

2022 FLOODS AND ROLE OF NDMA IN PAKISTAN

1- Introduction:

Their statement

Pakistan, in the form of floods of 2022, saw the worst disaster in its history. The shortcomings of NDMA aggravated the situation, but, taking the right corrective measures and reform in the system can increase the efficiency of the authorities and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

2- Causes of floods of 2022:

- i - Climate change triggered the disaster
- ii - Climate injustice to Pakistan
- iii - Negligence of authorities

3- Devastation caused by floods:

- i - Life loss
- ii - Infrastructure loss
- iii - Agricultural loss
- iv - Health issues
- v - Economic loss

4 - Role of NDMA in Pakistan:

- i - Background of NDMA
- ii - Duties of NDMA
- iii - Performance of NDMA in 2022 floods

5 - Shortcomings of Disaster management in Pakistan:

- i - Wrong approach to manage disasters
- ii - Shortage of funds
- iii - Non-trained staff
- iv - No National action plan
- v - No coordination among authorities

6 - Ways to improve NDMA:

- i - Approach to manage disasters should be correct
- ii - Adequate funds allocation
- iii - Proper training of staff
- iv - National action plan should be devised
- v - Collaboration of authorities

7 - Conclusion

Monsoon of 2022 will always be mourned in Pakistan. It brought agony, devastation, grief and irreparable losses with it. It was the retaliation of nature against the exploitation of natural resources by human. It was a consequence of climate change. Pakistan lost lives of hundreds of its citizens, property worth of millions dollars and crops spread on hundreds of acres. But, the fact that Pakistan did not contribute to climate change at all is deeply saddening. Pakistan is highly vulnerable to climate change. Sadly, it is a victim of climate injustice, climate change brought about such a heinous disaster that Pakistani authorities were not able to prevent. National Disaster Management Authority proved to be ineffectiveness in preventing and responding to the disaster. The disaster discovered many shortcomings of the system. The authority does not receive adequate funds, nor does it have a properly trained staff. Its approach to deal with the disaster is also wrong and no coordination among the national and provincial authorities exacerbated the problem. There is a lack of National plan and able first responder. All these

problems make NDMF ineffective. However, the performance of the authority can be improved by taking some corrective measures. The approach to manage the disaster should be changed. Adequate funds should be allocated to disaster management authorities and proper training of the staff and first responders should be done. Furthermore, an effective coordinating mechanism should be devised. These measures can increase the efficiency of the authorities and adverse impact of climate change and natural disasters can be mitigated. In short, Pakistan, in the form of floods of 2022, saw the worst disaster of its history. The shortcomings of NDMF aggravated the situation, but, taking the right corrective measures and reform in the system can increase the efficiency of the authorities and mitigate the impacts of the climate change.

It would not be wrong to say that the floods of 2022 were triggered by climate change. It was the cause of floods. Unfortunately, Pakistan is located in the region that is highly vulnerable to climate change. According to Global

Climate Risk Index, 2021, Pakistan is 8th most vulnerable country to climate change. It means that climate change would continue venting the anger on it and the leaders must take some measures before it's too late.

Another thing to worry is the fact that climate change was never ignited by Pakistan. It is the consequence of developed nations' endeavours. The exploitation of natural resources led to this apocalyptic situation. Pakistan is the a victim of climate injustice. Pakistan does not contribute to global carbon emissions majorly. However, the country is placed at 135th position in the list of global carbon emissions per capita (Climate Change Profile of Pakistan Asian Development Bank Report, 2011).

This fact compels Pakistan to engage other countries because, Pakistan cannot deal with the problem alone.

It is true that climate change triggered such a horrible disaster and Pakistan is not responsible for climate change, but the negligence of authorities and poor disaster

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management magnified the loss. The
pernicious conditions of poor people
of Pakistan depict that how
negligent National Disaster
Management Authority has been
about the disaster and suffering
of people. It is one of the
cause of severe devastation that
world saw in monsoon of 2022. It
could have been mitigated but the
authorities did not bother to
prevent it and people died.

