

Book Review on Shambhu P Singh's Environment Conservation Through Religion

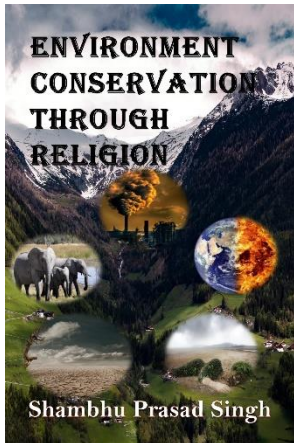
Dr Dalip Khetarpal

Poet, critic, author, reviewer, editor and columnist.

An outstanding Electrical Engineer with Bokaro Steel Plant, SAIL (Steel Authority of India Limited) with immense knowledge and interest in history, Indian astrology, philosophy, ecology, astronomy, mythology and cardinal principles of all prominent religions, Shambhu Prasad Singh, after authoring two books: *Nalanda To World Civilization* and *Vishwa Sabhayata Ko Nalanda Ki Den*, has now presented his latest book titled *Environment Conservation Through Religion* —a cornucopia of unique ideas and philosophy that the polluted world immediately needs most, especially, at this crucial juncture. Shambhu's works have been immensely anthologized because a large number of perceptive readers and publishers take an avid interest in his creations which are not only unique in nature, but also infinitely beneficial for the entire humanity for all times to come. Themes highlighted in the book are: environmental pollution, global disaster, humanism, man's interference with nature, eco-socio-

moral degradation resulting in human suffering, selfish exploitation of natural resources, global warming, ice-age, population explosion, metaphysics, preaching about healthy life style and wholesome environment by Shiva, Buddha, Laotse, Mahabir, Rishahadeva, Nanak and Kabir that are eco-friendly and that could help remove environmental pollution and cleanse the entire biosphere of all obnoxious green gases and pollutants vitiating the entire atmosphere. Such salubrious thoughts and ideas combine to impel various prominent critics and reviewers to effectively and convincingly articulate their appreciation and views on the author.

Shambhu Prasad is a keen observer of the biosphere and



ecosystem that everyone witnesses and through his enlightening book, *Environment Conservation Through Religion*, he hits at the artificial lives people live by vitiating the entire atmosphere. I was impressed by the impassioned utterance the author gave to his repressed thoughts of the approaching cataclysm owing to pollution, excessive green gas emission, indiscrete ruthless

exploitation of natural and terrestrial resources throughout the world, creating a degenerative milieu, leading to periodical disastrous geographical and geological changes that have strongly impacted the atmosphere and sensitive psyche of every well-meaning

and humane individual of the world. On the other hand, I was at pains to witness the author's grievances over the overbearing attitude and wicked tendencies of humans to exploit natural resources to meet their needs. Such an attitude that evinces love, high morality and anxiety in weal and woe of the humanity at large inspires not only a few readers, but also the entire mankind. As explicitly stated in the preface by the author himself, he justifies his aims and objectives of writing the book ethically and conscientiously with complete historical, religious and mythological background on the subject: 'The main object of composition of the book is to arouse the sleeping consciousness of human race, to visualize duty towards earth and environment and to make human race vigil for impending peril. We have inherited clean and balance environment from our ancestors. It is our duty to hand it over to our coming generation without any pollution'. The anxiety, care and concern for the welfare of the whole world clearly prove how every atom and molecule of the author's being is infused with humanism and sense of justice.

