

## **Radio serial on Sustainable Development Episode 38**

**Title in English** - Trouble making season

**Title in Hindi** - बिगड़ैल मौसम बनाती मुसीबत

**The name of the Original Writer** - Srinivas Oli

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### **Characters :**

**Payal** - 12th class student

**Dinesh** - MSc student and Payal's brother

**Bhawan** - Payal and Dinesh's Grandfather

**Dadi** - Payal and Dinesh's Grandmother

**Professor Karan** - College professor

**Atifa** - Geology research student

### **Signature tune... fades out**

**Announcer** : (Welcome + Recap + Intro) - A very warm welcome to the radio series on sustainable development named 'Chalti rahe zindagi' ('Life goes on'). Today we are going to talk about critical aspects of nature. Listeners, there are times when we have to face rowdy form of nature, whether it's flood or drought. In today's episode we would discuss how to maintain balance between nature and pace of development. So, let's move to a village where Dinesh and Payal are on vacation.

### **Signature tune**

#### **Scene one :**

#### **(Morning scene / Birds chirping)**

**Dinesh** : It's so much peace here...

**Payal** : Yes brother, no pollution... no noise... and remember the clear sky that we saw last night... The stars were shining... It was so beautiful...

**Dinesh** : Payal, please open the window... yesterday night, grandfather was telling that the Himalayan range looks golden bright in the morning... Let's see... now it's time for sunrise... Let's enjoy the view...

#### **(Sound of wooden window opening)**

**Payal** : (Loud and enthusiastic tone) Look... how beautiful it is...

**Dinesh** : Yes, It seems like someone has spread golden bedsheet over the Himalayan range. There are some clouds as well... I think the view would hide in the clouds soon...

**Payal** : Before all this disappears, let me click some pics...

#### **(Sound of pictures clicking)**

**Dinesh** : You are only interested in clicking pictures...

**(Sound of someone walking closer)**

**Bhawan** - Children... you all woke up so early... Did you all sleep well ?

**Dinesh** : Yes, we had a very sound sleep. We are feeling fresh this morning. The tiredness of our Delhi to here trip has all vanished.

**Payal** : I could not sleep till late night. Actually we are used to sleeping in noisy environment. And it was so peaceful here.

**(All three start laughing)**

**Bhawan** : Good... Now just get fresh... your grandmother has cooked breakfast for you all... She is ready to visit the fields... Yesterday you said, you want to come along... So, she is waiting for you all...

**Payal** : Yes, hurry up... Let's get ready

**Dinesh** : Grandfather, you promised to take us to Professor Karan...

**Bhawan** - (With a smile) Off course, I never said no... We would definitely meet him... There is a public awareness camp in district headquarters... In case we get time we would meet him there only...

**Dinesh** - Ok grandfather... I would benefit a lot from him...

**Payal** : (Anxiously) Benefit ? What benefit ?

**Dinesh** : (Smiling) You don't worry Payal... I am just thinking about my college project... he can be very helpful for the project...

**Payal** : (In a serious tone) Ok

**Scene transition music**

**Scene 2**

**(Sound of walking on dry leaves and fields... sound of a river)**

**Payal** : Grandma, you were saying that fields are nearby...

**Grandmother** : Yes, fields are not far... but you look tired...

**Bhawan** : The fields you can see from here... those above the river are all ours...

**Dinesh** - They look so beautiful... Payal see... Ganga water is so clear here...

**Grandmother** : It's good that you have come here in winters... These days, Ganga water level is low and silent... During monsoon, this river looks violent... During monsoon, parts of trees and large stones are moved with Ganga water... and it's too noisy to sleep midnight...

**Payal** : (filled with astonishment) really ???

**Grandmother** : Can you see the town just above that valley... that is Uttarkashi... The river has destroyed much of that area a few years back...

**Dinesh** : Oho ! So, this is Uttarkashi...

**Bhawan** : On 16-17 June, 2013... there was heavy rainfall which increased the water level of the river... The houses and hotels built on the coast of the river, suffered heavy loss...

