

# AWARENESS TO APPLICATIONS FOR AN ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE INDIA: ECO-CLIMATIC APPROACHES IN 'THE CLIMATE SOLUTION' BY MRIDULA RAMESH

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## ABSTRACT-

"Literature adds to reality, it does not simply describe it. It enriches the necessary competencies that daily life requires and provides; and in this respect it irrigates the deserts that our lives have already become." (Lewis) Literature has a greater influence and impact on society to realize, rectify and revamp in a practical way to make it sustainable. 'The Climate Solution' by Mridula Ramesh is a significant benefaction to climate change apropos to India, one of the world's most climate vulnerable countries. Climate crisis is a severe quandary that the whole world facing and this nuisance is a serious reason for global crisis. The present research paper aims to critically examine and interpret the aforesaid text with regards to the role of this specific work on current scenario as well as its impact on society to dispose of the oversized mess of climatic trepidations. The objective of this study is to analyze the distinctive approaches, employed by the writer in this book, which spread awareness and possible elucidations to clear out the setback of climate crisis. The study will also spotlight on the practical solutions to the prevalent and crucial ecological apprehensions and how it treats recent menace of climate change as regards to India. Furthermore, to conduct the research, qualitative research methods like 'textual analysis' and 'interpretive' are taken in to consideration. This research intends to help to widen wakefulness on consequences along with solutions to climate change in India with reference to Mridula Ramesh's 'The Climate Solution'. Therefore, the present research paper is a study on the eco-climatic approaches employed by Mridula Ramesh in her work 'The Climate Solution'.

*Keywords-* Mridula Ramesh, climate change, global crisis, ecological apprehension, eco-climatic awareness, eco-climatic solution

## INTRODUCTION-

"Climate change is the defining issue of our time and we are at a defining moment. From shifting weather patterns that threaten food production, to rising sea levels that increase the risk of catastrophic flooding, the impacts of climate change are global in scope and unprecedented in scale." ("The Climate Crisis- A race We Can Win") Certainly, 'Climate-Change Crisis' is one of the most dominating factors in this present scenario and can be regarded as a global crisis as it affects the overall growth of the society. Be it financial development, basic necessities fulfillment or technological advancement, ecological concerns have negative impacts upon these social priorities directly or indirectly. "Erratic weather patterns, rising sea levels and melting glaciers due to climate change, are reshaping societies across the globe." ("India Climate Change") The whole earth is facing and experiencing this menacing situation of environmental apprehensions. So in order to survive and sustain, we should understand and unfold the questions like 'what is climate crisis', 'why is it occurring' along with 'how to deal with the issue'. Moreover, we must apply certain appropriate methods and techniques to overcome the aforementioned subject matters.

"What is wonderful about great literature is that it transforms the man who reads it towards the condition of the man who wrote, and brings to birth in us, also the creative impulse." (Forster) Literature, indeed, has the power to modify a society in a better way. Furthermore, it can influence the general public to think and act accordingly. Mridula Ramesh, founder of the Sundaram Climate Institute, is not only a famous author of books like 'The Climate Solution: India's Climate-Change Crisis and What We Can Do about It' and 'Watershed: How We Destroyed India's Water and How We Can Save It' but also a visionary environmental activist who focuses on waste and water solutions and education. In her non-fictional work 'The Climate Solution', Mridula

intends to unfold and make others understand about climate change and its consequences plus the arenas of actions, to pact with the issue, which can be applied by individual to organizations with regards to India. "...the book is an important contribution to climate action, tailored to India, and written with lucidity. It should be a required read for all concerned citizens, entrepreneurs and decision makers around the country." ("The Climate Solution by Mridula Ramesh: An important book on climate change, tailored to India") Being an environmental activist, Mridula tries to put each possible action that can be easily applied by every individual to deal with the ecological disquiets in reference to India.

#### RATIONALE-

"And yet, in India, the entire corpus of climate change literature will not amount to speak of the volume published non-fiction works." ("The Climate Solution by Mridula Ramesh: A message for the masses") The book 'The Climate Solution' that contains understanding the changing climate plus consequences of climate change and actions to be taken to get rid of same predicament with practical examples makes it a complete power packed package to deal with climate crisis of India. Therefore, the present study endeavors to examine the abovementioned text to explore how it treats the ecological issues and up to what extent it can help to transform the society to become environmentally healthy and prosperous. The paper also attempts to spotlight on the explications, which are discussed in 'The Climate Solution', for resolving the climate crisis problem. As climate change is a major concern for present society, this study will help to unfurl the questions, like 'what is climate change and how we can overcome from this,' to the society.

#### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES-

The aim of this research paper is to critically interpret the text 'The Climate Solution' to analyze its role in solving the climate crisis that is being faced by India in this current scenario. The objectives of the present study are as follows:

- To discuss about the different aspects of climate change with regards to India.
- To trace the arenas of actions those are conversed in the book to trounce climate crisis of India.
- To find out the intensity of the practical applications of the actions to be taken for a climatically sustainable India.

