

Causes of Agriculture Decline in Pakistan

1. Introduction

During the era of British Empire, Indian sub-continent have largest irrigation system in the world. The land of the sub-continent served as the main food supply basket for the British for more than a century because, Britishers improved the connectivity of irrigation network and use modern technology which significantly improved the efficiency of agriculture sector, But now Pakistan is facing various problems which is leading to agricultural decline in Pakistan.

————— "Agriculture sector of Pakistan contributes 26% in GDP and employes 37.6% of labour force." —————

— Economic survey of Pakistan (2023-24)

2. How Indian sub-continent was the food supply basket for the British:

2.1. Ancient Innovation:

Indus valley civilization establish early techniques like canals and wells.

This tradition continued from early empires like Mughal empire, who significantly expanded irrigation system in sub-continent.

2.2. British Colonial Era:

British Administration dramatically enhances irrigation system in sub-continent from 18th to early 19th century. They constructed canal networks particularly in Panjab, and Uttar Pradesh. By 1947, irrigation system expanded significantly resulting in cash crops like opium and cotton for export. But now, Pakistan has to import food commodities.

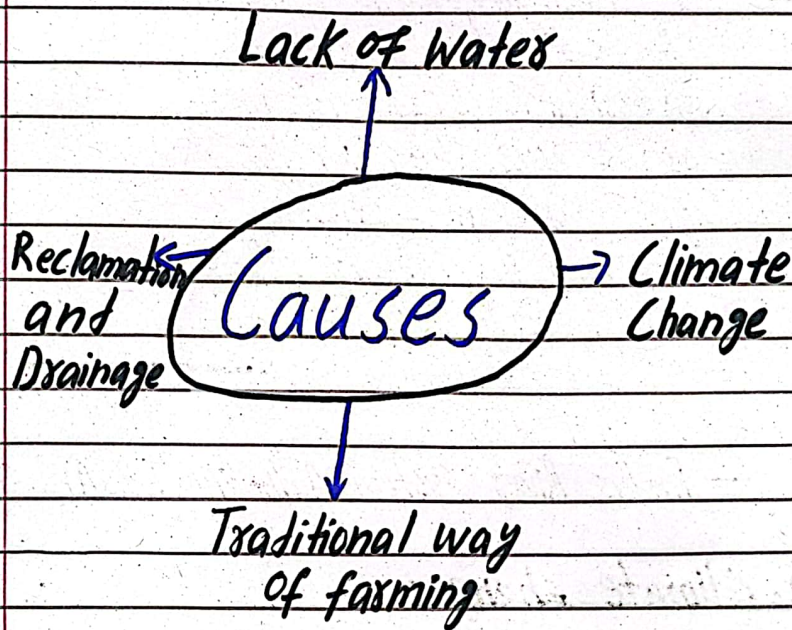
————— "Pakistan is the largest importer of cotton from USA." —————

— DAWN Article

2.3. Technological Advancement:

They use modern engineering techniques for enhancing and expanding existing canal systems, leading to improved water management and efficiency of agriculture.

3. Causes of Agriculture decline in Pakistan:



3.1. Lack of Water:

Water scarcity is the major problem of agriculture sector. Pakistan use to have too much water but now, Pakistan is facing significantly shortage of water, leading to decline of agriculture sector.

The Ravi river was the backbone of farmland because, it helps 90% of crop growth.

————— "Pakistan's water availability per capita has dropped to approximately 1,017 cubic meter as of 2023, classifying the country as water-stressed.

Inefficiency in irrigation systems result in only 30% of water reaching farms." —————

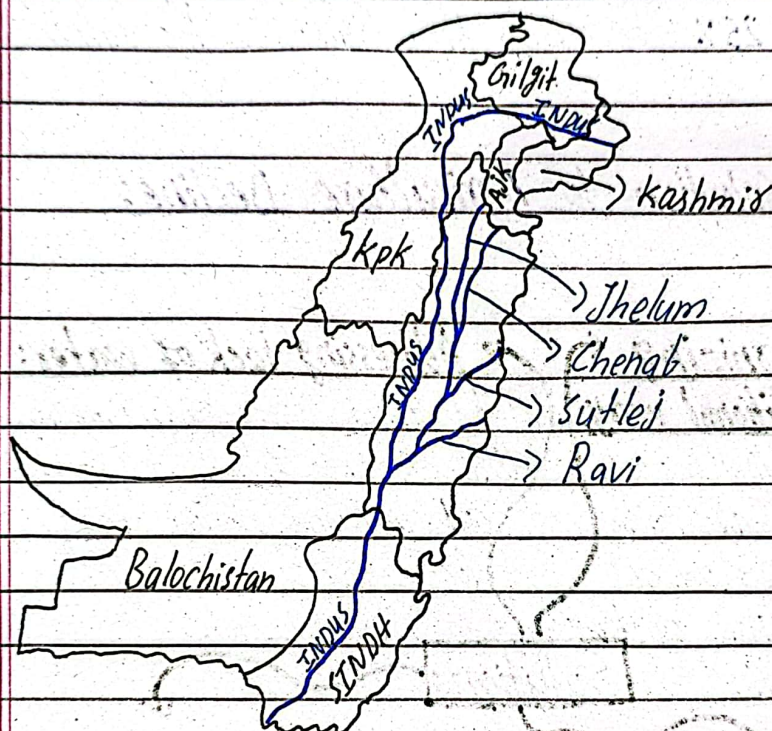
— Indus River System Authority (IRSA)

3.2. Climate change:

Climate change is also a major reason of decline in agricultural sector because, weather of Pakistan changes unpredictably leading to rain when it is not necessary causing low efficiency in agriculture sector.

—————"The recent floods
have destroyed more than
500,000 acres of agricultural
land in Sindh." —————

— Amnesty International



3.3 Traditional way of farming:

Pakistani farmers use old technique and traditional way for farming, because of it Pakistan's agriculture sector isn't productive as it could be. traditional way of farming yeild is lower than the yeild of modern techniques.

3.4. Reclamation and drainage:

Saltiness and standing of water, which is caused by poor drainage, making it hard for the land to produce crops. According to the Research Gate, Pakistan's crop production has dropped by 25% because the land is too salty.

4. Solution to Agriculture Decline:

Modernizing

Traditional way:

Providing modern tools and training farmers on new techniques can improve farming

Addressing lack of water:

by using water-saving methods like drip and sprinkler systems, collecting and storing rain water for farming we can address this issue.

Solutions

Improving Reclamation and Drainage:

salty and damaged soil can be fixed by using simple materials like gypsum or lime, while drain can be built to remove extra water from fields.

To combat climate change, farmers can plant crops that can survive extreme weather, and set up warning systems that can warn farmers from bad weather.

5. Conclusion:

In the late 18th century, Indian sub-continent serves as a food supply basket for British Empire but now, Pakistan import food commodities, because of problems in agriculture sector such as, water scarcity, climate change, traditional way of farming and poor drainage, leading to the decline of agriculture sector, but with some measures Pakistan can improve his agriculture sector.