

Name :

Date :

In Australia, fire sometimes breaks out in the large forests called 'the bush fires', which cover hundreds of miles. These bush-fires cause great damage to plant, animal and human life. So aeroplanes are sent regularly on reconnaissance (රිකනිසෙන්ස් - සොදිසිකිරීම) flights over these areas so that such fires could be detected (detect- පරීක්ෂා කර සොයා ගන්නවා) and controlled wherever they occur (සිද්ධ වෙනවා).

Such a plane once met with a terrible disaster (විනාශයක්). The plane with twelve officers on board was doing one of its regular flights over a thick forest when engine trouble developed. As the crew was helpless they sent radio messages to the airport about their plight (තත්ත්වය/අවස්ථාව). The plane which was completely out of control began to dive nose down and the pilot could do nothing to avoid a crash. His main concern was to save the lives of his crew and also to prevent the plane from catching fire which might result in setting the whole forest ablaze (අඛලෙයිස් -ගිනි ඇවිළී යාම). He tried to glide down on to a clear stretch of land (භූමි භාගය). But in a few minutes the plane crashed on to a huge tree and came to rest against it with the tail up. The nose and the front of the plane were completely wrecked ((උ) -රෙක්ට්). The pilot himself and two of his crew were crushed to death. Eight of the officers were so severely injured that their survival was doubtful. The other, though badly shaken up, was able to salvage (අනතුරකට පත් යානය කින් ඉතිරි වූ දේ බේරා ගන්නවා)the first aid kit from the wreckage and attend (සාත්තු කරනවා)to the wounded.

Soon after, they heard a rescue plane flying over them several times, but they were unable to communicate with it. The forest was so thick that the wreckage (සුන්බුන් වූ (ගුවන්) යානය) could not be seen from above. This made it impossible for the rescue party to locate it. The injured gave up all hope of being rescued, but their determination to live gave them the strength to face any hardship.

Night came on and the air became extremely cold. The situation grew frightening. Three were dead. Eight others were fighting for survival. It was very dark, and from a distance could be heard the intermittent (වරින් වර ඇති වෙන) howling (howl - හැඳලේ-උඩු බුරුලනවා) of wild dogs.

When day dawned four of the injured were dead. The others looked faint and weak. Their condition was becoming hopeless. The food supply the plane carried was barely sufficient for three days.

Some time later they could hear the rescue planes flying overhead. Their hopes rose. But a fresh danger threatened them. Attracted by the smell of the dead, vultures began to appear one by one. They started attacking not only the dead but the living, too. The only one who could move about fired his pistol again and again to keep the vultures away. But this didn't stop them from coming in their hundreds. What could one do in a situation like this?

There was only one shot left. Again he heard a rescue plane just overhead. Suddenly an idea struck him. He fired his last shot at the vultures (vulture - ගිජුලිහි කියා). Immediately they flew through the trees and up into the air. This unusual behaviour of the birds drew the attention of the rescue party which had been looking for the plane. They survey the area more carefully and through then trees they spotted something which looked like the tail of a plane. Soon arrangements were made to rescue the survivors.

1. Hello, Gamini ! What is the book you are reading so carefully? You seem to be very interested in it.

Yes, I am. It is a very interesting book. It tells us what will happen to the human race in the near future. Read this chapter. I hope you, too, will find it interesting.

2. There are over seven billion people in the world today. This is a very large number and some believe that the earth is already over-crowded. It means that there are too many people on the earth. This situation has created a number of problems. The biggest problem is to find food for this huge world population. It is estimated that even today half the people in the world don't get enough to eat. Death by starvation is not common in many parts of the world. People also need more houses and more clothing. The amount of land available for cultivation is also limited. These problems are made worse by the rapid increase in population. It is estimated that about two babies are born every second. This means that about 172,800 is being added to the world population every day. (the birth rate is 4 while the death rate is 2 / second) . At this rate of growth the population will come to about 10 billion in 50 years' time. This rapid growth of population creates further problems of food, clothing and shelter. Each year more and more people inhabit the earth, and the vital resources, such as food, air, water and land are becoming rapidly exhausted or polluted. Our earth is fixed in size as well as in its resources. So, when the vital resources are threatened all life on the earth is endangered. (අනතුරේ)

The situation described here is frightening. But surely there are some satisfactory solutions to these serious problems.

I believe there are. One solution is to control the rapid growth of population. But I don't believe it can be done successfully on a world- wide scale.

3. Aren't there other solutions? I am sure our scientists will be able to help us. I believe these problems are not too tough for them to solve. Can't they work on some new projects?

Such as?

4. What I mean is this. Man has already conquered space (conquer - දිනනවා). I hope it will be possible for cities to be built in space.

I wish they would do so. But it will have to be on a small scale. Building a city in outer space will be expensive and it will take a very long time. But there is a more practical solution. I wish they would build cities underground or on ocean-beds.

5. That seems possible. But how can the problem of food and water be solved?

I believe that sea-plants and fish could be exploited to provide more and better food for the people.

6. I wish they would prepare synthetic food in laboratories. Then it would not be necessary to depend on plants and animals for our food. But how would they get fresh water?

That is easy. Scientists have already converted sea water into fresh water. I believe they could do it on a larger scale and then the sea would supply all the fresh water the people need.

7. It will be a wonderful world then, with food from factories, water from the sea and houses underground or in outer space. I hope we will live to see all these.

I believe our dreams will come true in your life time and mine.

Home work

1-55 The words that are necessary to speak. (they (plural) – learnt (PV)

1-55 I -learn the words that are necessary to speak. (AV) (learn, learnt, learnt, learning)