

A HOLISTIC BUDDHIST APPROACH TO RESTORATION OF RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: AN ANALYTICAL EXPOSITION

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ABSTRACT

The contemporary world indulges in disproportionate (visamappamāṇayutta) material development at the expense of morality, equality, justice, peace and harmony. The prevalent social system based on such a detrimental 'development' has formulated its educational, professional, social, economic, political strata which propels the achievement of this kind of wanton materialistic development and unwholesome and insatiable consumption of all types of living and non-living resources. This predicament has undeniably caused confusions and tribulations in every echelon of the modern society threatening sustainable development that is beneficial and wholesome to the entire living and non-living world. Therefore, the paramount objective of this paper is to analytically expose how to restore responsible consumption and sustainable development through universally adoptable Buddhist approach. In this regard, the universal Buddhist tenets should be adopted to define and identify the root causes of the impediments and destructions for the establishment of responsible consumption leading to sustainable development which is multi-causative and multidimensional. Individual and social ethics, reciprocal obligations, moderation in use of materials, wealth and natural resources, wholesome education, wholesome trading

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and occupations, economic stability, good governance, etc. restore responsible, sensible, moderate and mindful consumption leading to sustainable development (dhāretabba abhivuddhi) that conduces to establishment of sustainable equality, justice, peace and harmony. Hence, a multi-dimensional Buddhist approach based on universally applicable principles is to be adopted for the restoration of responsible consumption and sustainable development in educational, professional, social, ethical, economic, political contexts in the modern society.

1. INTRODUCTION

Responsible consumption in its sense of entirety should refer to mindful and sensible consumption that strengthens wholesome and bearable sustenance of physical and mental qualities without harming physical and mental balance and health. Sustainable development in its overall sense should refer to bearable, sensible, wholesome and righteous development in every aspect that is not detrimental and destructive to mankind, flora and fauna, all types of resources and natural resources directly or indirectly, on short-term, mid-term and long-term scale. As a whole, responsible consumption and sustainable development should be beneficial to physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, social wellbeing and spiritual wellbeing of a country.

2. RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION

Responsible consumption on one hand leads to healthy living and on the other is beneficial to sustainable development. For instance, over-eating, eating at improper hours and eating unhealthy food, continuous practice of irregular and harmful food habits, unclean or polluted water etc. make one devoid of good health and often spend what is earned on medicine and treatments disturbing one's own mental health and peace in the family directly or indirectly. In Sri Lanka, a large amount of money is spent by the government on ailments like diabetes, blood pressure, atherosclerosis caused by high concentrations of cholesterol, cancers, renal disorders and others types of health problems caused due to irresponsible consumption. Healthy existence, according to Buddhism, is mainly of twofold aspect as mental health and physical health. According to the Sukhavagga of the Dhammapada, health is the most precious gain;

contentment is the greatest wealth (*ārogyaparamā lābhā - santutṭhī paramaṃ dhanam*) (Dhp. Ch.15. V. 204. P.177). Physical health is achieved through behavioural wellbeing and social wellbeing of a person in the absence of the problems mentioned above and mental health is gained through spiritual wellbeing. This Buddhist concept that conduces to sensible and moderate consumption is mandatory for sustainable development of a nation anywhere on earth.

3. NUTRIMENTS FOR ALL

As Mahāpañha sutta reveals, “All beings exist through nutriment” (*Sabbe sattā āhāraṭṭhitikā*) (AN. 10.27 WPB. P. 1373). The Buddha also points out that hunger is the most serious sickness in the world (*Jigacca parama roga*). According to the Suttas like Āhāra (SN. 12.11. WPB. P.540), Puttamaṅsa (SN. 12.63. WPB. P. 597), Moliyaphagguna (SN. 12.12. WPB. P.541), Atthi Rāga (SN. 12.64. WPB. P.599ff), four nutriments – physical nutriment – edible food (gross or subtle), second, contact; third, mental volition; and fourth, consciousness are required for the maintenance of beings who have come into being or for the support of those in search of a place to be born. In other words, birth and survival of a person is based on four types of physical and mental nutriments.

