food for the hungry. They should think about the number of trees which will be brought down to supply wood for their roofs, doors and windows. Trees have to be felled to cook the bricks for their buildings. Though the population is increasing, the land surface remains the same. The tar which is used to construct roads have to be first heated by wood-fire. The people who use motor cars instead of traveling by train require wider roads. The wider roads take up still more land, reducing the area used for food production. People's houses and shopes have to be demolished to widen the roads; many peepel, banyan and neem trees have to be felled. The motor cars that run on these roads, kill many pedestrians and cyclists; they give out toxic gases. By importing petrol and diesel at prohibitive costs, we are increasing our already huge foreign debt.

Seven greatest dangers facing the world:-

1. If land erosion, destruction of fertilty of the soil, destruction of humus, and the growing population, are not halted, the very existence of mankind will be endangered.
2. Violence, wars and internal disputes, terrorism, harmful economic, religions, social and poltical activities are posing serious danger to our survival
3. The wide gap between rich and poor and economic disparity between castes and communities.
4. Excessive influence and interference of poltical, economic, industrial and trade organisations.
5. Flawed thinking on the part of leaders that to meet fixed targets in a region, any means could be adopted.
6. Dishonest and immoral activities of government officials and organisations.
7. Lack of resolve on the part of leaders and organisations to maintain harmonious relationship with each other and live in mutual peace.

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Walk

Man can not stay healthy without physical exercise. One should do physical work in some form, equivalent to the energy spent in walking a distance of eight kilometers every day, otherwise he will be subject to such maladies as blood sugar, heart disease or knee pain. Rich women who stay idle at home and consider walking to be below their dignity get afflicted with these diseases before they are fifty; they get knee pain and their old age is spent lying on wooden beds. Shaikh Sadi was a well known philosopher of Iran. He says that a boat sinks when its belly becomes heavy. By this he means that when people increase their expenditure beyond their means and are unable to meet it through honest means, they resort to dishonest ways of getting money. To stay honest one needs to lower one's expenditure to a level which is well within one's means; he should avoid spending money on non-essential things, things he can do without. Those who do not consider it necessary to stay honest, have no compunction about adopting dishonest ways of getting money. The two and half centuries of the Industrial Age have produced a number of things which are positively harmful to man and are destroying him. But the rich who have black money crave these things because they either serve as symbols of their social status or they think that their lives would become happier by their possession. This parade of their riches not only ruins their own lives, the other people, who cannot really afford these things, try to copy them and ruin their lives. An article was published in American monthly magazine, 'Readers Digest', titled 'We are not too poor.' The article points out that we feel poor not because we lack the

necessities of life. It is because we start regarding things we can do without as necessities of life, and when we do not find the means of obtaining them, we think we are poor.

As an instance of using wealth to show off one's social status and a life of luxury, the writer says that a married couple living in his neighbourhood go to hill station by their own car every summer. This motor car consumes a major chunk of their income. An article published in 'Hindustan Times' of 29 December 1968, says that every family in America spends a quarter of its income on motor cars. The wasteful expenditure on motor cars is apparent from the fact that a motor car of 100 horse power engine may have only one occupant; and 80 out 100 cars have only one traveller. A hundred horse power engine can perhaps drive a bus or a truck. It is more sensible to travel by bus but every person in America wants to own a car. The Americans can save a lot of money travelling by bus instead of motor cars, but they do not wish to do so.

The increase in global temperature due to burning of fossil fuels will melt the polar ice and crores of people living near the sea shore could lose their lives. The old and the weak are riddled with lung disease due to toxic gases given out by motor cars; their lives have become miserable. Thousands of people are dying of road accidents.

Toxic gases given out by motor vehicles have made large numbers of people leave big cities and build their homes in outlying areas, so that they can get some fresh air. All these damaging events are taking place because people have given up using their feet for travelling and have instead taken to travelling by motor-cars and scooters as a luxury and to show off false pride. There is a Persian saying. 'Gulat-ul-aam-sahi, which means that a wrong action being done by a majority of people comes to be regarded as a right action. Thus, when a youth sees that bribery is commonplace in government offices, when he sees black-marketing taking place in every shop, when he sees that shop owners make wrong bills to evade sale tax, it is natural for him to conclude that it is wrong not to take

bribe; that it is wrong not to indulge in black-marketing. The money obtained through adulteration of commodities and black marketing have a large share in increase in the number of cars and scooters in our country. The Reader's Digest of America says that a person who increases his unnecessary expenditure cannot spare money for any charity. He will not be able to help with money any poor widow with children, or a needy sister. There may not be even two persons out of a hundred who spend money on cars and scooters and still manage to donate money in the name of God, or the Guru. The example set by the upper class people motivates the lower classes to lead virtuous or evil lives. The noise of motor cars is making people deaf and agitated. It is making them insecure. They only serve to dirty the air they breathe and give them the lung disease. The disease-carrying dust falls on dals cooked in tandoors, on rotis, milk, curd and other food items, and ends up in our lungs.

- According to the UNO estimates, by the year 2010, 2.5 crore children will lose one or both parents to AIDS.

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Death Warrant

To follow the herd and show off your prosperity by owning wooden chairs, tables and double beds that requires felling of trees, is like signing your own death warrant. Due to lack of adequate tree cover, our army has to camouflage its tanks and trucks by covering them with green coloured nets to escape detection. Those nets soon rot due to the action of sun rays and the rain and have to be replaced, which means wasting crores of rupees spent on these items. If we have adequate forest cover to protect our soil from erosion due to strong winds and flood waters, our army need not cover its tanks and trucks with cotton nets; the soldiers could hide under tree canopies with their tanks and trucks and escape detection by enemy aircraft which comes to attack them during war.

The soil erosion can only be prevented if our hills and plains have a total of 33 percent forest cover. The hilly regions require 60 percent of its surface to be covered by forest, while the plains require about 20 percent. But in India, this forest cover has come down to just 10 percent, which is far short of the required 33 percent. In the plains of Punjab, the trees cover only 5 percent of the surface, instead of the required 20 percent, and in Bathinda district the trees cover just 1% of the land surface. The number of trees felled in India in the last 40 years is far greater than in any other country. During the last few years, about one crore thirty lakh hectares of land has been denuded of forest cover in India every year. If this felling of trees continues at its present rate, in the next fifteen years, all the trees would be gone and the land will turn into desert. It will then produce no crop. If the hilly land does not have

the required 60% of forest cover, there remain large gaps between trees, and the rain showers hit the surface directly and wash away the soil The eroded soil then reaches the water reservoirs such as the Bhakhra Dam and cause silting. The muddy water can not be used to drive the turbines that produce electricity. The canals that originate from the dams also get choked by silt. The soil washed away from hilly areas mixes with the river waters. Huge sand embankments form and the river has to change its course, flooding the adjoining crop land and washing away the top soil The top soil is very valuable; it is mainly the top soil up to the depth of 8 inches that gives nourishment to crops. The top soil forms due to breaking up and withering of rocks over a course of thousands of years. Strong winds too cause erosion of this top soil by carrying and depositing it miles away. Once the top soil is carried away by wind or rain, the soil that is left is sandy and can not provide nourishment to crops. The forest cover over the hills has been reduced to just 15%; the drops of rain therefore hit the ground directly and wash away the top soil In the homes of the rich many vegetables are cooked for a single meal and a number of other dishes are also cooked, for which large quantity of wood has be burnt. People have got into the habit of sitting on chairs around a dining table, like the Englishmen.

Another foolishness has caught hold of the people: they decorate their walls and roofs with wood panels. The bank buildings and cinema halls also have their roofs and walls decorated with wood panels. The universities which ought to teach people to conserve trees, are also in a race to line their walls and roofs with wood paneling. They are only proving that the critical problems facing this country and the world, can not be solved by professors drawing princely salaries, living in large houses and riding motor cars; they would be solved by people like me who are not even tenth pass; by those young men who are not highly educated, but whose mothers fired their imagination in childhood by reciting to them tales of such great men as

Shri Guru Teg Bahadur, who meditated in an underground cell for 24 years, who had built up his inner power, and had pondered over the problems and difficulties facing the mankind. He had trees planted, gave cows where milk was needed.

Only one-fifth of the wood that is used for fuel in Punjab comes from its own trees. The rest comes from other states by trucks and trains. Before the arrival of railway and motor vehicles, things were transported by bullock carts, which could not reach areas affected by famines and a lot of people used to die for want of food. The wood too could not be transported from one state to another. That is the reason the sages, in the religious texts such as the Bhagwat Gita and the Matsya Pran, have written hymns in praise of trees. The Bhagwat Gita says that the trees bring rain. But it seems that our countrymen are all asleep. They are destroying the trees recklessly. Instead of trees with broad leaves and wide conopies which once protected the soil under them in the hills, the trees which have neither broad canopies, nor a large network of roots, are being planted. The trees such as the peepal and the banyan have deep and wide network of roots, and prevent erosion. They also have broad leaves and large canopies. The trees like the oak are being cleared in the hills and in their place, puny apple trees are being planted. A tree called chilpine is also being planted. These light trees do not have the ability to prevent the soil from being washed away, which then goes and chokes the water reservoirs like the Bhakhra Dam. The floods which result from this land erosion in India take the lives of large number of people and cattle; cots and beds are carried away by flood waters. The damage totals many hundreds of crores of rupees. Of course the cost of top soil that is washed away cannot be estimated in terms of money, because it is this soil which gives us food. When that goes, only sandy soil is left behind; and what can one grow in the sandy soil? According to an estimate by a national committee about environment, the quantity of soil that is

eroded every year in India amounts to 10-12 billon tons. This soil contains one crore five lakh tons of nutrients which could help grow food crops; they leave the soil for ever. At current price level, the value of these nutrients which are washed away is estimated to be between 7000-8000 thousand crores.

