

NATURAL RESOURCES : BLESSING

OR CURSE?

OUTLINE

1. Introduction

2. Reasons that demonstrates natural resources is a blessing

A. Provides hundreds and thousands of job opportunities

→ 82% of Nepal's population is employed in tourism industry as of 2024; United Nations

Tourism

B. Brings foreign investment all around the world

→ \$500 million deal in Pakistan with U.S. strategic metals in critical minerals

C. Presents opportunities to other ancillary firms

→ 90% of small-medium sized companies operate directly in primary sector

D. Assist in creating better infrastructure network

→ Pakistan's strategic location is most suitable for CPEC under BRI flagship project

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E. Major contributor in country's budget

→ 38% of Bahrain budget relies on hydrocarbon earnings; Financial Times

F. Serves platform to establish monopoly in the world's market

→ 71% of semi-conductors market share capture by TSMC

G. Natural resources earnings can be invested into other sectors

→ Dubai fossil fuel earnings finance in advanced architectural buildings

H. Brings paradigm shift in the country's fate

→ China's population from economic burden to economic asset

I. Enhancing bargaining power in diplomacy

→ Afghanistan suffered \$4.5 billion loss after Torkham border closing

3. Grounds that illustrates natural resources is a curse

A. Overexploitation of natural resources leads to health problems

→ Exacerbating malnutrition in Congo DC

B. Excessive environment degradation damaging aesthetic beauty

→ Overdevelopment in Kagan valley

C. Unequal distribution of profits among provinces, states and companies leading of chaos and civil war

→ Sudan civil war over gold natural resource

4. Rebuttal: Ways in which natural resources prove to be a blessing

A. Helps to eliminate poverty

→ 0.5% of poverty in the Switzerland

B. Reduction in criminal activities

→ 2% criminal activities recorded in South Africa in 2024

C. fundamental source of dollar influx

→ 98% of Venezuela's exports depends

on crude oil

5. Conclusion

According to recent Statista estimates, Russia tops the world with around \$75 trillion worth of natural resources. This figure highlights that a nation's worth is truly determined by the natural resources it possesses. Each country is bestowed with various natural resources. Those who utilize these valuable resources are ruling the world. Natural resources are the God-gifted goods that can change nations' destiny when harnessed effectively. These resources include; minerals, fossil fuels, timber, water resources, animals. With the passage of time, states' reliance on these resources aggravated. That later on, became a sole resource of earnings for the same countries. Utilizing these resources, it provides various job opportunities, contributes significantly in the countries' Gross Domestic Product (GDP). These on, it perpetuates the economic cycle of the country. With the use of these resources, many small-sized companies are inaugurated, better infrastructure is created, and even sometimes, country can use these critical resources as a bargaining

power in diplomacy. Henceforth, this essay would discuss the multiple-angled seasons that demonstrate natural resources is a blessing for a nation as it changes the makeup of whole country. After that, this essay would highlight grounds that illustrate natural resources is a curse as exploration of valuable resources opens up countless lethal problems that leads to raising death toll. and provide counter arguments to the natural resource as a blessing. Lastly, it would provide rebuttal that ^{mentions} ~~what are some~~ ways in which ~~method~~ natural resources prove to be a game changer for some states.

Try to have strong transition from one passage to another one

To start with, natural resources provide hundreds and thousands of job opportunities is the first raison d'être that proves ~~it~~ natural resources is a blessing. As per United Nations Tourism, more than eighty two ~~is~~ percent (82%) of Nepal's population is employed in tourism-based industry as of December 2024. This ~~percentage reflects~~ how a landlock country has effectively used its land for the tourism purpose.

When tourist pays visit in the ~~At~~ any tourist spot they spend on hoteling, food and purchasing symbolic souvenirs. Through this way, the economic cycle operates of ~~in~~ country and Hence,

such as tourist place
 natural resources give platform to open up
 multiple job opportunities.

Natural resources help to bring foreign

direct investment in ~~country~~ is the second

blessing for a nation. Countries have various

unearth and unexplored critical minerals, but

these minerals are deep remained unearthen due

to inabilities and insufficient resources

that can be used to explore those resources.

such as, Pakistan has multiple mineral

reserves, but owing to inadequate investment

in research and development. Country face hindrance

to utilise those reserves for which state give

these ~~reserves~~ ^{reserves} sites to the foreign investment

cooperations. These cooperations, share return

with provinces and states. Recently, US has

signed memorandum of association with

Pakistan to invest \$ 500 million in the

critical mineral sector of Pakistan.

Such foreign investment helps countries to use

the resource by paying fixed percentage of

profits. Thus, natural resources & bring foreign

investment in an economy and it is truly a

boon.