4. MINDFUL CONSUMPTION

Puttamaṅsa Sutta implies that one is not to eat food playfully or for intoxication or for putting on bulk or for beautification but to eat food simply for the sake of survival. The sutta further emphasizes that when physical food is comprehended, passion for the five strings of sensuality is comprehended. When passion for the five strings of sensuality is comprehended, there is no fetter bound by which a disciple of the noble ones would come back again to this world (SN. 12.63. WPB. P.597ff.). Mindful food consumption in proper quantity (*bhojane mattaññutā*) as emphasized in Buddha’s teachings is to be followed to restore responsible consumption. One who wishes to live hundred years as exposed in Araka Sutta (AN.7.74. WPB. P. 1096.) Should consume only seventy two thousand food portions consisting of neglected portions in certain circumstances such as sickness, babyhood, anger, feeling sad, retreat days and paucity of food. Eleven techniques that should be practised

in consuming food with mindful consumption are mentioned in Sekhiya rules. Donapaka Sutta (SN. 3.13. WPB. P. 176.) shows that the Buddha's gave instructions to King Pasenadi Kosala who ate a whole bucketful of food and suffered from being engorged and panting to control eating mindfully. Then, King Kosala who gradually settled down to eating no more than a cup-full of rice became quite slim and comfortable, and he came to realize that when a person is constantly mindful and knows when enough food has been taken, all the afflictions become more slender and he ages more gradually protecting his life. This sutta emphasizes that over-eating is the root of obesity, which accelerates the aging process and impends one's life, and that this only occurs when mindfulness is weak or absent and that wisdom will provide what is needed to refrain from greedy, senseless and immoderate consumption.

5. RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION FOR MAINTENANCE OF SUSTAINABLE HEALTH

Food for the nourishment of bodily health is of utmost importance as all beings subsist on food (*sabbe sattā āhāraṭṭhitikā*). Healthy food taken timely and in moderation is a support for mental health. For instance, a good breakfast, a moderate lunch and a slight supper will make one feel comfortable. Nevertheless, junk food, food containing harmful preservatives and artificial flavourings causing abdominal problems and indigestion, heavy food which makes digestion difficult, food in excessive amount and food taken inopportunately are unsuitable as they make body uncomfortable and sick. Acceptance of a water-strainer, a water-strainer cylinder (a regulation water pot) (Vin. Cv. V.13.1.PTS. P.162), a filter cloth (Vin. V.13.3.PTS. P. 163), a water jar by the Buddha means the use of fresh water for healthy drinking. The *sekhiyas* of the *Suttavibhaṅga* mentions that water should not be polluted by passing feces, urine and spit (*na udake aḡilāno uccaraṃ va passavaṃ va khelaṃ va karissamiti sikkhā karaṇiyati*). Passing feces, urine and spits into the water was promulgated as an offence (Vin. VI. PTS. P.206).

The three main classes food are staple food, non-staple food and juice drink. The Buddhist Monastic Code I Chapter 8.4 classifies food into two groups: *bhojanīya* (consumables) and *khādaniya*

(chewables). All fruit that is non-staple (Vin. Mv.VI.38.1. PTS. P. 347.) and eight types of juice drinks: mango juice drink, rose apple juice drink, seed-banana juice drink, seedless banana juice drink, *madhu* juice drink, grape juice drink, water-lily root juice drink and juice drink are allowed. Conjey and honey-lumps are allowed to be drunk early in the morning and ten advantages of conjey were introduced by the Buddha, viz. (1) it gives life, (2) beauty, (3) ease, (4) strength, (5) intelligence; conjey, when it is drunk, (6) dispels hunger, (7) keeps off thirst, (8) regulates wind, (9) cleanses the bladder and (10) digests raw remnants of food (Vin. VI.24.5 – 7. PTS. P.302.). The five products of a cow: milk, curds, buttermilk, butter, ghee can be taken (Vin. VI.34.21. PTS.P. 336.). All vegetables and all non-staple foods made with flour are allowed (Vin. VI.36.8. PTS. P. 344.). Monks or recluses are allowed to make use of fruits in five ways, viz. if it is damaged by fire, damaged by a knife, damaged by one's nails, if it is seedless or if the seeds are discharged (Vin. Cv. V. 5.2. PTS.P. 147.) These healthy habits can be followed by anybody to prevent from physical illness. Modern health science also advises people to eat a lot of fruits and vegetables to keep the body healthy.