The Congo Basin of Africa is the second largest tropical rain forest. Africa has pledged 3 crore 90 lakh dollars to save this forest. Brazil has reserved 3 crore 90 lakh hectares of rain forest in the North Amazon as a national park. New Zealand has declared an area spread over 1,30,000 hectares of land as protected area.

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What to do, what not to do

We have a share of only 2.5 percent of total land surface of the earth, but the men, women and children living in our country form a staggering 15 percent of the world population. The length or breadth of the land over which we live is not going to increase. The nations which did not limit the size of their populations according to the food and water they had, had their inhabitants die like insects for want of food and water. Our history records a total of more than fifty famines. One of these famines in India was so severe that it left countless skulls rotting every where. It therefore came to be known as the skull famine. Men offered to sell themselves for a single roti, but there was no food available; so who would buy them? The sages who saw people dying like insects took a lesson from these famines, and they wrote these words in scriptures: It is a better undertaking to produce corn than to collect pearls and diamonds.

"O man! you are in debt of the farmer, whose corn you eat in order to live". The canals coming out of dams like the Bhakhra have enhanced food production in our country. But the dams from which the canals come will begin silting up by the year 2000, and over the course of a 100 years will completely fill up with silt washed down from the hills. Even those dams which are being built now will fill up during this period. After these dams silt up, the canals that are left will only be able to irrigate an area which is able to grow crops for a population of 35 crores, not more than this. The present population of the country is 86 crore. (1992).

If the people of India do not want that one and a

quarter crore people should begin to die every year, they have to take responsibility. They have to give up many things they are doing now. The first thing to do is that every newly-wed couple should not produce more than one child. Minimise the use of wood. Make only one dish of dal and one of vegetable per day. Making of many dishes of vegetable like the rich do, will have to be given up. The dead should be disposed off in electrical crematoriums and not by burning wood. Houses should be built small Give up using table and chairs. If you cannot do without chairs, let them be of iron. Making double-beds made of wood is a harmful thing. Do not decorate walls and roofs of your house with wood panels. Do not waste money on invitation cards during marriages. Use postcards instead of elaborate invitation cards. Those who have nothing to do at home should spend their time planting trees over empty land and rearing them. Those who have regular incomes from house rent or bank interest should use their time in planting trees. Langars of krah-puris should be distributed on canal banks and road sides so that the men without employment should eat krah-puris and plant trees and use their time. Enough felling of trees has taken place in India. The craze for chairs, tables, double beds and house decoration has swallowed countless trees. Forests are being cut at the rate of one crore thirty lakh hectares every year, but no one is planting trees. At this rate all the forests will disappear in India in the next twenty years. Then the whole land of India will become a vast desert. Dust storms will blind us and cover our roofs with sand. If you wish that India should live, you should follow the example set by Shri Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib (When he went on the Assam tour for four years, he did many works of public good on the way; the greatest one was the planting of trees; he had distributed cows where milk was needed and had houses constructed for those who were homeless). You, alcohol lovers! You, wasters of money on motor cars! stop spending money on these useless things. Send money to Pingalwara, so that I can distribute these pamphlets and papers

throughout India and exhort people to save trees, so that your land does not become a desert. If you pay no need to what I said above, there will be great calamities. Your sons and grand-sons will curse you for your negligence. For the 600 years between the 11th and the 17th century, there was a famine every 50 years; with the coming of the British, the frequency of these famines increased. Since 1765 until the middle of the 19 the century, there were 12 major famines in the country, out of which four were very severe. Twenty eight years between 1880 to 1908 were the years of famine. The reckless cutting of trees that is taking place in India today, happened also in America in the 18th century. The people there had blindly cut down forests to obtain wood for building houses; that resulted in blinding dust storms and overflowing rivers. These storms and floods had washed away the top soil of 8 inches that produces crops. Once this top soil goes, only the sandy soil is left behind, that can not nourish any crops. The then president of America, Franklin Roosavelte employed an army of 20 lakh youngmen to plant trees over the barren land to prevent soil erosion and in a period of ten years covered the land with trees. This bold plan saved the land. The percentage of forest land in hilly regions is required to be 60 and in plains it should be at least 20. A total of 33 percent of the land surface in any country should be covered with forests to prevent soil erosion and for land conservation. But in India this percentage has dropped down to a mere 9 percent. African continent has been cursed with famine since many years, but in the last two years the situation has become very critical in 21 countries of Africa. One crore inhabitants of these countries have left their homes and are wandering in search food and water. The following reasons have been given for the occurrence of this tragedy: negligence toward farming for the last 40-50 years, not treating farming as a priority sector, flawed government policies, bias against small farmers, lack of fertilizers and insecticides and insufficient rainfall The shortage in rainfall has been ascribed to the cutting down of forests.

The sensible advice that the World War Institute in America has given to its countrymen is that every man, woman and child should undertake the work of planting trees. If our countrymen do not want to leave their homes, in their crores in search of food and water, they should devote their time and money towards planting of trees.

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Hear the cries of weeping air, water and soil

> Man has lost his capacity to foresee and forestall, he will end up by destroying the earth and with it of course himself pollute and perish.
>
> -Albert Schweitzser

You humans of this earth! you are signing your own death warrants by destroying the three elements that sustain your life : earth, water and air. You are creating problems for your coming generations, nay, you are closing the door on their being born. Earth, water and air had always remained in their pure and pristine form since the time of the creation, but since the use of coal, diesel and petrol driven engines and machines, the air, water, earth and animals have been perishing steadily. These engines and machines are not even 225 years old. If you desire that the air, water and the earth should not be destroyed, the calamities like floods, draughts, dust storms, famines, extreme heat, extreme cold, and acid rain should not take place, then you have to live with extreme care. You have to find some such holy place where you can get guidance to overcome above dangers. From time immemoral, the human race has been getting guidance and inspiration from holy places. In the present age, holy places such as Shri Darbar Sahib Amritsar are providing such inspiration. Do not be misguided by what television, radio and newspapers say. The television is destroying your lives by showing vulgar programmes where half-naked women are shown dancing; they advertise luxury goods such as motor

cars, motor cycles, refrigrators, expensive soaps, sarees and scents that only the rich can afford; but the poor people try to copy their life style and ruin their own lives. They show international cricket matches that people watch for six hours or more and waste their time and money. The time is running out fast; dangers are lurking every where. If you keep on using new-fangled luxury goods to show off your financial status, calamities will overtake you. The damage can cross allboundaries. The earth willbecome a desert and may not recover in a thousand years; water will become poisoned, the air will become contaminated. So many dangers are waiting in the wings that you can no bnger afford to ignore them. You have to pay need. You have to imbibe these lines from Shri Guru Granth Sahib in your heart and use them to guide your lives :

1. If we keep the future in mind, we willnot be punished.
2. Master is best served with wisdom.
   Wisdom only can bestow honours.
   Comprehension of the divine comes with wisdom
   And wisdom guides us to give money for charity
3. Meditation of God keeps us aware of our environment.
4. If we live according to God's will, we become aware of the unity of the creation.

The greatest calamity which is facing the world now has been produced by the burning of fossil fuels such as coal, diesel and petrolby motor cars, motor cycles, buses, railway engines and factories. As a result of the burning of this fuel toxic gases such as the CO_2 and carbon monoxide are produced. These gases are being produced at such a rate, that they can annihilate the animal and human life. Before that happens, by the year 2020, which is not very far off, the ice mountains at the poles would melt and raise the sea level by 24 feet. This would submerge many large cities and towns near the sea shore. If you want to escape these calamities, you should live simple lives. You have a give up many harmful things and activities brought about by the Industrial Civilsation. Taking inspiration from Shri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar, the

Khalsa had reversed the tide of invasion from India towards Kabul, the tide of invasion which had been flowing towards India for countless centuries. Not only this, the Khalsa had put its flag atop the forts of Jamrud and Gilgit on the frontiers of Kabul. The tale of Dhru Bhagat becoming a servant of God had inspired me to become a servant of God. To fulfill this desire, I became a sevadar, serving water to pilgrims at the Gurudwara Dera Sahib, Lahore, that commemorates the memory of the King of Martyrs, Shri Guru Arjun Dev Ji. While performing service at the Gurudwara Dera Sahib, a strong desire arose in my heart to know about this world and its problems. While remembering Shri Darbar Sahib, I pray God with my every breath that Shri Darbar Sahib give me power and inspiration, so that by distributing free pamphlets and booklets in Punjabi, Hindi and English languages, I can warn my countrymen of the dangers facing them, especially the danger posed by the pollution of air and water, and the danger of the earth turning into a desert.

- California is the first state in America to enact legislation to limit the emission of green-house gases.
- New Zealand has promised to provide homes to the residents of Tanalu, as that country is facing the danger of being submerged due to the rise in sea level

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History of my concern for the preservation of Mother Earth

I had ample opportunity to do research while engaged in social service under the auspices of Gurudwara Dera Sahib. I visited a number of libraries in Lahore, which was then the capital of undivided Punjab. In 1933, I read an essay in a monthly magazine of America, called Hygiea. The essay concerned land erosion. This monthly magazine was about subjects concerning health and hygiene. The essay said that if excessive deforestation is carried out in hilly regions, the rivers cause floods. It brought out the fact that trees, bushes and other vegetation help check the velocity of running water down the hills slopes, so that its progress towards the rivers becomes slow and gradual; but if the trees are felled in such numbers that the hills are denuded of their green cover, the running water washes away the soil, which then flows into the rivers; this silts up the river bed and the river overflows its banks and floods the land. It is worth mentioning that the top layer of soil upto the depth of 6-10 inches can only support plants. The soil below this layer is almost sterile. In hilly regions 22 parts out of a hundred should have tree cover. At 29 years of age, while walking the road of social service and human welfare, I could not remain indifferent about the need to save the Mother Earth, because all the where-with all that a person needs in life is supplied by the Mother Earth. The wealth of education that I had accumulated by educating myself in the libraries of Lahore only amounted to failing twice in the 10th examination. The Gurdwara gave me only two facilties: two meals a day and a place to sleep.