#### UNDERSTANDING THE CLIMATE CHANGE-

"India is a developing nation with a hot and water stressed climate.....from the floods in Chennai in 2015 to the Marathawada drought 2013-2016.....studies suggest that India is singularly vulnerable to climate change. Clearly, creating resilience to climate change in India is of pressing importance." ("The Climate Solution by Mridula Ramesh: An important book on climate change, tailored to India") Written with lucidity 'The Climate Solution' centers on 'what, why and how' relating to 'Climate Crisis' with reference to India. Here Mridula categorizes the non-fiction in to two broad sections like in first part of the book deals with 'Understanding Climate Change' and second part belongs to 'Action' or 'Arenas of Actions' require for prevailing over this threatened situation. The first part puts emphasis on 'understanding the climate, its nature, role and why it is changing'. "Climate Change is about so much more than just a simple increase of temperature. It's about shifting to a profoundly different world." (Ramesh 25) Here the author reveals the consequences of changing climate such as increasing number of natural calamities like storms, droughts along with floods, instability of rainfall patterns and unbearable heat waves etc. How 'changing patterns of rainfall' (unusual heavy rainfall) causes fatal floods, 'melting ice' reasons for receding glaciers and how 'the shifting ecosystem' grounds for the disturbed incomes of poor people of India are discussed in a simple way. For example; in 2014 flood devastated Jammu and Kashmir with a penalty of 500 deaths, the 2013 flood of occurring in Uttarakhand led to thousands of death with damage and reconstruction costs more than \$600 million, the receding of Gangotri glacier by more than 1.5 kilometers and upsetting income level of poor Indian fishermen are taken in to consideration to explain the ecological issue in a logical and practical manner. From 'IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change)' to 'The Kyoto Protocol' to 'Paris Agreement' along with the role of India in are talked about at length. "This seems rather dire. So, how come politics play such a big role in delaying meaningful climate solution?" (Ramesh 44) The roles of different countries and their harmful contributions to 'climate crises' plus their direct effect upon India are presented by the writer with lots of reliable informations. Mridula carefully points out and discusses in detail

about the hazardous effects of environmental disarrangement upon human health. Higher temperature helps to boost in unnatural deaths caused by heat stroke, vector-borne diseases like dengue, Japanese encephalitis, malaria and zika etc. "The year 2015 was particularly vicious. Extreme heat and draught made for a terrible combination, and caused over 2,000 deaths in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Odisha as temperatures reached the mid-40." "Add humidity to heat and you have a prescription for disaster." (Ramesh 61)." Most of the places in India, especially the coastal belt areas have humid environment. With the increasing temperature, these parts of the country suffer from deadly humid heat waves. Furthermore, malnutrition, mortality rates and mental health issues are some of important health factors which are conversed in the text in relation to climate change. In addition, increase in contaminated ground water due to rising sea level in coastal areas give birth to water borne diseases. "The effects of climate change on India's health are varied and severe." (Ramesh 70) Indeed, India is experiencing a health crisis and it is amplifying day by day. On the other hand, India is a leading agricultural land having a position of second largest producer of wheat, rice, dry fruits, and many more. But due to more flooding, frequent draughts and unexpected uneven weather conditions, agricultural harvest of India is facing a threatening situation. Near about 70 percent of its rural families depend on agriculture and the agricultural economy revolves around farmers of the country. "The rest of India will suffer along with her farmers. While the share of agriculture in Indian GDP is low (17 percent in 2015-16) and .... Rural incomes have a big role to play in several large sectors of Indian economy." (Ramesh 82) Climate crisis is the center point for economical imbalance to decreasing health conditions. Even the factors like water, pollution, agriculture are some of contemporary geopolitical weapons used for personal benefits. Here Mridula draws the significant connection between geopolitics, environmental concerns and security. For example, water conflicts between India and China over the Brahmaputra, the Cauvery conflict between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka and even we can take the recent case on water dispute between Odisha and Chhattisgarh over the Mahanadi River. Therefore, to avoid the geopolitical threats and develop the condition of India, matters regarding climate change should be taken seriously. Indian women especially, rural women workforce on agricultural fields and the hurdles they are facing due to warming climate to survive are discussed very thoughtfully. "What is more remarkable about the change is its pace. It's happening so rapidly that civilization is struggling to cope. In a world already struggling to manage inequality, a warmer world only accelerates this unequalizing trend." (Ramesh 26) The author conveys the intensity of criticality of climate change. Additionally, the historical data on climate change given in this book proves the logic behind 'why everyone in this globe should awake and aware about the above said crisis.' Ramesh's style of beginning a section with a personal experience or an interesting story or an inspiring quote and 'Q and A' pattern of discussing a topic interweaves a thread of connectivity to this complex topic with the reader.