Viewing the entire environmental scenario in retrospect, the author discovers that hundreds of years earlier, farming and agriculture were the only means of livelihood. Even people of other professions were indirectly connected with agriculture, keeping the entire ecosystem clean. However, after industrial revolution, many dimensions came to be added to human needs and desires, resulting in the immense increase in the

production of various materials and goods for the need and comfort of man. All industrial products were in great demand because they were cheaper than manual products. Animal and man power was replaced by machine and brain power. There was an abrupt transformation 'in political, social and economic structure across the world'. People became wealthier and started leading a comfortable and luxurious life. But ironically, with the multiplication of network of industries around the world, emission of green house gases increased, polluting the entire environment. Ecological system and ecological balance of the earth was also seriously disturbed owing to mindless deforestation for constructing newer and newer factories, but the frequency of floods on the other hand, has also correspondingly increased since the roots of trees and plants have a strong hold over soil that does not easily wash away by rains and floods. The author cites multiple living evidence to establish how due to ruthless exploitation of the earth's resources, serious chemical and physical disturbances have occurred in the entrails of the mother earth resulting in earthquakes, Tsunami and other terrestrial hazards. Innumerable people disappeared in Indonesian archipelago in Oct. 2010 owing to earthquake and Tsunami—the second most critical disaster of the first decade of 21st century in the Bay of Bengal. The frequency of earthquakes and Tsunami in the Bay of Bengal and Himalayan regions during the last 20 years are in fact, greater than the number of all such preceding disasters

occurred many years ago. During 2004 when Tsunami swept the Bay of Bengal, huge casualty and incalculable loss of property were caused in the Eastern coast of India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Thailand leaving many traceless. Geological and geographical changes have also caused drought, bringing untold miseries and sufferings to many cities. Big cities are also likely to be soon destroyed by the rise of the sea level owing to global warming generated by man's interference with earth and its environment. If the same cycle is repeated time and again, in the same way, human race will soon become an extinct species. It is really disheartening that in matters of vitiating the environment and emitting poisonous gases India's position is 6th in the world, after USA, Europe, Japan, China and Russia.

The author felt motivated to see that L.E.E.D. (leadership in energy and environment) was created as it was appointed by green gas engineering that has been working as international standard organization for environment cleansing through certain standards and norms to save the earth and human race from becoming extinct. This organization has vitally contributed towards controlling uncontrolled industrial emission of carbon gases into the atmosphere, carbon mixed gases emitted by fossil fuel driven automobiles, random unprincipled destruction of forests, ruthless exploitation of mines for iron ores, coal, gold, aluminum copper, magnesia, etc, industrial discharge of toxic waste and slag into rivers and all noxious pollutants that vitiate the clean atmosphere.

Shambhu was also perceptive enough to note that kite, jackals, foxes, hyenas, crows, vultures, etc., working as scavengers, partially keep nature clean by eating dead animals, thereby also preventing nauseating smell emitted during the course 'disintegration, fermentation, decomposition and rotting of dead body cells'. Even ducks, crows, swans, cranes, sparrows and lizards eat various insects and tiny creatures that cause harm to man and nature. But, despite all these little blessings and benign act that help check pollution, the damage caused to the environment has not been fully repaired, for the level of damage has already gone so high that no complete redressal mechanism seems conceivable. Unfortunately, many species of birds have now become extinct or are near extinction in the Indian subcontinent because they have fallen victim to the hunters. Some human friendly birds, sparrows and even some species of butterfly and insects are also facing extinction owing to 'high frequency electromagnetic wave generated for telecommunication purposes'. Chemicals and nano particles that infest the ocean destroy aquatic biosphere of ocean. Vultures that play a vital role in generating healthy environment by feeding on carcasses of cows and buffaloes are also gradually vanishing, because chemical hormone oxytocin injected to these animals make their flesh poisonous, leading to the death of vultures. Farmers' use of insecticides to protect crops from various harmful insects and spraying of pesticides on crops to contain epidemic arising from fungus and bacteria may be financially

profitable for them, but it is definitely injurious to human health and biosphere. Likewise, genetic mutant food also has an equally negative impact. Though the effects of 'chemicals and genetic catalysts' are not immediate, yet, later they adversely impact the 'genetic profile and anatomical structure of human body' and this vicious impact will be perceptible for generations.

