



SPARING RESOURCES; THE JAINA WAY OF LIFE

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Introduction

In the world of complexities, opposites and contradicts are myriad. In that, beauty juxta posed with ugliness, rich with poor, urban with rural, illiterates with literates, health with disease and so on. The universe endowed with matter and energy. Matter and energy are inseparable and energy cannot be created or destroyed, but it can only be utilized. Nature bestowed with myriad of resources in the form of natural resources, water resources, mineral resources, human resources and the like. Mother earth can bestow the human kind with sizable resources. As pointed out by Mahatma Gandhi, father our nation, the wealth of the world is sufficient to meet the need of every single man, but not enough to meet the greed of single person. Therefore the resources utilization should be in a judicious, economical and it should be conserved for future generation. The Jaina way of utilizing the resources is that minimum possession of resources will fetch the individuals the maximum happiness and reduces miseries. Hence, the need of the hour is the judicious, conscious and careful utilization of natural, human and all types of resources for balanced material and spiritual progress in any country or in any part of the world.

Jainism and Resources

Look at the history of Indian religions; they are divine origin and spiritual in nature developed by intuition of sages. The religion is not a bundle of rites and rituals that we are practicing, but it is nothing other than basic principles, philosophy and ethical values of Consciousness to **Live and Let Live** and Compassion towards all living beings. The principles, philosophy and ethical values of the religion provided the moral, emotional, psychological, social and economic development of an individual which creates an enabling environment of peaceful atmosphere which helps generation of wealth and overall development of cities and the nation as a whole. Among such various religions Jainism is one which exists from time immemorial.

Jainism as an **Ancient Religion** holds an important position among Indian philosophical systems. It has enriched Indian culture with its metaphysics, moral, cultural, philosophical, ethical, Social, economic and political force, since the dawn of Indian civilization and still it is serving in India and abroad with its rich philosophy and ethical values. The philosophy of Jainism helps every human being in relation to the reality of existence, universe creation and environment. Hence, Jainism as a **Religion of Nature** plays a significant role in cosmic knowledge, ecological awareness and attitude towards our surrounding, comprises of all types of resources. Jainism also tells us about Right to live, harmony and co-existence of all living beings. The intrinsic Principle of Co-Existence is Live and Let Live, Parasparopagrahó Jeevanam which surrounded by Ahimsa(non-violence). According to Jivadrvaya of Jain philosophy, the life exists not only in human, animal and micro-organisms, but also in natural resources like



flora, fauna, in stones, earth, water, fire and air. Harm to these resources is disturbing global ecological- balance and it is an act of violence. In Jainism sense minimal use of natural resources means that not harming the nature, living beings, plants, micro- organisms and other inanimate matter. The use of resource sparingly ensures detached way of living, non-possessiveness, practicing compassion, non-violence, loving kindness and concern for other living beings. This philosophy of Jainism brings man, nature, resource utilisation and environment under the umbrella of co-existence. Jainism resource utilisation awareness involves balancing human needs and protecting natural and cultural heritage for the future generation through Self- Restraint. Hence, the philosophy of Jainism showing that human life directly or indirectly related to environment and nature. Therefore it is not man and nature, but it is man with nature.

Synthesis of Religion and Economics

It is clear that Religion and economics are converging. Each religion has its own ethics. The ethics is applicable to the people who follow that disciplined religion. Aristotle regards ethics as the doctrine about the moral of man as a social creature, as a political animal. The religion can influence the wellbeing of individuals, families, youths, communities and nations and its ethical values have played a significant role in advancing human and ecologically responsible societies.

Great economist Lionel Robbins defines that the studies of economics starts with human wants are unlimited and wants satisfying resources are very limited. The formula of Modern Economics is to stimulate the limitless wants raised from greed and selfish nature of human beings. The new mantra of economic development is planning for marketing of materialistic goods to meet the uncontrolled wants and desires. Therefore modern economic development is evolving on the basis of materialism and consumerism. Such consumerism and non-ethical character of modern human beings all over the world created utilisation of all types of resources in an unprecedented manner as well as diverting the scarce resources for the production of unproductive and nuclear armaments leads to global ecological crisis. Any economic development or business without ethics or Social concern is a crime.

Economic progress and Spiritual Crisis

The systematic exploitation and destruction of natural resources began right from the time man began to live in the society. According to Jaina Cosmology, during the early period of socio-economic life, there was an existence of harmony. The laws and rules of the nature guided every being. The early human being lived in coexistence with nature since he had limited wants and desires. But as man became more civilised, his wants increased and needs were replaced by greed and selfish behaviour. Hence, he exploited the natural resources beyond its self-sustainability level and human values and principles of coexistence and harmony have been replaced by dishonesty, selfishness, greed, deceit and lust and as a result physical resource world is polluted, social and economic life is destructed, moral life is affected and even spiritual life is under crisis.



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- Physical crisis is reflected in terms of drying up of lakes, scarcity of clean drinking water, deforestation, pollution, global warming, ozone depletion, natural calamities, epidemic diseases, conversion of agriculture land into commercial land.
 - Socio-economic crisis reflected in terms of population explosion, socio- economic inequalities, grabbing economic opportunity by few people, increase in poverty, unemployment, caste, creed and gender discrimination, unhealthy competition and pursuing wealth, power and fame at the cost of others.
 - Psychological crisis in terms of stress, suicide, chronic anxiety, depression, mental illness, insecurity feeling, dissatisfaction and emotional imbalance.
 - National and global problems in terms of power struggle, corruption, redtapism, national and international terrorism, utilisation of public money by political leaders and Bureaucrats, lack of concern for public welfare and International disputes.
 - Spiritual crisis in terms of misinterpretation of religious values. ethics, rituals and practices, religious conflicts developing inhuman behaviour.

Jainism and Sustainable Solution

To resolve the crisis and proper utilisation of resources, the policy makers have resort to innumerable policies, laws and regulations. These laws and regulations instead of solving them aggravated the problems. Jainism provides a sustainable solution in terms of Spiritual Mission called **Self-Purification**. Jainism creates awareness to develop respectful co-existence of Jiva with Ajiva through Ahimsa(Non-violence), Aparigraha (non-possession), ParigrahaParimanu(put limit on possession) and karma theory.

These vows directly and indirectly guides the individual householders to control and conquer self from all emotional passions like greed, anger, pride and deceit which motivating householders for proper utilisation of scarce resources. Ahimsa, Aparigraha, ParigrahaParimanuand Karma theory are the central concepts of Jainism prohibits the materialistic economic idea of individuals unlimited wants, unlimited possession and unlimited accumulation of resources and avoid violence against resource utilisation. In this contest HH' AcharyaMahaprajnain his book **Economics of Mahavira** mentioned three kinds of lifestyle provided by Lord Mahavira.

- More Desires- More Accumulation- More Violence
- Less Desires- Less Accumulation -Less Violence
- Free from Desires- No Accumulation- Non-Violence (of all types of resources)

Hence, Jainism is not just a religion with abstract concepts, but it is a scientific based, practical oriented, positive attitude, disciplined and rational way of Ide teaches how every householder can live compassion and coexistence with his surroundings and motivates them fur judicial use of resources which are scarce in nature.



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