

Interests of Imperialist Countries and Corporate Forces caused Climate Change and Environmental Destruction

The UNFCCC organises 'Environmental Conference' every year. The 26th conference in that sequence to be held in 2021-COP-26 has been organised during October 31, 2021 to November 12, 2021 in Glasgow of Scotland. As usual, in a routine way, the discussions are continued with utmost care without touching the issues that hinder the interests of imperialist countries and powerful corporate forces, which in fact, are responsible for the growing problem of climate change. The emerged 'Glasgow climate pact' was thrown the responsibility of reducing Green House Gas Emissions on to the emerging/backward Countries which are already suffering from drought, floods, hunger and severe water problems due to Climate Change. Therefore, UN Secretary General Antonio Gutterus opines that due to lack of strong political will, the agreement reflects deep contradictions and interests.

- Prof. Thota Jyothi Rani

The emerging economies are pressurised to accept it as a rule of compromise.

Glasgow Climate Pact- India

The Paris Agreement, 2015 directs measures to achieve the goal to limit global warming to well below 2°C preferably to 1.5°C compared to pre- industrial levels. The allotted carbon budgets have been depleting fastly due to excessive emissions. Therefore, the present pact states that the present decade is critical and it needs to achieve as high as 45 percent reduction in the CO₂ emissions so as to achieve the goal in 2050.

It is already directed that National governments should decide the National Determined Contributions (NDG). The pact states that, the status of achievement in regard to NDC should be submitted to UNFCCC in 2023 only instead of 2025. However, this will be applicable to emerging economies only as UNFCCC will not dare to question dominant/ developed countries.

Further, it is decided to move far away from the use of Fossil Fuels. Therefore, the production of thermal power should be phased down and remove all the

subsidies given so far to these inefficient fossil fuels. In addition, more than 30 countries and 6 major vehicle manufacturers set out their determination for all new car and van sales to be zero-emission vehicles by 2040 globally and by 2035 in leading markets to accelerate decarbonization of road transport which currently accounts 10 percent of global GHGs.

In India, more than 70 percent power is generated from thermal power plants. How many more concessions and incentives should be offered to foreign investment for alternative power generation by closing our coal mines and thermal power stations? How many loans should be taken for capacity installation? What about the enormous employment related to this production? It will further accentuate the problem of unemployment. This will be used as an opportunity to pressurise installation of Nuclear Power Plants on the pretext of low CO₂ emissions, which is in fact, more dangerous to people as well as environment.

Already, the sale of Electric Vehicles (EVs) escalated on the pretext of zero-emissions. Electricity is unavailable to farmers and common people when there are no EVs. The recent farmer's struggle has seriously opposed to the Bill of Privatisation of Electricity distribution. Still, many interior villages and Adivasi hamlets are not connected with electricity. If EVs became main means of transportation, then what will be the level of electricity requirement? These consumers will be squeezed on the name of additional charges, load charges. Moreover, India will be pressurised to close thermal power plants which produce more than 70 percent. As a result, India will be forced to mortgage entire national resources only for the production of electricity as well as EVs.

One serious study reveals that the manufacture of batteries required by EVs needs huge amounts of Zinc, Manganese, Lithium, Silver oxide. All the heavy metals needed to save electricity in batteries are highly toxic. Moreover, it requires heavy extraction of minerals. The used and thrown batteries become a heavy toxic material in soil.

The process of accelerating the sale of EVs strengthens monopoly capital as an imperialist power of environmental exploitation. Consequently, the backwardness of backward countries will be increased. It raises the dependency and force them to remain as toxic colonies to bear toxic emissions. The entire environment will be thrown to dangerous level.

In fact, our level of electricity consumption is at low level. Moreover, this has to be raised to achieve qualitative change in the lives of people. The per capita electricity consumption in US in 2019 is as high as 13,405 KW and per capita emissions are 20.2 t CO₂. In Germany, it is 7297 KW and emissions are 9.8 t CO₂.

In UK, it is 8642 KW and emissions are 6.1 t CO₂. While in India, the per capita electricity consumption is as low as 1174 KW and per capita emissions are just 2.4 t CO₂. Thus, our electricity consumption is much lower to the global average. Moreover, in this regard our share in the Global emissions is only 6–7 percent. Therefore, even if we reduce our emissions, it will not have only significant impact on global emissions. The substitution of Non- Fossil fuel electricity generation and encouragement to EVs is only for the interests of monopoly capital.

As per Paris Agreement, the dominant countries should provide \$100 billion funds to emerging economies to reduce GHGs. However, they failed in this regard. On the request of emerging economies in COP-26, they promised to provide the fund by 2023. In fact, major part of it is loans. Their debt- trap will be further tightened. Consequently, the domination of Imperialist exploitative forces on the resources of backward countries will be strengthened further.

