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◆ Chief Editor's Voice

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Chief Editor's Voice

L-I-F-E : LIFE STYLE FOR ENVIRONMENT

The concept of LIFE was introduced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at COP 26 in Glasgow in November 21 calling upon the global community of individuals and institutions to drive LIFE as an international mass movement towards "mindful and deliberate utilization of resources instead of mindless and destructive consumptions" to protect and preserve our planet. There was a demand from individuals and institutions that the Union Budget 2023-24 must focus on Life Style for Environment. Some tools, say some Apps must be introduced to enable the adoption of LIFE. There should be some restrictions and regulations. For instance, putting a cap per household/business and levying fines on crossing the threshold limit.

India's carbon dioxide emissions plummeted by 6.5% in 2020 due to COVID 19 lockdowns and restrictions. But later it shot up by 11% in 2021 to reach a record high of 2.6 GT CO₂. World has long realized that it is the man "the principal polluter and his lifestyle which causes the maximum environmental damage". It has shown that just by adopting a sustainable lifestyle, though imposed, one can neutralize the year-on-year increase of CO₂, and gains can be potentially higher over some time.

If every citizen cuts his her emissions by 10% then our country can save 266 million tons of annual emissions, which will account for 10.2 per cent reduction from the annual CO₂ emissions of India.

Can government put cap per household/business and levy fines on crossing the threshold limit. Can government provide tax breaks to individuals/institutions and an option to file carbon foot print along with IT return and claim tax rebate. Can this be a mass drive or movement for GHG emission reduction?

In August 2022 India officially submitted its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) target. It talked about a healthy and sustainable way of living, through a mass movement for LIFE as a key to combating climate change. What cannot be measured cannot be managed. If the government could mandate the corporate India to strictly capture and calculate their carbon emissions using available technologies and certified products, with tax benefits to those abiding by the rules, the nation can even reduce its scheduled time to achieve Net Zero target.

The government should introduce policies and create a voluntary carbon trading market regulated by the government. It should define policies and standards around the verifications and issuance of carbon credits, which once generated can be traded on exchange. The new education policy should strictly introduce sustainable life style in the syllabus. So that the new generation can understand the basics and prepare themselves to adopt a lifestyle in conformity before they enter the corporate world. The executive lifestyle, unfortunately, is not eco-friendly.

This will drive more participation from investors to invest in green projects to generate more carbon credits which then can be traded or used for setting emission thresholds. India is a lead player in the global green energy market. It needs to invite every stakeholder of energy in the world to invest in India. India had demonstrated its capability to achieve the objectives before time when it comes to renewable energy sources. Under the Green Hydrogen Mission, India aims to produce five million tons of green hydrogen. The Gobardhan Yojana is an important component of India's bio fuel strategy. It aims to harness the biogas efficiently.

There are a lot of startups and small educational institutes who can partner with government schools and colleges to accelerate climate change awareness and educate the masses about the eco-friendly living. The country's future development will be depending upon three factors; both for achieving green growth and realizing energy transmission. Increasing the production of renewable energy is the first factor. The second is reducing the use of fossil fuel in the economy. The third and the last one is moving towards a "Gas-based Economy",

In so far an ancient country like India is concerned, eco-friendly life style is not at all a new idea. The Indian life style was always simple and environmentally friendly. Our ancestors lived naturally and frugally too. Bhagavad Gita says about "Yuktahara and Yukta Vihara" means Natural food and proper lifestyle. Mahatma Gandhi propagated a lifestyle that is friendly to environment and economy. The lifestyle put forward by Maha rishis, great gurus to

Mahatma Gandhi is the only way to solve our modern problems.

Modern world faces numerous environmental challenges like climate change, pollution, deforestation and many others. We need to make positive change and protect both our health and the environment. Be green is the right step towards an eco friendly life style. There are so many simple thing that we can adopt in our daily life. It includes turning off the light, eating more vegetables, wasting less food, cutting the plastic use, recycling the used items, switching to LED lights, go for renewable energy, consciously reducing carbon footprint, reducing the consumption and resorting to simple life, etc.

Small corrections in our daily life are enough to make great changes in the environment. By adopting a green life style we can reduce the risk of illness such as diabetes to dreaded cancer. It can bring down the energy use and energy bills. Driving less and walking more will reduce the carbon footprint and keep one healthier. Recycling and reducing the waste help us to protect our environment.

Becoming more eco friendly will allow us to preserve the planet for the future generation. We need to limit our exposure to harmful substances and make informed decisions. The Chinese Saint Tao Tse Ching says "A journey of a thousand mile starts with a small step". Every step that we take towards an environmentally friendly living will lead us to the world of sustainable development. Every change in our lifestyle will be a big step towards protecting our planet.