The education I had received till that time and the study of the contents of news magazines made me so concerned about the conservation of earth that while walking, I started picking up small twigs of trees and other pieces of wood that could be used as fuel I took over the work of supplying firewood for the cooking of langar at the Gurdwara Dera Sahib. It being an important Gurdwara people from the city and those from outside kept visiting throughout the day to offer Krah Prasad. The Krah Prasad was therefore prepared a number of times in the langer and the fire in the stoves was kept alight through-out the day. I had to go to the enclosure where langar was prepared, quite frequently, to collect my own meals, to take bath, and also to get food for a poor cripple sitting outside, who kept waiting for me to fill up his stomach; he could not feed himself and looked to others to feed him. The langar fed all kinds of people, that included women and children, travellers, the poor and those without any work or means of living. The helpless, the cripples and the sick also fed themselves from the langar. Those who were entirely dependent on the langar, would keep sitting outside the kitchen and wait for some one to give them roties. They sometimes got food, sometimes not, and sometimes less than the required amount. I used to go to the kitchen and bring out food for such people, and sometimes persuaded the sevadars to give them food. At times I brought out rotis, hiding them under the cotton sheet which I wrapped around my upper body. I would go to the kitchen several times a day to watch the wood burning in the stoves and if I saw that nothing was being cooked over the fire, I would pull out pieces of wood from the stove to save them for later use; this sometimes irked other volunteer workers, as the wood piled in a single stove was as much as four mounds (160 kgs) and the bh (iron sheet) placed on it for the cooking of rotis measured four and a half feet on the side. The other workers disliked my work as they had to put all this half-burnt wood back into the stove when the next cooking was to be done. When the cooking was

finished I would take out unburnt pieces and coals from the stoves; this was not an easy job as the heat near the stoves was intense; I had to rest frequently, sometimes 5-6 times, to save my body from overheating. The other workers were not as much intrested as me to save the wood for later use; they would let it idle and burn to ashes. In the winter, I would leave part of the wood in the stoves to provide warmth to the people resting in the kitchen, but during summer, the coals saved by me were filled up in gunny-sacks and kept for use during the singing of the 'Asa Di Vaar' (morning prayers) in winter months. Those days the cost of coal was 8kgs per rupee. My eyes would smart from heat while removing coal from stoves during the summer months, but the satisfaction I got from doing what I considered to be my duty, amply compensated me for my pains. Being young and in the prime of health, I considered this work no hazard for my health. Since I had no paid job, all I had to offer by way service to the Gurdwara was manual labour, to return in some measure the mental peace and spiritual blss I enjoyed being there. The wood I saved from misuse in the Gurdwara was at times worth as much as four rupees a day. I was so concerned about soil erosion taking place in hills and plains due to lack of adequate forest cover that to save wood gave me great happiness and mental satisfaction. I did not mind the skin scorching work of removing coal from langar stoves. My mind took delight in such work. Among the sangat (congregation), there was one Bhagat Bawa Bel Ram who was a great donnor, in that he offered one and quarter rupees krah prasad every day in God's name; he also dusted the shoes of devotees visiting the Gurdwara in the mornings and evenings. But I considered my services to God even greater than his as they helped in the conservation of nature created by Him; they were rendered in more thoughtful manner. To save Gurdwara resources had become part of my emotional life as I had come to associate my own life and death with the existence of the Gurdwara; that great monument had in real terms become my true

home.

Not only research is needed to save land in the country and the world; it is also important that the results of this research should reach the common man. The land which supports all life on this earth is being destroyed in a number of ways. By remaining complacent about the conservation of earth, the human race is endangering its own future. The soil is being eroded both by flooded rivers and stormy winds. The people should be educated by distributing pamphlets and advertisements explaining the importance of trees and the need to recycle waste matter by turning it into manure to increase the soil productivity.

I need lakhs of rupees every year so that, through the distribution of advertisements and tracts, I can educate each individual about soil conservation.

The first book I came accross about land erosion was in 1956. It was titled 'which way les hope', and was by Richard B. Grey. The Punjab Conservator of Forests had warned that to prevent soil erosion, tree cutting over catchment area that supplies water to the Bhakra Dam should not be carried out recklessly; it should be carried out under a well considered plan. I also came to know by reading that essay that if the land is denuded of tree cover, strong winds could blow off the fertile top soil, leaving sterile sandy soil below. I had this essay published in the then monthly paper, 'Pingalwara Studies in Current Affairs' and had made an attempt to distribute it to every home. I wish that necessary information about the importance of trees should be written on iron boards and installed on roadsides; it should also be displayed prominently at religious gatherings and other fairs. I wish that papers containing this information should reach every child in school The single-handed unique work on educating people about dangers to our environment which I am trying to do, entitles me to seek help, especially from Gurdwaras, Singh Sabhas and invidual Gursikhs, so that I can tell the world about the role that Gurdwaras, especially the Gurdwara Dera Sahib, are playing in

motivating people towards doing social work; so that these Gurdwaras become world known.

- Scientists warn that maize crop in Mexico has been contaminated by contact with genetically modified maize crop in America.
- According to one study, half the land in North America has lost its flora and fauna. Two hundred thirty-five species which include milch cattle, reptiles, birds and amphibious animals are on the verge of extinction.
- Compared to the year 1998, the rate at which glaciers are melting has now doubled. It is also estimated that by the year 2100, sea level will rise by 27 cms.

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Beware!

Draughts are imminent due to the cutting of forests. Rise in global temperature is causing the glaciers to melt. As a result sea level is rising and will submerge large areas along the sea shores. About 20 percent of world population lives near the sea shore. The rise in sea level will make them homeless and also swallow fertile land near the coastline. These people will have to emigrate to inland areas; they will need employment. They will make the housing problem worse than it already is. They will occupy the already scarce open spaces; there will be overcrowding. The population is on the rise. The reduction of farm land will be catastrophic. Electricity is produced by the burning of coal, that releases large volumes of toxic gases into the atmosphere. These gases create the greenhouse effect, that allows the sun heat to reach the earth's surface; but prevents the radiation of heat from the earth back into space. This results in rise in global temperature. The heat trapped by greenhouse gases, which are produced as a result of the burning of coal, diesel, petrol, kerosene oil, wood and dung, is causing the glaciers to melt, which raises the sea level A day will come when many islands in the oceans will disappear; whole countries such the Bangladesh will get submerged. Droughts will be more frequent; deserts will expand. Food production will come down. The ash and smoke produced by the Thermal Power Plant of Bathinda are giving the people living within 10kms of it, the lung disease; it is blackening their clothes. Dust particles in the smoke ruin crops within 5 kms of the plant. It is destroying valuable food producing land; poisoning the drinking water. ***

Traps of Death

There was a time in Europe during the Roman Empire when bloody duels were fought in the arena, in which two masked men fought each other with swords. They were called gladiators and they fought with swords till one of them fell dead. Thousands of men and women watched this bloody sport; they included nobles and ministers. People applauded when the gladiators struck fatal blows against each other, severing an arm, leg or the head. It was all done in the name of entertainment for the people. Not only men, sometimes even animal fights were staged for peoples' amusement.

Then one day, during one of these bloody duels, an ordinary citizen got up and said that these bloody games should be stopped; they were cruel and inhuman. Other spectators watching this sport got angry at that man and shouted that he should be killed. The angry mob killed him. The man who had protested against this bloody sport was not a prominent citizen but an ordinary individual, whom, at the most, his immediate neighbours might have known. But his courageous act, later, made others think that he might after all be right; that this cruel sport should indeed be discontinued. After the death of that unknown hero, these games were indeed stopped. That bloody sport might have been taking place only twice a year; or it might have been taking place twice a year; it might have killed at most four or five men; but on the roads of India, motorcars, motorcycles, buses and trucks crush to death about 40000 people every year; about one lakh people have their bones broken.

About two lakh persons die in the world every year

in road accidents; the number of injured may be in crores. But who will put a stop to this flood of motorcars and motorcycles, because it has spread to the whole country. A Roman citizen had the courage to speak against the bloody gladiatorial fights and was instrumental in putting a stop to that inhuman activity. He succeeded in his task because the actors in that bloody game were all gathered in one place and he could address them all Is it possible to gather the drivers of these motorcars, motorcycles, scooters, trucks and buses, which are spread out throughout the country, at one place? There is only one way to deliver the message to all of them : Papers and booklets explaining the rules of safety should be distributed to people at public places such as bus-stands and railway stations and at religious places and pilgrimage centres. The auspicious days such as the Puranmashi (full moon), Sangrand (first day of every month), Amavas (new moon), which large number of people gather to celebrate, could be used to distribute these papers and pamphlets. The other occasions could include the Diwal at Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar; the Maagi at Sri Darbar Sahib Muktsar, Baisakhi at Takhat Sri Kesgarh Sahib, Sri Anandpur Sahib, the Mela at Gurdwara Fatehgarh Sahib, Sarhind; the annual fair at Hardwar; the six-monthly Ard-Kumb and the twelve-monthly Kumb festival at Hardwar. For the purpose of distribution of these papers and pamphlets, I have chosen the main gate of the greatest religious shrine of the Sikhs, Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar. Papers and pamphlets explaining the serious problems facing this world are distributed here.

The rains which fell in Rajasthan in 1988, had come after four years of drought. The distribution of free papers and pamphlets which is being carried out near the gate of Sri Darbar Sahib Amritsar is meant to make the people aware of dangers facing them and the things they can do to avert them. These dangers include droughts, floods, global warming, acid rain, melting of glaciers and the consequent rise of sea level, which could destroy lives of crores of people.

