



# HARIT SANKALP

# हरित संकल्प

“अवसर की प्रतीक्षा में मत बैठो ।

आज का अवसर ही सर्वोत्तम है ।”

हर छोटा बदलाव बड़ी कामयाबी का हिस्सा होता है

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# **Spiritual Ecology in Sikh Dharma: Reverence for Nature in Sri Guru Granth Sahib**



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## **Abstract**

*The concept of spiritual ecology in Sikh Dharma highlights the profound reverence for nature expressed in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS), the central scripture of the Sikh faith. Rooted in the foundational belief of Ik Onkar, the Oneness of the Divine, Sikh teachings portray nature as a sacred manifestation of the Divine Will (Hukam). Key verses, such as “Pavan Guru, Pani Pita, Mata Dharat Mahat,” highlight the Earth, air, and water as revered life-givers and spiritual guides. SGGS condemns greed and material exploitation while promoting virtues such as contentment, humility, and selfless service (seva), all of which foster ecological balance and sustainability. The scripture celebrates biodiversity, seasonal rhythms, and the interconnectedness of all life forms, offering a holistic ecological worldview. The lives of the Sikh Gurus, particularly their agrarian lifestyles and environmental stewardship, exemplify these principles. In today’s era of climate crisis and ecological disruption, the teachings of SGGS offer a spiritually grounded and ethically compelling framework for environmental care. This spiritual ecology calls for a conscious, harmonious relationship with the Earth, one that integrates reverence, responsibility, and action, positioning Sikh Dharma as a vital contributor to contemporary environmental ethics and global sustainability efforts.*

## **Introduction**

In an age where environmental degradation and climate change threaten the balance of life on Earth, revisiting spiritual traditions for guidance and ethical wisdom becomes not only relevant but urgent. Among the world’s sacred texts, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* (SGGS) [1-2], the eternal scripture of *Sikh Dharma*, offers a rich tapestry of teachings rooted in the sanctity, interconnectedness, and divine presence within nature. This spiritual ecology is not merely metaphorical but forms a foundational worldview in *Sikh Dharma*, where reverence for nature is intertwined with reverence for the Divine [3-5]. Through poetic metaphors, moral instructions, and

spiritual principles, SGGS presents an ecological vision that can inform contemporary debates on sustainability and environmental ethics [6-7].

### 1. Nature as Manifestation of the Divine

The central tenet of Sikh theology is the belief in one, formless, all-pervading Divine (*Ik Oankaar*), present in every element of creation. Nature is not separate from God but a manifestation of the Divine Will (*Hukam*). As a result, the natural world is to be approached with reverence, not domination.

One of the most well-known verses reflecting this reverence is:

*Pavan Guru, Pani Pita, Mata Dharat Mahat.*

Air is the Guru, Water is the Father, and Earth is the Great Mother. (Jap ji, SGGS, p. 8)

This verse from the Japji Sahib, the opening composition of SGGS, establishes a spiritual ecology where natural elements are ascribed familial and pedagogical roles. The air (*pavan*) is the guru that teaches life through breath and vitality. Water (*pani*) is likened to a nurturing father, essential for growth and sustenance. The Earth (*dharat*) is the great mother who births, feeds, and shelters all beings. This spiritual framework promotes a vision of nature not as an exploitable resource, but as a sacred family, deserving of love, gratitude, and protection.

### 2. Interconnectedness and Oneness

The philosophy of *Ik Oankaar* also underscores the interconnectedness of all life. SGGS frequently emphasizes that all beings and elements exist as part of a unified whole, established and sustained by divine order (*Hukam*).

*vich duneeªaa sév kamaaªeeªæ. Taa dargèh bæsaṇ paaªeeªæ.*

In the midst of this world, do *seva* (selfless service), and you shall be given a place of honour in the Court of the Lord.” (M. 1, SGGS, p. 26)

This injunction to perform selfless service extends beyond human society to include service to the Earth and its ecosystems. Such a vision blurs the boundary between the spiritual and ecological. By serving others and living lightly on the Earth, one aligns with divine will and maintains cosmic balance.

This interconnected view challenges the anthropocentric model of modern industrial societies, which often places human needs above ecological systems. In contrast, *Sikh Dharma* views human beings as part of an intricate web of creation, wherein harming any part of the system is akin to harming oneself and one's spiritual potential.

### 3. Condemnation of Greed and Material Exploitation

One of the root causes of environmental degradation is greed, an insatiable desire to consume, exploit, and dominate. SGGS strongly condemns greed (*lobh*) and attachment (*moh*) as spiritual vices that not only corrupt the soul but also destabilize ecological harmony.

*Lab kutaa koor choohṛaa.*

Greed is a dog; falsehood is a filthy street-sweeper. (M. 1, SGGS, p. 15)

By equating greed with a dog that chases endlessly, the Guru draws attention to the dehumanizing and destructive nature of uncontrolled desire. This metaphor can be extended to modern consumerism, where constant economic growth and overexploitation of nature lead to pollution, climate change, and loss of biodiversity.

*Sikh Dharma* calls for *santokh* (contentment), a virtue that encourages individuals to live within their means, be grateful for what they have, and resist excessive consumption. This ethical stance has substantial ecological implications, promoting sustainable living and reduced environmental footprints.

#### 4. Sacredness of Biodiversity

The SGGS abounds with references to animals, birds, rivers, forests, and seasons, portraying them not only as divine creations but also as spiritual metaphors. Every creature is seen as having a role in the divine play, and none is considered inferior or expendable.

*K<sup>h</sup>and pataal asa<sup>n</sup>k<sup>h</sup> mæ gaṇai na ho<sup>ee</sup>. Too kariaa govind tūḍ<sup>h</sup> sirjee tūḍ<sup>h</sup>æ go<sup>ee</sup>. Lak<sup>h</sup> cha<sup>o</sup>raaseeh mēḍnee tuj<sup>h</sup> hee té ho<sup>ee</sup>.*

There are countless worlds and nether regions; I cannot calculate their number. You are the Creator, the Lord of the Universe; You create it, and You destroy it. The 8.4 million species of beings issued forth from You. (M. 3, SGGS, p. 1283)

*Lak<sup>h</sup> cha<sup>o</sup>raaseeh jant<sup>i</sup> upaa<sup>é</sup>.*

God created 8.4 million species of beings. (M. 1, SGGS, p. 1190).

*Ba<sup>i</sup>aalees lak<sup>h</sup> jee jal mēh ho<sup>ie</sup>.....*

There are approximately 4.2 million species of beings in the water... (Bahagt Namdev, SGGS, p. 485)

Thus, SGGS points out that there are beings and creatures in the water and on the land, in the worlds and universes, and God has created them all. This universality affirms the sanctity of all life forms, from the smallest insect to the largest mammal, and calls for their protection. In modern terms, this can be seen as an endorsement of biodiversity conservation. Moreover, the lack of hierarchy in Sikh metaphysics means that all beings have intrinsic value, not just instrumental worth.

#### 5. Seasonal Consciousness and Ecological Rhythms

The *Barah Maha* (Twelve Months), a poetic composition included in SGGS, beautifully illustrates the changing moods and spiritual meanings associated with each month of the Indian calendar. Written by Guru Nanak and Guru Arjan Dev, it reflects a deep ecological consciousness rooted in seasonal cycles and agricultural rhythms. For instance:

*Saavan sarsee kaamṇee charan kamal si<sup>o</sup> pi<sup>a</sup>ar.*

The month of Saawan is delightful; the soul-bride longs to meet her Husband Lord. (M. 5, SGGS, p. 134)

The Barah Maha not only celebrates nature's beauty but also encourages mindfulness of natural rhythms. This mindfulness is crucial in an age where environmental imbalances are caused by a disregard for seasonal and ecological limits, manifesting in phenomena such as deforestation, soil depletion, and water scarcity.

## **6. Role of the Gurus as Environmental Stewards**

The Sikh Gurus themselves exemplified simple, agrarian lifestyles, and many of their teachings arose in rural settings surrounded by forests, rivers, and fields. They encouraged tree planting, equitable use of water, and sustainable community life. Guru Nanak's travels (udasis) often included references to mountains, rivers, and natural phenomena, highlighting their spiritual significance.

Guru Har Rai, the seventh Guru, was especially noted for his care for the environment and preservation of medicinal herbs. He maintained extensive gardens and encouraged care for all living beings. His legacy is a testament to the Sikh emphasis on living in balance with nature.

## **7. Water and Rivers: Symbols of Purity and Life**

Water holds a sacred place in *Sikh Dharma*, not just in ritual, but also in symbolism and ecological value. SGGS frequently associates water with life, purification, and divine presence.

*Pahilaa paanee jeeo hæ jii hari-aa sabh ko-é.*

First, there is life in the water, by which everything else flourishes. (M. 1, SGGS, p. 472)

Water bodies, such as rivers, are not merely physical entities in Sikh thought; they are sacred spaces. Historical sites such as the *Sarovar* (water tank) at Sri Harmandir Sahib in Amritsar are designed to emphasize spiritual cleansing and ecological balance.

This reverence implies a duty to preserve water resources, avoid pollution, and ensure equitable access to water, issues that are central to modern environmental justice movements.

## **8. The Concept of Seva and Environmental Responsibility**

*Seva* (selfless service) is a cornerstone of Sikh practice. While traditionally associated with helping others in community kitchens (*langar*) or volunteering at Gurdwaras, *seva* can also be extended to environmental stewardship.

