

Having the largest irrigation system in the world, the land of sub-continent served as the main food supply basket for the British Power for more than a century, but now Pakistan has to import food commodities. Discuss in detail the causes of its agriculture decline.

Introduction

The Britishers harnessed the true potential of the largest irrigation system of the world. They kept on fulfilling their agriculture needs through the fertile land of sub-continent. On one hand, the fertile land was being exhausted by the Britishers, on the other, this fertile land is getting barren with each passing day. Ranging from water scarcity to poor agriculture governance, have contributed to the decline of a sector once known the backbone of Pakistan's economy.

Causes of Agriculture Decline

A Water scarcity leading Pakistan to water-stressed country

Water scarcity is the root cause of the downfall of Pakistan's agriculture sector. Constant lesser supply of water is causing manifold issues in the production of certain crops. Water scarcity is not only affecting the agriculture sector, but also

leading the country to become water-stressed countries. Pakistan could ~~dry~~ dry up by 2025. [PCBRW] Pakistan Council on Research of water resources.

B Outdated farming technique and untrained farmers

No country could be prosperous, unless the farmer is prosperous. The farmers in Pakistan have been applying outdated techniques in crop yielding. The onus is on to the successive governments as they did not pay heed to the training of farmers rather leaving them untrained. Moreover, lack of innovative approach, farmers are also playing their part in water wastage through water logging.

C Obsolete Irrigation System

Pakistan is known to have the largest irrigation system. This irrigation has become obsolete in the modern world. Pakistan has barrages, canals and rivers, but it could not take advantage of them because they are polluted and full of sedimentation. No major reforms and policy was made in order to revamp and refurbish the old irrigation system, Israel and Singapore which once known to be the imperator of agriculture have become self-sufficient by rejuvenating their irrigation system.

D Lack of Water Reservoirs Reservoirs

Lack of water reservoirs is the major factor of declining the agriculture sector. The half hearted approach of the successive governments towards construction of water reservoir has caused irretrievable damage. The negligence of the governments towards have compelled the country to import food commodities. Pakistan did not build dams in last 50 years of which price is being paid by the masses. The lack of political unanimity is the prime reason such as Kalabagh dam.

E Floods Contributing the declining and Devastation of Agriculture sector

The floods in Pakistan is also the main cause of the devastation and decline of Agriculture sector. Lack of water reservoirs invites floods to reach the crops that eventually wash them away. The last year's floods in Pakistan had jolted the agriculture sector which contributes 22% of Pakistan's GDP. Pakistan incurred the loss of nearly 17 billion Dollars on account of the floods in 2022 [World Bank]. Pakistan has witnessed the low production in the agriculture; 1.6 growth against a target of 3.9% [Pakistan economic survey 2022-2023]

Solutions to Ameliorate the Declining Agriculture Sector

A Construction of big Dams

The construction of big dams is imperative to ameliorate declining agriculture.

Construction of Macro and Micro Dams

The construction of Macro and micro dams is imperative to ameliorate the declining agriculture sector. Though the 3 big dams Diamer, Basha, Dasu and Momand are being constructed but Pakistan still is in a dire need of more dams in order to fulfil its agriculture needs. Moreover, the government particularly the provincial governments need to build small micro dams which were built by KPK government. The small mini dams not only provide water for irrigation but also generate cheap electricity in KPK. Hence, other province need to replicate.

B Innovations and technology are inevitable for declining Agriculture

Pakistan cannot become self-sufficient in the agriculture, unless it brings technologies in agriculture sector.

The usage of drip irrigation must be encouraged as it not only saves water from wastage but also provide the required water to the crop. In Pakistan

Th the use of high-yield hybrid seeds of cotton, wheat and rice has gained momentum in recent years, which is limited to few areas need to be expanded. This approach involves the use of new agriculture inputs and skills such as Precision farming techniques and crop rotation.

C following Model of Netherlands in Agriculture Sector

A country 19 times smaller in size and 12 times smaller in population is beating Pakistan in agriculture. As Per Netherlands government the country's agricultural exports is 65 billion euros a year. The Netherlands's export is three times more than Pakistan's exports in all sectors combined. what makes the Netherlands different from Pakistan is the synthesis of technology and sheer commitment and passion to the the agriculture sector

"Every day is earth days when you work in agriculture" Jason Stuebel

D Bringing investment with subsidy and farmer-friendly loans

foreign investment in agriculture with granting subsidies and interests free-loans to smaller farmers are the hours of need in agriculture. foreign investment particularly Chinese investment may help the country's declining sector. ∴ The government needs to bring agricultural projects with investment in CPEC. Besides, the government must provide subsidy on fertilizers, cotton seed, pesticides and saved tax on locally manufactured tractors, furthermore in order to make farmers prosper, government needs to support the vulnerable and small farmers with interests free loans.

Conclusion: The agriculture sector is a lifeline for the food security of any country. Pakistan's agriculture sector has several loopholes but these holes can be filled with robust policies and meaningful reforms. ∴ Pakistan's exports is largely relies on agriculture which is in a state of decline. The productivity remained stagnant due to host of reasons whether government's negligence or floods. that is why 300,000 tonnes of wheat was imported from Russia. The steps have to be taken on war footing if this sector has to make self-sustainable.