Flesh of human beings (Vin. Mv. VI. 23.9. PTS.P. 298.), elephants, horses, dogs, snakes, lions, tigers, leopards, bears, and hyenas should not be consumed (Vin. VI.23.10-15. PTS.P. 298 – 300.). The Commentary adds comments here: These prohibitions cover not only the meat of these animals but also their blood, bones, skin, and hide. The WHO (The World Health Organization) has issued a communiqué advising people to eat less meat but to eat a lot of vegetables and fruits. As revealed in the Kitāgiri Sutta (MN. 70. BPS. P. 577.), the Buddha advised monks to abstain from the night-time meal so that they will sense next-to-no illness, next-to-no affliction, lightness, strength and a comfortable abiding. Having a light meal or no meal is also good for healthy life of a person. Fatty food, salty food, junk food and heavy meals should be avoided to maintain sustainable good health.

6. HEALTHY DWELLING AND ENVIRONMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Healthy houses equipped with basic facilities are essential for

healthy living. According to the UN Human Rights Convention, shelter for people is a basic need and the absence of permanent shelter harms healthy living and it causes family and social problems and disturbs sustainable development. Having dwelling in a peaceful area and keeping the dwellings tidy, clean and neat is mandatory for healthy living. It is very much fortunate for a person to be born, growing, studying, living and working in a good environment. This is the foremost prerequisite for the existence of healthy living. The maintenance of dwellings and environment is mentioned in the Visuddhimagga. A calm and quiet surrounding, peaceful area, place, suitable monastery, forest, grove, good weather etc. are environmental prerequisites for being engaged in meditational practices directing one's mind to spiritual development through meditation. The Ariyapariyesana Sutta reveals that pleasant environment replete with natural beauty may enhance spiritual development (MN. 26. BPS. P. 259.). Similarly, people should have dwellings in a peaceful environment devoid of four major pollution – land, water, air and sound but replete with vegetation, fresh water, fresh air, fresh food and fruits and good neighborhood. The presence of these factors enhance good standard of living, and in turn contribute to sustainable development which brings about happy, peaceful and harmonious existence.

7. MORAL BEHAVIOUR FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

When individuals, families, society and all communities in a country are devoid of moral behaviours and corruption prevails in every echelon of the society, sustainable development becomes dream. Hence, moral development for sustainable development is a mandatory factor in every aspect. Moral behavior which is of utmost significance with regard to healthy development of a nation encompasses moral actions – basically skillful bodily actions and skillful verbal actions, abstinence from all forms of malevolent verbal and bodily deportments, refrain from vices and detrimental deeds and the observance of the five moral precepts which safeguards Human Rights.

The Two aspects of Right Conduct – right conduct in body (*kāya-sucaritaṃ*) and right conduct in speech (*vacī-sucaritaṃ*) mentioned in the Sangīti Sutta (DN. 33. WPB. P. 483.) are the