Cleaning rivers, planting trees, promoting organic farming, and resisting industrial pollution are modern expressions of *seva* in an ecological context. Several Sikh organizations and Gurdwaras today engage in such *eco-seva*, inspired directly by the teachings of the SGGS and Guru-led traditions.

By expanding *seva* to include environmental care, *Sikh Dharma* bridges the gap between spiritual practice and ecological action.

## **9. Implications for Contemporary Environmentalism**

In the contemporary context of climate change, habitat destruction, and mass extinction, the teachings of SGGS offer a transformative vision rooted in respect, balance, and divine



interconnectedness. Unlike secular environmental ethics, which often rest on utilitarian or anthropocentric rationales, the Sikh worldview provides a spiritual imperative for ecological care.

This can be particularly effective in inspiring behaviour change, fostering community-based environmental activism, and promoting long-term sustainability grounded in faith.

Organizations such as EcoSikh [8], established in 2009, have taken these teachings to global platforms, promoting awareness of Sikh ecological values and initiating tree-plantation drives, clean energy campaigns, and water conservation projects worldwide.

## Conclusion

Sri Guru Granth Sahib offers a timeless ecological wisdom grounded in spiritual insight, moral responsibility, and reverence for nature. By portraying the Earth and its elements as sacred manifestations of the Divine, SGGS calls for a life of humility, balance, and selfless care. Its teachings challenge the exploitative attitudes that drive modern environmental crises and instead offer a spiritually enriched path of ecological harmony.

In a world increasingly disconnected from the rhythms of nature, *Sikh Dharma's* spiritual ecology reminds us that environmental care is not only a social or scientific obligation, it is a sacred duty. Embracing these teachings can help foster a sustainable future, where humanity lives not above nature, but as a conscious part of it, imbued with awe, compassion, and reverence for all creation.

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# **Panch Tatva and the Modern Environment: Bridging Ancient Wisdom with Scientific Thought**



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## **Introduction**

In an era dominated by rapid industrialization and technological advancement, environmental degradation has emerged as one of the most pressing global concerns. From deforestation and water scarcity to rising carbon emissions and climate change, the world stands at a critical juncture. While scientific interventions have become essential in addressing these challenges, there is increasing recognition of the relevance and depth of traditional ecological wisdom, particularly that embedded in ancient Indian texts. One such timeless framework is the concept of Panch Tatva — the five fundamental elements: Prithvi (Earth), Jal (Water), Agni (Fire), Vayu (Air), and Aakash (Space).

This article explores how the philosophical concept of Panch Tatva offers not just spiritual insight but also aligns with ecological principles and modern environmental science. It presents a compelling case for revisiting ancient Indian wisdom to re-establish a harmonious relationship with nature — one that is not exploitative but respectful and balanced.

## **Understanding Panch Tatva: The Five Elements of Nature**

The concept of Panch Tatva finds its roots in Samkhya philosophy, Ayurveda, the Upanishads and Vedic cosmology. According to these , all matter in the universe including the human body is composed of these five essential elements:

1. Prithvi (Earth) – Symbolizes stability, fertility, and life-supporting structures.
2. Jal (Water) – Denotes fluidity, purification, and sustenance.
3. Agni (Fire) – Represents transformation, energy, and metabolism.
4. Vayu (Air) – Embodies movement, breath, and communication.
5. Aakash (Space/Ether) – Refers to openness, consciousness, and connectivity.

Together, these elements explain the interconnectedness of life forms, their environments and the cosmos. According to Ayurveda, balance among these elements is essential for health and by extension environmental harmony.

### **Scientific Perspective: Environmental Parallels**

From a modern ecological and scientific lens the Panch Tatva aligns closely with the components of Earth's ecosystems:

- Earth (Lithosphere) provides soil, minerals, and a foundation for all terrestrial life.
- Water (Hydrosphere) covers 71% of the Earth's surface and is critical for all life forms.
- Fire (Energy systems) powers natural cycles like photosynthesis, the water cycle, and atmospheric dynamics.
- Air (Atmosphere) regulates climate, weather, and respiration.
- Space (Exosphere/Cosmic influence) encompasses planetary motion, solar radiation, and even satellite-based environmental monitoring.

Scientific disciplines such as geology, hydrology, climatology and environmental physics study these components in depth. However, they often do so in isolation, unlike the Panch Tatva philosophy which emphasizes holistic interdependence.

### **Prithvi (Earth) – The Foundation We Exploit**

Ancient Indian scriptures refer to the Earth as “Dharti Maa” — the mother who nourishes all life. The Atharva Veda speaks of Earth as sacred, encouraging sustainable use of land and natural resources. “Mata Bhumi Putro Aham Prithivya”

(“The Earth is my mother, and I am her son.”) – Atharva Veda 12.1.12

In contrast, modern industrial activities often treat Earth as an infinite resource base. Soil erosion, mining, deforestation and land degradation have reached alarming levels. Scientific solutions like afforestation, soil conservation and organic farming are steps in the right direction, but the root of the problem lies in our attitude toward nature.

If we adopt the reverence for Earth embedded in our scriptures, environmental conservation becomes not just a scientific task but a moral and spiritual responsibility.

### **Jal (Water) – The Sacred Source in Crisis**

Water, considered purifying and life-giving in Indian traditions is referred to as “Jal Devta” (Water God). Rivers like Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati were personified as goddesses. Rituals, prayers and festivals have long celebrated the sanctity of water bodies.



Yet today, India faces a severe water crisis. Groundwater depletion, polluted rivers and mismanaged water systems threaten agriculture, biodiversity and public health. While the science of rainwater harvesting, wastewater treatment and watershed management offers solutions, traditional practices like stepwells (baolis) and tank irrigation systems also provide sustainable models worth reviving.

Bridging modern water management with ancient water ethics can result in more community centered and culturally sensitive conservation strategies.

### **Agni (Fire) – Energy and Environmental Balance**

Agni is central in Vedic rituals — a symbol of purity, transformation and divine connection. In Ayurveda, it governs digestion and metabolism. Scientifically, Agni corresponds to energy systems, from solar radiation to fossil fuel combustion.

However, the overuse of non-renewable energy sources has disrupted the balance, leading to rising CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and climate change. While we shift toward solar, wind and bioenergy. The fire sacrifices (Yajnas) in ancient times symbolized giving back to the universe, a concept now echoed in carbon offset programs and green energy investments.

Thus we must not just change energy sources but also our relationship with energy seeing it not merely as a utility but a sacred force to be used responsibly.

### **Vayu (Air) – Breath of Life, Polluted and Ignored**

Air is central to life, not just for respiration but for maintaining ecological balance. In Indian tradition, pranayama (breath control) practices acknowledge air as a carrier of vital life force (prana).

Modern science studies air through atmospheric chemistry, pollution control and climate models. Urban air quality today is deteriorating fast due to vehicular emissions, industrial activities and unregulated construction. India's major cities often rank among the world's most polluted.

Ancient texts never saw air as “free”, it was sacred and shared. Adopting this mindset alongside scientific innovations like green mobility, carbon capture and clean fuels, could help reverse the crisis.

### **Aakash (Space) – The Silent Element**

Often misunderstood or neglected, Aakash represents space, ether or consciousness. In ancient Indian cosmology, it was believed to be the medium through which sound and energy travelled, a connector of all existence.

In environmental science, space plays an increasingly crucial role. Satellite imaging, climate modeling, and remote sensing have become powerful tools in monitoring natural disasters, deforestation, ocean health and glacial melt.

Interestingly, Indian scriptures linked space with inner awareness, a principle echoed today in the mindfulness movement, which is also being linked to ecological consciousness. Environmental well-being begins with mental awareness and lifestyle changes, making Aakash a symbol of both external and internal space, both of which must be preserved.

### **Resolving Myths and Misconceptions: Reconnecting with Ancient Indian Wisdom**

One of the most critical environmental challenges we face today is public perception, often shaped by misinformation, lack of awareness and a growing disconnect from nature. Ancient Indian knowledge systems, when revisited through a scientific lens, offer valuable insights that can help correct common myths and reestablish harmony with the environment.

#### **Myth: Nature is boundless and endlessly forgiving**

Reality: Ancient Indian texts emphasize the concept of *Maryada* (limit or boundary). Nature, when respected, nurtures; when exploited, retaliates — a truth conveyed through the idea of *Prakriti ka Prakop* (Nature's fury). Overconsumption and imbalance disturb the cosmic order (*Rita*) resulting in ecological consequences like droughts, floods, and disease. Sustainability was never a new idea, it was a way of life.

#### **Myth: Environmental Science is a Western concept**

Reality: India's civilizational heritage is deeply ecological. Concepts like *Vriksha Ayurveda* (science of plant life), *Panchgavya* (five cow-derived products used for health and agriculture), *Agnihotra* (a Vedic ritual believed to purify air), and water harvesting systems in Indus Valley Civilization are profound examples of environmental science rooted in indigenous traditions. Far from imported, ecological consciousness has long been embedded in Indian thought.

#### **Myth: Traditional practices are outdated and irrelevant today**

Reality: Many modern sustainable practices find their origins in ancient Indian methods. Organic farming, now globally promoted, mirrors traditional Indian agriculture that prioritized soil fertility through composting, crop rotation, and natural pesticides. Natural dyes, once sidelined, are returning as eco-friendly alternatives to chemical textiles. Herbal medicine and Ayurveda are being validated by modern pharmacology for their efficacy and sustainability. These are not relics, they are resilient models for the future.