Thirdly, natural resources help in establishing
 ancillary firms. These are small - medium sized
 companies that provide assistance to their major
 client. For example, Toyota is a car manufacturing

company. It is practically impossible that Toyota has all its raw material or input that are essential to completely build the car. Then to Toyota would have to purchase car tyres from Hilal company, indicators from other company it provides at reasonable price like this way, other major Toyota giant would provide assistance for the development of other helping or auxiliaries firms. As per stats issued by Pakistan Business Council (PBC) approximately ninety percent (90%) of companies functioning in Pakistan are small-medium size (SMS) corporations that provide assistance to the major companies. E.g., ancillary firms highly rely on these big corporation based on extraction of natural resources, is a true blessing.

What is the fourth blessing of natural resources? The fourth blessing of natural resources is that it helps in building infrastructure networks such as roads, highways, bridges, dam, flyovers. Pakistan's strategic location is a ~~true~~ natural resources. It is because of this, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the most suitable in Pakistan under One Belt and One Road Initiative (BRI) by China. Under CPEC phase 1 project. Infrastructure work is almost finished. Some of examples are like Motor-line 1, Orange line in Lahore and dam in northern areas. Owing to Pakistan's ~~strategic~~ location, natural resources, Pakistan is able to

encash its resources and it is able to attract projects like CPEC. Therefore, natural resources also help in creating infrastructure network in a country.

fifthly, natural resources is the major contributor in the country's budget. Various nations have few natural resources such as Bahrain that has only oil reserves. Financial Times maintains that around thirty eight percent (38%) of Bahrain budget depends on hydrocarbon earnings. This data by Financial Times highlights the how just fossil fuel reserves are the major contributor of a country's budget. This fact also illustrate the over-reliance of a nation on a single resource. In case of depletion of crude oil, then, ~~countries~~ there may encounter dark clouds of uncertainty in the economy. However, currently it is sole playing its pivotal role in Bahrain's economy. So, natural resources is the blesing when a state's budget significantly depends on natural resources.

~~Natural resources can serve platform to establish monopoly in the world's market is also to some extent proved to be a blessing of a government. Taiwan is a country that posses vast semiconductors. These has been~~

accompanied an increasing in demand by Chinese and United States (U.S) companies. As these semiconductors can be used almost every electronic gadgets. Currently, Taiwan has established monopoly. \rightarrow More than seventy one percent (71%) of ^{global} semiconductor market share is dominated by Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Corporation (TSMC) only. Hence, it is proved that natural resources can be used to establish monopoly and capture market share in the global market.

Natural resource earnings can be invested into other sectors is the seventh ground that proves that natural resource is a blessing. In the early 2000s, Dubai's major contributor was profit earned from fossil fuel trading. With the passage of time, Arab leaders, decided to utilize those profits in the modern and architectural building.

Currently, Dubai is not only earning from from hydrocarbons but also from the attractive skyscrapers and artificial beaches.

Burj Khalifa, Burj al-Arab, F and Palm Islands are the some of those ^{example} invested of architectural buildings, and beaches. Truly, proving that no returns earned from natural resources can be utilized in other sector of an economy.

Country's fate can be change after utilising the natural resources effectively. It is the right factor that reflects that natural resources is ^{one of} a blessing. China's natural resources was its growing and uncontrollable population. In this, China developed numerous manufacturing industry and employed ~~it then to~~ young people in the factory. By this way, employers and industrialist had vast pool of competitive employees at low wages. ^{This} overall reduces the cost of production of the industrialist. This morphed into bulk production and China is able to compete with ~~at the international~~ international firms. By this way, not only population explosion was used effectively but also reduces poverty levels drastically. Ergo, natural resources, like that of China, can change the country's destiny after employing it in an effective manner.

Lastly, natural resources enhances bargaining power in diplomacy. Afghanistan, being a landlocked region, it has to pass its trade from Pakistani soil. Only to rise in militant attacks after Taliban takeover in 2021. Afghanistan's economy is adversely impacted. With that being, there has been increase in terrorist attacks in Pakistan.

also, and Pakistan plane this on Afghanistan for proudly launching raid to terrorist outfit. Due to which, Pakistan closed its border with Afghanistan for 10 days. And Afghanistan suffered for around 34.5 billion loss in just 10 days after Torkham border closing. And currently, Pakistan is using harsh diplomacy against Afghan government to ensure there is no decrease in terrorist attacks. Henceforth, Pakistan strategic land, natural resources, is being used ~~as~~ ^{as a bargaining power} for in diplomacy and proves how land can be a blessing for a one country.

Previous paragraphs shed light on the natural resources as a blessing. Succeeding paragraphs will underscore need to discuss about natural resources as - use and praise counter arguments to x blessings of natural resources.

firstly, overexploitation of natural resources leads to health problems. Heavy and specialized machinery are employed to extract ~~other~~ minerals or other resources from the earth. Those machinery generate ~~perilous~~ and life-taking pollutants that cause lung cancer, breathing problem, and sever and headache. Cobalt, that is used in construction of electric vehicle's battery, is extracted from Congo DRC. The extraction process

lead to illness. According to World Health Organisation (WHO) Report in 2020. It mentioned that around 2500+ deaths were reported in two weeks due to excessive exploitation and workers working without precautionary and healthy and safety measures. This dark figure shows that ~~on the one hand~~ world is shifting towards renewable energy using electric bollards. While ~~on the other hand~~ how painfully locals are dying in the Congo. Therefore, exploitation of natural is proved as a curse in a least developing country like a Congo.