wholesome behavioral prerequisites that form the principal basis for healthy behavior. The two grounds based on merit that lead wholesome conduct: that of giving (*dānamayaṃ puñña-kiriya – vatthu*) and of morality (*silamayaṃ puñña-kiriya-vatthu*) (DN. 33. WPB. P. 483.), the Ten Meritorious Deeds etc. restore and enhance healthy development. The good practice of body and good practice of speech (Iti. LGC. P.152), the purity of body and purity of speech (Iti. 3.7. (56). LGC. P.157 – 158.) and the two perfections, to wit: perfection of body and perfection of speech (Iti. 3.7. (56). LGC. P.158) can be taken as the highest moral behaviour for sustainable development. The four ways, in which one is made pure by skillful verbal actions elucidated in the Cunda Kammāraputta Sutta (AN. Vol.V.10.176.PTS. P.175) contribute to sustainable development by restoring truthfulness and amiability. (1) By abandoning false speech, he abstains from false speech, speaks the truth and holds to the truth. He is firm, reliable, no deceiver of the world, (2) by abandoning divisive speech and abstaining from divisive speech, he reconciles those who have broken apart or strengthening those who are united, he loves concord, delights in concord, enjoys concord and speaks things that create concord, (3) by abandoning abusive speech and abstaining from abusive speech, he speaks words that are soothing to the ear, that are affectionate, that go to the heart, that are polite, appealing and pleasing to people at large. Abandoning idle chatter, he abstains from idle chatter and (4) by speaking in season, speaks what is factual, what is in accordance with the truth and morality. He speaks words worth treasuring, seasonable, reasonable, circumscribed and connected with the goal. The three kinds of skillful bodily conduct in accordance with the Dhamma and righteous conduct – (1) abandoning the killing of living beings and becoming one who abstains from killing living beings, (2) abandoning the taking of what is not given and becoming one who abstains from taking what is not given and (3) abandoning misconduct in sexual desires and becoming one who abstains from misconduct in sexual desires introduced in the Sāleyyaka Sutta (MN. 41.WPB. P.380.) bring about peace, harmony, trustworthiness and wholesome rapport in and among individuals establishing healthy and harmonious living which contributes to sustainable development.

Virtue (*sīla*) which is the right conduct or behavior is the foundation of the entire healthy existence for sustainable development. The observance of the five moral Precepts (*pañcasīla*) entirely prevents the violation of the five major aspects of human rights advocated in the UN Human Rights Conventions. Namely, (1) every person has the right to protect one's life, (2) every person has the right to safeguard one's wealth and property, (3) every person has the right to lead a peaceful family life, (4) every person has the right to know true information and (5) every person has the right to maintain peace of mind. These basic rights are well preserved by the observance of the five moral precepts. The violation of moral precepts through bodily and verbal actions is inwardly propelled by the noxious trio – greed, hatred and delusion. Refrain from the violation of the moral discipline reinforces the outward suppression of harmful mental factors and in turn helps one to suppress the inward detrimental mental factors. As a whole, moral restraint and moral purity establish sound outward conditions which help inward progress bringing about healthy living. The practice of virtue by an individual for his own benefit and for that of others elucidated the Sikkhā Sutta shows the importance of morality for sustainable development of a nation (MN.73.WPB.P. 595).

8. RIGHT LIVELIHOOD AND RIGHTEOUS WEALTH FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The sustainable development of the contemporary society is threatened with Right livelihood, balanced livelihood, rightly earned wealth and property restore and maintain healthy living. Right livelihood (*sammā ājīva*), refrain from wrong livelihood (*micchā ājīva*) and adoption of the Four Types of Bliss of a man, etc. establish peaceful, meaningful, wholesome existence which conduces to maintain sustainable development. Right livelihood, according to the Maggavibhaṅga Sutta is the abandonment of dishonest livelihood and keeping one's life going with right livelihood (SN. 45.8 WPB. P. 1528 – 1529.). The Buddha mentioned in the Vanijjā Sutta five types of occupations or business or trading that one should not be engaged in as they are wrong livelihood; business in weapons, business in human beings, business in meat, business in intoxicants, and business in poison (AN. Vol. III. 5.177

PTS. P.153). These types of occupations cause harm to individuals, family, society and the environment bringing destruction to peace and harmony. The mind of one who is engaged in such wrong business or occupation becomes unkind, ruthless, rough, wicked, cruel and immoral causing unhealthy living. Right livelihood (*sammā ājīva*) which refers to the engagement in wholesome occupations which helps a man to earn money through righteous means not through detrimental ways is a preliminary requisite to restore sustainable development.