By bridging ancient wisdom with contemporary science, we can dispel harmful myths and build a more informed, rooted and resilient approach to environmental stewardship.

### **The Way Forward: A Holistic Environmental Ethic**

As we confront the escalating environmental crisis, the need is not only for innovation but for a **deeper cultural and ethical shift**, one that reconnects humanity with nature. Ancient Indian philosophy offers such a path through the **Panch Tatva** framework — the five fundamental elements: **Prithvi (Earth), Jal (Water), Agni (Fire), Vayu (Air), and Aakash (Space)**. Far from being symbolic or nostalgic, this framework can serve as a **blueprint for sustainable living** in the 21st century.

- In education, Panch Tatva can be integrated into environmental science curricula from primary school to higher education to build respect for nature. We can nurture ecological consciousness from a young age. This approach not only teaches scientific facts but builds **emotional and spiritual respect for nature**, inspiring youth to become custodians of the environment.
- Modern environmental laws often struggle with enforcement due to lack of emotional connection. Integrating cultural references like **Panch Tatva** can bridge this gap. Such culturally resonant framing can **enhance public participation**, make policies more relatable, and encourage voluntary compliance.
- In daily life, people can adopt mindful practices — like reducing waste (Prithvi), saving water (Jal), switching to renewables (Agni), using clean transportation (Vayu), and creating mental space (Aakash), to live in harmony with nature. These actions cultivate not just environmental sustainability, but **personal and collective well-being**, aligning outer ecology with inner harmony.

### **Conclusion**

Ancient Indian wisdom does not view humans as separate from nature rather, as an extension of it. The concept of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam”, the world is one family, is not just a spiritual slogan but an ecological truth.

By integrating the Panch Tatva philosophy with modern environmental science, we can foster a truly sustainable worldview, one that balances progress with preservation, science with spirituality, and innovation with inner awareness.

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# **Fact Checking Nature: An Analytical Approach to Environmental Myths**



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## **Introduction**

In an era of environmental debates and activism, discussions about nature often become emotionally charged and sometimes misinformed. While growing awareness is crucial, it has also led to a surge in misconceptions. This article aims to offer a clearer understanding of environmental issues by addressing popular myths with logical insights and factual reasoning.

## **Myth 1: Nature Is Too Delicate to Withstand Human Impact**

There is a widespread belief that nature is overly delicate and any form of human involvement causes lasting damage. Although some ecosystems are indeed sensitive, the natural world is remarkably robust. Forests can regrow, rivers can self-purify, and species often adjust to environmental shifts. Rather than avoiding nature, humans should engage with it in a sustainable and responsible way.

## **Myth 2: Natural Equals Safe, Artificial Equals Harmful**

The assumption that all things natural are good and all man-made products are harmful is misleading. Natural elements like poisonous berries or volcanic gases can be dangerous, while engineered innovations like medical treatments and sanitation systems improve quality of life. The goal should be to strike a thoughtful balance between modern progress and ecological well-being.

## **Myth 3: Climate Change Will Only Affect Future Generations**

Many think climate change is a distant issue meant for future generations to deal with. In truth, its effects are already visible— from rising sea levels to more intense storms and shifting weather patterns. This is a current global challenge that demands immediate action through both prevention and adaptation.

## **Myth 4: Recycling Is the Ultimate Environmental Fix**

While recycling is valuable, it's not the complete answer to environmental degradation. Most plastic degrades with repeated recycling, and the process itself consumes energy. The most effective approach lies in reducing consumption and reusing items. Recycling should be a final step, not the first line of defense.

### **Myth 5: Only Forests Are Vital Ecosystems**

Forests are undoubtedly important, but they are not the only ecosystems that matter. Wetlands, oceans, deserts, and grasslands each play a crucial role in environmental balance. Wetlands prevent floods, oceans influence global climate, and grasslands support diverse species. Preserving varied ecosystems is essential for a healthy planet.

### **Bridging Traditional Wisdom with Modern Science**

There's a common belief that ancient ecological knowledge contradicts modern science. However, both can work hand in hand. Traditional methods like water harvesting and crop rotation are practical and time-tested. When combined with scientific analysis, these methods can significantly enhance sustainable practices.

### **Nature and Human Well-being**

Many overlook the close connection between nature and human health. Access to green spaces reduces anxiety, natural diets enhance immunity, and biodiversity lowers disease transmission risks. Urban lifestyles often distance people from nature, leading to both physical and mental health concerns. Reconnecting with the natural world benefits not just the Earth, but also our personal well-being.

### **Rethinking the 'Eco-Guilt' Mentality**

The growing environmental awareness has led some people to experience 'eco-guilt'—the feeling of not doing enough for the planet. This mindset can be counterproductive. Instead, we should focus on taking consistent, manageable steps. Positive change comes from the collective effort of many, not the perfection of a few.

### **Conclusion: A Realistic and Hopeful Outlook**

To truly safeguard our environment, we must ground our efforts in reality, not assumptions. Recognizing both the strength and vulnerability of nature, embracing science alongside tradition, and making informed choices can lead us to a more sustainable and hopeful future.



# Nuances of Being



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*As you may know me.... I try to pen my feelings, with more honesty than with language and grammar. While reading the posts below you may experience what compelled me to write these. While I was thinking of giving a name to my wordings; this came to me; "Nuances of Being" Being "Me" is the best that I am at and hope that will show in this article below.*

## Collective Karma



***Burnt Banyan tree - Image from CNN.com***

The news channels are showing devastation from the fires in the island of Maui in Hawaii. Loss of life, devastation, despair and destruction is seen in every frame that is aired in news. This could have a similar impact as other such news that one sees, sad and upsetting. But this is not just that, in addition to being Sad and upsetting it is emotionally devastating, a personal hurt. Would not have been that if I had not roamed the markets in Lahaina just a few months ago. When the island of Maui and the streets of Lahaina had been a very generous host to my family during our first ever vacation in Hawaii. The famous banyan tree of Lahaina was an instant friend as I saw it.

The banyan tree was not just a tree but an experience that I had verbally shared with almost everyone I met since the visit. The cradling shade of the tree that gave us shelter along with many other visitors, locals, homeless and the carefree roosters (who I learnt was an invasive species in the island, but had made it home many generations ago and the island generously accepted).

The banyan tree's shade was a blessing for all, displaying the concept of inclusion, equality and equity for all, irrespective of race, gender or even species. A concept that many corporations and societies work so hard to explain and implement. But now that tree is burnt in the fires that devastated the island. The shelter and the blessing is scorched. The death toll keeps on rising and loss of property, life and hope is heart-rendering.

What can one do, feeling helpless since it is a bad natural disaster. But is it a natural disaster?

Wildfires were due to unprecedented heat, a direct aftermath of global warming. The uncontrolled spread of fires can be attributed to the hurricane winds. Hurricanes that are becoming intense each year due to climate change. Are we responsible? One species who claim to be the best creation of the almighty.

Not even worth getting in a debate on this topic. I have my opinion that we humans collectively are responsible to a great extent for earth's climate situation. Our actions, our choices, our karma must take some responsibility.



***Banyan Tree of Lahaina - Dec'22 By Nikhil***

The banyan tree had amazing karma of its own providing shade and shelter for all for more than a dozen decades, but still it paid the price of the Karma of human race. Similar can be

said about many who lost their life or livelihood or home in fire.

I think when we share the planet, we do share some impact of each other's Karma to some extent. There is the Collective Karma at work some time. That collective Karma harmed the big banyan tree.

But if collective Karma can damage, I have hope that collective Karma can heal too. And so I pray for that Tree to restore to its past glory, (I hope it is only damaged and not destroyed.)

Let us make small changes in our everyday life. Let our collective Karma start to heal what is damaged. Remember theory of Karma is tightly bound to the concept of free will. Free Will gives us the option to choose our actions to harm or to heal.

Let us heal what is damaged. Let our collective Karma be a constructive force.



# **Vegetation Emerges as Natural Shield Against Noise Pollution**



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Noise pollution is not just an environmental issue, it is a health crisis, a social challenge, and a psychological burden. It sneaks into every corner of our lives from busy highways and bustling industries to our bedrooms and backyards.

## **Understanding the Sources and Impact of Noise Pollution:**

Our modern, and progressing society has achieved technological advancements, rapid urbanization, and a fast-paced lifestyle. Our daily lives have been affected by noise pollution. Unlike smoke in the air or waste in the water, noise is invisible. Although we frequently underestimate the extent of its harm, its effects on our bodies and minds are significant.

Every day, we are surrounded by a barrage of unwanted sound: the impatient honking of traffic, the booming speakers of DJs and religious processions, the ceaseless buzz of mobile phones, high-volume televisions, and the background hum of home appliances. These noises, once jarring, have now become so routine that we hardly notice them, but put constant auditory stress and impact our lives.

Noise pollution affects everyone, but its grip is cruellest on the most vulnerable, in essence, infants whose sleep is disrupted, children who struggle to focus, elderly people who suffer from memory loss and sleeplessness, patients in hospitals whose healing is delayed, and expectant mothers. For those dealing with mental health challenges, persistent noise can deepen distress and worsen symptoms, disrupting recovery.

One of the major contributors to daily noise is the rampant honking on roads. While adding to noise pollution, it also reflects our declining patience. Using pressure horns or honking in frustration does not solve traffic problems, it only adds to collective stress. In fact, rising cases of road rage today can often be linked to noise-related stress. The need of the hour is not more noise, but calmer and discipline.