The severity of the
floods could be understood by ~~the~~
of seeing the devastation it caused.
Almost all the international society
addressed floods of Pakistan and
showed condolences many people lost
their loved ones. Reports show that
almost 1200 died as the result of
the surging water. It was an
initial estimate. More people died
afterwards due to water-borne
diseases and lack of resources. The life
loss was due to the disaster triggered
by climate change and the problem
was aggravated owing to the
negligence of the authorities.
The loss is not limited
to life loss only but property
and infrastructure of millions dollars
got demolished. People lost their

livestock and livelihood. Homes, roads, communication networks were destroyed. Studies show that the floods incurred a loss of 11 billion dollar worth of infrastructure on Pakistan. This damage would impact the economy and reconstruction would be a new task for the leaders.

Over and above, the direct economic loss, there are many indirect and secondary economic losses that Pakistan will have to face. The water of flood destroyed infrastructure as well as the crops and cultivable lands of the country. Widespread standing crops were destroyed and the fertility of the land for future use would also be reduced.

Studies show that 45% of away cropland has been washed away in Sindh Province of the country. It will give its repercussions in the future and agricultural decline would cause food insecurity, inflation and unemployment. These all would be the consequences of the floods of 2022.

Another affliction on the people who lost everything in the natural disaster is the health crisis. Floods brought with them many

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health issues. All the health department and facilities were destroyed and inundated. Moreover, the stagnant water gave birth to infections and viruses. People, due to lack of basic facilities such as food, drinking water, shelter and toilets, fell ill and many succumbed to death. The condition of maternal and antenatal health was also abominable in the flood-affected areas. There people faced the worst time of their life.

Besides all the immediate and direct impact, the indirect and long-term impacts on the country and its development are also worrisome for its leaders. The devastation will give a deep impact on the economic growth of the country. Unfortunately, owing to the floods, Pakistan would not be able to see the economic growth of 5% as envisaged by ministry of Economic affairs. However, studies and initial reports show that there would be a growth of only 2% because 3% would go to the recovery, reconstruction and

rehabilitation. It is another adverse impact of the floods that were triggered by climate change. To deal with disasters like floods, earthquake, Tsunami and rain storm, there are some authorities that are established by the government of Pakistan. The authority that works on national level is the National Disaster Management Authority. It was found in 2007 as a response to the devastation witnessed by people of Northern Pakistan in 2005 earthquake of Kashmir. According to estimate, almost 100,000 people died in the disaster and there was no proper authority that could have responded and rescued people. Thereafter, NDMA was found. This authority is headed by Prime Minister of Pakistan and its main objective is managing the disaster in Pakistan.

The responsibilities of NDMA are several and it is the authority that works at the top level of disaster management. Three of its major tasks are implementation of the policies designed by National Disaster Management Commission Act 2010, coordination

among provincial and district level disaster management authorities, Pakistan Meteorological Department and volunteer forces during the disaster management and monitoring the authorities as well, scholars claim that the policies are very comprehensive and authorities are also established but there is a question mark on the performance and the efficiency of the authority.

On recent floods the National Disaster Management Authority proved to be inefficient and people were in abject condition. There was no rescue program and many people died. A survey by Save the Children organization showed that many people were shelterless and were defecating in open water. There was a shortage of 2 million medicines and people were helpless. Moreover, people were compelled to drink contaminated water. All the studies and reporting of floods struck areas disclose the pathetic performance of the National Authority.

The people faced many difficulties due to the shortcomings

of the National Authority, there are many loopholes in the system. The foundational problem is with its approach of dealing with the disaster in Pakistan. The disaster management authorities have an approach of response and recovery instead of predictive and preventive. In this century, technology is so developed that countries tend to predict the disaster and then try to prevent it. However, in Pakistan the authorities are still lacking and do not take initiatives, instead authorities wait for the disaster to occur and then give response and try to recover from the disaster. This is not a good approach.