The burning of fossil fuels like the coal, diesel, petrol, kerosene oil in vehicle engines and factories produces heat and toxic gases. These gases eat up the bricks of buildings; they also erode the surface of marble tiles at Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar. Since the creation of the earth, many serious problems and dangers have threatened it. Why those dangers arose and what can be done to prevent them? Men of vision have to think about their solution. In our own times, the science has invented radio which should have given a means to the people to learn about these problems while sitting in their homes. But the radio needs new and novel subjects everyday to hold the people's attention. But here the issue is about the dangers facing us, such as the contamination of air and water, increase in global temperatures, the loss of soil fertility and the acid rain etc. These dangers require detailed information to reach the ordinary people, which could be best done through the printing of pamphlets and advertisements and their wide distribution among the public. This the radio can not do. I read an article in an American monthly, the Readers Digest, titled 'make a note of it.' This article explained that whatever a man hears, he forgets a part of it in fifteen minutes and the rest in increasing amounts of half an hour, one hour, one day, one week, one month and one year; after a few years he may forget all of it. Whoever gets my advertisements will read them again and again; his family members, neighbours and relatives will read them. I read somewhere that a person has 32 teeth, and if he reads something 32 times, he will remember it for ever. This work could only be possible at religious places. It is only the key centres of religion which can undertake the work of printing and free distribution of advertisements and booklets. The portals of Sri Darbar Sahib is one of the first places to undertake this work. Now, the most important pilgrimage centre, the Hardwar, which has even been mentioned in Sri Guru Granth Sahib, should also undertake this work. New Bhagat Puran Singhs should be born everywhere. The earth has been in existence for

countless centuries and the water and soil have always remained pure and uncontaminated. It was due to clearing of forests that the deserts came into existence. Since the beginning of the industrial era, the water, air and soil have been so ill-used that they are on the brink of extinction after only 240 years. If there is anything that can be done to overcome this impending calamity, it can only be begun from the portals of religious shrines. Such work has never been undertaken by any one else in the past. People should not depend on radio and television to do it.

Economic development should take place at such sustainable rate that there is no adverse impact on the environment and natural resources. For this we will have to conserve our soil, increase the forest cover, control the growth of population and make a more efficient use of energy. Our industrial development should take account of the fact that our natural resources are limited. We should not have only short-term benefits in mind while using them.

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Tobacco

There are twenty-one kinds of poisons in tobacco. Nicotine is among one of the most potent of them; a single drop of it could kill six cats or two dogs; eight drops could kill a strong horse. Tobacco throws an open challenge to its users- 'I give you cough; I give you the pus, If you still do not die, what more can I do?' The money spent on beedies, cigarettes, pipes and hookas is money down the drain. Farmers have been seen selling ghee to buy tobacco. A regular smoker consumes a total amount of 3-5 quintals of tobacco upto the age of 68 years. The life span of this person in shortened by 5 years. One of the causes of heart disease is the use of tobacco. It can cause damage and even failure of such vital organs as the heart, lever, lungs and kidneys; it can cause paralysis of the fingers. This dangerous crop is grown over an area of five lakh hectares in India. A country which has perennial shortage of food, countless men with no land and countless number of people dying of hunger, can still afford the cultivation of this poisonous plant-What a tragedy!

• According to a study, the 1986 Chernobyl Nuclear Accident had caused a number of cases of thyroid cancer. This is the first time that a single cause of any disease has been established. The people living near busy highways can get leukemia of the lungs from the pollution caused by engines of motor vehicles. Toxic smoke and gases emitted by the burning of diesel can cause lung cancer. Similarly, Bengine (which is used in the manufacture of paints, can also cause leukemia.

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Manage Your Household

Since the price of crude oil started going up in 1973, I have been, through my advertisements, urging my countrymen to limit the use of petrol and diesel During the last seven years money spent on import of crude oil has put unbearable burden on our economy. Between 1 April 1979 and 13 March 1980, cost of crude oil imported from other countries amounted to 1800 crore rupees. The price increase since December 1979, will further increase the burden on the economy by 3200 crore rupees and upto the period of 31 March 1980, the total cost of oil used in the country will be 5000 crore rupees. It is strange that despite such huge increase in the price of crude oil in the seven years between 1973 and 1979, the consumption of this material has increased instead of decreasing. No one has thought about decreasing the consumption of crude oil Do the users of this item think that the oil and petrol will fall from the sky, or the foreign exchange required to import it will be sent to them by an angel? This has never happened, nor is it likely to happen. The rise in the price of crude oil has reached alarming proportions. It will break the back of our economy. Every citizen of our country has to think about reducing consumption of this substance and help decrease the import bill Scooters, three-wheelers, small lorries, station wagons and buses should be replaced by tongas. Our countrymen are harming no one but themselves. Buses are running about so recklessly as if the diesel required for their engines is raining from the sky; as if it costs nothing. No one thinks that things that are imported from other countries should be used with care; that their use should be minimised. Daily use things which

can be made by hand should not be replaced with those that are machine made, as the machines run on oil The cloth you wear should be the one which is hand-made. If you have to buy a utensil, ensure that you buy only the handcrafted one; do not buy machine made utensils. Travel by rail instead of by bus. The village people are usually less ease- loving and ostentatious than city-dwellers, but they too have lately begun to travel the wrong road. They too have given up walking because their enemy, the bus, has reached the countryside. Once they thought it as nothing to walk ten miles. People have begun to think that government is responsible for every thing; but the government can not run successfully until people cooperate.

The nations of this earth should do the folbwing to keep the environment clean :-

- To prevent pollution instead of trying to cure it.
- To increase energy efficiency.
- To use clean fuels.
- To promote non-polluting energy sources such as solar energy, wind-power and hydro-electric power.
- To promote the use of less polluting means of travel; travel by rail instead of by aeroplane.
- To slow the growth of population.
- To take account of pollution and its clean-up cost while fixing prices of various kinds of energy.

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Fatal Loud Noise

Countrymen! Beware of noise pollution produced by the machinery, trucks, buses and motorcars and their blaring horns. This noise is injurious to health; produces eye diseases and even causes deafness. Doctors say that among causes of mental disease, loud noise is one of the deadlest; it gives rise to eye disease, stomach disorders, lack of sleep and insomnia. The sound of vehicle horns is making the lives of people miserable, especially of those living in cities and towns or near busy highways. This loud noise is causing great distress to children and old people living near roadsides. They are disturbed and miserable. Pedestrians and cyclists going on the roads of cities and towns should remain clear of the buses that overtake them, so that they don't have to use their horns. Bus passengers should ensure that the driver does not drive fast while passing through crowded roads of a city or town. Do not travel by buses; they are the dealers of death, killing people every where; travel by tongas and rickshaws instead.

1. Use low and clear voice while talking to one another.
2. Adjust the volume of your radio, television or tape so that their voice is audible to you alone.
3. Avoid places where there is excessive noise.
4. Use horns of motorcars and scooters only when needed.
5. Keep the volume of speakers at low level during religious functions and marriage ceremonies.

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History of Famines in India

Famines in India have been taking place since 650 A.D. The main reason for their occurrence has usually been insufficient or no rainfall at all. A few of the major famines were as follows :-

Some of the worst famines occured in 650, 1148, 1149, 1386-1407, 1591-1598 and 1760-1792. During these famines one province after another was devastated. Famines that occurred in the year 941 and between 1022 and 1033 were so terrible that human beings killed one other to eat their flesh. During a famine in the year 1334, the then Sultan of India, Mohammed Bin Tughlak took the inhabitants of Delhi to his new capital, Devgiri, in the South. Another famine that gripped the province of Gujrat during the years 1630-1632 was so horrible that for a few roties, human beings were prepared to sell themselves, but no one had the means to buy them even at such a price-one historian wrote, giving a vivid account of conditions during the famine. A famine during the year 1772 came to be known as the Khopri Kaal (the skull famine) as it left countless skulls littering the land. For six years following 1838, there were as many as 20 famines in various parts of India due to lack of rain. The following famines were among the most terrible : famine in U.P. in 1839 which killed 8 Lakh people; a famine in Orissa in 1865 took 10 lakh lives; a famine in Rajasthan in the same year killed seven and half lakhs. A famine hit the provinces of Bombay, Madras and Madhya Pradesh during 1896 and killed about seven and half lakh people. These famines occurred due to the lack of water because of insufficient rains. They displaced large numbers of people, who migrated to the

neighbouring provinces, further widening the area affected by them. These famines not only killed large portions of the human population, they also killed lakhs of cattle through hunger and thirst. They decimated bullock population to such an extent that even after the famine when rains fell, there were no bullocks to plough the land. There was no replacement for men who died in the famine. So the land kept lying fallow for want of men and bullocks for a number of years.

Seven crore people were affected by famine that took place in 1896-1897. The Mughal Emperor Akbar had a new capital built in 1570 at Fatehpur Sikri but had to abandon it as sufficient water was not available at the site. He therefore shifted his capital to the city of Agra, situated about 10 miles from the banks of Yamuna.

The famines may kill one and a half crore people in the coming 100 years. The only way to prevent these deaths is that a married couple should not produce more than one child, be it male or female. Those who leave large broods of children, their sons and daughters will die of hunger.

Today 50 crore people live in famine prone areas. By 2025, this number will increase to 240-340 crores.

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Let the Village Live

Out of every hundred people living in India, seventy five live in villages. Those who live in villages can continue to live there only if they are able to find employment; and they will continue to have employment only if we Indians buy the things they make. When things the villagers make do not find buyers, they lose their employment and have to remain hungry. Then the only choice left to them is to migrate to cities. A man dying of hunger sometimes becomes so desperate that he is ready to do any evil So if a person remains indifferent as to whether somebody loses his employment and buys a machine made good when a hand made substitute is available, he only shows a lack of sense.