Secondly, ~~using~~ natural resources at a high level leads to damaging environment and killing ending aesthetic beauty of places. Kagan Valley that once used to a green and aesthetic spot for tourist tourism, in 2010. But, now, due to overdevelopment in the valley has destroyed the natural scene of a valley itself. This is only one of example that is damaged. Nasan, Shogran and other valleys have also lost their charm thus reducing tourist flows in the valley. Over developed has adversely impacted the valleys. Henceforth, over-development ^{especially} in ~~to be~~ green places, natural resources, is really proved to be a curse for one country.

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Thirdly, unequal distribution of profit among provinces, states, and corporations is causing a opportunity of conflict and clashes. Provinces want higher royalties as their land is being used for natural resource purpose, government want high share for bringing multination companies in the country and cooperation with large share due to their technical expertise.

The disagreement may lead to the conflicts.

Such as Sudan Civil war, where ~~target~~ around 15000 people have been killed due to war on gold mining according to Al-Jazeera. Moreover, there has also been concern from the Baloch people of having only 16.7% share in Saindak and 18.9% contribution of royalties in Reko diq. Unfairness and excesses of government to have more profit over parties towards clashes. To ~~the~~ Ego, unequal distribution share in the natural resource exploration, provide ground for conflict, like that of Sudan - civil war, that truly prove that natural resource is a curse.

Preceding paragraphs mentioned about the counter argument that illustrates natural resource is a curse. However, upcoming paragraphs would highlight provide the rebuttal to natural resources as a curse.

Natural resources is a true blessing as it is used in eliminating poverty. Those

resources provide employment alternatives, from every as it gives job in every sector ranging from watchman to a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Countries like Norway, Sweden and Switzerland, poverty is very extremely low. Because these country has employed its main labor force in protecting and preserving natural resources like mountains and villages. And ^{in return,} ~~governme~~ government pays them significant monthly salary. & That is ~~more~~ to three times (3x) more than the per capita income benchmark set by United Nations Organisation (UNO). Only zero-point five (0.5%) percentage of poverty was recorded in Switzerland for protecting their natural resources. Thus, natural resources with government willingness can help to end poverty in the country and proved to be a blessing.

Criminal activities can be reduced after utilizing natural resources effectively and in correct manner. Natural resources provider kick ^{off} ~~start~~ to any economy economic engine. As from natural resources provides raw materials such as metal, copper and gold. After extracting, semi-finished and finished goods can be produced ^{countries can export} ~~large number of~~ and those goods to other countries and earn a and some amount. Those revenues can be utilized

to curb the criminal activities within an economy. This way, natural resources help to combat social evil. Hence, ~~other~~ ^{natural} resources are ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~main~~ ^{main} reason as it reduces ~~and~~ ^{is} Two percent (2%) of criminal activities were reported in South Africa in 2024. Once South Africa used to be in top list of criminal activities in 2000s as per International Security Council 2024 reports. Henceforth, natural resources ~~help~~ ^{is} a blessing, as it reduces criminal social evil and estimates and social evil within a society.

Lastly, natural resources provide a fundamental source of dollar influx. Recent reports published by Venezuela's government depicts ~~it~~ ^{how} their ninety eight percent (98%) of Venezuela's export depends on hydrocarbons. Hydrocarbons, which are basically natural resources, can be ~~an~~ ^{the} major influx of dollars in the economy. Moreover, Maldives that is ~~far~~ ^{well} known for its ~~beaches~~ ^{beaches}. That is ~~an~~ ^{an} essential example. That entry one natural resource ^{earnings} that is beach can be used to run the country of 10 million people. Maldives all dollars comes from its beaches. Therefore, because of natural resource ^{on} which whole country's economy is based proves that natural is ~~the~~ ^{is} blessing in a real terms.

To cap it all, natural resources is

a genuinely blessing for a country when it is used effectively and when human and environment cost is taken into considerations. When natural resources are produced more positive externalities than negative externalities, then surely natural resources wood is a blessing unlike Congo DC where people are dying of life-taking atmosphere and diseases. It is a need of time for a country like Congo DC to promptly take precautionary measure else situation may go adverse. Country presence itself is a natural resource in the world. They demographic location plays important role in shaping the fabric of the world. Just like strategic location of Pakistan. However, the ground that states natural resources is " curse" can not be sidelined as well. The ~~seas~~ preventive measures must be taken to overcome those curses like avoiding over-explosion, discouraging environment degradation and having equal fair distribution of profit. When these steps are taken, and then it natural resources would create more then natural resources will prove that it is a true blessing.