



By KP Shashidharan

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Only the fittest can survive in Delhi, the heart of India

The first thing after birth for healthy life we need oxygen, then potable water, and then non-toxic food. To have these life giving prerequisites, there must be a healthy habitat, flora and fauna, biodiversity and biotic and abiotic surroundings. Now the question is what do we breathe, what do we drink and what do we get for eating for survival in Delhi which is the heart of India. The city of the great emperors of India is now claimed to be “governed good” by the Central Government and “administered for the common man” by the Aam Aadmi Party-run State Government, the modern emperors and kings of India!

However, Greenpeace India reports a different story. It says that Delhi is among the top 20 in the most polluted cities of India where 1.2 million deaths occur every year due to air pollution only. Statistics do not speak about how many die due to bad water and food poisoning. What matters is who cares? Who is responsible? Who will govern, administer and care for the people and make a positive difference in their living? Who will make Indian cities habitable? Fighting elections is good, being powerful is also good, shouting all the time doing good for the poor is appreciable, but is good governance visible? Hostile parties indulge in never ending games of mudslinging “You and I” accusations and counter-allegations. Are the people at fault for being born, or coming to cities for living? None of the 168 cities assessed by Greenpeace complies with air quality standards prescribed by the WHO. Political parties can find fault with the calibrating equipment or the WHO for prescribing such standards!

What’s the need of any standard except creating confusion, depression and finding fault with good governance? The report shows that a “few” cities in southern India comply with air quality standards. These cities may follow the example of Delhi when more people opt for fossil fuel-driven automobiles. The best secret of making more money is by looting the helpless public by unscrupulous, greedy traders who allegedly blind the supposed-to-be law-enforcing agencies by their ultra innovative ways. They reportedly grease the palms for facilitating themselves to sell insecticides and pesticides-infested vegetables, adulterated dairy products



and the toxic flesh of hormone-injected animals!

PATHETIC LIVING

To many, living in the national Capital is pathetic, horribly depressing, having no escape! It is thanks to pollution in the air and water, the deafening noise pollution and food adulteration! Children, adults and the aged, males and females and the third sex of all castes, communities, and religions are treated equally if they have to come out in the open air! Pollution treats everyone on a par, equitable and fair. Those who are voted to power go on playing the game of fixing Odd-Even numbers for driving cars on Delhi roads on different dates! People die in the game, but the privileged escape the killing gas chamber by sitting beside AC, drinking filtered water and beverages and eating organic food and meat from well-reared animals. In the deadly horrific city of Delhi, people often get sick and get hospitalised many times. The diseases of pollution like dysentery, cholera, typhoid, malaria, *chickengunya* and dengue reduce the life span and kill the unfortunate untimely. In the ancient land of Ayurveda which prescribes food as medicine for longevity, 1.3 billion now struggle for survival of the fittest without potable water and breathable air after more than 70 years since Independence. Who cares for life in India where Almighty God is dispensing the fruits of *Karma* and is solely responsible for protecting life. ■

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