9. BALANCED LIVELIHOOD FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

According to balanced livelihood (*sama-jīvikatā*) revealed in the Vyagghapajja Sutta, a man knowing his income and expenses leads a balanced life, neither extravagant nor miserly, knowing that thus his income will stand in excess of his expenses, but not his expenses in excess of his income. Earning or wealth in righteous way is also conducive to healthy development. The four sources for the increase of amassed wealth through right livelihood or right living – (1) abstinence from debauchery, (2) abstinence from drunkenness, (3) non-indulgence in gambling, (4) friendship, companionship and intimacy with the good should be developed to lead a simple and balanced life (AN. Vol. IV. 8.54 PTS. P. 189.). The same sutta reveals that a man lives wholesome life in the present life when he is active in doing good, heedful and circumspective, equanimous in livelihood and careful with his savings (*uṭṭhātā kammadheyyesu, appamatto vidhānavā, Samaṃ kappeti jīvikam sambhataṃ anurakkhati*). The Six Channels of Dissipation of wealth as revealed in the Siṅgāla Sutta - (1) Indulgence in intoxicants which cause infatuation and heedlessness, (2) Sauntering in streets at unseemly Hours, (3) Frequenting theatrical shows, (4) Indulgence in gambling which causes heedlessness, (5) Association with evil companions and (6) The habit of idleness and the Six Faults that Dissipate Wealth and Property: laziness, heedlessness, lack of action, lack of restraint, sleepiness and sloth as mentioned in the Najirati Sutta of the Saṃyutta Nikāya should be avoided to protect wealth that supports the maintenance of sustainable development. The four types of bliss that a man can enjoy immensely enhance sustainable living and development.

10. LEADING A SIMPLE LIFE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Leading a simple life endowed with contentment (*santussaka*), having few activities (*appakicca*), light living (*sallahuka*) and modesty (*appagabbha*) as mentioned in the Mettā Sutta is a prerequisite for healthy existence as a simple life has fewer attachments, bonds and ties (Sn. PTS. P. 125.) This does not mean that one is to neglect duties, responsibilities and obligations. Most of the people in the modern society are extremely busy with unnecessarily self-assigned or alienated activities which cause strong attachments and craving. This is directly conducive to harm mental peace and relaxation making the existence unhealthy, stressful and suffering. A simple life with a fewness of wishes, less attachment and less craving restores sustainable development.

11. PRESERVATION OF WEALTH & GENEROSITY

The Buddha, in the Vyagghapajja Sutta, instructs wealthy people how to preserve and increase their prosperity and how to avoid loss of wealth (AN. Vol. IV. 8.54 PTS. P. 187 ff.) Righteous wealth is appreciated and poverty is rejected in Buddhism. Wealth alone, however, does not make a complete man or a harmonious society. Possession of wealth often multiplies man's desires, and he is ever in the pursuit of amassing more wealth and power. This unrestrained craving, however, leaves him dissatisfied and impedes his inner growth. It creates conflict and disharmony in society through the resentment of the underprivileged who feel themselves exploited by the effects of unrestrained craving. This harms sustainable development of the entire society. Therefore, the Buddha advises men to gain material welfare with four essential conditions for spiritual welfare: confidence in the Buddha's Enlightenment, virtue, generosity and wisdom. These four will instill in man a sense of higher values. He will then not only pursue his own material concern, but also be aware of his duty towards society. To mention only one of the implications: a wisely and generously employed liberality or generosity will reduce exploitation, poverty, starvation, theft, corruption, tensions and conflicts in the society. Thus, the observing of these conditions of material and spiritual welfare will make healthy and sustainable development in in the modern society.

12. HEALTHY MIND FOR RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The mind overwhelmed by the noxious trio—greed (*lobha*), ill-will (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*) generally harms mental health. Intense greed (*abhijjhā*), intense ill-will (*vyāpāda*) and intense delusion (*avijjā* or *micchādiṭṭhi*) should be abandoned to maintain mental health. Wholesome mental actions, right view, confidence (*saddhā*) wholesome knowledge, wholesome attitudes, spiritual qualities, etc. conduce to healthy life. Confidence in the Fully Enlightened One, the Doctrine and the enlightened disciples of the Fully Enlightened One known as the Triple Jewel is of utmost significance. As the flawless doctrine expounded by the Fully Enlightened Buddha perpetuated by the Enlightened Saṅgha shows us the path endowed with right view leading to happiness, peace and mental health that is immensely essential to restore and maintain sustainable development.