Beyond the chaos of traffic and public celebrations, there lies another major contributor: industry. In factories and construction zones, machines roar from dawn to dusk, and often well into the night. The residents living near such areas are exposed to dangerously high decibel levels for long periods of time. Prolonged exposure can lead to hearing loss, chronic irritability, poor sleep, and even long-term psychological strain. The heavy vibrations and sharp mechanical sounds not only affect humans but also disturb birds and animals.

And noise is even prevalent in our homes. The simultaneous use of mixers, grinders, washing machines, air conditioners, and even ceiling fans creates a cacophony. This may sound harmless but without even knowing, it disturbs our mental calm, increases anxiety, fatigue, headaches, and emotional irritability.

Numerous factors fuel this growing problem. Among them are traffic & motor noise, reckless honking, loudspeakers blaring during weddings and festivals, industrial operations, construction work, and the constant buzz of electronic devices. In urban areas, the problem is magnified.

One particularly troubling habit in today's digital age is our overexposure to media. Hours spent on mobile phones, binge-watching, or conversations may seem harmless, but they add to noise levels. Health experts recommend keeping electronic devices below 40 decibels, yet almost no one follows this advice. Music, a universal source of joy, has unfortunately become another source of disturbance. We often forget that music is a is not something to be imposed on unwilling ears. Playing music on loudspeakers in open areas, particularly at odd hours, not only violates the peace of others but also leads to anxiety, hearing damage, and insomnia. If such systems must be used, they should be restricted to closed venues and kept within the permissible sound levels.

Festivals and sports celebrations, too, have seen a rise in the use of firecrackers, often in the middle of the night or at dawn. For a sick person, a newborn, or someone with high blood pressure, the unexpected burst of sound can be terrifying and physically harmful. Sadly, we rarely think of the impact these noises have on the voiceless animals and pets.

Now is the time to recognize this threat, take it seriously, and work towards building a quieter, healthier society. A peaceful environment not only improves the quality of life but also strengthens relationships and community harmony.

### **Government guidelines for noise limit:**

To address this growing problem, the Indian government has established clear guidelines. Maximum permissible noise levels are 55 decibels in residential areas, 65 in commercial zones, 75 in industrial areas, and 50 in sensitive areas such as hospitals and schools. Additionally, the use of any sound equipment is prohibited after 10 PM. However, enforcement alone cannot bring about change; it requires public awareness and a sense of responsibility among citizens.

### **Harnessing Nature to Combat Noise:**

Nature continues to offer some of the most effective and beautiful solutions to counter noise pollution, amidst the noise pollution created by humans. Trees act as silent warriors against the harsh clamour of modern life. Species like Bamboo, Neem, and Ashoka stand out for their excellent sound-absorbing qualities. Planting green belts along roadsides, near schools, and around hospitals can significantly lower ambient noise. Similarly, expanding public parks and green zones in cities not only mitigates noise but also promotes healthier, happier communities.

### **Best Trees for Sound Absorption:**

Certain trees are particularly gifted when it comes to absorbing sound.

1. Evergreen species like pine, spruce, and cedar maintain their foliage all year, providing continuous noise reduction.
2. Broadleaf trees such as oak, maple, and beech are also exceptional due to their wide leaves and dense canopies.
3. Fast-growing trees like hybrid poplars and willows are ideal for rapidly urbanizing areas.
4. Dense hedges, including laurel, holly, and privet, further improve noise control at lower levels, especially when used in conjunction with trees.

### **The Science Behind Trees as Natural Sound Barriers**

Trees function as natural sound barriers in four primary ways: absorbing, scattering, and deflecting & diffraction. Leaves and branches are especially effective at diffusing high-frequency sounds, while the rough texture of tree bark, particularly in oaks and pines, helps absorb and redirect sound energy. Dense

foliage absorbs high-frequency sounds, while irregular surfaces like bark and leaves scatter sound waves into smaller, less intrusive vibrations. Mechanisms of Natural Noise Mitigation includes

- Absorption: Dense foliage traps and absorbs high-frequency sounds.
- Scattering: Irregular plant surfaces break sound into smaller waves.
- Diffraction: Plants obstruct and redirect the path of sound waves.
- Visual Screening: Green barriers make noise feel less intrusive.

Additionally, trees and natural elements form visual barriers that psychologically soften the impact of sound. Even when noise levels remain the same, green surroundings make the environment feel quieter and more relaxing. Additionally, the soil and low-lying vegetation around trees absorb lower-frequency sounds, making a well-structured green belt a powerful ally in noise mitigation. Vegetation also reduces air turbulence, which can amplify noise. Perhaps most intriguingly, the presence of greenery alters our perception of noise. Natural elements like birdsong further enhance the soundscape, creating a more restorative and enjoyable acoustic environment.

## **Green Belts Acting as Nature's Noise Shields**

Studies show that effective vegetative noise barriers can reduce sound levels by 10 to 15 decibels, especially when planting is dense and belts are sufficiently deep. While wide buffer zones might be difficult to implement in congested urban cores, vertical green walls, rooftop gardens, and strategically placed vegetation offer viable alternatives. A well-planned green barrier includes plants with large, hard leaves, extensive branching, and foliage that reaches close to the ground. Position taller species behind shorter ones, spacing them to maintain health and maximize noise attenuation. These installations not only reduce noise but also beautify landscapes, enhance biodiversity, and improve air quality. The effective strategies are required to be implemented at war foot. Effective vegetative noise barriers depend on:

- Height and Density: Taller, denser plants block more sound.
- Width: Wider belts reduce noise more effectively.
- Species Selection: Choose native, evergreen, and dense-leaved plants.
- Layering: Combine tall trees, medium shrubs, and low ground cover for a tiered effect.
- Spacing: Ensure close planting while allowing space for healthy growth.

### **Acoustic Comfort Through Greenery**

Beyond mere decibel reduction, greenery improves acoustic comfort. Dense vegetation softens the impact of artificial noise barriers and creates a visually appealing environment. According to the studies, every 30 meters of dense vegetation can reduce noise by 5 to 10 decibels. Urban parks filled with trees and shrubs provide sanctuaries where city dwellers can escape the noise, relax, and rejuvenate.

### **Why Trees Beat Concrete Barriers**

While concrete walls offer instant sound blockage, they lack the emotional and ecological benefits of trees. Green barriers purify the air, reduce urban heat, and provide habitats for birds and insects. They enhance urban aesthetics, lower stress, and improve mental health. Moreover, as living systems, they adapt and require less maintenance over time compared to rigid structures.

### **Making Our Cities Greener for Purposeful Urban Planning**

Cities around the world are embracing green infrastructure to tackle noise pollution. These models offer inspiration for integrating greenery into the heart of urban planning. In India, green belts along highways and in urban centres are playing an increasingly important role in combating noise pollution. Dense

plantings near schools, hospitals, and residential zones are protecting vulnerable populations from such sound exposure. Urban greening programs are making cities not only quieter but also more breathable, liveable, and sustainable. Several Indian cities have effectively used vegetation to reduce noise pollution & enhance liveability:

- Chandigarh, India's first planned city, features wide roads flanked by dense green belts. Tree-lined avenues with species like neem and jamun act as natural noise barriers, especially along roads like Madhya Marg and Jan Marg.
- Bengaluru, known as the Garden City, incorporates trees along major roads and green parks like Cubbon Park and Lalbagh, helping control urban noise.
- Pune has mandated green buffers along highways in its development plans, and areas like Baner and Aundh showcase roadside tree belts that absorb traffic sound.
- New Delhi has developed green corridors and vertical gardens along busy roads and flyovers. Lutyens' Delhi, with its dense canopies, remains a model of green urban planning.
- Gandhinagar, Gujarat's capital, has over 50% green cover with trees lining almost every road, making it one of India's greenest cities.

### **Strategy to Develop Urban Green Zones & Mini Jungles**

1. Identify Vacant Spaces: Map unused lands, roadside medians, and buffer zones near highways, schools, and industries.
2. Choose Native Species: Use local trees like neem, peepal, jamun, and shrubs that adapt well to the climate and need less care.
3. Apply the Miyawaki Method: Create dense mini forests in small plots using fast-growing native plants for quicker results and better biodiversity.
4. Build Green Road Buffers: Plant noise-absorbing trees like Bamboo, Ashoka, and Ficus in belts along roads and city borders.
5. Involve the Community: Engage schools, residents, and NGOs in planting and caring for green areas to build ownership.
6. Use Sustainable Watering Methods: Set up rainwater harvesting and drip irrigation.
7. Integrate with Urban Planning: Align with programs like Smart Cities & connect green areas to parks, walking tracks, or community spaces to increase use and visibility

### **Noise Reduction at a Personal Level:**

Homeowners can also reduce noise by planting strategically. Trees and shrubs placed between homes and busy streets act as natural sound shields. Layering different types of vegetation creates a forest-like effect, absorbing noise at various frequencies. Vertical gardens along walls and fences enhance beauty while muffling unwanted sounds. Supporting local tree planting initiatives in schools, parks, and community spaces spreads the benefits of noise control and environmental consciousness.

### **Combining Greenery with Other Eco-Friendly Innovations**

To further enhance noise reduction, vegetation can be paired with technologies such as:

- Green Roofs and Walls: Ideal for high-rise buildings.
- Permeable Pavements: Minimize reflected sound and reduce runoff.
- Community Gardens and Urban Forests: Encourage engagement and improve soundscapes.

