

**'Dear Mr. UN Secretary-General,**

**'IF' is indeed a strange word. Do you know why?**

**If you had not kept the tap running while brushing your teeth as a child,**

**If you had considered melting of polar ice caps to be important three decades ago,**

**If you had not hunted the giant panda to near extinction,**

**If you had been serious about stopping the ivory trade,**

**If you had punished poachers dealing in tiger skins,**

**If you had not started using chlorofluorocarbons for refrigerants,**

**If you had stopped the developed nations from flouting the Montreal Protocol,**

**If you had stopped chemical bombs and napalm from being used in Vietnam and Iraq,**

**If you had stopped the ozone layer hole from getting bigger and bigger,**

**If you had listened, truly listened and not simply heard, Suzuki Severn's concerns twenty years ago,**

**If you had halted the continuous genocide in African states ,**

**If you had listened to Mahatma Gandhi and stopped apartheid ,**

**If you had stopped the diversion of the Yangste and the resultant destruction of habitat,**

**If you had stopped the desertification and disappearance of the Aral Sea,**

**If you had taken action on the annual floods in Bangladesh and Thailand,**

**If you had stopped whaling and indiscriminate salmon fishing,**

**If you had prevented the Yamuna river from turning into a cesspool of waste,**

**If you had established a smooth supply chain of foodgrain distribution,**

**If you had stopped the politicians from creating the Somalian famine,**

**If you had laws to stop genetically modification of all our food,**

**If you had penalties in place for nations which allow foodgrains to rot,**

**If you had instituted harsh actions against female infanticide,**

**If you had provided equal opportunity for the girl child,**

**If you had not allowed nations to starve their children while spending millions on missiles,**

**If education had been made a birth right across the world,**

**If the colour of one's skin did not matter,**

**If child labour was a punishable offence and not a flourishing third world custom,**

**If politicians and policy makers did not necessarily need to be fifty plus,**

**If oil was not more precious than blood,**

**THEN, Sir, I would not be writing to you now to act and save our planet.**

**Twenty years hence , I hope my child is able to write a thank you note to you on the occasion of Rio+40.**

**.... An urgent cry for action from Kehkashan Basu an 11 year old from Dubai**

