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Love Revolution

By Satish Kumar

Our acts for the Earth are Acts of Love.

The UK parliament has declared “climate emergency” in the country. From the 90 year old iconic BBC presenter David Attenborough to 16 year old Swedish activist Greta Thunberg are actively reminding the world that the predicament of our precious planet Earth needs urgent attention. 1500 peaceful protesters of Extinction Rebellion have been arrested because they were demanding immediate action by the government to “tell the truth” and address the pressing problem of climate crisis.

Behind these high profile events millions of ordinary citizens, young and old, women and men, believers and atheists, blacks and whites, poor and rich are getting engaged in transforming their own way of life and finding practical solutions and enacting policy changes.

In addition to resistance and saying NO to the systems which cause climate crisis people in their millions are also saying YES to a constructive agenda at the grassroots level. They are adopting a low carbon lifestyle. They are giving up meat and energy intensive methods of farming and food processing. They are subscribing to the companies producing renewable energy, putting solar panels on their roofs and insulating their homes to reduce carbon emissions. They are refusing to shop with a plastic bag or drink water from plastic bottles and tea from throw away cups. They are engaged in these small or large radical activities and participating in the transformative actions in the belief that caring for the climate and looking after our precious planet is everybody’s responsibility.

I whole heartedly endorse and support the actions of School Strikers and Eco Warriors, whoever they are and wherever they are. But I urge Greta Thunberg and the young and old campaigners of Fridays for the Future and Extinction Rebellion that, “please use the power of love to build the movement for climate care and do not be swept away by the force of fear. Let our activism be the acts of love. The power of love endures. Power of love persuades and transforms, whereas force of fear frightens”.

The movements to end slavery, apartheid and imperialism were led by the leaders of love. The women who led the suffragette movement were inspired by love. We will walk in their footsteps and we can and will protect the planet from climate catastrophe with our deep love for the planet Earth.

Ours is a Love Revolution. Love is logical and magical simultaneously. The Earth is an embodiment of love. Earth is love and love is as good a word as Earth. The Earth is our teacher and we learn the art of love from the Earth. Earth loves us and in return we love the Earth.

We act because we love the forests and flowers. We love rivers and oceans. We love magnificent mountains and life sustaining soil. We love beautiful birds and wonderful animals. We love people and future generations. Therefore, we will say NO to the policies and practices which harm the Earth and cause global heating, resulting in the arctic ice to melt and the sea levels to rise. We will boycott the businesses and products which harm the earth. We will go to prison for the sake of the Earth and we will do so peacefully and happily as brides and grooms go to the wedding chamber. We have no fear whatsoever.

And we will also say YES to living simply and sustainably. We will say yes to planting trillions of trees and yes to regenerative agriculture. We will eat healthy organic and nutritious food. We will support small farmers and growers around the globe. We ourselves will live as artisans and artists. We will support craftsmen and women of the world. We will resist the evil to make it dissolve and we will assist the good to flourish.

We will never allow despair to diminish our optimism. The activists have to be optimists. Pessimism can lead to journalism but never to activism. With enduring hope and lifelong commitment we undertake the journey of transformation. Yes, activism is a journey and not a destination, it is a long-term process and not a short-term product. We say, “Commit Yourself to the Earth and Live as an artist and an activist”.

We are all in it together. We have no enemies. The economy of waste and pollution, extraction and exploitation, greed and ego have to be brought to an end with the participation of everyone. Politicians and poets, industrialists and artists, creators and

consumers, all of us must join hands and walk together to overcome the perils of pollution and avert the crisis of climate catastrophe.

As we act to bring about outer transformation we also act for inner transformation. If our minds are polluted by greed, fear and craving then that will give birth to discontentment, consumerism and materialism and will result in the pollution of the planet earth. Outer landscape and the inner landscape are two aspects of one reality. Nature out there is not separate from our inner nature.

The old story of separation has to give way to the new story of unity between the inner and the outer and between nature and humans. Meditation and action, intuition and reason, mind and matter, silence and speech, inner and outer, left and right complement each other. Cultivating compassion within and conservation without is the way to embrace the new holistic paradigm.

We need to heal the wounds caused by the old story of separation and dualism, prejudices of us and them, divisions of class, casts, race, religion, identities and nationalities. We need to apply the balm of unconditional and unlimited love to cure the conflicts among people and between people and the planet Earth.

We must transcend divisions and celebrate diversity while embracing the unity of life. We must remember that unity is not uniformity. Unity manifests in biodiversity, cultural diversity, truth diversity, diversity of thoughts and opinions. Evolution favours diversity. From the time of the Big Bang the evolution has worked hard over billions of years to create diversity in every direction. We must cherish diversity of languages, religions and identities while united in our total commitment to do no harm to our precious planet Earth; do no harm to people, to animals, to forests or to oceans.

We uphold the ideal of human rights and equally we uphold the rights of nature; the rights of all living beings. The Earth is not a dead rock, she is Gaia, a living organism. As William Blake said, "Nature is imagination itself". And in the words of Shakespeare "tongues in trees" - yes, trees speak, not in English but they speak in 'Treenglish'. And he said, "Books in running brooks" - yes, we have to learn to read the book of rivers and book of nature. And further he said, "Sermons in stones" - yes, we need not go to the

temples, or to the churches, we can hear the teachings of peace, patience and resilience from the living stones.

Thus, we do not measure the value of nature in terms of her usefulness to humans, rather we recognise the intrinsic value of nature and of the entire Earth. Nature is not simply a resource for the economy, nature is the source of life itself.

Therefore, we must learn to live in harmony with nature, with the Earth and with all living beings; with the human and with more than human world. Even if we do not achieve such hundred percent harmony, it is an ideal worth striving for.

I may sound an “idealist”. But what have the realists achieved in the world? The climate crisis is not the work of idealists. It is the activities of the realists causing climate crisis, demise of biodiversity and pollution of air, water and soil. Under the watch of so-called realists the hunger, wars and many other human tragedies have grown globally. The realists have ruled the world for far too long, and have made a mess of it. Now it is high time to give the idealists a chance, it is high time to listen to Thunberg and Attenborough, to the eco-protestors and eco-pioneers, it is high time to heed to re-wilders and agro-ecologists, to School Strikers and Earth defenders. They are the gentle heroes of our time.