### **Conclusion:**

Vegetation is a functional, living barrier against noise pollution. By integrating trees into our urban environments and daily lives, we combat unwanted sounds, nurture ecosystems, support mental well-being, and build a quieter, greener future.

# प्रकृति: मानसिक स्वास्थ्य की सर्वोत्तम चिकित्सा

"ग्रीन प्रिस्क्रिप्शन" – जब धरती खुद बन जाती है इलाज



**लेखक: श्री.एन डी शर्मा देवशाली**

**प्रस्तावना:** जब मन थकता है तो प्रकृति सहलाती है।

आधुनिक जीवन की तेज़ रफ्तार, भागदौड़, तनाव और सूचनाओं की भीड़ में आज मनुष्य जितना जुड़ा हुआ दिखता है, भीतर से उतना ही अलग-थलग, थका हुआ और संघर्षरत होता जा रहा है। अवसाद, चिंता, ध्यान की कमी और मनोदशा असंतुलन जैसी स्थितियाँ सामान्य हो गई हैं। ऐसे में एक पुरानी लेकिन आज सबसे आधुनिक लगने वाली सलाह फिर सामने आई है – प्रकृति के पास जाइए।

प्रसिद्ध अंग्रेजी समाचार पत्र द गार्डियन ने 2024 में एक रिपोर्ट प्रकाशित की जो इस बात की पुष्टि करती है कि प्रकृति केवल सुंदरता नहीं, बल्कि सशक्त चिकित्सा भी है।

**वेल्स (यूके) में हुआ सबसे बड़ा अध्ययन:** 2024 में यूनाइटेड किंगडम के वेल्स क्षेत्र में 23 लाख (2.3 मिलियन) लोगों पर एक दीर्घकालिक अध्ययन किया गया, जिससे यह स्पष्ट हुआ कि: जो लोग प्रकृति के करीब रहते हैं, उनका मानसिक स्वास्थ्य अधिक संतुलित होता है। वे लोग जो हर दिन हरियाली, प्राकृतिक प्रकाश, पेड़-पौधों, नदियों या जंगलों के सम्पर्क में आते हैं, उनमें तनाव, अवसाद और चिंता के लक्षण बेहद कम पाए गए।

**ठंडा पानी: अवसाद और थकान के खिलाफ एक प्राकृतिक अस्त्र:**

पानी हमेशा से चिकित्सा का केंद्र रहा है – लेकिन हालिया शोधों में यह सामने आया कि: 5 मिनट की ठंडी पानी की डुबकी शरीर की हार्मोनल प्रतिक्रियाओं को सक्रिय करती है। कोर्टिसोल (तनाव हार्मोन) का स्तर घटता है। मूड बेहतर होता है, और व्यक्ति अधिक ऊर्जावान महसूस करता है। यह लाभ एक बार के



स्नान से भी संभव है, इसलिए सप्ताह में 2-3 बार ठंडे पानी में स्नान मानसिक स्वास्थ्य के लिए वरदान साबित हो सकता है।

### **जंगल: ध्यान, गंध और उपचार का संगम:**

जंगल सिर्फ हरियाली नहीं देते, वे मन की उलझनों को सुलझाने वाले प्राकृतिक ध्यान केंद्र भी होते हैं। शोध में यह पाया गया कि: सिटका स्प्रूस, स्कॉट्स पाइन जैसे कुछ पेड़ मस्तिष्क की न्यूरोनल गतिविधियों पर विशेष प्रभाव डालते हैं। पेड़ VOCs (Volatile Organic Compounds) छोड़ते हैं जो हमारी सूंघने की शक्ति के ज़रिए मस्तिष्क तक पहुँचते हैं और शरीर की हॉर्मोनल गतिविधियों को संतुलित करते हैं।

### **गंध – सबसे प्रभावी प्राकृतिक संकेतक:**

जंगलों की गंध यादों को जगा सकती है, मन को शांत कर सकती है और शरीर को ठीक करने की प्रक्रिया में डाल सकती है। गंध मस्तिष्क के एमिगडाला और हाइपोथैलेमस को सक्रिय करती है, जो मूड, हार्मोन और इमोशनल संतुलन का संचालन करते हैं।

### **“ध्यान बहाली सिद्धांत” और नरम आकर्षण (Soft Fascination):**

आधुनिक मनोविज्ञान में एक सिद्धांत है: Attention Restoration Theory (ART) – यानी प्रकृति मानसिक ऊर्जा को पुनः भरने में सक्षम है। हर दिन हम डिजिटल उपकरणों, सूचनाओं, कार्यभार और शोरगुल के बीच संज्ञानात्मक थकावट से ग्रसित होते हैं। ऐसे में प्राकृतिक वातावरण में हमारा ध्यान ‘नरम आकर्षण’ द्वारा खिंचता है (जैसे पत्तों की सरसराहट, पानी की धार, पक्षियों की आवाज़)। यह ध्यान ‘बिना प्रयास’ का होता है, जिससे दिमाग आराम करता है और पुनर्जीवित होता है।

### **एकांत का सामर्थ्य: जब चुप्पी भी दवा बन जाए:**

लेखिका हीदर हेन्सन और यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ रीडिंग के शोधकर्ताओं ने एक प्रयोग किया जिसमें यह पाया गया कि: दिन में केवल 15 मिनट का चुना हुआ एकांत चिंता को घटाता है। आत्म-संवेदनशीलता को बढ़ाता है। मानसिक स्पष्टता और रचनात्मकता को बढ़ावा देता है। यह “साथी एकांत” भी हो सकता है – जहाँ कोई हमारे साथ हो लेकिन हमें बिना किसी अपेक्षा के मौन में रहने दे।

### **विविधता ही औषधि: पेड़ों, पक्षियों और माइक्रोबायोम का रहस्य:**

कनाडा के कई शहरों में हुए एक अध्ययन से यह निष्कर्ष निकला: जिन इलाकों में पेड़ों और पक्षियों की विविधता अधिक है, वहाँ के लोगों का मानसिक स्वास्थ्य बेहतर पाया गया। इसका एक बड़ा कारण है गट माइक्रोबायोम – यानी आंत में पाए जाने वाले सूक्ष्मजीव। प्राकृतिक वातावरण, मिट्टी, पेड़-पौधे, हवा के माध्यम से ये सूक्ष्म जीव हमारे शरीर में प्रवेश करते हैं और अवसाद को घटाने, मूड को स्थिर रखने और तनाव घटाने में मदद करते हैं।

**विस्मय: प्रकृति का चमत्कारी भाव:** कैलिफोर्निया यूनिवर्सिटी के डॉ. डैचर केल्टनर के अनुसार: “प्रकृति में जब हम कुछ विशाल, सुंदर, या रहस्यमय देखते हैं – जैसे सूर्यास्त, पर्वत, विशाल वृक्ष, या आकाशगंगा – तो हमें विस्मय (Awe) का अनुभव होता है।” यह भाव: आत्म-केन्द्रिकता को घटाता है, खुशी को बढ़ाता है, शरीर में इन्फ्लेमेशन (सूजन) को घटाता है। हमें ब्रह्मांड का एक हिस्सा होने का अनुभव देता है – जो मानसिक स्वास्थ्य के लिए चमत्कारी है।

**प्रकृति उपचार नहीं, एक जीवनशैली है:** डॉ. मिशेल एंटोनेली कहते हैं: “हमें प्रकृति को अब सिर्फ ‘इलाज’ के रूप में नहीं देखना चाहिए। यह एक निवारक उपाय है – जीवनशैली का हिस्सा। जो हमें मानसिक संकट तक पहुँचने से पहले ही बचा सकता है।” प्रकृति मुफ्त है, सर्वसुलभ है, और सबसे सशक्त ‘ग्रीन प्रिस्क्रिप्शन’ है – बिना साइड इफेक्ट वाली दवा।

### **क्या करें? सरल उपाय**

- प्रतिदिन कम से कम 20-30 मिनट प्रकृति में बिताएँ।
- सप्ताह में एक बार जंगल या हरियाली भरे क्षेत्र में भ्रमण करें।
- बिना मोबाइल, बिना किसी लक्ष्य के, केवल देखना-सुनना-सूँघना
- कभी-कभी चुपचाप बैठना और केवल अपने आसपास की ध्वनियों पर ध्यान देना।
- पेड़ों को स्पर्श करें, मिट्टी को छुएं, बहते पानी में पाँव रखें
- अंत में: खुद को प्रकृति के हवाले कीजिए – आप खुद को पाकर लौटेंगे। “जब आप जंगल में अकेले चलते हैं, तो आप वास्तव में अकेले नहीं होते – आप स्वयं के सबसे सच्चे रूप में होते हैं।”

# Let Us Save our Mother Earth



*Prof. (Retd.) Dr. Suresh Sharma, Mahindra College, Punjabi University Patiala*

The earth is our home, so pure and so bright

Let's protect it with all our might

From pollution to conservation, we must take a stand

For the future of our planet, hand in hand

The trees provide oxygen, the trees provide shade

Let's plant more trees, before it's too late

The oceans are vast, the oceans are deep

Let's keep them clean, and the marine life keep

The air we breathe, the water we drink

Let's keep them clean, and our health will think

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, let's do our part

For a sustainable future, let's start

Let's protect the wildlife, let's preserve the land

For a greener tomorrow, let's take a stand

We owe it to ourselves, we owe it to our kids

To protect the environment, with all our hits

So let's join hands, and work as a team

For a cleaner, greener, and brighter dream

Let's protect the environment, it's our duty and role

For a sustainable future, let's take control of the environment.