**Dinesh** - Yes, I remember... I saw it on television news... Big houses tumbled like deck of cards... We tried calling you but could not get in touch with you because of bad network...

**Bhawan** : Those were very scary days for us... Roads got blocked at various places... Electric poles were destroyed... Phone cables were demolished... We had not seen such heavy rainfall in our lifetime... And it was not only Uttarkashi, that suffered... Almost all mountainous regions of Uttarakhand suffered ill effects of heavy rainfall...

**Dinesh** : Yes, During that time severe landslide destroyed Kedarnath as well...

**Bhawan** : You are right Dinesh... Heavy rainfall followed by flood destroyed everything you can think of... More than 5000 people lost their lives....and property worth crores was ruined...

**Dinesh** : (Astonished tone) So much rain... Why this happened ? Why there was such heavy rainfall ?

**Bhawan** : I don't know much about it... Rest information you would get from Professor Karan... He lives in Uttarkashi only...

**Dinesh** : (Talking to himself) yes, I have to ask him other things as well...

**Grandmother** : I remember, it used to rain heavily... but I have never witnessed this much loss...

**Payal** : There were not many people living here at that time...

**Grandmother** : No, there were no high rise in Uttarkashi... It was all fields around the river..... The houses were built at a distance... Now there are so many houses... roads... construction going on every where... so one can't avoid destruction...

**Payal** : But roads are necessity grandma... How can one think of development without roads...

**Dinesh** : Payal... roads are important but while constructing roads one has to take care that this does not lead to destruction... I mean, it's important to balance development with nature...

**Payal** : Grandma, you all would stay here for some more time ? I want to go home...

**Bhawan** : Ok, you people return home... we would come later...

**Dinesh** : Ok Dadaji...

**Grandmother** : Be alert on the way... Don't go near the river...

**Dinesh** : Sure Grandma... You please try to return as early as possible... We have to go to meet Karan Sir...

**Bhawan** : Yes off course...

**Scene transition music**

**Scene 3**

**(Sound of awareness camp... people chatting... loudspeaker announcements)**

**Sound on loudspeaker** : We welcome all of you who have spared time for the awareness camp... We hope that all the information you get here prove beneficial for you... We request our volunteers to be alert in time of heavy rainfall and flood... The district administration once again express gratitude to the people present, departmental staff and specialists...

**Dinesh** : Oh, now I got it... This is disaster management department awareness camp...

**Bhawan** : Yes Dinesh, After last floods, such camps are planned quite often...

**Dinesh** : (disappointing tone) Grandfather, the awareness camp activities are done... Now, would we be able to meet Professor Karan ?

**(Sound of people chatting)**

**Payal** : We should have left on time from home, to reach here on time...

**Bhawan** : Don't worry, Professor Karan would be somewhere here only...

**(Sound of people chatting)**

**Bhawan** : See... Professor Karan is coming to us...

**Payal** : Good brother... otherwise you were so disappointed...

**(Sound of Footsteps approaching)**

**Bhawan** : Good evening sir... We were looking for you only...

**Prof Karan** : I was also remembering you... I reached here after I received your call...

**Bhawan** : Yes professor, we actually left late from home... so reached here a bit late... This is my grandson Dinesh and my grand daughter Payal...

**Dinesh and Payal** - Good evening sir...

**Karan** : Good evening kids... This is Fatima Didi...

**Dinesh and Payal** : Good Evening Didi...

**Fatima** : Good evening kids...

**Karan** : Bhawan ji, Fatima came for this camp only... She is doing a research on environment... These days she is travelling in mountainous areas for her research project...

**Bhawan** : So good to hear this... Dinesh you must be very happy... You would get lot of information for your college project...