Intense pollution has doubtlessly, wrought catastrophic changes, putting the whole civilization on the brink of apocalypse. Such a pathetic situation seems to perturb the disgruntled author whose sensitive soul often simmers with discontentment and resentment, so much so that he had to vent the plethora of his choked and aggrieved feelings through this phenomenal book which he did in the most graceful, impressive, refined and dignified manner through various religious, mythological, metaphysical, mystical and scientific explanations and justifications not conceivable in the whole range of study and research on organisms, ecosystems and environmental pollution till date. It is precisely the exigency of the situation that impelled him to invoke Lord Shiva, Vishnu, Christ, Lao-T-s and Osyrus to reincarnate themselves in some form, return to this earth, undo all sins committed by mankind and 'save human race from extinction'. As a mystic-engineer-writer, the author is still hopeful that some positive changes through religious beliefs could be induced, though Prof Franc Fener of Microbiology of National University, Australia opines that 'it is too late to rectify the sins done to environment.

Homo sapiens (humans) will extinct from this earth within 100 years.’ However, most interestingly, Shambhu Prasad, without breaking stride has convincingly proved how Lord Shiva is symbolic of recycling and conservator of environment. He affirms that Shiva’s life style, his way of living, dress, ornaments and habitats convey the message of sacrifice and abandonment of all worldly belongings only for the welfare of environment and biosphere. Even his carrier *Nandy* is the symbol of welfare of biosphere and environment and also lives for others by feeding on human-generated scraps like straw, grass and husk that generate energy used in tilling land that produces food to nourish the entire human race, thereby doing great for the welfare of bio world also. Ashes and burnt waste of earthly material smeared on Shiva’s skin proves that nothing on this earth is futile, everything can conveniently ‘be used for the welfare of organic world’. Shiva uses ash for covering and warming his body; the crescent on his forehead indicates the periodical ‘inevitability of happiness, sorrow, creation, destruction, rise, fall, acceleration, retardation, darkness, lighted phase during organic evolution of life. The moon is the creator of heart and water in organic world; during recycling process (sanhar) of wastes and slag of physical and organic material energy, water is essential. The moon also inspires us to store energy during the first half of the cycle of operation and discharge it in the half cycle. Snakes around Shiva’s neck is the symbol of rebirth and inevitability of life periodicity....’ Likewise, various images and elements

connected with Shiva and other gods are shown to have some or the other symbolic significance related to nature, ecosystem and environment.

The best warning message that comes from various mythological allusions and references is that we must discard our luxurious life style that is greatly responsible for vitiating the environment. Uncontrolled emitting of limitless green gases and huge expansion of network of industries to meet our endless unaccountable luxurious needs have poisoned the atmosphere so much so that we're now compelled to reconsider about recycling capacity for conversion of venomous waste and trash into some vital component through *Sanhar* process of Lord Shiva. The author strengthens his concept on the basis of the laws of 'indestructibility of matter' and 'conservation of energy' of Physics which establishes that no matter or energy, whatever, can ever be totally destroyed; only its magnitude, nature, shape, direction and size can be transformed. Hence, modern concept of Physics on matter and energy are only different names of *Sanhar* of Shiva at metaphorical, physical, metaphysical and philosophical levels. The author is also adept at synthesizing his knowledge of mythology with science and medical sciences. He observes that snakes around Shiva's neck assimilate all venom, unwanted energy emitted into the atmosphere and all vicious elements in biosphere, protecting this biological world from being harmed. Snake's venom is a condensed form of energy in liquid state as one single drop of king cobra's venom can kill 100

men. When a snake's venom enters human body, it dissolves the organic tissue of neurological system which paralyzes 'communication of electric signals sent by different limb-sensor to brain through neural tissues, paralyzing human body within hours, rather killing him. But conversely, when a snake's venom is injected into human body in a diluted form, many incurable and complicated diseases like hypothermia, paralyzes, neural and other conceivable and inconceivable diseases could be cured. Quite meaningfully hence, snakes around Shiva's neck are instrumental in conserving, regulating and balancing of venom energy discernible on earth. Shambhu thus, exhorts all polluters to reduce their use of luxurious appliances like air-conditioner, car, heavy electrical equipment and the like and strictly follow the simple life-style and code of conduct set by Shiva in case they really want to conserve ecosystem and this earth and prevent it from facing the impending ice age which due to biological and geographical changes, sweep the earth after every 1000 years.