#### **ARENAS OF ACTIONS-**

"The climate has changed. We are entering a hotter, more unequal world.....where glaciers shrink, and seas rise.....where our health- physical and mental- is battered....where women face new kinds of threats." (Ramesh 125) Still, we can build an all-round ecological resilience in India that's what Ramesh wants to state and explain in the second part of the book where from 'management to innovation to implementation' in an eco-friendly way are explicated with practical illustrations and creative ideas. Mind plays a vital role to get success. In this context, Mridula terms 'ignorance, bias and doubt' as the monsters that create hinderances in the path of climatic development from an individual site. Secondly, the huge mismanagement of water sources in India should be tackled carefully. "The combination of waste water treatment desalination, and drip irrigation has allowed a desert nation to export containers of fresh water! That's true magic." (Ramesh 152) Here in this context, Ramesh draws the attention on technological and regulatory strategies and procedures of Israel. This could be taken as an outline for water conservation in India. She also puts emphasis on rain water harvesting, regulating water bodies with common ownership and pricing of water to deal with the water scarcity and wastefulness of people towards water. Furthermore, the technological innovations like 'precision farming' for increasing agricultural production with an effective management of fertilizer and irrigation processes must be adopted in India rather than emphasizing on harmful GMO (genetically modified organism) process of farming.

With respect to utilization of energy in a correct way and to overcome from the mismanagement of energy resources, Ramesh calls attention to that dated technology, inadequate maintenance of power transmission, theft and careless usage of filament bulbs. In order to be an energy efficient nation, she puts emphasis on different solutions like switching to LEDs from filament bulbs, using energy proficient A. Cs or other electronic items

instead of general products by which, from an individual effort, one can contribute towards an eco-friendly environment. In 'a checklist of actions', she gives a blue print on possible and viable solutions for 'individuals, institutions and for government' to get a climatically healthy nation. "... Small actions can lead to a flood. It requires us to believe our actions can make a difference and take the first step." (Ramesh 292) Besides, she broadly talks about the issues of massive sewage and solid wastes which cause fatal diseases and contaminating the environment due to methane emissions. By presenting her own personal experience and basic experiments, she gives practical and successful methods like evading food wastage along with usage of biogas machine to change over organic wastage in to energy for the reduction of solid waste to get rid of such crucial matters. Further, the author discusses about the solutions for pollutions by answering the questions like 'why should we care about pollution, what is driving pollution and what can we do' to handle the current scenario. Among most polluted cities in world (2022), six cities from India are within the top ten polluted cities of world. ("25 Most Polluted Cities in the world, 2022 Rankings") Being a serious issue, pollution in India has to be reduced. Therefore, the solutions, which are provided by the writer, such as using the waste as resource to make organic compost for cultivation and going for natural farming should be adopted for an ecologically sustainable India. "The Climate Solution's largely conversational style and the author deftly connecting climate challenges to her own lived experiences and those of others make it a ready reckoner on climate change and India." ("The Climate Solution by Mridula Ramesh: A message for the masses")

## CONCLUSION-

"The climate crisis, together with the loss of biodiversity, is the greatest challenge facing our world. Right now, increased global average temperatures are having a profound effect on our climate and those effects will become more severe in the coming years." ("Climate change: causes and consequences") Undeniably, ecological issues are predominant factors resulting troubles in the path of by and large developments of human society. During this crisis period, it is the first and foremost responsibility to prioritize our prerequisites and practices for a climatically healthy Earth. "It also offers a checklist, drawn perhaps from the author's own experiments with 'zero waste' living." ("The Climate Solution by Mridula Ramesh: A message for the masses") To make it achievable, every individual must start it from his/her home. This small contribution will make a sea of connection and participation in a larger way to conquer over climate crisis, one of the prevalent problems on the globe. Though several non-fictional works are there concerning climate and environmental issues, this specific work has very distinctive and practical approaches towards the subject matters of ecological trepidations. "But raising popular awareness and understanding in the country would require offering the reader an immediate connects." ("The Climate Solution by Mridula Ramesh: A message for the masses") Brilliantly elucidated with true examples and realistic applications to solve the peril of climate crisis of India, this literary non-fictional work not only provides the solution to the aforesaid issue but also interlaces an attachment with the reader. "Mridula's book is thought-provoking... It impels the reader to think about what he/she can do to help the cause." ("Climate Change and you") 'The Climate Solution' by Mridula Ramesh, without a doubt, is a very useful and functional book which successfully discusses and explains 'Awareness to Applications' to triumph over 'Climate Crisis' in a constructive way with reference to India, one of the World's most climate vulnerable countries. The very unique 'Eco-Climatic' approaches, which are employed in this text, have the ability to transform India in to a climatically healthy nation.

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