

Climate Initiatives ; An Eyewash by Global North

Outline-

1. Introduction

Thesis Statement: Global North have always contributed more than their fair share in carbon emissions. Also, they failed to act on the agreements made. However, they must act quick in certain ways to withhold the impacts of their carelessness.

2. Carbon Emissions started gaining a rise with Industrialization in Global North

3. Factors highlighting the eyewashing effect of climate initiatives taken by Global North

- a. Failure to meet the commitments made in agreements.
- b. Lion's share of Green House gases belongs to Global North
- c. Lobbying of fossil fuel Industries
- d. Little effect in transportation sector
- e. Emission reduction was a mere rhetoric
- f. Failing on promises to assist the developing countries.
- g. Giving huge subsidies to fossil fuels.
- h. Moving towards AI to stay ahead in world, but failing to recognize its climatic impact
- i. Slow Transition to Renewable Energy Sources.

4. Recommendations for Global North to bridge the gap between Rhetoric and Action
- a. Act on their promises of supporting the developing nations.
 - b. Invest in climate resilient infrastructure.
 - c. Decrease fossil fuel subsidies.
 - d. Support research and innovation
 - e. Educate and Raise awareness
 - f. Climate consideration must be integrated into economic policies.
 - g. Manage AI and regulate its use
 - h. Be true to the commitments made

5. Conclusion.

Essay:

عمر یوسف لونی غالی کرتے رہے غالب
دفعوں کے لئے ہم آئیں صاف کرتے رہے

These lines from the famous Urdu poet Ghalib fit well with the efforts done by the Global North to mitigate the climate disasters. They are making the claims, and agreements but are failing to truly act upon them. The efforts they are doing are of no use in the longer run. They need to realize the true need of action and act accordingly. Global north have been adding to the carbon emissions, since industrialization. From then onwards they have been doing certain actions which highlight their eyewashing efforts. For instance, they fail to meet their commitments, they are not reducing their carbon emissions. In addition to that they are allowing fossil fuel industries to do their lobbying. Also, they are giving huge subsidies on fossil fuels paired with slow transition to renewable sources of energy. They are also lacking in assisting the developing countries in moving towards green energy.

Along with that, they are investing in AI to become global leaders but failing to realize its impacts on environment. Global north have always contributed more than their fair share in carbon emissions.

However, they must act quickly and effectively to stop the coming disasters. They must move quickly to renewable sources of energy, reduce subsidies on fossil fuels and assist global south in mitigating climatic disasters. This discussion will be further elaborated through evidences and facts.

For instance, global north have always tried to be the bigger guy in the room and handling everything. They have always ~~se~~ come out as the protective ones. Similarly, they made various agreements to tackle the problem of ~~to rising~~ global temperatures. For example Montreal protocol in 1989, Kyoto Protocol 2005, Paris Agreement 2015. All these agreements were taken up by the ^{global} north to reduce the effect of industrialization on climate. But, as an Analysis by Climate Action Tracker in 2021 showed that no major industrialised country had policies in place to achieve 1.5°C target. Most were falling short on their own pledged contributions. The

evidence shows that Global North is failing in the agreements it made.

In addition to that, the rising sea levels, increasing heat waves and droughts are all a result of green house gases. All the countries are contributing to the emission of green house gases, which in turn increases the global temperature. But, even in this domain global north is on top. Global North comprising merely of 18% of world's population is responsible for over 70% of cumulative global CO₂ emissions (Source: Global Carbon Atlas Report 2021). The rest of the countries are hardly even reaching the allowed standards by UNFCCC. Global north has the biggest share in carbon emissions.

Furthermore, even when the governments are taking part in agreements and discussions for climate change, the industries are still lobbying. The fossil fuel industries are lobbying for the use of fossil fuels. According to an analysis done by Centre for Responsive Politics, Oil and Gas Industry spent over

\$125 million on lobbying in 2020 alone. (Centre for Responsive Politics - 2022). Global north and the climate activists are condoning the actions of fossil fuel industries which will be highly dangerous in the long run.

Another factor that ^{fossil fuel based} transportation is the major reason for pollution and increased temperatures. There are no solid steps ^{being} taken to reduce the use of fossil fuels in transportation industry. The International Council on Clean Transportation found that less than 10% of global commercial aviation emissions were offset in 2019. There is no benefit in making agreements if the industries which are the whole structure of a nation cannot control their emissions. Transportation industries are contributing very little in the efforts for climate.