It is alright if the thing is such that it could only be machine-made, but at least those things that are hand made should be purchased, even if only with the thought that the man who made them can continue to feed his family by keeping his employment. A large number of people have lost their employment because a single machine does the work on which hundreds and even thousands of persons were formerly employed. Everyone living in a village does not own land and every one can not get his livelihood from land. Even a farmer owning land cannot keep himself employed throughout the year or every day of a month. A farmer or a farm worker may have to remain idle for as many as 150 days in a year. The only other work that the seventy two persons out of a hundred can do during their idle days is the work of spinning and weaving, and the remaining 28 percent also have to do this work as the cloth, like the food, is needed by everyone

alive. Even a beggar sleeping on bare earth needs clothes to cover himself. Without following the above advice, which Mahatma Gandhi had given to his countrymen, we Indians can not survive.

- According to the United Nations, by the year 2030, the world population will increase by 220 crores. Most of the coming children will be born in cities.
- The world population has grown very steeply since 1600 A.D. In the last 400 years, the world population has increased from 50 crores to 600 crores. Its rate of growth has gone upto 1.8 percent. This huge increase has been as a result of new medicines, better healthcare, improved nutrition, better clothing and security of life.
- A large number of people have migrated to cities in the last few hundred years due to the concentration of industries and handicrafts in the cities. The percentage of urban population had gone up from 14 to 45 percent during the period 1900-1993, according to an estimate. This percentage is likely to increase to 60% by the year 2025.

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Do not starve the Mother-Earth

Inhabitants of this Earth! If you starve the Mother-Earth, you will yourselves starve to death.

Restore Natural Fertility

The soil can and must be brought back to natural fertility; otherwise our food will become more and more deficient in essential nutrients. This will cause more and more ill health and disease. Man will become more and more dependent upon medical services and eventually the world will become one vast hospital or cemetery!

The earth on which we live was originally a rich store house of life sustaining elements. Its rivers and glaciers wore away rocks of the mountains and hills and deposited them as sediment in the valleys and plains. Now, after long ages its store of these life giving elements is relatively exhausted-reproduced from monthly journal 'Herald of Health'; Poona, March, 1966.

Things that the earth produces, she needs to reabsorb to maintain her regenerative power. If the things produced on earth by the hand of man or the things that are given ready-made to man are not returned to earth in their transformed state, she can not maintain her fertility. Every man of this earth has to understand that the power which made the earth at the time of creation has already done what it could to sustain life. The earth created life through a process that requires the participation of air, water and sunlight. Many kinds of germs also help the earth in this process. While creating the world, the nature had created all things simultaneously; further, she had left it to man to manage the resources bestowed on him by nature, with

wisdom, in order to sustain his life.

Soil is the most important among things that sustain human life. It is from the soil that we get things like food and clothing that sustain our life; but while doing so, we should ensure that we maintain the soil in a healthy state so that it continues to sustain our life for the times to come. We cannot afford to neglect this. If we do neglect this, we cannot escape punishment from mother-nature. The history of the world is full of the records of terrible famines, during which men died like insects.

Granted that every man in this world is not a farmer; there are many other works that men do, but the mankind should not forget that all other works are secondary to the work of food production; the production of food is of prime importance. Food and clothing are the basic needs of man. Man can neither survive nor do any work if he has nothing to eat. Every person has to manage his life in such a way that he should continue to get adequate food and clothing; one cannot remain complacent just because one has adequate stocks of food for a month or two. He has always to guard his food against rains, robbers and birds and animals. Thus, while doing other things, it is the duty of every human being of this earth that he should give thought to maintaining the food-producing capacity of the earth, because if the earth loses this capacity, his very survival will become impossible. Every person living on this earth, if he values human life, if he understands that human life is precious and invaluable and it gives us an opportunity to enjoy wonderful happiness, if he values the love and affection of his children and relatives, if he wants to enjoy a happy and comfortable life, has a responsibility to have deep understanding of the environment in which he lives and the things he should do to protect it; he should always remain alert about dangers to the environment. It is also true that every person is not endowed with virtues such as love, compassion, religiosity, truth, temperance and self-satisfaction. Incidents of robbery, thefts, cheating, violence and murders that take place everyday, do not

involve only those roaming with hungry stomachs. There are numerous persons who indulge in these vices as a profession, for thrill, or for acquiring money to indulge in lechery and extravagant living. If an individual is prepared to do these evil deeds as a profession, or for thrill and excitement or to get money to fulfill his vices, or is ready to kidnap or kill the lovely child of a woman, what will he not be prepared to do if he is dying of hunger?

World population	1900 – 160 crore 1990 – 500 crore 2000 – 650 crore

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Why should we use soap-nuts and clay?

Babu Purshotam Das Tandan was among the greatest leaders of the freedom movement. He had also held the most important post in the Congress, i.e. president. He had also been a minister of the Maharaja of Nabha. He was M.A. and a qualified lawyer, and had also been the general secretary of the Punjab National Bank. His countrymen called him Raj Rishi (national sage). He was a great soul and a truthful man. He always wore hand-weaved cotton clothes and kept a long beard. He told me that he never took sugar; he ate jaggery; did not use soap but soap nuts while taking bath. He said that the nature had created soap-nuts for the purpose of washing woolen clothes, the beard and head hair. For cleaning the body the soap-nuts, and not the soap, were the best. According to him even the most expensive soap harmed the human skin.

Like Raj Rishi Babu Purshotam Das Tandon, Pandit Madan Mohan Malavia had also been the Congress President. He was never called by his proper name, but by a more honourable name, Maha Manu. He was an orthodox Hindu. The Hindus gave him great respect and honours. He had established the Banaras Hindu University with donation money. Even Kings bowed their heads when he went to them to ask for donations. The university had been established with the purpose of promoting the Sanskrit language and the Hindu religion. Whoever met Pandit Madan Mohan Malavia, would join his hands before him in respect. He was a Tapasvi Brahmin and devoted his life to the education of poor students.

The toilet soap used for bathing is usually packed in card-board boxes, each box containing three soap cakes.

Each soap cake is wrapped in paper. But the more expensive varieties of soap that usually cost 7-9 rupees a piece are wrapped in two layers of expensive paper. Each piece of soap is packed in a separate card-board box, which is made of expensive thin cardboard, printed with colourful English words. Cost of printing is naturally included in the price of the soap. The worrisome thing about this soap is not only that it is expensive and beyond the reach of ordinary people, but the fact that to sell it, a great deal of paper is wasted. I myself use only water for bathing and nothing else. I rub my body to get rid of the dirt and then wipe it with a clean cotton cloth. This is sufficient to clean my body. Eighty out of a hundred of us Indians live in villages. We usually use only water for bathing; we don't use any soap etc. The people of India have been doing so for centuries. The practice of using soap is a new thing in India, which we caught from the British. Remember, that the paper is made out of trees and bamboos.

So many trees have been cut in India that the land is almost bare and turning into desert. If this reckless cutting of trees is not stopped soon and every Indian does not use everything within his power, including body, mind and wealth to save them, then in the next 25 years the whole land of India will become a vast desert and Indians will die like insects. Due to the denudation of forests, the valuable top soil is being washed away into the sea. The droughts that took place once every four years are now taking place once in every two years. When the land becomes sterile and people start dying of hunger, they will read these advertisements and wonder why they used these card-board boxes. The effluents mixed with water, released by cardboard factories, is poisoning the water in our rivers and canals. Even the Ganga and Yamuna have not been spared. Sixty lakh people of Afrika have died of hunger. One crore people there have got uprooted from their homes and are wandering in search of food and water. This is the punishment waiting for those who cut down trees recklessly. To save yourselves from such calamities,

decrease the use of paper.

- Man continues to fight nature in the belief that one day he will bring it completely under his control; but history tells that civilsations of the Nile and the Euphrates River Valley, the Syrian and the Greek civilsations, and the Indus Valley Civilsation, all perished because they did not follow the rules of nature.
- Unless we give up trying to exploit nature and begin to conserve its treasures, the end of mankind is certain.
- Only trees can halt such violent and uncontrollable forces of nature as floods, storms and earth-quakes etc.
- The environmental pollution is likely to kill about 180 lakh people during the period 2001-2020.

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Do Not Use Aluminium Utensils

It is a poisonous metal The use of aluminium gives rise to many diseases. There was an article in English weekly of Delhi, the Origaniser, of 6 April 1986, by C.R. Verma, decrying the use of aluminium utensils. Verma is secretary of the Nature Cure Foundation in Ernakulum city of the Kerala state. This institution is concerned with healing people through natural cures. Vermaji writes that he teaches people to live their lives according to the laws of nature so that they can escape from diseases caused due to violation of these laws. He writes that he has been doing this work for the last 26 years.

He says that people with the following acute diseases who came to him had become sick due to the use of aluminium vessels: stomach ulcers, insomnia and lack of sleep, kidney disease, heart disease and cancer. He observed that the people afflicted with insomnia were soon cured when they gave up the use of aluminium vessels. Patients who had tumours or cancer had been made worse by the use of aluminium vessels. Vermaji writes that the food is best cooked in earthen vessels. The aluminium vessels are harmfull because this metal produces poisonous chemicals by contact with the atmospheric Oxygen. When these poisonous substances mix with our food while cooking, it harms our body.

He says that if this poison goes to our blood, it can cause even death. A patient in Hydrabad in 1985 who had kidney disease and used to have his blood cleansed by dialysis machine, happened to use aluminium vessels and died as the result of this. Verma Sahib writes that the government of a rich country constituted a committee of

doctors to investigate effects on the health of people who used aluminum vessels. The committee took six years to investigate and prepare its report. The report confirmed that aluminum vessels indeed harmed the health of their users. The manufacturers of aluminium vessels did not like this report and were successful in pressurising the government to suppress it.