The continuation of higher profits of monopoly capital continuously needs boundless exploitation of environmental resources and emits high level of CO₂. To solve this, Paris Agreement proposed that carbon forests should be raised in backward countries with foreign Investments. The generated carbon should be sold to corporate forces. Thus, the corporates which purchase the carbon will be eligible for equivalent CO₂ emissions. The proposal is acceptable to dominant forces. The Glasgow climate pact has formulated needed rules to ensure transparency in carbon marketing.

As many as 137 countries agreed to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030. The CEOs of Financial Institutions who control more than \$ 8.7 trillion global assets committed to eliminate investment in activities linked to deforestation. Thus, in future, huge foreign investments will be available to carbon forests. Thus, the growth of carbon forests will be accelerated by vacating villages forcibly to produce needed carbon to ensure CO₂ emissions of monopoly capital.

Contrastingly, in India all the acts related to environmental protection are either liberalised or abolished since 2015 on the name of “Ease of Doing Business”. In fact, India has developed a strong legal system to protect-ecology as it is closely linked to social development too. Still, the environmental destruction increased from 1990 onwards. Moreover, in the name of ‘Development at any cost’ the government started diluting environmental rules. Thus, the development at the cost of environment became a normal phenomenon. The relevant acts modified and simplified to ensure the appropriation of natural resources and common property resources by monopoly capital. This resulted in the demise of

forests and wild animals and species protection. This led to the negation of lives of millions whose livelihood is closely linked to forests.

In 2012, the CAG identified faulty and illegal coal-mines allotment. But when BJP came to power in 2014, it has amended the relevant law to legalise the violations. Thus, illegal allotments became legal. In fact, all the amendments of Acts since 2015, on the name of ease of doing business to strengthen privatisation and commercialisation are negative to the law of environmental protection. Moreover, environmental clearance will not be applicable to so-called Bharatmala, Sagarmala, Highways, Pipelines, Transmission lines, Coal and other minerals –as they stated to be means of development. As soon as Prakash Javadevkar became environment Minister, he started giving prior permissions on the name of 'Utmost Good Faith' without examining from the viewpoint of environmental laws. They will be regularised later on automatically. Further, the Centre directed States that permissions should not be delayed due to environmental clearances. No value for people's opinions. No place for their protests.

Thus, the process of privatisation and corporatisation strengthened at the cost of environmental protection. It is growing like Tsunami. In this condition, the issue of Climate Change will not be solved by substituting EVs. These measures will destroy the lives of people as well as environment. The purpose of our PM Modi's announcement in COP26 that India will reduce 1 billion tons of CO₂ emissions by 2030, shifting of railways from the use of thermal power to electricity generated by non-fossil fuel and India will reach Net-zero goal by 2070, only for the benefit of corporate forces.

Rising Problem of Climate Change - Reasons

Since many decades, the dominant countries, corporate forces and wealthy class strongly promoted the argument that poor and backward countries are responsible for environmental destruction. However, it is proved that the intensity of global emission increased from 1990 onwards. This really affirms that the issue is closely related to the strengthening of exploitative capitalist system. The capitalist class destroys nature and environment for getting more and more profits. Rising economic inequality and extreme concentration of wealth, super luxurious lives of ultra rich resulted in excessive CO₂ emissions. This is clearly proved in recently released 'World Inequality Report, 2022' and Oxfam's Carbon Inequality Report, 2021 with relevant data.

The monopoly capital could appropriate the entire natural resources along with the common/collective property resources with its strengthening of imperialist exploitative system. This trend is strongly supported by the comprador

bourgeoisie governments of emerging economies. Consequently, the marginalised and adivasi people whose lives are closely linked to forests for generations are thrown out from forests. Moreover, they are blamed that they hinder development and responsible for climate change. In fact, the monopoly capital and wealthy class are accountable for environmental pollution where as oppressed classes are suffering from this issue.

The emission of dominant countries is relatively higher when compared to global average. US emissions are three times higher. Moreover, the backward countries are transformed as toxic colonies to throw the emissions of dominant countries. It is known to all that the distorted industrial development of rich countries intensified the issue of climate change. They have completed their quota of CO₂ emissions. In fact, their CO₂ emissions should be negative so as to provide space to emerging economies. Contrarily, they are asking backward countries to grow carbon forests to enable rich nations for CO₂ emissions.

In view of the extreme concentration of wealth, the costly lives of ultra rich in all the nations will be similar. The CO₂ emissions of this class is the main cause for the issue of climate change. Top 10% rich class are responsible for 50 percent emissions. Contrarily, the emissions of bottom 50 percent is at the low levels.

