



Food, Clothing, Shelter and Land

Food, clothing and shelter are the basic needs of man. We have divided our needs into comforts and luxuries. This can be a sign of man's progress. Once upon a time, the man ate roots, covered his body with leaves and took shelter in caves. Today man has been enjoying a variety of eatable things, wearing costly clothes and has been living in huge bungalows. But it is also true that, there are people who don't get enough food to eat, clothes to wear, who live on the footpaths as they don't have homes. It means there is a wide disparity even in fulfilling the basic needs. Hence there is a need to discuss about these things again.

It is necessary to think of land because all our needs are related to land. Land grows food grains, stores water in the crust. Houses are built on the land, and cotton from which cloth is made, grows in soil. Thus land fulfils all our basic needs. Hence land is our prime necessity. We should take this into consideration and think about it.

We know that there are some limitations to land. It cannot be expanded. Hence it should be used properly. Land is continuous. It may have been broken into several pieces naturally. We have given different names to the divided land. It is divided into countries, states, districts, *talukas* and villages. Even in villages land is divided and each one has their own land. When there are divisions between

two brothers land also is divided. Thus the land which is limited is made more limited. There should be some rules as to what limit, the land should be divided. It is necessary to make the maximum use of limited land.

Land should be used for the development. If any business is to be developed and land is needed for it, it should be acquired. It should be acquired for roads, railways, airports and other works which are for the development of the country. While purchasing the land, its due value should be given to the land owner because one's life, as well as the livelihood of next generation depends on it. If no land, no future. With this view, fair land price and job accommodation in the developed land is suggested for livelihood. We see that people sell their lands, transactions of lakhs and crores of rupees are done. But the money flies away in different directions. It is spent on many unnecessary things. When no money is left, the next generation has no alternative but to toil hard to get money. We should think while purchasing or selling land or acquiring agricultural land. With proper planning, the displaced should be re-habilitated. They should be given agricultural land. If this is not possible, they should be given a share of the profits of the work, for which the land is acquired.



It is seen that the lands which are purchased or acquired for the development purposes, are not used properly, we don't think how much hectare of land will be used to make a two lane road into a four lane. We are not bothered to think, "How useful these means of communication (roads) will be to the people in the long run." If the land is not used to its full extent properly, it is wasted. Sometimes thousand hectare of land is acquired for a big project. It takes a long time for the materialization of the project. Projects are not completed even after decades. The acquired land remains unused inspite of its productive use. But nobody understands this. Such misuse of land should be stopped.

While using the land, it should be used in pieces. Trees should be planted even on the bunds between two fields. Production of fodder should be taken. The farmer should earn some money from it. The farmer works hard, grows food grains or other products and sells it in the market, without getting any importance in the market and gets cheated. The mediators and merchants make more money for the farmers' produce. Farmer doesn't get the due value. The merchants and others exploit farmer. This should be stopped. Productivity of the land should be fully used. On the international level, we are leading in the production of cereals like wheat, rice. But when we talk of production of food grains per acre; our rank goes down. Our productivity per acre is less. The condition of farmers won't improve unless productivity is increased. Farmers should be guided for this.

This is all about agricultural land. The other lands also should be used properly. We have read the history of the kings planting trees on the roadside, dug lakes and wells, built rest houses for the travellers. These were useful deeds. The trees gave shade to the passers-by. Wells, lakes, quenched thirst with the water 'serais' and *dharmashalas* were for resting. The government should do similar works. Charitable institutions rarely do such types of work. Today the condition of mountains is really very bad. They are barren, deserted without plants and trees, plantation is done on hills and mountains, but due care is not taken. Hence they either die or cease to grow. This affected environment. We often experience that the amount of rainfall decreases in the absence of trees. When we say, lands should be used, then we should get income from it. If trees are planted on the roadsides and looked after, arrangement of

drinking water is made, resting places for tourists are built, it will create employment. Unemployed hands will get work, unemployment will be reduced. Today we see thousands of acres of land lying barren, including farmlands. There are many vacant plots in the key areas of cities. I feel that rules should be made to bring such lands to use. Some lands lie vacant due to legal disputes and court cases. But the undisputed, vacant lands should be brought in use. If the land is government owned, it should be used to give some work to the people. Land will be used for productive purpose and get benefits. The needy will get employment.