Despite the author's wide knowledge in various disciplines, his erudition and diligence come to the fore when one witnesses a comprehensive environmental pollution index (CEPI) which has been calculated deeming four factors: pollutants, pathways, receptors and additional high-risk element. A detailed list of position of air, water and land CPEI of industrial clusters in the states like Gujarat, U. P., Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Orissa, Punjab, Kerala, A. P., Uttarakhand, Assam and

Tamil Nadu is explicitly explicated. Shambhu also took pains to scrutinize how developing countries are speedily increasing the production of steel that generates unaccountable green gases. An increase in production of steel in percentage by various developed and developing countries like USA, Germany, Brazil, Japan, South Korea, Russia, China, Ukraine, Turkey and India has been elucidated precisely through a proper chart. The author has also explained how countries like USA, European Union, Japan, China, Russia and India that have higher urban population annually generate higher level of green gases and CO₂. Shambhu has also been insightfully perceptive when he attributes the cause of pollution to population explosion. Production to meet human needs, luxury and comfort has to increase mainly because of the rising population. With great effort, this again has been illustrated by citing the average growth, density per square km., religion and average female population of many countries of the world through exact and detailed facts and figures. No writer, till date has made such an in-depth study of ecosystem, environmental pollution—its causes and effects on the entire humanity and various curative measures mainly through religion and science. Loaded with facts and figures, the book is a relevant and unique document written with heart touching rendering. With imperceptible tears of anguish, the compassionate author vents her immense suppressed disappointment on the heartless attitude and insane manner this world spreads pollution. This makes him resentful of the

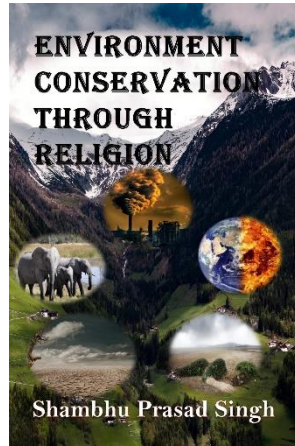
exploitation of earth's resources by the so-called modern, civilized, cultured and enlightened society. Being deeply sympathetic towards the suffering battered ecology and agonized humanity, he bares even his unconscious mind most boldly, candidly and factually by emoting his justifiable grievances and agony fervently as evidenced in all chapters.

Bedecked with scientific, historical and mythological facts, the book is riddled with bitter satire and grim irony. Surely, the author is in for some drastic change, for he knows well that everything in life is ephemeral and inconstant, except change, that alone is constant. The crucial issues taken up by him are pertinent and have been plaguing human society for at least 200 years.

The author has skillfully interwoven religion, culture, science, history, convention, tradition, mythology, psychology and philosophy with inconceivable writing skills, making the anthology a unique inspirational and useful document for the present generation as well as for posterity to savour and preserve it for all times to come.

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About The Author

Shambhu Prasad Singh was born in East-Champaran district in Bihar. He passed electrical engineering from Bihar University in 1972 and joined Bokaro Steel Plant, SAIL (Steel Authority of India Limited). He worked in different units and faculties at the plant. He retired from service in December 2008 on the post of Assistant General Manager. Besides electrical engineering, he has special interest in the fields of Indian astrology, history, philosophy, religion, environmental, hazard, games and sports.

He has two books *Environmental Hazard and Peril of the Earth* and *Eclipse of cricket over Indian sub-continent* published to his credit till date.

Reviewer's Bio

Dr Dalip Khetarpal worked as a Lecturer in English at Manchanda Delhi Public College, Delhi. He worked in various capacities, as Lecturer, Senior Lecturer and H .O. D (English) in various academic institutes in Haryana. He was a Dy. Registrar and Joint Director at the Directorate of Technical Education, Haryana, Chandigarh.

Dr Dalip has also started a new genre in the field of poetry, which he would like to call "psycho-psychic flints".

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