The per capita CO₂ emissions of bottom 50 percent per annum is 1.6 tons which constitute 12 percent of global emissions. While the per capita emissions of middle 40 percent per annum is 6.6 tons which constitute 40 percent of global emissions. The share of top 10 percent in the global emissions is as high as 47.6% percent. Their per capita CO₂ emissions are 31 tons per annum. Among the top 1 percent super rich will emit 110 tonnes on an average per year. Their share is 16.8 percent. Contrarily, among bottom 3.8 billion people, as many as 1 billion people will emit less than one ton on an average per annum. Thus, strong positive relations is seen between wealth and CO₂ emissions.

Therefore, rise in the concentration of wealth raises CO₂ emissions excessively. The CO₂ emissions of top one percent is on the rise continuously from 1990 onwards. Thus, unrestrained rise in the economic inequalities is the significant cause for the issue of climate change. It is a wonder to notice that the COPs organised by UNFCCC so far failed to mention it at least. The top 10 percent rich in US, France should reduce 90 percent of their consumption while middle income group by 50 percent. As they move to top level, there will be huge growth in their CO₂ emissions. The average CO₂ emissions of top one percent in the globe per year is as high as 110 tons, while it is 467 tons for top 0.1 percent billionaires. Further,

it is 2530 tons for top 0.01 percent super billionaires. The continuation of rise in economic inequalities intensified the issue of Climate Change.

During the period of severe Covid-19 pandemic in its second wave, when majority people suffered from extreme poverty and miserable lives. Contrarily, in the same period 'Space Tourism' started for the enjoyment of ultra rich. The 11 minute tour will emit as high as 76 tons per capita. The addition of indirect emissions make it 250 to 1000 tons. The per capita lifetime CO₂ emissions of bottom 1 billion people never exceeds the per capita CO₂ emissions of super rich in their 11 minute space tour.

The compatible per capita CO₂ emissions to attain global warming at 1.5°C should be 2 tons per annum. While per capita CO₂ emissions of top one percent per annum is 70 tons. Bill Gates' CO₂ emissions from his private jet travel alone is as high as 7500 tons. Roman Abramowitz emits 34,000 tons per year by running his super Yachts. Moreover, ultra-rich will possess gigantic buildings in multiple places, supercars, private jets. All these are mainly responsible for CO₂ emissions. The proposal of Bill Gates to shift to Bio-fuel needs enormous tree felling for wood pellets which destroys forests and erosion of species. Thus, wealth of rich class, their consumption and violation of rules of environmental protection destroys environment at an accelerated speed.

The aviation tours of celebrities as revealed in social media is cause for 1000 tons CO₂ emissions. The share of top 1 percent rich in CO₂ emissions from aviation is to the extent of 50 percent. Further, the investments that produce the luxury goods consumed by super rich is cause for 70 percent emissions in 2019.

The economic model of exploitative capitalist system, consequent excessive economic inequalities, extreme concentration of wealth resulted in this super luxury lives are real causes for the issue of climate change. This negates the lives of majority oppressed and poses critical problems for the survival of globe. Moreover, the super luxury lives of ultra rich are strongly campaigned as role models which seriously destroying the way of thinking of youth resulting in cultural perversion. This pollutes human relations.

Per Capita Targets of CO₂ Emissions Compatible to 1.5°C

It is a wonder to notice that the per capita consumption emission footprints set for top 1 percent wealthy class to achieve the goal of 1.5°C by 2030, is still 30 times higher when compared to global average. Thus, the permission is given to this class to increase their consumption emissions. Their share in the global emissions in 1990 is 13 percent and it will increase to 16 percent in 2030. While, the

target set to bottom 50 percent is still lower when compared to global average. Thus, the Paris Agreement accepts and promotes Carbon Inequality.

In fact, the consumption of top one percent should be reduced by 97 percent, but the agreement reduced it by just 5 percent, while the consumption emissions of bottom 50 percent will be compatible to 1.5°C even if their consumption increased by 200 times. The consumption of middle 40 percent should be reduced by 57 percent. Thus, the decisions taken, targets fixed to solve the problem of Climate Change still supports the high consumption emissions of wealthy class. Unless and until, radical reduction in the consumption of wealthy class is ensued, the climate change problem will never be solved.

Conclusion

The strengthening of imperialist exploitative forces resulting in extreme economic inequalities is the cause for rise in all kinds of discriminations and moreover, it is aggravating the issue of climate change. The complete eradication of exploitative system is a necessary condition to stop environmental destruction. This warrants strong consolidation of all the revolutionary forces and build powerful movements.