There was a news article in the Statesman newspaper dated 27 April 1986 concerning the tribal people living in Orissa. They live in a region covered by forests. A mining company called Balco obtained permission from the government to mine aluminium from that area. The manner in which the company started clearing forests and extracting this metal from the mines, began ruining the lives of these tribals. The mining of this metal had to be stopped when the tribal women held a Satyagraha.

- The cars running in America emitted a total of 11,390 lakh tons of CO_2 gas into the atmosphere in 2002. This amount is in excess of the total quantity of CO_2 that the Japanese have released into the atmosphere so far.
- 90 kms of ice from the glaciers melts every year. This quantity is 4 times the yearly consumption of ice in America.

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Economic Crisis

To mitigate economic crisis, it is essential to increase food production. But the food cannot come from the heavens, nor can the government increase food production without your cooperation.

You should pick up dung, fruit skins, pieces of bone and cloth when you see them lying on road and throw them on piles of garbage meant to be used as manure in the fields. If you are too ashamed to do it, at least put these things on the edge of the road so that things like the animal dung are not run over by vehicle tyres and turn into dust. If you see stones, horse-shoes, nails, bricks or glass on the road, you should pick them up. If these things get mixed up with dung, it cannot be used as manure by farmers because if mixed in the field soil, they would hinder the farmers' work; glass pieces, nails and horse-shoes can injure the feet of farm workers and bullocks when they are working the fields. These things also become obstacles when the field is dug up to clear weeds.

Do not waste water. Let the used water go to drains; while urinating let the urine go to the drains, so that this water can be pumped into fields and help in the growth of plants – the urine is nourishing for the plants. There is no other way of overcoming the food crisis. If you neglect these things, and do nothing to help in overcoming the food crisis, no amount of agitation against the government on your part can make up for this loss due to your negligence. Economic policies of the government may be flawed, but if you believe that your duty is only to stage protests against the government, while doing nothing to help overcome difficulties, you are sadly mistaken. Every house

hold in Japan preserves faeces and urine in wooden containers. Every morning trucks of the municipal committees come to collect these things from their doors and take them to the fields. The countries which are aware that they are likely to face food shortages if they do not take positive action, do not hesitate to do these things.

- In the last 10 years, 1 core 40 lakh inhabitants of Southern Africa have died of hunger.
- Germany has decided to generate one-fourth of its total domestic consumption of electricity through wind power. This target willbe completed by 2025.
- There are 160 crore people in the world who stilldo not have the facility ofelectricity. In the coming years, there willstillbe 140 crore people who do not enjoy electricity.

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Tree and Air

The harm that is done to a smoker's health if he smokes forty cigarettes a day is the same as to a person who breathes dirty air in our cities. Today's man has become an enemy of trees; he is cutting them down everywhere to fulfill his own selfish needs. The reckless cutting of trees is producing many catastrophes such as floods and droughts. Scientists have found that a single tree has the capacity to neutralise toxic effect produced by the burning of 130 litres of petrol If there are no trees, the pollution caused by the large scale burning of fossil fuels would do great harm to our health. The high blood-pressure among people is on the rampage and the toxic sulphur dioxide produced by factories is polluting the air we breathe. Trees have the capacity to absorb this gas to a certain extent, but if its amount goes beyond that limit, the trees themselves are affected adversely and lose their leaves.

Engines and factories run by man are increasing the air temperature. During the last 5-7 years, some states of India have been hit by 3-4 years of drought. Many people died for lack of water, many cattle died and many were given over to the butcher. Tankers were used to supply water to the drought affected people; at times oil-tankers were used to supply water, making it unfit for drinking. The floods which came in 1988 were alarming. The Bhakhra Dam faced the danger of bursting open. To relieve pressure on the dam, so much water had to be released that it washed away numerous houses and drowned a large number of cattle. Had the Bhakhra Dam really burst open, there would have been 52 feet of water in Amritsar city;

even Delhi would have had 8 feet of water. The forest cover over hills should be 60 percent, but at present it is much below this percentage. Natural calamities like floods have arisen because of thoughtless cutting down of trees by man. If people continue to blindly cut the trees, the floods which are yet to come will be much more severe.

The scriptures say that to plant trees is a virtuous act. Mahatma Budh taught that a person should plant at least one tree in five years. If people do not follow this teaching, the natural calamities will be more frequent and more severe. All unused land should have trees planted over it. The fields, the canal banks, the government land and foot-paths should be lined with trees. The roads should have shady trees at their sides. It is only the trees that save us from catastrophes like floods and droughts; they neutralise toxic elements in the air.

The following could be the causes of climate change in the world

1. Change in the amount of radiation from the sun.
2. The dust released into atmosphere by volcanoes, which blocks radiation from the sun.
3. Shift in the axis of rotation of the sun.
4. Change in the earth's orbit around the sun.
5. Changes in the minimum and maximum distances of earth from the sun while orbiting around it.
6. The process of mountain formation, that changes the wind direction.
7. Drifting of the tectonic plates of the earth.
8. Change in the land use, such as cutting down of forests, excessive industrialization of cities.

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Growth in human population and scarcity of food

There was never a time in this world when men lived lives free from worries, but conditions in the modern world have already become very serious and are worsening every day. The world has a lot to worry about, and so has our own country.

A thoughtful person who knows the seriousness of conditions in the country and the wider world cannot help worrying about it. Let alone demand a scooter or motor-car from in-laws at the time of marriage, men will become unwilling to even get married. Those who own scooters as a luxury or to satisfy their vanity are contributing to the country's ruin by forcing it to import oil by spending rupees 12000 lakhs every year. The population is increasing by leaps and bonds, while the area available for food production is on the decline. Food has never fallen from the sky as rain does. While giving birth to man, the nature never made any damn fool promise to him that she will fulfill all his needs of food and clothes throughout his life, irrespective of what he does to her. Were it so, there would not have been famines, which have occurred frequently and killed large masses of men, cattle and other animals.

It is possible to ensure that there are no famines in future. For this to happen every man has to learn about causes due to which they take place and the means which could be adopted to prevent them. Those who live without any worry for the future should not hope that they will continue to live happy lives for ever. Whether we will live happy or unhappy lives in future will be decided by how

we spend our time now. Those who are living ignorant lives, not knowing how the food and clothes they get are produced, will live to regret their ignorance. They will not be able to escape the fury of famines. To be spared from famines, we have to know about the causes due to which they take place and try to remove them. Those who are leading idle lives, or are living by cheating others, are contributing to the creation of these famines.

The process of silting up of dams is constantly taking place and in about 125 years, they will become totally unusable. The canals which come out of them will also fill up with mud. From where does all this mud come? If we know that this mud comes from erosion of hills slopes which feed the rivers, then we should also know the factors which contribute to this land erosion and what could be done to stop it.

The food producing capacity of our country would be able to support a population of 35 crore only, even after 125 years from now. Keeping this in mind, the only way in which we can prevent this mass murder of people due to hunger during this period of 125 years, is to gradually reduce our population to a more sustainable level, before our dams fill up with mud, and the stocks of coal and oil get exhausted.

One way of controlling land erosion is to plant hill slopes and valleys with so many trees that they should cover 60 percent of the land. We should also take steps to reduce the use of coal, diesel, petrol and kerosene oil This could only happen if we buy hand-made goods and stop buying those which are produced in factories that run on coal or oil

We have to remain alert about the problems regarding food production from now itself. If it does not rain sufficiently for two years, we would face a severe drought, in addition to the ones that take place once in five years. Their frequency can even increase and they could occur every two years. The factories that run on electricity should produce only those things which cannot be made by

hand, so that this electricity could instead be used to operate tubewells. More trees are required to be planted so that the animal dung which can be used as fertiliser, is not wasted as fuel. All waste organic matter should be used as natural fertiliser. These materials should not be used for land-filling.

- World population doubled during the period 1950-1990 from 250 Crore to 500 crore. Increase in the demand of wood accelerated felling of trees in the tropical rain forests.
- The rate of population growth needs to be brought down. The developed countries should transfer information and technology to the developing countries to help them in their economic development.

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Nineteen Thousand Villages Hit by Famine-No Food and Drinking Water

Experience is not what happens to man but what he does at what happens to him.

There was adequate rainfall in all states of India during 1988. Before these rains came, many states had had dry spells for the last 3-4 years. (A man of knowledge says that experience is not what happens to man but what he does at what happens to him. It is what the experience teaches him and what he does to escape a similar experience in future). What the experience of those three to four years of famine did to people is given below.

I wish that the ample rains of 1988 should not make the people of India forget the preceeding droughts. So this advertisement will continue to be published so that the people do not become complacent; so that they continue to take remedial action. (God was kind to Punjab to spare her from droughts. But they should not come to think that the drought will never hit them; much needs to be done to prevent droughts, such as planting trees and minimizing the use of wood). If people do not learn what to do, then not only droughts but other calamities will also overtake them, such as acid rain, shortage of food and water, floods and dust storms, heating of the earth, the land becoming desert, rise in sea level and people drowning in rising sea levels.

There was a terrible drought in Maharashtra due to shortfall in rain. Half of the population in 19000 villages in the state had scarcity of drinking water. The fields became parched. People were selling their cattle to

butcheries. With the arrival of summer, the people from villages began moving to the cities. Due to lack of rainfall both Rabi and Kharif crops failed.

Six members of a farmer's family in a Vidarbh village committed suicide. Crops in other parts of Maharashtra were leveled by a storm. The people were forced to sell their cattle for a few rupees. The collector had arrangements made to buy fodder worth 21 lakh rupees to save the cattle from butcheries. The Tamilnadu state had scarcity of water for the last two years. Gujrat state too had shortage of water. Twenty one countries of Africa have been facing droughts for many years, but the last two years have been the worst. One crore men, women and children had to leave their homes and wander in search of food and water.