Another foundational issue with the NMA is the shortage of funding and resources. Pakistan being an underdeveloped country never has enough resources and funds to support any of its systems. Similarly, the NMA suffers due to shortage of funds and resources. In a recent disaster of floods, it is evident that there is a shortage of rescue teams and tools. People were not provided with basic necessities and

There was a shortage of food and medicines.

Due to shortage of funds and resources, NEMA is not able to provide proper training to its rescue team. In fact, the rescue team are inefficient and in case of emergency, armed forces are summoned to rescue people. Untrained staff cannot deal with the situation effectively and situation gets worse. In recent floods, the shortcoming was discovered. Armed forces were there to take people out of water. Religious groups provided people with shelters and basic necessities and NGOs helped people in difficult times. But, such disasters require trained professionals so that impact can be mitigated and life loss can be minimized.

Another shortcoming of the national authority is that there is no national action plan in case of any emergency. The policy talks about the plan but unfortunately, no such plan has still be devised that can be followed in time of need. It is a major shortcoming and cause

much distress. It makes things vivid and disaster management becomes more difficult and complicated task when there is no plan to follow. It is a major flaw and must be resolved to avoid such disaster in future.

The disaster management in Pakistan is complicated further due to the lack of coordination between the authorities, making a network of coordination between the national, provincial and district disaster management authority is the duty of national disaster management authority but unfortunately, nothing like this happens in time of need, national authority failed in fulfilling its responsibility and lack of coordination among authorities makes the management of disaster complicated and difficult.

The year 2022 brought with itself a horrible disaster. It engulfed many lives and millions worth dollar worth of infrastructure. Moreover, it highlighted the shortcomings of the disaster management system of Pakistan. It is clear now that the system

needs to be improved. First of all, there is a need to change the approach of disaster management authorities. The authorities should shift from response and recovery approach to predictive and preventive approach. There should be research and development to mitigate the adverse impact of climate change. The authorities should increase their capacity and should make the system able to predict the disaster early so that it could be prevented and precious human life could be saved.

Furthermore, adequate funds should be allocated to disaster management so that the people may not suffer and are provided with sufficient basic necessities of life. There should be a proper mechanism to allocate and utilize the fund. Moreover, adequate resources should be provided to increase the capacity of the institutions. There should be technological development to prevent the disaster and predict it as soon as possible. In addition to material resource, human resource of the

authorities should also be enhanced. There should be proper rescue teams and these teams should be properly trained to deal with the people stuck in areas hit by disaster. It can help authorities make optimal use of resources and prevent life loss due to human error. It will strengthen the disaster management system of the country and suffering of people would be less.

Another loophole that needs to be plugged is the formulation of a National Action Plan. There should be such a plan devised by authorities. It would help in time of emergency and disaster management would not be complicated. It would eliminate many ambiguities and all the people would be aware of their duties and responsibilities. It would make the system efficient and expedite the process and suffering of people would be less.

Another very important step that the authority should take to increase its efficiency to the maximum is making a proper

link between all the relevant authorities i.e., provincial and district disaster management authorities. There should be coordination among these authorities and no one should work ~~isolate~~ in isolation. It will increase the efficiency of all the authorities and institutions involved in disaster management and adverse impact of the disaster would be mitigated.

In short, Pakistan faced the worst disaster of its lifetime. It was a climate-related disaster. It was triggered by the much debated issue of this century i.e., climate change. It is disturbing to think that the country is a victim of climate injustice. It is paying the debt of developed nations to the nature. The country's contribution to the atmosphere, in terms of carbon emissions, are negligible but still it is facing severe disaster. It is happening because climate change does not recognize any national borders and impacts the whole world. Moreover, the authorities of

Pakistan are also weak and inefficient in dealing with climate change. NDMA proved to be ineffective in managing the recent floods. There are many issues with the disaster management system of the country. However the solutions also exist and must be implemented to prevent such disaster in future.

Word count = 2560