**Dinesh** : (in a happy tone) yes grandfather...

**Prof Karan** : Let's sit in the canteen there... There is not much rush...

**Bhawan** : Yes sir, that would be good place...

**(Everyone walking, conversation continues)**

**Prof Karan** : Dinesh, You are in MSc final year... right ?

**Dinesh** : Yes Sir, These days I am working on a project on climate change... I am even considering the 2013 flood...

**Fatima** : Wow ! This is a very nice topic... Excessive rainfall, floods and droughts have direct relation with climate change...

**(People chatting...)**

**Prof Karan** : That's why we can see lot of changes in rainfall pattern... Even the small rivers cross their limits and lead to drastic floods...

**(Sound of Chairs moving)**

**Prof Karan** : It's cold out here... Let's have some tea....

**Payal** : (smiling) Usually I don't drink tea but I will have one today...

**Prof Karan** : (A little louder) Get us 5 cups of tea...

**(Echoing voice from some distance...)**

**Bhawan** : Ok ok

**Prof Karan** : Fatima... there were huge hotels beside the river on your right side... But the 2013 flood washed away everything...

**Fatima** : I can notice one thing everywhere... Lots of settlements have grown up on the river bed with time... I have some old photographs which prove my point... Moreover... in the name of development, some random construction have been done over time...

**Dinesh** : But is this the only reason for floods...?

**Prof Karan** : There are several reasons... specially when there is heavy rainfall in the water catchment area... It results in floods... Condition deteriorates in times of cloud bursts... In the slopes of the mountains, the conditions of the forests have been much worse...

**Fatima** : That's right sir... The construction done in unscientific way has also increased the loss due to floods... whether it is a multi-storey building on the river bed or randomly constructed roads...

**Payal** : But didi... lots of surveys are done before constructing roads...

**Fatima** : You are right Payal... But many times the rules are not implemented correctly... and in flood like situation, if you neglect rules... we are forced to see bad results...

**Prof Karan** : Floods have always led to losses... Every year almost 1500 people die because of flood situations... Thousands of animals sacrifice their lives to flood... crops in the fields are destroyed... And all this directly affect our economy and the pace of development...

**Payal** : But Sir, government should take necessary measures...

**Bhawan** : What can government do in this ?

**Prof Karan** : Why not Bhawan ji... Even government is working hard at its end to minimise the losses caused due to heavy rainfall and floods... And these efforts are continuous... In our country, the National Flood Commission was constituted in 1980... and after that many committees and

units are constantly working in this direction... Stages of floods and drought and related data are collected and analysed continuously...

**Dinesh** : Really ?

**Prof Karan** : Not only this... It is also arranged by the government that rivers in the flood situation remain safe... Security walls are also built in areas adjacent to the rivers...

**Fatima** : Taking example of Uttarakhand, after 2013 floods, state disaster relief force (SDRF) was constituted... so that relief operations can be carried out within time...

**Bhawan** : Yes, even I remember.. Last year one SDRF team visited our village... They briefed villagers about disaster management...

**Fatima** : After this massive flood, many aspects of reducing the possibility of loss in the future have been worked on and still continues... National Disaster Management Institute, in its report, has emphasised that for the construction of roads in the Himalayan region, the standards should not be ignored... Report also emphasises on the need for better warning systems...

**Prof Karan** : Be it SDRF or any other unit of disaster management department... the basic source of information is the public... In case of floods as well, direct information from the people is gathered... For this, teams of volunteers are prepared in villages which becomes active at the time of need... often the preparations are tested by mock drills...

**Dinesh** : This means that to reduce ill effect of flood, public participation is must...

**Prof Karan** : You are absolutely right Dinesh... District administration, Disaster management units and voluntary organisations, make combined efforts to reduce loss figures... Floods do cause losses, but bad management even worsens the situation...

**Dinesh** : That's Probably because public awareness and public participation in flood relief related government has been given so much importance...

**Bhawan** : Professor, Now there are not many people in villages... Most people are busy in their work in cities...

**Prof Karan** : The disintegration of the traditional villages has also had a great effect... It is estimated by the damage caused by flood in the plains...

