

# The twentieth century is an age of greed

Life



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They were. But the number of people consumed by this disease is many times more this century. Also the variety and intensity of greed is unparalleled. We have many more opportunities to feed our greed on. See the amount of consumer goods available nowadays. How many of these goods can be genuinely said to benefit the user, or at the least satisfy him? Precious few, I would think.

All too often we read in the newspapers and consumer magazines about the underhand tactics used by giant corporations to sell their products. We hear about poisonous materials in foodstuffs. There are also innumerable amount of products that are shoddily made, yet passed off as up-to-standard products. Then into this vast consumer market comes the pirates. These are people who make imitations. They have no scruples. So we are deluged with pirated tapes, records, books, clothes and other products. We even have pirated medicine.

The misuse of public enterprise is rooted in nothing but greed. The greed for money, for more and more profit, regardless of what happens or who suffers. Look at the advertisement section of any newspaper and you will see companies advertising for "aggressive" personnel. They must sell as much as they can, even if it is like forcing the product down the consumer's throat. The worsening drug situation in the world now is also a result of greed. Drug-trafficking and related offences are punishable, some even by death. Yet the drug trade is not abating.

On the contrary, it is booming. Why is this so? Again we have people greedy enough to take risks in exchange for great returns. Their only aim is money.

Drugs is one way of getting money, big money. So they go in it regardless the fact that drugs destroy people and society. They do not care who gets hurt as long as they get the money. They pretend not to see the evils of drug-addiction while their pockets are being lined with illgotten gains. Only when they get caught or are themselves addicted to drugs may they regret their greed. By then it may be too late.

To see greed in action, all one has to do is to peep into a stock exchange or commodity trading centre. In smoke-filled rooms we can witness the behavior of people consumed by greed. Not all the traders are greedy, but there are some who sweat, haggle and shout themselves hoarse so as to reap as much profit as possible from the frantic buying and selling of invisible things. There are few people who purposely manipulate the market for their own ends. The smell of greed emanates from their bodies despite what they proclaim otherwise.

In addition to the greed for money is also the greed for power. The more power a person has, the more power he seems to want. Considering the unceasing bickering, backstabbing, and fighting among leaders and politicians it is no wonder the modern world is in such a chaotic state. One leader holds on to power by getting rid of his enemies, whatever the means. His opponents plot and scheme to replace him Coup-de-tats, uprisings, revolutions, assassinations and other political maneuvers are all aimed at the seizure for power. The one in power holds on tightly.

In time he is dislodged by another or by his own mortality. Thus the procession goes on. Individuals come and go, but the greed of power

remains to infect all who choose to follow its path. What does all these power struggles contribute to the welfare of our fragile planet? Nothing, but a global world with multitudes of nations fearfully isolating themselves from one another. In the name of religion, ideology and belief, the leaders of the world blindly lead the rest, but behind these excuses all we can see is greed and hunger for more power. So the greed persists.