Along with this, the governments are giving subsidies on fossil fuels. This is an open indication that the prosperity of states is more important than the global destruction impending due to rising temperatures. The amount of public money flowing into coal, oil, gas in 20 of the world's biggest economies (G20) reached a record of

\$1.4tn in 2022 (International Institute for Sustainable Development) despite agreeing to reduce it at COP26. The conference of parties 26th meeting made these economies pledge to reduce their fossil fuel investment. But, they couldn't act upon their pledges.

Moreover, at Climate Policy Initiative in 2009, all the Global North countries agreed to raise \$100Bn for Global south till 2025. Uptil 2020 they could only raise \$83Bn falling short of \$17Bn. They are failing to fulfill the promises they made. A study by Stockholm Environmental Institute found that rhetoric in International Climate Negotiations often exceeds actual commitments and policies implemented domestically. The apparent image of Global North being the part of the globe which stays true to its words is getting damaged badly. They are not able to address the myriad of problems which is being created due to their lag in actions.

Nevertheless, Artificial Intelligence is the new competition among the major power holders. All the countries are investing heavily in developing technology and AI to be ahead of their

rivals. But, this desire to be at the top is making them blind to its environmental impacts. Training a single AI system can emit over 250,000 pounds of CO₂. In fact the use of AI across all sectors produces carbon emissions at a level comparable to aviation industry (AI's Environmental Costs and Promises Elisabeth Jones - 2022). AI can be beneficial in many ways but its huge carbon contributions cannot be pushed under the carpet.

Adding insult to injury, Global North is also slow in transitioning towards Renewable sources of energy. They are advocating its change and their contributions but "bandaids don't fix bullet holes". A little step towards renewable energy sources will not make up for the loss caused by huge contributions. According to EIA forecasts in 2023 the share of Renewable Energy is 23% in United States - compared to 83% of fossil fuels. This huge gap screams the failure of global north to be consistent in their promises.

However, it's never too late to start acting right. Global North should start with assisting the developing nations in working towards climate friendly actions. The Green Climate Fund, established

to support developing nations, has mobilized over \$23 Billion in climate finance as of 2021. In the 27th meeting of Conference of Parties - loss and damage fund was established to provide financial assistance to climate vulnerable countries. Those promises must be acted upon and collective effort should be done.

In addition to this, as the global north countries are investing in increasing their military powers. They must also direct their investment towards climate resilient infrastructure.

The American Society of Civil Engineers estimates that the U.S. requires an investment of \$5.9 trillion in infrastructure by 2025 to address climate-related vulnerabilities and ensure long term sustainability. There needs to be a world in order to rule that world. So, global north should focus more on the climate than military.

Furthermore, they should decrease the subsidies on fossil fuels. The purchasing power of fossil fuel by industries should be increased. Forcing the industries to more cost effective, renewable energy sources. As a result of which the carbon emissions

will be reduced. Subsidies on fossil fuels should be reduced.

Moreover, there must be increase in initiatives for research and innovation in climate related activities.

These initiatives can help in finding different ways to eradicate the factors enhancing the carbon emissions. In 2020, the US Government allocated \$7.8 Billion for clean energy research and development, emphasizing the commitment to advancing green technologies. Such initiatives should become the new normal and not once in a blue moon thing.

Nevertheless, there should be an increase in awareness and education about the climate and global warming. The world should wake up to the dangers their surroundings are in. The air we are breathing in, is deteriorating. The water is getting polluted. There should be public awareness about the activities of daily routine and its impacts. Awareness and enlightenment should begin at grass root level.

And, Global North should integrate climate consideration into their economic policies. Being the world's major economies they should take responsibility of

climate consideration. New Zealand's 2021 budget includes a Green Investment Fund to finance projects that reduce emissions and build climate resilience, demonstrating a commitment to integrating climate consideration in the economy. Such responsibility is expected from the global north.

Additionally, they should manage and regulate the use of AI. In order to be among the best they may put the world in danger of climatic disasters sooner than later.

Such actions should be properly monitored through watchdogs and accountability. AI should be environmentally friendly, and its carbon contributions should be reduced.

Moreover, global north should focus on being true to the commitments they made and keep on making. Reducing carbon emissions, clean and green energy, assistance and agreements. All these measures were only given lip service. When it should be reflected through actions. It should be held accountable for its actions and made to pay for the inaction.

To sum up the whole

discussion, it is evident that there is a gap between the rhetoric and actions of the Global North. Their insincere attitude towards the agreements and promises. Their ~~the~~ disbursement of subsidies to the fossil fuels, and failing to reduce carbon emissions. All these factors highlight the failures of Global North. They must serve the purpose of being the world drivers through shifting towards clean energy, reducing emissions and increasing awareness. Or else it wouldn't be wrong to call it a step towards "collective suicide".