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Water scarcity in Pakistan: Causes, implications and way- forwards

Outline :

1- Introduction

Water scarcity is a serious threat to Pakistan, caused by a number of factors and contributing to economic and social unrest. This problem needs to be tackled through water conservation policies and infrastructure developments.

2- Factors contributing to water scarcity in Pakistan

A- Rapid population growth

B- Effects of climate change

~~i- Glacial melts and less snowfall during winters.~~

Melting of glaciers

C- Expanding agricultural sector

D- Outdated irrigation system

E- Poor water management system

F- Non-essential activities

i- Urban beautification and horticulture projects.

G- Transboundary water issues.

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3- Implications of water scarcity in Pakistan

- A- Threat to agricultural yield
- B- Food insecurity and economic instability
- C- Hampering Industrial growth
- D- Health Issues
 - i- 40 percent deaths are caused by insufficient supply of clean water
- E- Loss of biodiversity
- F- Inter-states and intra-state conflicts.

4- Way forwards to counter water scarcity in Pakistan

- A- Public awareness
- B- Policy reforms
 - i- Legislation^{on} over-extraction of ground water.
- C- Implementing efficient irrigating techniques.
 - i- Drip and sprinkler system.
- D- Adopting rainwater harvesting practices
- E- Shift from water intensive crops.
 - i- Example of Jordan
- F- Reducing non-essential activities
- G- Building water reservoirs.

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Introduction :

The British-American poet W.H. Auden say: "Thousands have lived without love, not one without water". Water is a life-blood for all organisms. It is as necessary for Pakistan as water is for fish. Water scarcity in Pakistan is a pressing and multi faceted issue caused by a number of factors. These factors include rapid population growth, glacial melts and less snowfall during winters, expanding agricultural sector, poor water management system, non-essential activities and transboundary water disputes. This water scarcity has resulted in serious implications. These implications encompass threat to agricultural yield, food insecurity and economic instability, hampered industrial growth, health issues, loss of biodiversity and inter-states and intra-states conflicts. These implications need immediate attention of stakeholders to implement strategies to overcome this issue. These strategies may include

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public awareness, policy reforms,
implementing efficient irrigation techniques,
shift from water-intensive crops,
reducing non-essential activities and
building water reservoirs. In essence,
water scarcity in Pakistan is a serious
threat caused by a number of factors
and contributing to economic and
social unrest. This problem needs to
be tackled through water conservation
policies and infrastructure developments.

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