



Bhumi Thoughts

Open for Comments

Perceiving Bhumi

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Can we visualize a universe without the Earth or imagine a world without the earth? !!! All people who dwell in this world would undoubtedly agree that if not for the beloved planet Earth we would be no where and would not know where we would be in the infinite universe. The Earth has the magnetic power of attracting and holding all living and non living matter on it and is certainly our dwelling place giving us a 'Bhumi', a base on which to live and settle down. Hence, in a broad sense Bhumi can be viewed as the blue planet in our solar system, which is the sphere shaped earth. The globe is also known as *Bhu Golaya* or geo -sphere, and geo -graphie is known as the science of the earth.

In a historical context, this round and beautiful earth has been known as the 'mother earth' to people in many lands. Earth in each place on earth can be viewed from a myriad of perspectives. Yet one and all will simply agree that earth of course is soil and the good earth, and 'Bhumi' the land that provides us a base on which to inhabit the earth and land on which to live. However that is indeed a complex statement encompassing a wide range of aspects that Bhumi is and has potential to be, for us human beings, assuming the fact that all other non human living things and non living matter found on the earth are there for

the humans to use, consume, develop , manage and enjoy.

Bhumi is round and yet is flat !, is high ground but also is low ground, can be just bare land appearing to be lifeless at one place yet it also is full of trees, flora and fauna and life at another place. Bhumi is full of visible resources, yet full of invisible resources found beneath the surface, is capable of producing and reproducing and appears to be static yet dynamic, in reality rotating all the time and revolving silently in the universe to get days and nights and four seasons.

Land certainly is a wonderful resource full of surprises and with an almost uncountable range of opportunities and potentials. Bhumi basically is Land, as can be seen and what we believe to be the surface crust or solid surface on the Earth. However in the definition of land , when a parcel or piece of surface land is connected to the center of the earth everything beneath the surface and everything above the surface belong to that land and is part and parcel of it with several 'tenure rights' of its use and occupation. Land in a legal sense encompasses various 'rights' in regard to its territory, ownership and use and development.

Those are only a few aspects of Bhumi!

Bhumi land is unique to each place where it is found and has a fixed location on the earth which is immovable in general. Land can be measured in relation to its surface extent or area. Bhumi as an entity is finite in quantity and of course it has a shape and form and generally cannot be destroyed.

Land is a sought after precious commodity, which attracts the consumer to its situation where the market for it is found. Hence, it is a special commodity which has a price tag as well as a value attached to it and is capable of generating revenue. The valuation of "land" in a holistic sense is a complex science. Land is an invaluable resource and also provides a base for the multitude of resources on it and under it and over it. The surface land is a base for production of everything that grows on it determined by soil type, terrain, topography, and climate. Land also is the base under which mining is carried out to extract the mineral and metal resources which are the raw materials, for various industries that manufacture goods for human consumption and even services. Land is the stage on which all human activities take place. Bhumi is therefore the platform for construction of shelter and housing for people and is also the source which supplies the primary raw materials needed to build the houses, the wood, the sand, the lime stone, the rubble, while secondary inputs such as cement and iron based products etc are also supplied and manufactured by the wealth of resources provided by Bhumi.

People have organized themselves and land as territories of

peoples of countries, communities and neighbourhoods and all types of human settlements in urban and rural areas, where bhumi can be identified in terms of forests, cultivable and uncultivable land, water bodies which usually have bhumi underneath and built-up land with different types of construction on it and cultivated land and developed land surrounded by a vivid and colourful environment.

In the context that Bhumi is land, it is of paramount importance in town and country planning. This is in recognition of the fact that land is essential to development, has a carrying capacity, and is a mandatory ingredient in human settlement planning. The growth of population increases the demand for land not only to provide food, clothing and shelter to them but also to cater to several varied needs for which land is a critical element. Furthermore, it reduces the land per person ratio while the available land supply remains constant. The implication of this phenomenon is that there is a realistic need for managing the use of land and a reasonable need for a land policy for development of land for different purposes within a physical, institutional and economic, framework that would ensure better use of land without over exploiting it. The objectives of such a policy require integration of several types and uses of land ensuring equity and efficiency and harmony.

It is a joy to pen a few thoughts on 'Bhumi' as a contribution to the first issue of Bhumi.

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