

Worsening Air Quality: A Looming Environmental Crisis in Pakistan

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by S. Akbar Zaidi

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Essay

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The invention of loom machine in the United States marked ^{the} initiation of industrial revolution. It brought huge economic benefits for the state but, it also led to human rights violation by promoting slavery. Similarly, the technological and human advancement has brought ease in life but, it also has detrimental effects. Poor air quality in Pakistan is caused by the technology used for the ease. The factors that leads to poor air quality in Pakistan include: use of vehicular fleets, heavy reliance on fossil fuels to meet the energy demands, and proliferation of housing societies at the cost of deforestation. All the above mentioned factors are leading to environmental crisis which may have detrimental effects. It includes rising food insecurities due to

decreasing crop yields, public health is at severe risk, and balance of trade crisis has become prevalent. However, the looming environmental crisis can be dealt with, by over-hauling of automotive industry, and uplifting of agricultural sector by introducing advanced technologies that are environmental resistant resilient.

All in all, there are certain factors leading to worsening air quality in Pakistan, which has detrimental effects, however, following the recommendations in letter and spirit will help the state to counter this environmental crisis.

Worsening air quality can be defined as increasing air pollution. When the air contains huge amount of toxic elements and gases, it is called polluted air, and the phenomenon is called air pollution. The carbon dioxide, Carbon

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monoxide, sulphurs, nitrogen oxides, ^{and} particulate matters from debris are some harmful substances that leads to worsening air quality.

The coming paragraph

To begin with, vehicular fleets in Pakistan are a demon in disguise. Although they have eased the life of the citizens but, they have contributed to the poor air quality equally. The fleets run on the petroleum product which release harmful substances in the air leading to poor air quality. According to ^{the} United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the vehicular fleets running on petroleum contributes more than thirty percent ⁱⁿ carbon emission. The situation gets worse in Pakistan as most of the part of vehicular fleets here ^{include} have decades old cars. Thus, vehicular fleets contributes

in worsening air quality.

Secondly, heavy reliance on the primitive energy resources has contributed in poor air quality. The state's energy mix heavily relies on imported hydrocarbons. The use of fossil fuels for meeting energy needs lead to poor air quality.

According to S. Akbar Zaidi, use of fossil fuels for energy needs is one of the major factors of poor air quality in Pakistan. The use of hydrocarbons has filled the air with harmful gases. Thus, primitive energy resources are contributing in deterioration of air quality.

Fourthly, unplanned proliferation of industries are contributing in poor air quality. The nascent industries use fossil fuels to meet the expenses. Rapid proliferation of such industries have increased

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the amount of harmful substances in the air. According to United Nations Secretary General, the use of fossil fuels by nascent industries have increased poor air quality index of developing nations. Therefore, it can be argued that nascent industries in Pakistan are contributing in poor air quality.

Lastly, the unbridled proliferation of housing societies in Pakistan has also contributed in poor air quality. In order to accommodate the citizen deforestation has become rapid. The natural carbon sinks - forests - are unable to decarbonise the air due to rapid deforestation. According to Peter Bakers, deforestation for housing of the people will exponentially increase the poor quality of air. Thus, it is also a factor contributing

in poor air quality.

Above mentioned paragraphs highlighted the factors contributing in poor air quality. The coming paragraphs will depict effects of looming environmental crisis in Pakistan due to poor air quality.

Firstly, food insecurities have become prevalent due to decreasing crop yield. The poor air quality has increased the temperature of the soil beyond need which results in lower crop yield. According to Hajiza Kulsoom, a Professor of Food Sciences, the poor air quality has trapped more heat than required for optimal crop growth. It will lead to food insecurities in the future. Hence, Pakistan is facing a looming food crisis due to the looming environmental crisis.

In addition to food

insecurities, the public health has become a disaster. The poor air quality is leading to number of new diseases, and it has turned hazard into a disaster. According to Jim Neil, the average life expectancy decreases due to the poor air quality. Similar case can be observed in Lahore. Hence, poor air quality has detrimental effect on Public health.

Moreover, Pakistan will face balance of trade crisis due to the poor air quality. The poor air quality has trapped more heat which is resulting into rising sea levels. According to **SMEDA**, New York based think tanks, Pakistan's balance of trade crisis is prevalent under current environmental factors. The factors may submerge the Bin Qasim port under water by 2080's. Hence,

Maintaining

balance of trade equilibrium is also at threat.

Lastly, sports tourism in Pakistan is at threat. The industry contributes heavily in Gross Domestic product (GDP). ~~How~~ Now, the poor air quality may halt the sports tourism, and it will result into decline in GDP. The Northern Areas are the hotspots for sports tourism, and reports suggest yearly decline in sports tourism. One of the factors includes poor air quality. Hence, GDP may decline due to the halt in sports tourism by poor air quality.

Above mentioned paragraphs highlighted the effects of the poor air quality. The coming paragraphs will highlight provide the recommendations to counter the factors contributing in poor air quality.

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Firstly, the state should prioritize the over-hauling of automotive industries. It can be done by formulating policies, and administrating the implementation of such policies by auto-motive companies in Pakistan. For instance, the state can make catalytic converters the part of new fleets of cars through such policies. It will help to reduce the harmful substances from getting into the air. Hence over-hauling of automotive industries by the government is the need of the hour.

Secondly, the agricultural sector needs to be revitalized by introducing new technologies. The new technologies will be able to adapt with current environmental factors, and prevent further degradation. For example,

Using F.A.S.T technology, food and agriculture by sustainable technology is a technology which adapts with environment to increase the crop yield. Hence, use of technology in agricultural sector is necessary.

Lastly, the state can diversify the energy mix by erecting wind mills along the Southern coastal belt. It will decrease the dependence upon hydrocarbons, which will help in decreasing the quantity of harmful substances in air. According to Antol Levian, diversify the energy mix with green energy will help in reducing the harmful substances in the air. Hence, proliferation of wind mills is necessary for the state to counter the poor air quality in Pakistan.

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All in all, the air quality in Pakistan is getting worsed with each passing day. It has been turned into a looming environmental crisis. There are some factors such as, unplanned proliferation of industries, heavy reliance on primitive energy resources, and proliferation of housing societies that have contributed in the poor air quality. The poor air quality There are some detrimental effects due to a looming environmental crisis due to poor air quality. It includes rise in food insecurities, disaster in public health domains, and decline in Gross Domestic Product due to halt in sports tourism. All these factors can be dealt with the recommendations given in the essay. There is chaos present due to environmental crisis but, the

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state has an opportunity to
deal with ^{the} issue in the form of
technology. Therefore, the "There is
an opportunity in the midst of
chaos." Sun Tzu.