If a plot is vacant in a city, at least some trees should be planted near the compound wall. Such a plot can be used for vehicle-parking. There is no parking space left in the city to keep vehicles. If vehicles are parked on the road, it becomes narrow, traffic becomes slow, there is traffic jam and fuel is wasted and all this leads to pollution. In such cases, if such vacant areas are used for vehicle-parking, the problem will be solved to some extent. At the same time, income will be generated. Such plots can be used as temporary shelter for the needy and such plot can also be used to grow vegetables. In this way, such vacant lands can be used for the protection of the environment, producing food-grains and vegetables or to get rid of our daily problems.

The land may be used for farming or other purposes, it should be used properly. In agriculture we should choose the crops according to the climate, quality of soil, the natural components present in soil and availability of water. The crops should be chosen accordingly. If attempts are made to grow crops, when the conditions are not favourable, it may cause not only financial loss but also loss of the land. If any construction project is started in some remote areas, a lot of time, money and energy are wasted in transporting water to the people, make arrangement of disposal of waste water; make arrangement of transport and maintenance of all these things.

Those who have bungalow type houses, should plant trees around the house, in the court yard or on the terrace. This will make the air, pollution free. The use of solar and wind energy is recommended, wherever possible. These are natural sources of energy. A poor can plant the climber of bitter gourd, long gourd etc. behind his hut. It can be watered with the waste water from the hut. A shelter may be of any type, it should be beneficial

to the person living in it. It should give benefits to the society, nature and environment. May it be a bungalow or a hut, by planting trees around, a person should get advantage of clean air and fresh fruits and flowers. This may be possible in urban as well as rural areas.

According to me, farming should be done by making stripes of land. For example wheat should be grown in one big stripe. Farmers can do it collectively. Everyone's capacity is more or less the same. Hence a single farmer cannot get expected gains. But if some farmers come together, they can systematically do the planning of the crops. The different chores of agriculture can be divided among them. And all can get equal benefits. There will be proper use of land. There are many *dhabas* or big and small hotels along roads, and highways. They can also be given some responsibilities. Some parts of the roadsides should be allotted to each *dhaba* and they should be told to grow plants, water them in the areas given to them. They will be benefitted by this. The trees will grow on the roadsides, there will be shade, trees will have flowers and birds will come, chirp and gentle breezes will blow. The travellers will take a stop at the *dhaba* to enjoy this atmosphere. They will take rest. Income of the *dhaba* will increase. The feeling that we owe something to nature, society and country should be demonstrated through our actions.



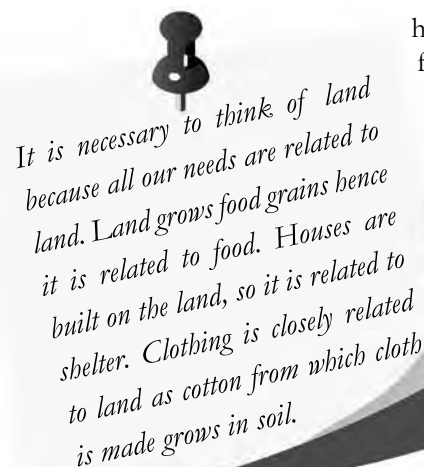
Same thing is true when it comes to shelter. Once we make our shelter, we should get joy and satisfaction at the place of shelter. Today we see that every home has a T.V., refrigerator, washing machine etc. Are they really necessary? Why shouldn't such things be common? Can't some people come together and make common arrangement of all these? Take simple example of a newspaper. Suppose there is a colony of 100 houses, and every house has a newspaper. It means 100 houses have 100 newspapers. Instead of this, if all the people together buy 10 newspapers and make arrangement of a library, all can get its advantage. Everyone can read 10 newspapers. The colony will get the income out of the scrap paper. The colony can also have a T.V. They can arrange for the watching of T.V. to all. Much electricity and money can be saved through this. More important is that, due to such collective arrangements, people will come together, will know each other. They will share their sorrow, problems and they will help each other. In the name of economic independence, man has become lonely instead of being social. The husband and wife have conflicts which lead to divorce. The reason is lack of understanding. The feeling of coming together for something is getting lost. Actually the terrace is common to the society; today the terraces of the building are also divided. The terrace should be used together by all. The feeling of collective happiness is getting lost. Things like neighbours, love, sympathy etc. are being diminished. These concepts