# Nature is Sacred: Ecological Wisdom from the Vedas & Upanishads



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When the seers of ancient India looked at the world, they did not see a pile of resources—they saw a sacred web of life. The sun was not just a ball of fire; he was Surya, the nourisher. The rivers were not mere water bodies; they were mothers. The forests were not timber; they were the dwelling of vanaspatis, sentient plant-beings. Today, as the world grapples with climate collapse and ecological imbalance, perhaps it is time we returned to the spiritual ecology of our roots—a worldview where nature is not outside us, but within us.

## **I. The Vedic Vision of Nature**

Thousands of years before the term "environmental crisis" came into being, the sages of India were contemplating the balance between human life and the cosmos. The Rta—the cosmic order—governed every element of existence. The Rigveda, one of the oldest known scriptures, reveres this order as divine, teaching that humans must live in harmony with the rhythm of the universe.

In this worldview, Panchamahabhutas—the five great elements: Prithvi (earth), Apas (water), Tejas (fire), Vāyu (air), and Ākāśa (ether)—are not inert substances to be extracted, but living presences to be honoured. Each of these is addressed in the Vedas with hymns, prayers, and awe-struck reverence.

“Samudrāya namah, Vanaspataye namah, Vāyave namah...” (Salutations to the ocean, to the trees, to the wind...) — Yajurveda

Fire (Agni) is the purifier and the divine messenger. Air (Vāyu) is life-giving, roaming freely across the three worlds. Water (Apas) is sacred, flowing not just through rivers but through our very beings. These forces were invoked not to be conquered—but to be communed with.

## **II. Nature in the Upanishads: The Inner and the Outer**

If the Vedas sang of nature as divine, the Upanishads internalised that divinity. The Isha Upanishad begins with a revolutionary ecological statement:

“Isha vasyam idam sarvam, yat kincha jagatyam jagat...” (All that moves in this world is enveloped by the Divine. Therefore, enjoy with detachment and do not covet what belongs to others.)

This single verse shatters modern consumerism. It declares that nothing belongs to us—not the land, not the water, not even the breath we take. Everything is pervaded by Ishwara, the Divine. Thus, to pollute, exploit, or hoard is not just unethical—it is adharmic.

The Upanishads teach Aparigraha (non-hoarding), Ahimsa (non-violence), and Samatva (equanimity). These are not abstract spiritual ideals—they are profoundly ecological principles.

In the Chandogya Upanishad, the metaphor of a tree is used to explain the subtle essence (sattva) of all beings. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad speaks of water as the source of all life forms. These ancient insights feel uncannily modern—and urgently needed.

### **III. Ecological Symbols in Ancient Texts**

In Vedic tradition, the Earth is not "our planet"—she is Bhūmi Devi, the mother goddess. We do not walk on her, we are carried by her.

The rivers—Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati, Godavari—are not only sacred but personified as mothers, sisters, and goddesses. The Rigveda invokes Saraswati as a nurturing and protective force:

“Ambitame, Nadītame, Devitame Saraswati...” (O best of mothers, best of rivers, best of goddesses, O Saraswati...)

Trees were seen as sentient beings. The Ashvattha (Peepal) tree was worshipped not for its medicinal properties alone, but because it was believed to be the cosmic tree, linking the earth and the heavens. Cutting down a tree was akin to violence.

Animals, too, were respected—not domesticated into invisibility. Cows were not “milk machines”—they were mothers, called Gau Mata. The elephant, the tiger, the snake, the monkey—each was seen as a sacred form, a symbolic guardian of ecological balance.

This sacred cosmology served one purpose: to remind humans of their place in the web—not at the top, but among.

### **IV. Ancient Indian Practices: A Manual for Sustainability**

Long before "zero-waste living" became a hashtag, Indian households practised it by tradition.

Yajnas, the sacred fire rituals, were not performed to "please gods" but to maintain harmony between humans and nature. Offerings were made to Agni, Vāyu, and Varuṇa—not out of fear, but out of gratitude. The smoke from the yajna was believed to purify the air. The ashes were used as fertilizer. Nothing was wasted.

Festivals like Vana Mahotsav and Tulsi Vivah were rooted in environmental respect. Every harvest festival—Pongal, Baisakhi, Makar Sankranti—was a prayer of thanks to nature. People offered the first grain to the cow, the crow, and the ants. This was dharma in action.

Traditional water conservation through step-wells (baoris), rainwater harvesting, and sacred groves helped communities live within their means. Forests like the Devarai (God's Forests) were protected by spiritual sanctions—not legal ones.

These were not merely "beliefs"—they were sustainable lifestyles woven into spiritual dharma.

## **V. The Modern Crisis: Losing the Sacred**

Today, climate change is discussed in terms of carbon credits, GDP losses, and emission graphs. But the deeper crisis is spiritual. When rivers become “projects,” forests become “real estate,” and animals become “resources,” we lose not only our biodiversity—we lose our humanity.

Our ancestors understood something we have forgotten: Nature is not a machine to be fixed; she is a being to be healed.

Take the Chipko Movement, where rural women hugged trees to prevent their felling. This was not activism—it was ancient reverence made visible. Or the Bishnoi community of Rajasthan, who still protect wildlife and trees as a part of their dharma, even at the cost of their lives.

Modern science is finally catching up: studies now confirm that trees “communicate,” rivers have “memory,” and soil has “life.” But the Vedas knew this millennia ago.

“Sarvam khalvidam Brahma” – All this, indeed, is Brahman. — Chandogya Upanishad

## **VI. A Call to Reawaken**

We do not need to return to the past—but we must revive its wisdom. As India strides forward into technology and innovation, we must carry the soul of Sanatan Dharma with us—especially its ecological soul.

Reverence is not backwardness. Simplicity is not poverty. To walk barefoot on Bhūmi Devi, to plant a tree and whisper a mantra, to see water as sacred—these are acts of resistance in a world that treats nature as disposable.

Imagine classrooms where Rigvedic hymns are sung as environmental pledges. Imagine urban gardens where Upanishadic silence meets compost bins. Imagine policy built not just on climate reports—but on dharma.

## **Conclusion**

The ancients did not separate the spiritual and the ecological—because to harm nature was to harm the Self. The Upanishads teach that Atman (the soul) is not separate from Brahman (the whole). And if all is Brahman—then so is the river, the mountain, the air, and the ant.

We must stop asking, “What can nature do for us?” and begin asking, “What can we do for her?”

Let us not be the generation that left behind a scorched earth and a forgotten soul. Let us be the ones who remembered—that to live simply is to live sacredly.

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## Nature Heals, but who heals the Nature?



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“One summer afternoon, a young boy sat beneath an old banyan tree, frustrated after a long, tiring day. As he sat in silence, he noticed something strange: the tree, though weathered by years of storms and scorching sunlight, stood calm, still offering shade without asking for anything in return. A falling leaf landed gently beside him. For the first time, he felt peace — not from a person, but from itself.” As a child, I thought trees only gave shade. As I grew up, I realised they give us life. I began to see that nature is not just background to our lives; it is a vital presence.

But while nature has always given selflessly, we humans have responded with exploitation. Forests that once echoed with bird songs are now replaced with the sounds of chainsaws and bulldozers. A recent example is the Telangana forest land clearance in Hyderabad, where vast stretches of green cover were cut down to make way for developmental projects. Thousands of trees were felled, displacing wildlife and destroying fragile ecosystems that took centuries to evolve. Incidents like these are not rare — they are becoming our new normal. In the name of progress, we are trading nature’s long-term gifts for short-term gains.

But what if the real danger isn’t just cutting trees — but believing in myths about nature that science has long disproved? As these unchecked destructions also expose how little we understand nature. Many still believe that forests are limitless resources, but studies show that once biodiversity is lost, it can’t be fully restored. Another common myth is that technology alone can fix environmental damage, yet science makes it clear — no amount of innovation can replace the complex climate-regulating role of natural ecosystems. Nature isn’t optional — it’s irreplaceable.

Yet all is not lost. Around the world, people are finding ways to reconnect with nature — not just through big conservation projects, but also through small and mindful actions. Urban forests are



being planted, native trees are being protected, and even rooftop gardens are bringing back bees and butterflies in cities. Planting trees for each dot ball in IPL cricket leagues also promotes the idea at large scale. ‘Fridays for Future’, such projects initiated by youth, also contribute to the idea of sustainable and green future. Science shows that when green spaces are restored, biodiversity begins to return, air quality improves, and mental well-being rises. Healing nature, it turns out, heals us too.

The path forward lies not in conquering nature, but in coexisting with it — with humility and awareness. Even a single tree planted with care becomes a silent act of resistance and hope. But the choice is still in our hands. By remembering our roots, by respecting the balance of life, and making conscious efforts — no matter how small, we can begin to rebuild what we have lost. Because, “sustainability isn’t about a few people doing it perfectly — it’s about millions of people doing it imperfectly.” So let this not just be a reminder, but a call to act — before silence replaces birdsongs and concrete replaces green.

# How University Campuses Can Become Models for Sustainability



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Sustainability is becoming a priority for communities everywhere, and university campuses are in a unique position to lead the way. As a college student I see so many opportunities of maximizing environment friendly practices around me. With a large population of students, staff, and visitors, campuses can serve as real-life examples of how sustainable practices can work — showing both challenges and solutions in action.

