

A Blueprint for Checking the Survival Crisis Before It Is Too Late

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Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [Society](#)

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The most defining feature of our times, unprecedented in human history, is that due to man-made factors the life-sustaining conditions for all life-forms of our planet are badly threatened and hence they face a survival crisis.

Segments of this man-made crisis appeared and grew steadily during the last 75 years. Today the survival crisis has assumed an extremely serious form.

Many factors together constitute the survival crisis. At the risk of some simplification, these may be classified into two sections.

Firstly, there are very serious environmental problems, led by not confined to climate change. **These include fresh water crisis, ocean acidification, air pollution, accumulation of toxic substances and products, disruption of food safety (among other factors by GM crops), destruction of natural forests and huge bio-diversity loss with escalating species extinction.**

Secondly, there are factors linked to accumulation and proliferation of nuclear weapons, increasing chances of their actual use and accidents relating to them.

Robot weapons also bring very serious existential risks. Banned weapons may still see destructive use.

Highly destructive new weapons equal to or worse than existing WMDs (Weapons of Mass Destruction) can emerge in new conditions.

Risks of [US-NATO] terrorist groups gaining access to or control over WMDs are increasing. The impacts of any large-scale use of WMDs are too well-known to be repeated here.

Several senior scientists or groups of scientists have issued statements in recent years saying that these two issues, taken separately or together, constitute an existential crisis.

As a journalist and author, when I researched this issue, I had an overwhelming feeling of the importance of this issue. Following years of sporadic effects, in 2018-19 (with age catching up) I decided to concentrate my efforts on this subject and **wrote four books on this subject. All four books have been published. These are**

(1) Protecting Earth for Children – Crucial Role of Next Decade

(2) Earth Without Borders – One World for Protecting All

(3) Planet in Peril; Survival Crisis – People’s Response Only Way Forward and

(4) A Hindi book which to some extent brings together all the three above-mentioned books - Dharti Ki Raksha Ke Liye Nirnayak Hoga Agla Dashak.

What follows is a summary of what I've stated in these four books mentioned above.

Firstly, given the overwhelming importance of the survival crisis for all humanity and for all forms of life, this survival crisis should be at the centre of all future decisions and planning all over the world.

Secondly, the survival crisis should be resolved within the framework of justice, peace and democracy. In fact, with the emergence of this crisis, the case for justice and equality, avoidance of all war/conflict, life based on non-violence and real grassroots democracy has become much stronger as all this is needed much more than before for resolving the survival crisis.

Thirdly, the next decade 2020-30 may well be the last window of opportunity for resolving the survival crisis before it is too late. This assessment is based on the extent to which various serious problems have advanced. This is also in conformity with the special report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released in October 2018 which said that critical decisions for checking climate change must be made and implemented in the years up to 2030. This report also spoke of 'unprecedented changes' that are needed. Hence a 10-year perspective plan on very basic worldwide changes is badly needed.

Fourthly, my research reveals that the most basic solutions and changes that are needed are not possible within the existing world structure based on nation states. So we either need to move away entirely from this, towards 'Earth Without Borders' or else other big reforms are needed - for example handing over all survival issues to a democratically formed world government with limited mandate just for these issues.

Fifthly, all future wars need to be avoided. The most serious environmental issues cannot be resolved under the shadow of war and conflict. For this, suggestions like disbanding all armies and handing over protection of national borders (if at all such borders are to exist) to a democratically formed world government or international authority should be considered.

Sixthly, all nuclear weapons, all weapons of mass destruction and robot (or AI or autonomous) weapons should be completely banned and eliminated, except that for some very special and unlikely situations less than one percent of the stocks may be kept with a world authority in highly secure conditions.

Seventhly, very high priority should be assigned to restricting global warming to 1.50C. For this while use of fossil fuels has to be minimized, this should be accompanied in addition by wider changes for minimizing all harmful and wasteful products and technologies while at the same time leaving more carbon space for meeting the genuine needs of the poor.

Changes in the economy should be for increasing justice and equality, while reducing waste and consumerism. Livelihood protection and social security should be emphasized, while linking these to sustainable life-styles and all-round protection of environment.

Social change should emphasise sincerity, cooperation, stability and equality in human relationships, so that people seek happiness and satisfaction in such relationships and not in consumerism or endless, wasteful pursuit of material, sensual pleasures. Gender justice at

all levels should be honored.

Relationship of human beings with all other forms of life should be based on protective (not destructive) thinking and attitudes. Special encouragement should be extended to small family farms, protection of natural forests, water conservation and improving greenery in rural areas, leading to more sustainable livelihoods.,with special emphasis on cooperative efforts of people particularly women.

Last but not the least, all this will not be possible without a drastic and sustainable change in existing value systems, as prevailing value systems are not at all in tune with the changes outlined above. Hence a very big and creative effort has to be made in this context, identifying values which are needed and spreading them in participatory, interesting ways with special emphasis on youth and children.

A key concern should be to emphasize that present-day children and youth as well as the generations to come (our children and grandchildren and their children and grandchildren) have to the right to grow up and live in a safe and secure world.

Some of the basic changes which are badly needed will be resisted strongly by the existing establishment, we should have patience enough to engage in a well-reasoned debate with them to win over many potential supporters who will play a helpful role. However a more important role will be played by people's movements with special emphasis on youth movements. Existing social movements of peace, environment protection, justice, gender justice, democracy and animal rights need to come closer to each other and work together with the added perspective of resolving the survival crisis in time. Peace movements with many-sided dimensions should converge to emphasise non-violence in all aspects of life.

As the survival crisis accentuates ordinary people will be inclined to listen to what these movements have to say and by this time these movements should be able to speak unitedly about a broad agenda of change that is needed to resolve the survival crisis in time.

This is a very brief summary of what I've tried to say in the four books mentioned above. I've also tried to take this agenda forward in the form of a campaign called Save the Earth Now Campaign and its SED Demand. Several prominent citizens and social movements have endorsed this campaign. This campaign statement can also be seen at my web-site - www.bharatdogra.in.

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