are important. They have an important place in human life. So now we should again use the old system of going from an individual to a group or society. It has economic, social and cultural benefits. Hence a process should be started to bring the society together.

Clothing is a basic need of man but today it has greatly changed into fashion. Today covering the body is no more intention of the clothing but clothes are worn to make the personality more attractive. Show off has gained importance. Personality is important, but there is a misunderstanding that the personality is enhanced by clothes. Your personality becomes distinctive due to your qualities and not by your clothes. Even then, there is a great craze of fashionable clothes among the youth. The wardrobes are filled with a variety of clothes. Still they want more clothes. There are 100 shirts in one cupboard, yet there are many reasons for not wearing them, as they have become old and boring, design has become out-dated etc., so go to the market and buy one hundred and oneth shirts. After some days, next new shirt is added to the collection. Now a days fashion changes in every one or two months and the clothes become a heap in the cupboard. This is wastage of clothes and money. Clothing business gains from it, but what about the leakage of your wallet? I remember, as college students, we friends would use each other's clothes. In this way, we wore shirts of many varieties. We didn't feel the need of buying new shirts and keeping them in the cupboard. Scientifically each other's clothes should not be used. Yet clothes can be shared. It is important to have the feeling of friendship, brotherhood. In those days, we used to make blankets of torn, worn up clothes. They were very nice and warm in winter. In those days, along with other things, there was shortage of clothes. Today cloth is available in plenty. Some People's cupboards are packed with clothes. But there are many, who don't have enough clothes to wear. They live on a single cloth. We see children without clothes begging on the roads.

Now take the case of food. 4-5 decades ago there was shortage of food grains in India. The food grains were not enough for growing population. Hence we had to import food grains from abroad, recurring droughts and the condition of food grains worsened. But the picture changed after green revolution. Today, there



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have been record breaking food production in India. Then there was shortage of food grains in the go-down. Now the food grains are getting spoiled in the go-downs. Both the pictures are not good. There are many families who don't have enough food for one time. The food grains don't reach them but are spoiled in the go-down.

This is really heart breaking. Today we see that in wedding and other ceremonies, food is served on a large scale. People fill their plates with a variety of preparations and half of the food is wasted. Not allowing wastage of food is very important. In the olden days beggars used to go to every home. They used to get leftover food. Today there are many, who are hungry. In flat system the beggars are not allowed. Hence food goes in the dustbin. The garbage should be classified as wet and dry. We don't even do it. Hence food is getting wasted. Such food should be used for hungry people and animals. There are some organizations in cities that collect the leftover food from the people and hotels and distribute it among those who are hungry. Stale food can be used in animal food and also for making manure. We should try to see that such food reaches them. We should always keep our humanitarian attitude alive.

By making due use of food, clothing and shelter, the excess pressure on land can be reduced. Food should be eaten scientifically. It should be eaten on time, if you are hungry. You should not overeat. Clothing should be used scientifically. It should be worn properly. We should not store too many clothes. Shelter should be according to the needs. If number of family members are two but there are four toilets, kid's room for children and master bed for elders. Is it necessary? All such things should be checked with psychological and scientific attitude. Land should be used with planning. The government should make strict, transparent laws for the people as to how the excess or barren lands should be brought into use.

In short, we have seen that food, clothing, shelter are our basic needs. They are from natural resources. But we misuse them. The natural resources are wasted. We should avoid this. These natural resources should be used for human development, to keep the balance of environment and also for preserving and growth of nature. To plan the use of these resources are very essential.