The people of Punjab should thank the Almighty that they had no scarcity of food and water. We should remain vigilant to save ourselves from a similar fate and start doing those things that prevent droughts. The advice that the World War Institute in Washington, that studies the worldwide conditions concerning the food and water, has given to Africans is that every inhabitant of that continent should start planting trees.

Every inhabitant of Punjab should fear the wrath of God and use their best efforts to plant trees. They have to make big sacrifices. Religious books such as the Gita and the Puranas consider planting of trees one of the most virtuous acts. The rich should have cows in their homes instead of cars. They should rear calves by giving them half the yield of their mother's milk and gift them to the poor when they grow up.

Many countries which have desert lands now, did not have them always. These lands were once fertile but the inhabitants of those lands kept felling trees recklessly, which turned these fertile lands into deserts. Two famous cities of the Indus Valley Civilization were ruined because the people had thoughtlessly cut trees and denuded the land; then the duststorms covered it and made it a desert.

You should plant trees wherever you find space-for them : empty spaces in villages, cemeteries, schools and colleges, Panchayat houses and roadsides; put protective fences around them and water them everyday; Minimize the use of wood. Cook only one dal and one vegetable dish per day. The stupidity of eating meals on chairs and tables has crossed all limits. Use iron cots instead of wooden double-beds; if you need a chair let it be of iron; do not use wood needlessly.

- Forests trap rain water and release it gradually into the rivers; this prevents floods. The disappearance of forests can put great strain on the water cycle.
- Ice over the mountains of the Larsen Bay in Antarctica, covering 3250 square kilometers, has already melted as a result of rising temperatures.

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Catastrophes

The world has been in existence since the time began. The measures of time like millons and billons fall far short while measuring the age of the universe. But the machinery which runs on coal, diesel and petrol is barely 300 years old. The coming of machinery changed the way people had been living from the times immemorial These machines took everything to the edge of destruction: these include the air, soil, oceans, rivers, jungles, animals and birds, which had been living in their natural habitat for lakhs of years. At the age of twelve, I began to study at a high school in the town of Khanna, which was about 7½ miles from my village. Every Saturday, I used to walk from Khanna to my village to spend weekend and then go back to the town on Sunday evening. I never considered walking this distance of seven and half miles a burden; on the contrary I took it as a sport and an entertainment; it never made me tired; I used to look forward to it.

I had begun going to school when I was in my seventh year of age; I went to the primary school at Rahon, a village near my own. I studied here till the age of twelve. Rahon was at a distance of one and half kilometers from my own village. My fellow students and I thought it nothing to walk this distance everyday. While returning home from school in the evening, we would race home laughing and playing. On the way we would pluck fruit from jujube trees and eat it, as well as carry some of it home. The boys also ate chibbars (cucumis callissimus) from the creeper plants when they were in season, as well tender stems of tarameera plants (a kind of mustard plant).

Had there been buses, as today, the boys would never

have had the pleasure of eating jujube berries or the tarameera stems. The jujube berries have more digestive power than apple. In 1923, at the age of 19, I had occasion to go to the town of Nabha. I started late in the afternoon at about 4 p.m. After covering a distance of 6 kms., I had to spend the night in the Gurdwara of village Kaulgarh. The Granthi Singh (priest) was an enlightened and pious Gursikh (Guru's disciple). I was so impressed with his bearing that I decided to become a Sikh. He offered me food with great humility and love. Those days, I was a Hindu youth and my name then was Ramji Das. The next day I resumed my journey on foot. Nabha must be at least 25 kms. from my village. I had to go to Nabha twice within a span of few days. On both occasions, I had covered the two-way trip on foot.

Only with the advent of railways, people began thinking about using mechanical means to travel distances of 15-20 kilometers. Our village was in Samrala Tehsil The people of our village who had to go to Samrala, first walked a distance of seven and half kilometers to Khanna. The journey from Khanna to Samrala was by tonga. Samrala was about 17 kms. from Khanna. There was an enlightened and pious man called Sant Brahm Das in our village. He was a Ravidasia Sant. He was well-versed in Gurbani. He was a singer as well an interpreter of Gurbani. One of his two sons played the Jori (a musical instrument), while the other played the harmonium. He was probably 75 when he died. He had always travelled to and from Samrala on foot. When travelling by tonga, only a part of the journey had to be covered by walking. But to go to Samrala on foot, there was a short cut. He could well afford the tonga fare, but he preferred to walk, as in this way he got the opportunity to talk to people enroute and to acquaint them with the teachings of Shri Guru Granth Sahib. He considered walking an exercise for his legs and not a hardship. He died walking on the railway track going to Samrala; otherwise he might have lived to be a hundred plus. His son, the Ravidasia Karta Ram lived to the age of

a hundred. Till the day of his death, he walked many kilometers everyday while going to nearby villages for alms in the name of the Guru.

Those singers who desire to sing the Asa Di Vaar contained in Shri Guru Granth Sahib aught to keep in mind the travels of Guru Nanak for twenty years on foot.

India became independent on 15 August 1947. Between the period 1924-1947, I read a number of books and daily newspapers and acquired knowledge about problems facing our country. Swami Sat Dev of the Almora city of U.P. used to give discourses regarding economic independence of families. The following words of his went deep into my heart: you should take a note book and pencil in your hand and travel through the villages and see the condition of the poor in the villages of the country; at the same time, give them the call of the freedom movement.

The second time when I came back from Nabha, it was nearly noon. It was during the rainy season and there was a light drizzle. I covered the distance cantering like a horse and reached my village by 7 p.m. I was to spend a few days at home after the matriculation examination. Those days I had no money of my own. Had there been buses then, I would not have thought of travelling on foot and possibly would have been successful in borrowing money for the bus fare. If then I had to travel on foot to Nabha for want of the bus fare, I would have felt dejected and unhappy, because then I would have considered it a great hardship to walk 25 kms. Due to the nonexistence of buses during that period, the 25 kms. fast walk that I then completed in seven hours, gave me a chance to test my physical strength and to delight in my physical fitness.

Buses have deprived the youth to perform such wonderful feats of physical fitness. Many people consider it a hardship and below their dignity to walk. Some people are just too ease-loving and lazy to use their feet. People have stopped thinking what is right and what is wrong; they are caught in a vicious cycle to accumulate money through fair or foul means and then to waste it on non-

essential things. If they come to understand that their short-sighted thinking is taking the country towards ruin, perhaps they would stop being so mulish.

The hill of Naina Devi must be at least 35 kms. from my village. I, Ramji Das, a Hindu youth of 18 years, started on foot to visit Naina Devi. The journey beyond Shri Anandpur Sahib is uphill till one reaches the shrine 15 kms. away. I covered that upslope distance jogging. I was perhaps showing off my physical strength to my companions on this journey by jogging uphill But I was rightly proud of my physical fitness.

If buses had been in fashion at that time, I would never have undertaken this journey. I was a poor student those days. I had no money for bus fare; I would have considered this long journey too difficult to cover walking; and if I had money for bus fare, I would have gone by bus, but would not have had the pleasure of showing off my physical strength to my fellow travellers. I thank God there were then no buses and I had the pleasure of walking all the way to the Naina Devi. If I had later gone to Naina Devi by bus, when it had become fashionable to travel by bus, I might have been among those unfortunate 50-60 passengers who got drowned when the bus carrying them back from Naina Devi fell into the Sirhind Canal If those dead passengers come back to life, they would certainly say that they wish they had gone to Naina Devi on foot like Bhagat Puran Singh so that they could have escaped death by drowning.

I was to return to Lahore from Amritsar in 1931. Another youth was accompanying me. I was then 27 years old. I had money in my pocket to pay for the train fare; but my legs said that I should walk to reach Lahore city; they said that I should not insult them by travelling by train; they said they wanted to walk and show that the village people were strong and healthy; that they did not belong to an old man; that they belonged to a young man; that they were not lame.

One should not just walk when young; one should jump and run. Physical exercise is a must to maintain

health. Otherwise one would catch artharitis, heart disease or diabetes. A person leading sedentary life can only remain healthy if he walks a distance of at least eight and a half miles, or thirteen and a half kilometers every day.

- Every year 16 lakh children die due to consumption of contaminated water and due to dirty surroundings. Majority of these children are under 5 years of age.
- One crore persons do not have clean drinking water.
- The infectious diseases kill double the number of people who die of cancer. These diseases are preventable.

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Cover the Land of Punjab with trees during the month of Sawan (Mid-July to Mid-August)

Air, water and soil are the gifts of nature which sustain life. If the air becomes toxic, the water in canals, rivers and wells becomes contaminated or reduces in volume or disappears, and the land turns into desert, then no life can exist on this earth. Large land areas in many countries have already become desert because the people living there denuded the land by cutting down trees. The cities of Mohinjodaro and Harrappa were once models of good city planning. They got covered with sand due to stormy winds because people had cut down trees in such numbers that the land became barren. The earth can be prevented from turning into deserts if the plains have at least 21 percent of their area covered with trees and the hilly areas as much as 60 percent of their surface covered with forests. A guilty man may escape punishment from the hand of man but he cannot escape punishment from the hand of God. The industrial age that brought trucks and railway trains is less than 250 years old.

In the modern age, if some area is hit by famine due to drought, trucks and trains may be able to supply food and water to that area, but it would not be sufficient to overcome the effects of the drought. Before the advent of trucks and trains the famines that resulted from droughts, killed people en masse. One such famine that took place in India was called the Khopri Kaal (the skull famine). It meant that so many people died in the famine, that skulls of the dead lay scattered everywhere. There was another famine during which men offered to sell themselves for a scrap of food; only there were no buyers; no one had a scrap

of food to spare. That is the reason the sages of India wrote in religious books that the grains of corn are more valuable than the diamonds and pearls; they gave prime importance to the planting of trees.