The development of Four Sublime Abodes – loving – kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karuṇā*), altruistic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*) and the Five Faculties – confidence (*saddhā*), energy (*virīya*) mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*) restores mental health. For instance, Ill-will, cruelty, resentment, irritation, passion, conceit etc. implied in the Mahārāhulovāda Sutta are internal impediments to healthy mind. They should be suppressed at least to a certain extent to make way for the development of mental health (MN.62 WPB. P. 530 ff.). Good will is to be developed so as to abandon ill-will. Compassion is to be developed in order to abandon cruelty. When altruistic joy is developed, resentment will be abandoned. When equanimity is developed, irritation will be abandoned. Passion will be abandoned when the unattractive is developed. The perception of inconstancy should be developed to abandon the conceit (MN. 62. WPB.P.530–531.). Development of the four sublime abodes is mandatory to the restoration and maintenance of sustainable development.

13. SOCIAL HARMONY AND RECIPROCAL OBLIGATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Disharmony among people, poverty, illiteracy, unemployment

etc. cause a multitude of social problems like robbery, bribery, fraud, environmental pollution, drug addiction, alcoholism etc. destroying peaceful existence and wholesome development. Social harmony and peace, absence of poverty, starvation, malnutrition, unequal distribution of wealth, literacy and employment, wholesome family and social life etc. also restore sustainable development. The Sikkhā Sutta elucidates that an individual who practises virtue for his own benefit and for that of others abstains from the taking of life and encourages others in undertaking abstinence from the taking of life. He himself abstains from stealing and encourages others in undertaking abstinence from stealing. He himself abstains from sexual misconduct and encourages others in undertaking abstinence from sexual misconduct. He himself abstains from lying and encourages others in undertaking abstinence from lying. He himself abstains from intoxicants that cause heedlessness and encourages others in undertaking abstinence from intoxicants that cause heedlessness (AN. Vol. II. 4.99. PTS. P. 107.). The individuals endowed with these qualities contribute to social harmony and peace and help restore sustainable development on any land.

14. WHOLESOME RELATIONS FOR RESTORATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A good friend (*kalyāṇamitta*), good neighbours, good family members, social ethics, wholesome social relations, wholesome, family, cultural, economic, educational, religious relations etc. contribute to the development of healthy living in the society. The association of the four types of good-hearted friends introduced in the Siṅgāla Sutta highly conduces to healthy living in the society (AN. Vol. II. 4.99. PTS. P. 178 ff.). The Six things which are conducive to communal living (*sārāṇīyā dhammā*) mentioned in the Sangīti Sutta are also wholesome social prerequisites that contribute to peaceful co-existence which, in turn, favours mental development.

The four grounds for the bonds of fellowship discussed in Saṅgaha Sutta are (i) generosity, (ii) kind words, (iii) beneficial help and (iv) reliability (AN. Vol. II 4.32. PTS. P. 36). These great qualities help each other greatly for the development of the moral

and spiritual qualities. A trustworthy person is the best kinsman (*visvāsaparamā nāti*) according to the Sukhavagga (Dhp. Ch.15. V.204. P.177.) The Rāga-Vinaya Sutta also details about four individuals out of one who practises for the subduing of passion within himself and encourages others in the subduing of passion; practises for the subduing of aversion within himself and encourages others in the subduing of aversion; practises for the subduing of delusion within himself and encourages others in the subduing of delusion (AN. Vol. V. 11.12 PTS. P. 209 ff. /Vol. II 4. 96 PTS. P. 105.). The six conditions that are conducive to amiability, that engender feelings of endearment, engender feelings of respect, leading to a sense of fellowship, a lack of disputes, harmony and a state of unity are mentioned in the Saraṇiya Sutta (AN. Vol. V. 6.12. PTS. P. 208.). A monk is set on bodily acts of good will with regard to his fellows in the holy life, to their faces and behind their backs. The monk is set on verbal acts of good will with regard to his fellows in the holy life, to their faces and behind their backs. The monk is set on mental acts of good will with regard to his fellows in the holy life, to their faces and even behind their backs. Even the people in the society should follow these ethics to make society suitable for sustainable development. The adoption of the sixty one reciprocal obligations exposed in the Siṅgāla Sutta that restore wholesome relations in family, educational, social, economic and religious contexts that establish social harmony and peace is conducive to maintain sustainable development in every stratum in the society.