## **Building Smarter and Using Energy Efficiently**

Many campuses are investing in energy-efficient buildings that reduce waste and lower costs. This includes installing solar panels, upgrading lighting to LED, and using smart systems to manage heating and cooling. Even older buildings can be retrofitted with better insulation and energy-saving technology, helping reduce their environmental impact.

## **Reducing Waste and Encouraging Recycling**

Waste management is a major focus on campuses. Many universities have expanded recycling programs and introduced composting to reduce the amount of trash sent to landfills. There is also a push to limit single-use plastics by promoting reusable containers and offering alternatives to disposable packaging.

## **Promoting Sustainable Transportation**

Transportation is another area where campuses can make a big difference. Encouraging biking, walking, and public transit use helps reduce emissions. Many campuses have built bike lanes, introduced bike-sharing programs, and improved access to public transportation. Some, like mine, are even transitioning to electric or hybrid campus vehicles.

## **Conserving Water and Enhancing Green Spaces**

Water conservation efforts include installing low-flow fixtures and using rainwater harvesting systems. Campuses are also developing green spaces, such as native plant gardens and shaded areas, which support local biodiversity and create healthier environments for everyone on campus.

## **Integrating Sustainability into Education and Community Life**

Sustainability is not just about infrastructure — it's about culture. Many universities have integrated sustainability into their curricula, offering courses and programs focused on environmental issues. Student organizations and community projects provide hands-on opportunities to engage with sustainability, making it a part of campus life.

## **The Bigger Picture**

When university campuses adopt sustainable practices, they demonstrate what's possible on a larger scale. These institutions become living laboratories for innovation, inspiring students and communities alike to adopt greener habits. Ultimately, campuses can serve as models for sustainability that extend far beyond their boundaries, helping to shape a more sustainable future for all.

## Embracing Nature - the key to sustainable future



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### Introduction

Nature is a foundation of our existence, providing us with the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat. It is the symphony of trees, rivers, mountains and wildlife that's around us. The environment and nature are interlinked, and their preservation is crucial for our survival. *Nature is not a place to visit, it is home.* This profound quote by **Gary Snyder** reminds of the intrinsic bond between humans and the natural world. As we face the challenges of climate change pollution and biodiversity loss it is essential to recognise the importance of protecting our planet.

Nature provides us with the essential resources, such as air, water, and food. It also supports ecosystems that regulate the climate, pollinate crops and provide natural habitats for countless species. Moreover, nature has a profound impact on a mental and physical well being, with studies showing that spending time in nature can reduce stress, improve mood, and boost cognitive function. Nature provides us with numerous benefits that impact our physical, emotional, and mental health. Some of the most significant advantages of nature include clean air and water. Nature's ecosystem supports agriculture, providing us with the food we need to sustain ourselves. Nature helps regulate the climate, mitigating the effects of extreme weather events, nature has a positive impact on mental health, reducing stress and promoting relaxation. It supports a vast array of plant and animal species maintaining the delicate balance of a planet's ecosystem.

Human actions are significantly harming the environment and nature, causing damage to ecosystems and loss of biodiversity. The consequences of human actions such as deforestation, pollution, overfishing and climate change are destructive. Deforestation

not only destroys habitat but also contributes to climate change by releasing stored carbon into the atmosphere. Pollution, whether it's plastic waste in oceans or toxic chemicals in soil and water harms wildlife and contaminates the food chain climate change driven by greenhouse gas emissions, is altering ecosystems, destructing species and increasing the frequency of extreme weather events. These impacts threaten not only the health of our planet but also human well being and survival. Addressing the challenges requires understanding of our interconnectedness with nature.

To conserve and preserve nature we must adopt sustainable practices and develop a deeper appreciation for the natural world. Here are some ways to achieve this:

Minimise waste, reuse materials, and recycle to reduce our impact on the environment. Use water efficient appliances and practices to preserve the precious resource. Support conservation efforts and preserve natural habitats to safeguard biodiversity. Engage in outdoor activities such as hiking, gardening or simply taking a walk in a park, to connect with nature. Pay attention to the sites, sounds, and smells of nature to cultivate a sense of appreciation and wonder. choose products with minimal packaging, made from sustainable materials, and support companies that prioritise environmental responsibility.

Some fascinating data points highlighting the importance of conservation include:

- 15% of global greenhouse gas emissions come from deforestation and land degradation emphasizing the need for sustainable land use practices.
- 1 million species are threatened with extinction due to human activities highlighting the urgent need for conservation efforts.
- 71% of the Earth is water yet only 2.5% is fresh water highlighting the importance of conservation efforts.

**Some common myths and misconceptions about Nature are:**

- **Myth: Humans are separate from nature:**

**Reality:** Humans are the part of nature, they are interconnected with other species and ecosystems

- **Myth: All natural disasters are caused by nature:**

**Reality:** While natural disasters like earthquakes and hurricanes are natural phenomena, human activities like climate change and land degradation impacts nature.

- **Myth: Technology can replace nature:**

**Reality:** While technology can help mitigate some environmental issues, it cannot replace the complex functions and benefits provided by nature.

## **CONCLUSION**

Nature is essential for human survival, providing us with the resources we need to thrive. By recognising the importance of nature and adopting sustainable practices, we can work towards a more harmonious relationship with the environment. The future of our planet depends on our ability to protect and preserve the natural world.

# Respecting Nature: A Call from Punjab's Heart



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The human body is made of five sacred elements — earth, water, fire, air, and space. We worship each of them in our traditions and rituals. Yet, knowingly or unknowingly, we are damaging them every day polluting our rivers, burning the air, depleting the soil, and filling space with waste. Today, we are all feeling the effects: rising temperatures, water shortages, polluted air, and health problems. In Punjab — once blessed with lush greenery and flowing rivers — this imbalance is hurting our people, our farmers, and our future. Our great saints taught us to live in harmony with nature.

Our ancestors and saints understood the importance of nature. Guru Nanak Dev Ji spoke of nature as God's own form — "Pavan Guru, Pani Pita, Mata Dharat Mahat." (Air is the Guru, Water the Father, and Earth the Great Mother.) Guru Har Rai Ji devoted his life to healing and preserving nature. Our ancestors protected trees, rivers, and animals — even giving their lives to save them. Now is the time to act — not tomorrow, but today. Let us take this as a mission, a shared duty.

## **What Can We Do?**

Change doesn't always need big steps — small habits at home can ripple across society. Let's begin with actions we all can take:

- Carry your own refillable water bottle.
- Plant a tree each year with your family.
- Use cloth bags, say no to single-use plastic.
- Walk or cycle short distances.
- Save water in daily routines.
- Involve children, women, and elders — change begins at home

## **Why It Matters?**

By taking these small steps, we can make significant changes:

- We reduce chemical use, which protects our soil and water.
- We cut plastic pollution, which chokes rivers and land.
- We connect with nature, reviving a relationship long forgotten.
- We inspire others — change is contagious when seen, not just preached.

Together, these small acts become a movement. Let's start today — with heart, with hope, and with home. Saving the environment is not just a duty, it is our shared responsibility and deep-rooted tradition.

“Pawan Guru, Pani Pita, Mata Dharat Mahat” — Let us live by it.

## हरियाली की खनक को मैंने महसूस किया है



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मैंने देखा है हवाओं को, पैतों के साथ धुन बनाते  
मैंने देखा है बादलों को, अक्सर आपस में दौड़ लगते ।  
मैंने गौर किया है, ये हवाई भी गुनगुनाती है  
और काले बदलो के साथ, छमा छम नीचे आती है  
ये पेड़ भी धरती की खूबसूरती को,  
चार चांद लगाते हैं, कुछ पानी लेकर  
तो कुछ कुदरत की खुशबू से बढ़ जाते हैं  
ज़रा सोच कर देखें,  
तो पर्यावरण की, हर चीज़ नायाब है,  
जल, जीव, पेड़ पोधे सब कुछ आप से आप है  
ये कल कल बहती नदियां, आपस में तो कुछ कहती है  
समुंदर में जब मिलती है, इनमें कुछ मस्ती सी रहती है!  
ये कुछ अलग अलग सी खुशबू,  
जो चारों तरफ लहरा रही है!  
ज़रा देखो ये तो फूल कालिया है,



जो हवाओ संग

लहरा, बलखा,और इन्ठला रही है।

ये खुबसूरती ज़मीन और , आसमान के बीच की है,

क्यूँ ना इसे बनाए रखा जाए,

तो चलो इस बारिश और पेड़ लगाए जाए,

प्रदुषण को कम करके, हवा की खनक बचाई जाए,

और नदियों को साफ़ रख, उनकी चमक बचाई जाए!

हर बाग में एक पेड़ कटने पर, पांच पेड़ और लगाए जाएं,

ताकी परिवार का एक सदस्य जाने से

परिवार सूना ना रह जाए!

## **Environment and Nature: Our Planet, Our Responsibility**



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It's not always about big teams or collective efforts. Sometimes change begins with you..

The environment is the life-support system of our planet, encompassing everything around us—air, water, land, animals, plants, and the natural forces that shape the world. Nature refers to the untouched beauty of the world, from vast forests and flowing rivers to towering mountains and deep oceans. Together, the environment and nature form the foundation on which all life depends, including our own. Yet, in the rush of development, urbanization, and modern living, we have started taking this natural world for granted. Human activities, especially over the last century, have severely damaged the environment. Forests are being cleared at alarming rates, rivers are polluted with industrial waste, plastic is choking oceans, and the air in many cities has become unbreathable. These damages are not just environmental—they directly affect human health, livelihoods, and well-being.

