



Reflections | Fast for the Climate

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Fasting to make dream realistic - A dream towards Eco-Just World

By Ms Pranita Biswasi

Amos 5:24 of the Bible says, "Let Justice roll down like Waters."

This verse seems a dream to me in this present scarcity world. Our world would be a better place to live in, if it is run by values of liberation and Justice. But how can we realize this dream poses a question!

Strange as it may appear, I have resorted to an unusual way of finding the answer. Out of all the global issues, environmental degradation has today raised its ugly head. What if the plants were also granted with the four virtues: freedom, conscience, knowledge and wisdom like the human beings? At least the plants would not kill or harm their fellow beings but we do. The plants would have got themselves involved in the UN climate negotiations as we do. They would have earned their living by resorting to different professions as we do. We human beings are good practitioners of utilizing our virtues in a destructive manner and in no course of time we would have turned those plants with virtues into human-plants making them selfish as we are.

The influence of our temporal world, our selfish desires do not permit us to listen to the call of justice. In the name of development we are consciously/unconsciously destroying ourselves. The developed countries have contributed a lot in the green house gas emissions by mining enormous quantity of carbon. The sad irony is that the countries that have emitted the least amount of green house gases suffer the worst impacts of Global warming.

India is a developing country and very often facing the relentless severity of climate. Given its sheer size, climatic geography and the impacts associated with increased severity of cyclones, droughts in various regions, coastal vulnerability from sea level, reduction in agricultural production, livelihood loss for the poor and potential threat to the entire system of monsoon. Though agriculture is demographically the broadest economic sector and plays a significant role in the overall socio-economic fabric of India, even the National Food Security Act, 2013 has been passed by the parliament still this did not wipe out the hunger. India needs to strike a balance between development and environment protection. Drifting to one of the ends will hamper India's chance to sustainable development.

What awful and unjust situation it is that half of India still starves! This realization of the cry of my nation made me join in the fast for climate during COP19. Fasting in the first day of each month now makes me feel the metabolic status of the millions of poor and vulnerable people who have no other option rather than only fasting. One part of the world enjoys and the other suffers. Fasting acts as a sword in the battle of Climate Justice. Fasting is a powerful prayer. My childhood perception about fasting was to make God listen to my prayers. I had no idea that one day when I grow up my empty stomach will raise the frequency of my voice for the voiceless and will lead to a movement for change.

Isaiah 58:6 -The Lord says the kind of fasting I want is this: remove the chains of oppression and the yoke of injustice.

Let us practically bridle and succeed where others have failed to move the vehicle of Justice forward and make stance that every person should have equal access to development that is consistent with its own understanding of Climate Justice.

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