15. GOOD GOVERNANCE FOR RESTORATION AND MAINTENANCE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The contemporary society overwhelmed by avariciousness, political extremism, despotism, nepotism, detrimental trading and occupations, immoral entertainments and literature, violation of rights, racism, extreme poverty, exploitation, oppression etc. harms peace and harms harmony destroying wholesome development in the current society. It is externally due to bad governance based on unsuitable policies of economic system, education that increase intense greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*) and mismanagement of both human and natural resources. This also causes damages to the world resources as they are exploited to

amass wealth for rulers and their intimates to lead a life in the lap of luxury at the expense of their citizens whose living standards are below the poverty line. As a whole, evil consequence of all these is the destruction of healthy development.

Good governance which restores social equality, justice, reciprocal obligations, law and order etc. and prevents unemployment, unequal distribution of wealth and property, poverty, illiteracy, social vices, riots, conflicts etc. and other detriments should be adopted for making the modern society suitable for sustainable development. The Seven Conditions of a Nation's Welfare (*satta aparihānīya dhamma*) revealed in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (DN.16, WPB. P. 231.), the duties of an Ariyan Wheel-rolling Monarch, according to Cakkavattisīhanāda Sutta as revealed in the Kūṭadanta Sutta (DN. 5. WPB. P. 136.), the rightfulness and righteousness of a wheel-turning monarch who had conquered the land in four directions and ensured the security of his realm, possessed the seven treasures, whose kingdom is rich and prosperous discussed in the Mahāsudassana Sutta (DN. 17. WPB. PP.279 – 280.) can bring about law and order, prosperity, justice and equality in a country. Thus, the Four Virtuous Qualities (*satara saṅgaha vatthu*) – liberality, kind speech, beneficial actions and impartiality, the Ten Obligations of Universal Monarch (*dasasakvittivat*), the Ten Duties of Good Governance (*dasarājadharmā*), etc. which should be executed by a ruler can be adopted to restore peaceful and sustainable development in the context of virtuous and righteous governance.

16. CONCLUSION

In Buddhist perspective, consumption and development in a country become responsible, sensible, moderate and sustainable only when serious detriments of the noxious trio – greed, hatred and delusion are avoided and wholesome (skillful) bodily actions, verbal actions and mental actions for individual and common welfare are developed in every stratum of the society. Moderate consumption, healthy food, good dwellings and environment devoid of pollution, moral Behaviour that safeguards basic human rights, right livelihood and balanced livelihood that preserves righteous wealth and property, healthy mind developed through

Buddhist teachings, social harmony and reciprocal obligations and good governance that restores social equality, justice, prosperity and peace for healthy living are essential factors for restoration and continuity of responsible consumption of material and immaterial resources and sustainable development in the modern pluralistic society.

ABBREVIATIONS

AN:	<i>Aṅguttara Nikāya</i>
BPS:	Buddhist Publication
Cv:	<i>Cullavagga</i>
Dhp:	<i>Dhammapada</i>
DN:	<i>Dīgha Nikāya</i>
Iti:	<i>Itivuttaka</i>
LGC:	London Geoffrey Cumberlege
MN:	<i>Majjhima Nikāya</i>
Mv:	<i>Mahāvagga</i>
PTS:	Pali Text Society
SN:	<i>Samyutta Nikāya</i>
Sp:	<i>Suttanipāta / Sutta–Nipāta</i>
Vin:	<i>Vine Piṭaka</i>
WPB:	Wisdom Publication, Boston

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