One real-life example that highlights the seriousness of this issue is the case of Delhi, the capital of India. Once known for its wide roads and tree-lined avenues, Delhi has now become one of the most polluted cities in the world. Every year, especially during winter, the city gets covered in a dense layer of toxic smog. The sky turns grey, visibility drops, and residents are advised to stay indoors. Schools are often closed, flights get delayed, and hospitals fill up with patients suffering from asthma and other respiratory problems. The major causes of this crisis include vehicular pollution, construction dust, industrial emissions, and the burning of crop residue in nearby states. Despite several efforts by the government and citizens, the problem persists and is worsening each year. This situation is a clear warning that ignoring nature's balance leads to dangerous consequences that affect millions.

Beyond Delhi, climate change is being felt all around the world. Temperatures are rising, glaciers are melting, and weather patterns are becoming more unpredictable. Farmers suffer as crops fail due to sudden

droughts or unseasonal rains. Coastal communities face floods and erosion. Wildlife is disappearing, and species are going extinct faster than ever before. This environmental crisis is not just about polar bears or distant forests—it is about us. The food we eat, the water we drink, the air we breathe, and even the homes we live in are all tied to a healthy environment. Without a balanced ecosystem, human civilization cannot survive, let alone progress.

But even though the problem is large, the solution starts small. Every individual has a role to play in protecting nature. It begins with awareness—understanding how our daily actions impact the planet. Choosing to use public transport, reducing plastic use, saving electricity and water, planting trees, and supporting eco-friendly practices are all steps we can take. When millions of people make small changes, the result can be powerful. It is also important that governments and industries work together to enforce laws that protect natural resources, shift to renewable energy sources, and invest in sustainable development. Schools and communities should focus on educating the younger generation about the importance of living in harmony with nature, because they will inherit the planet from us.

Nature is not just a backdrop to human life; it is deeply connected to our mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Spending time in green spaces reduces stress, boosts creativity, and improves health. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many people realized how essential fresh air, sunshine, and quiet natural places are for peace of mind. Yet, these spaces are shrinking. Forests are being cut down for roads and buildings, and natural habitats are being replaced by concrete. We must realize that economic growth does not have to come at the cost of the environment. In fact, a clean and healthy environment supports long-term development, tourism, health, and agriculture.

Throughout history, many cultures have lived in balance with nature. Indigenous communities around the world have protected forests, rivers, and animals for generations, guided by respect for the Earth and its cycles. We have much to learn from these ways of living. Instead of exploiting nature, we must aim to coexist with it. There are already encouraging examples of people and communities who are making a difference. In India, the Chipko Movement in the 1970s saw women hugging trees to protect forests from being cut. In Karnataka, an elderly woman named Saalumara Thimmakka planted over 8,000 trees along roadsides without formal education or government support. These stories remind us that caring for nature does not require wealth or power—only love and commitment.

The environment cannot speak for itself, but it shows its pain through floods, droughts, fires, and storms. Each of these is becoming more frequent and more severe. If we continue to harm the environment, future

generations will not just inherit a damaged planet—they will face survival challenges we cannot yet imagine. However, if we act now, we still have time to heal the Earth. This healing begins when we start respecting the simple truth: we are not above nature, we are part of it. Our health, happiness, and future depend on how well we care for the natural world around us. Protecting the environment is not a choice—it is a responsibility. Let us embrace this duty with hope, unity, and action. Only then can we ensure that the beauty and bounty of nature will continue to inspire and sustain life for generations to come and for that we have various ways, it's not always that you need to achieve big teams, you are the one who can bring the change by making eco bricks for eg I collected all the empty bottles and filled all the plastic material in it so that everything could be recycled at once.

# Do Trees Sleep at Night? And Why Some Plants Close Up Like They're Afraid



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## Introduction

When I was small, I was told not to touch the *touch-me-not* plant, also called *chhui-mui* or *lajwanti*. Some people said it is “haunted” or that it brings bad luck if you play with it too much. But I was always curious — why would a plant fold its leaves just because we touched it? Do they feel something?

Later I started noticing something else — at night, some trees and plants looked like they were resting. Their leaves drooped a little, and the flowers closed up. My grandmother used to say, “**Raat mein ped bhi so jaate hain**” (even trees sleep at night). I thought it was just a saying. But science is now showing... maybe she was right.

## Do Trees Really Sleep?

Well, trees don’t “sleep” like humans, but **they do enter a resting state** at night. This process is called **nyctinasty** — a fancy word scientists use for the way plants move with day and night changes. For example:

- Some trees lower their branches at night, like they're tired.
- Flowers like hibiscus and lotus close after sunset.
- Leaves fold or hang down as part of their daily rhythm.

This happens because of **light, internal water pressure, and hormones like auxin and melatonin**, which even plants produce in some way. Using special night-vision scanners, scientists have seen trees like birch *droop slightly during night*, and then rise again at sunrise.

But the idea that plants sleep is **not new to Indian tradition**. In the **Atharva Veda (Book 5, Hymn 4)**, there is mention of plants having “**life force (prana), will, and energy**”, just like living beings. Trees are described as “**vanaspati**”, which means "the lord of the forest", hinting at their sacred and conscious nature.

### **The Sacred Silence of Trees in the Night**

In some Puranas, like the **Padma Purana** and **Skanda Purana**, there are specific instructions on not disturbing trees at night. Cutting or harming trees after sunset was forbidden. While people said it was due to spirits, the real reason might have been **to let trees rest and avoid disturbing the night-time energy balance in nature**.

There are also beliefs from **Ayurveda and Vrikshayurveda (the science of plant life)**, that say trees release different energies during the night — for example, **Peepal trees release oxygen even at night**, unlike most plants. This has been confirmed by modern studies due to their CAM photosynthesis process.

So when elders said "don't sit under Peepal tree at night", it wasn't always superstition — it might be about moisture, insect activity, or energy imbalances.

### **But What About the Touch-Me-Not?**

This plant is special. Its name is *Mimosa pudica*, and it folds its leaves instantly when touched. People in villages say:

- It shows fear or respect.
- It is shy and soft, like a symbol of politeness.
- Some say it can absorb "negative energy".

But here's the **scientific truth**:

The plant has special **pulvinus cells** that rapidly lose water when stimulated, causing the leaf to fold. It's a **natural defence system** to scare insects or protect itself from damage.

Interestingly, Indian traditions respected this response too. In **Charaka Samhita**, *lajjala* (another name for touch-me-not) is mentioned for its medicinal properties — used in healing wounds, stopping bleeding, and calming nerves. The name *lajjala* itself comes from “**lajja**”, meaning modesty or shyness — again showing emotional value being given to plants.

## Do Plants Have Feelings?

Ancient Indian philosophy believed **everything has consciousness**, even stones and plants — though in different forms.

In the **Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 7, Verse 9)**, Krishna says: *"I am the life in all living beings, I am the intelligence of the intelligent."* This extends to all of nature — including plants.

In **Upanishadic** texts too, like the **Brihadaranyaka Upanishad**, plants are considered living souls with **an inner essence (Atman)**. Some sages practiced deep meditation in forests because they believed that trees could silently influence the mind and help reach higher consciousness. Modern science now calls this **"plant neurobiology"**. Plants don't have a brain, but they:

- Respond to touch and sound,
- Warn nearby plants of danger,
- Learn from repeated experience (like touch-me-not stops reacting over time),
- Communicate using chemical signals.

## Why This Matters Today

We cut forests, destroy sacred groves, and treat plants as lifeless decorations. But if we start seeing them as sensitive, active, even *conscious*, we might care more. Whether it's a giant banyan or a tiny mimosa, all plants are **active participants** in Earth's balance. Sleeping, reacting, healing — they are doing much more than we notice.

Maybe the ancient texts weren't just being poetic. Maybe they saw something we are only now discovering with modern tools.

## Final Thought

Next time you walk past a tree at night or see a *chhui-mui* plant on the roadside, pause. You're not just seeing a leaf move or droop. You are watching a **quiet life** that is aware, alive, and part of something greater.

Maybe trees don't talk — but maybe they *listen*.  
And maybe, just maybe, they dream too.

# द्विभाषी पत्रिका

मासिक पत्रिका: अगस्त, 2025

**“अवसर की प्रतीक्षा में मत बैठो ।**

**आज का अवसर ही सर्वोत्तम है ।”**

## हर छोटा बदलाव बड़ी कामयाबी का हिस्सा होता है

**संपादक: डॉ. सुमन मोर, डॉ. प्रदीप कुमार**

# TREE PLANING

**N**e kriegts tont  
insur d. Wert d  
eins on dem f-oe  
altemen en doe-  
marchen d. oren  
am d. d. d. d. d.

Water is essential for human tissue structure. Insufficient water intake is a danger to health by increasing the risk of dehydration and kidney stones. It also helps to regulate body temperature and maintain blood pressure. Drinking water is also important for digestion and overall health. It is recommended to drink at least 8 glasses of water per day.

[illegible]

Untly anidans  
**Harie Vatuurs**  
World Iwe Hogition

**B**etween civil and totalitarian conflict lies the insidious gray divorce. In a town that hasn't even seen its last civil war, the violence of a revolution is being fought out in the streets. The Mexican government and the United States have agreed to a peace treaty, but the violence continues. The Mexican government is not the only one to be blamed for the violence. The United States is also responsible for the violence. The United States is not the only one to be blamed for the violence. The United States is also responsible for the violence.

[illegible]

# Green Thoughts

*Subject to*  
*Environmental*  
*Environnnal Protection*

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