In the times gone by, the land in many countries has been turning into desert as the people did not realize the above given truth about the trees. Now that scientists have confirmed this truth, men in allnations of the earth should devote their time to the planting of trees. Now they should do what scientists tell them and should devote their bodies, hearts and money to the cause of planting and saving trees so that the land does not turn into desert. When people die during famines, often the ornaments of silver and gold are found under their pillows. Of what use can they be when they have died of hunger? Though when rivers caused flooding in 1988, hundreds of crores worth of property was destroyed and hundreds of people and animals died, it was stilldisaster on a smallscale; but yet the proud owners of motorcars are busy satisfying their petty vanities and by their ignorance, are inviting a bigger disaster.

Mahatma Budh has been a great personality in our history and Buddhist religion founded by him is spread over many countries. He had urged his followers that as they advance in life, each individualshould plant at least one tree every five years. Thus, if a person lives a hundred years, he would have planted at least 18 trees.

The Hindu religion has six Shastras and eighteen Puranas. It is written in the Matsya Purana that a person who installs a well, lives in heaven for the number of years, which are equal to the drops of water in a well. A person who has ten ponds built, his deed is equal to the drops of water in a lake. One who builds ten such lakes, his deed merits the birth of a good and virtuous son, and one who is blessed with ten such sons, his virtue equals the planting of a tree.

At the time of my birth in 1904, my father was a rich man. He had a pond dug in our village to provide drinking

water for people of the village and my mother had two trivenies (trinities) planted-each triveni consists of three plants (a peepal, a banyan and a neem plant). Three of those peepal trees still stand at the edge of that pond; they are about 76 years old now.

When the 9th Guru of the Sikhs, Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib Ji, went to the province of Assam on a four-year tour, he had numerous trees planted enroute in the regions where there was a lack of them. People have given up walking; they don't like to ride bicycles or travel in tongas; they don't plough their fields with bullocks; they have given up conveying goods on donkeys and bullock-carts. To satisfy their petty vanities they are inviting such catastrophes which in the coming fifty years will make their lives miserable.

The land of India will become so hot that people will cry in pain; eyes will smart; the crop yields will be reduced to a fifth. The biggest cause of this warming will be the coal burnt in factories, and the petrol burnt in the engines of buses, trucks, motorcars, motorcycles and scooters. The burning of coal, wood, dung or petrol all produce heat and poisonous gases. The trees absorb and use these poisonous gases for their own growth and in turn produce the life-giving oxygen gas. A peepal or banyan tree produces enough oxygen to sustain the lives of two hundred human beings. The shade underneath a banyan tree remains cool because the leaves of this tree absorb heat coming from the sun. People should not give up walking; they should use bicycles; they should not ride motorcars. Where a bullock-cart can reach, people should not go on bus or motorcar.

Half the world population lives near sea coasts. The seas near the poles have large mountains of ice. The heat which is being produced is accumulating in the atmosphere. This heat in a few years will reach such intensity that the ice mountains will melt completely. The sea level will rise and flood the land adjoining it. These floods will drown half the human population, animals and other life forms. The craze for motorcars, motorcycles, buses, trucks

and three wheelers and the heat produced by them, will melt the Ice Mountains and cause destruction of half the world.

Those who are keen to show off their social status and to live lives of luxury by owning motorcars and motorcycles, including the wealthy, the ministers and other officers, should take a lesson from the Chinese. In that country only the motorcars and motorcycles belonging to the government are permitted on the roads. However rich or influential one may be, he is not permitted to use a motorcycle. Every one has to use the bicycle. Every country has four deadly enemies: poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and disease.

The crores of people now unemployed could be employed for planting trees over barren lands. Where as this will save the land in the country from turning into desert, it will also provide employment to a large number of now unemployed youth, which will not only save them from hunger, but also from turning into thieves and robbers. For this to happen, the rich should stop riding motorcars, buying costly clothes and ornaments; they should use their bank balances for planting trees over barren land.

The water is drying up due to absence of trees. The burning of fossil fuels like petrol and coal is causing acid rains. The lands, barren of trees, will invite dust storms and make the people's lives miserable. The absence of trees has already turned the land in many countries into deserts.

Do not forget to plant trees in the month of Sawan.

Wait for the month of Sawan to plant trees. In India the lack of trees has reached a critical level, which is likely to give rise to many dangers; the dangers are becoming more imminent due to the still continuing decimation of forests. The greatest danger is that of the land erosion and floods that will follow. If you have so far not planted any tree in this season of rains, plant one now.

By denuding the land of forests, a number of countries have had their fertile land turned into deserts. To escape

such calamity, positive action is essential The planting of trees is the most important single action that willsave the land from this danger.

I want to tell through this article that there are two times in a year when trees can be planted. Every man in India should eagerly await them, and when these times arrive' trees should be planted in such places as the schools, Panchayat houses, village roads and public lands.

In India, the desert area expands by one mile per year. One percent of the top-soil (upper eight inches), every year, is washed away due to flood waters and stormy winds. It is this top-soil which produces food crops. Once this soil is washed away, the soil which is left is sandy and sterile; it cannot produce crops. The greatest danger to the country is from reckless cutting of trees. If you want to escape this danger, gird up yourselves to plant trees.

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Save yourselves from motorcars- the deadly monsters

Professors of the Yale University in America have studied the dangers posed to mankind by industrial machinery of the modern age and have reached the conclusion that the most dangerous invention of man is not the nuclear bomb but the motorcar, and that man has become a slave of this, his own creation. The article that said it was published in a Delhi newspaper, 'Hindustan Times' dated 19 December 1968, with the title: Man's deadliest invention-motorcar.

Three of these professors said in a radio interview that the craze with which people of this world are riding motorcars, and the resultant increase in their numbers, will one day destroy the face of this earth.

Professor Arthen Gelson, a biologist, has written that a running motorcar engine has hydrocarbon among its exhaust gases, which warms the earth. He says that if the increase in the number of motorcars continues at the present rate and they continue to emit this hydrocarbon, then in the next one hundred years the mountains of ice will melt completely and the water released by them will raise the sea level to such an extent that it will drown people living along sea shores. This will cause disruption in many natural processes taking place on earth and in the sky. Heavy rains will wash away the top soil. The deserts will cover so much land that there will hardly be any left to support human life.

The professor wrote that he had given up his job in a California city because the poisonous gases emitted by

motorcars caused such heavy clouds over that city that his family began dying a slow death. The city of Los Angeles lies in a low-lying area, so the clouds of mixed dust and smoke at times cover the city for many days at a stretch. These are known as the smog. During the smog, the old and weak men and women who have breathing problems, suffer terribly. Larger the clouds of this smog, more the number of people who die. Plagued by these smog clouds, many rich and medium class familes are leaving the big cities in America and settling in far off villages.

The professor writes that the use of motorcar is harming American citizens economically as the motorcar having become a status symbol, every family wants to own one and has to spend about one-fourth of its total income on the motorcar. He writes that it is more economical to travel by bus and rail and thus save themselves from toxic gases produced by motorcars, but their high ambitions and petty vanities do not allow them to live simple lives. He says he one day stood at a particular place to see whether the owners of these motorcars, which cause so many dangers to the human existence, have any awareness of their actions; but he found there was hardly any of them who showed any consideration for his fellow human beings or for the environment. Their behaviour appeared to be totally irresponsible to him. They were only concerned about satisfying their false pride. He found that eighty percent of the motorcars were huge in size, disregarding the desirabilty of using small cars to convey only one individual No one seemed concerned about these things. Professor Seers is a specialist in conservation. He has speculated that it seems the motor vehicle users are bent upon exhausting the reserves of fuels like petrol lying in the earth's bosom.

America is using three-fourths of all mineral resources coming out of the earth, while its population constitutes only about 6% of the total population of the earth, and still its consumption is on the rise. The professor fears that engineers who are blindly building

new roads and doing the lengthening and widening of the existing ones, do not know the geology or about the minerals hiding under the surface of the earth; they do not know what damage these roads which are built for the convenience of man, are causing to the earth's ecology and environment, and endangering the very existence of the human race. The main reason for building the roads are motor vehicles like trucks, buses and motorcars; these make the air poisonous by producing toxic gases. The motorcars, scooters and motorcycles are used merely for ease and to show off false pride

Most of the places where we have to go in every day life can be reached on foot. Doctors say that a person leading sedentary life should walk at least eight and a half miles every day, or he should do some physical work so that he spends an energy equivalent of eight and a half miles walk. An article in the American magazine, the Scientific American, said that the main reason for diabetes disease is that a person does not spend the same amount of energy in physical work that he gets from the intake of food. I read another article in 1928, published in Mahatma Gandhi's newspaper 'Young India', titled : 'work cure and starvation cure' which means that a number of diseases get cured when we remain hungry. The article gave an illustration: During the World War I a number of rich German women undertook care and treatment of wounded soldiers. For this work they had to undergo great physical exertion and sometimes even to remain hungry. But they found that as a result of this hunger and hard work, a number of their chronic diseases got cured.

An association called the Club of Rome published a book called 'The Limit of Growth' in 1972. The book explained that the natural resources which come out from earth were limited and the rate at which they are being consumed will soon exhaust them in few years; at this rate the end of life on this earth will come in another 100 years. But the Club has since revised its estimate, and in a report published in 1992, it says that the rate at which the human

population has been increasing and the rate at which the natural resources are being consumed, they will last only another 30 years. In 30-35 years, the natural resources would all have been exhausted and the world would come to an end. All life would have perished.

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