**Bhawan** : What do you mean ?

**Prof Karan** : This means that till earlier, the ponds used to be a community in most areas and the ponds were used by all the people... Today the condition is that the ponds of the villages have been demolished and houses have been built in its place... In the event of floods, large quantities of water was saved in these ponds, so that the damage caused by flood was greatly reduced...

**Fatima** : But one good thing is that various state governments have started the exercise of reviving ponds... so that ponds can be maintained...

**Prof Karan** : Indeed rains, floods and water bodies are deeply connected with each other... The impact of irregular rainfall in the mountainous areas is also affecting the situation of local water sources... For some places water sources have dried up and in some new places water went out...

**Bhawan** : Last year even we suffered lack of drinking water...

**Prof Karan** : Bhawan ji, As much damage is caused due to flood, the same damage is caused by water scarcity i.e. drought... Along with floods, drought has also put environmentalists in

concern... Scientist have speculated that due to the ever increasing temperature in the Himalayan region, due to floods and droughts, there are also incident of irregular rainfall...

**Fatima** : You are right sir, Today the situation is that more than two hundred and fifty districts in the country are in the grip of drought... however, many arrangements are made to reach water in drought prone areas... even if people get drinking water but farming gets quadruped...

**Bhawan** : But there are no arrangements of water done in our village... We have to travel long distances to fetch water...

**Fatima** : (With a light smile) Uncle, there is so much water in your area...

**(Everyone laughs)**

**Prof Karan** : See, nature has given so much to our country... Himalaya as a water reservoir... There are hundreds of rivers, ponds and lakes... but despite all this, we are not able to manage water... Actually we have ignored the rules of nature in the path of development...

**Dinesh** : You are absolutely right sir... There is no problem of water here... but in towns and cities... we have to struggle for every drop of water specially in summers...

**Fatima** : In our country, per capita availability of water is continuously decreasing... I tell you some statistics from this diary... (sound of turning page) In 1951, the availability of water to every person in our country was 5177 cubic meter... and in current situation, it is less than 1600 cubic meter... Scientists have estimated that till 2050, the availability of water to every person in our country would go down to 1400 cubic meter...

**Bhawan** : This is ridiculous... somewhere it rains heavily causing flood and at other places it's completely dry...

**Fatima** : Whatever be the case... It is our responsibility to deal with the situation... Simple solution to the problem is to adopt models of development which do not harm nature... You can yourself make out the difference since the forests are being wiped out, how the weather patterns change...

**Bhawan** : you are right fatima... I remember even after heavy rainfall, there were less incidents of landslide but today, landslides are quite common even after normal rainfall...

**Dinesh** : Grandfather, this would happen... When there would be no trees, soil would get loosen and lead to landslides... On our way here from delhi, we witnessed several incidents of landslide...

**Payal** : Yes Grandfather... Our bus was stuck at one place due to landslide...

**Prof Karan** : See Mr. Bhawan... Whether it is drought or flood... It must be acknowledged that the changing weather cycle and uncontrolled rain have become a bitter truth today ... Although floods do not always hurt, rather it also favours large areas too ... The fertile soil brought from the Himalayan region helps in making the soil of the plains fertile...

**Fatima** : You are absolutely right sir... Keeping in view the changing climate, it is important to make changes in the method of farming like sowing of crops etc. Also, if moisture content is reduced in the land area, then according to that we have to make changes in the crops also... With the changing climate, the use of crops and seeds is extremely important... Only then will we be able to step in with the current condition...

**Dinesh** : Fatima didi... All this information would help a lot in my project...

**Fatima** : (Smiling) Oho ! I am doing all the research and you are getting all the benefits... This is not fair...

**(Everyone laughs)**

**(A sound from far off)** Sir, tea is ready... should I send it now...

**Prof Karan** : Oh... in our conversation we forgot that we ordered tea as well...  
(In a higher tone) Off course... please send it...

**Payal** : Sir, I am feeling hungry too...

**Dinesh** : Payal, you were saying that you don't drink tea and now you are hungry... Have tea and try to console your hunger...

**(Everyone laughs)**

**Scene transition music**