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CLIMATE DISASTERS  
ARE POLITICAL FAILURES  
, NOT NATURAL ACCIDENTS

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## THE ESSAY

Nature blessed humans with unlimited resources and blessings. Neat and clean environment was one of such blessings. With time, human's thirst for more and more led to the era of industrial revolution. The urge for unlimited wealth did not end with industrial revolution, but it led humans to green revolution followed by technological revolution. In journey toward development, humans started over exploitation of natural blessings. Natural resources like forests were exploited for urbanization and luxury items. The political elite did not care about the exploitation of natural resources. The over and over use of natural resources became a major cause of natural disasters. These climate induced natural disasters were initially considered as natural accidents. But the research based evidence suggests that these natural disasters were and are

preventable climate induced calamities are not natural phenomenon but political failures to manage and prevent climate induced destructions. Political failures including failure to cope with deforestation, installing of clean energy projects, afforestation and reforestation drives, population control, ~~and~~ desertification and industrial regulation are the major causes of climate induced calamities.

To begin with, one major political failure to cope with climate disasters is uncontrolled deforestation. Implementation of strict rules and regulations can stop excessive deforestation. Forests are considered as the lungs of the earth. They balance the excessive carbon dioxide and convert it to oxygen, an environment friendly gas. The carbon dioxide is a major green house gas. It is the main culprit responsible for green house effect leading to global warming, root cause of climate disasters. Thus, deforestation is the

major cause of excessive carbon dioxide. According to environmental protection agency, deforestation is the top most ~~cause~~ cause of excessive carbon dioxide and global warming. As the deforestation can be stopped but due to lack of political will, it has not been stopped and is still leading to natural calamities.

Not only the uncontrolled deforestation is a political failure, but also the failure of states to plant forest is another twin political failure responsible for climate induced calamities. Two major approaches to increase the forests are reforestation and afforestation. Reforestation refers to planting trees in areas from where forests were cut while afforestation refers to plantation of trees where there were no forests before. Both these are recommended approaches to decrease the green house gases like carbon dioxide. Recommended area for forests in a state is 33% or one third of the state. But most

of the developed as well as the developing states have not attained the threshold of 33%.

The failure to increase the forest land is another political failure responsible for natural disasters.

Likewise, failure to manage the agricultural hazards is also a political failure responsible for natural disasters like floods. Agriculture is the major factor responsible for various climate issues. 60% of deforestation is attributed to the agriculture. This is because forests were cut to increase the agricultural land. Overgrazing also causes the loss of green leaves from the bushes, responsible for production of oxygen. To manage the agricultural loss, scientists have discovered a number of alternatives, which could have been used to decrease the climate induced disasters. For example, meat produced by tissue culture is an alternative to over exploitation of livestock. This meat can be used to replace the livestock meat used in fast foods.

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Thus our dependency on livestock could have been reduced, which would have led to less devastating impacts on environment due to agricultural exploitation. But as due to lack of political will, dependency on livestock has not been reduced, which has become a major cause of climate related issues.

Similarly, the population growth is another issue which is also due to political mismanagement. Population growth causes the environmental degradation in many ways. Firstly, it leads to more emissions of carbon dioxide, a green house gas responsible for climate induced disasters like floods. Secondly, more and more resources are exploited. Forests are cut to ensure livelihood. Thirdly, more agriculture is done to provide food to more people. Lastly, the industrialization is expedited to provide daily usage items to more people. All these processes degrade environment in one or other way. All these problems can be controlled by managing the population

growth rate. Population control is not utopic as many countries have successfully controlled their population. China is the best example which successfully managed the population growth. China successful population control initiative shows that population can be managed by political will.

But the failure of developing states like India and Pakistan to stop the population <sup>explosion</sup> is another reason for climate induced disasters, having political mismanagement as a cause to cope with the issue.

Excessive production of methane is another cause which can be controlled using political will. Methane is a major green house gas responsible for global warming associated climate damage. Agriculture, in form of rice paddy, marshes and livestock are major producers of methane. Political management of methane is possible as done by New Zealand. New Zealand introduced green tax on farmers harvesting the

Crops responsible for methane production. This tax worked well for New Zealand and a significant decrease in methane gas was observed by New Zealand's environmental management agencies. This shows that political management can cope with green house gases like methane safeguarding the world from climate induced atrocities.

In the same way, states have substantially failed to decrease the fossil fuel consumption and to shift toward cleaner energy like solar, wind and hydal energy. This is also a political failure. Fossil fuels are mainly responsible for air pollution and global warming. Though scientists have discovered alternatives to fossil fuels, the consumption of fossil fuel is still in vogue in all the developed and developing states. None of the state has started to out weigh the fossil fuel vehicles even in the availability of electric vehicles. Likewise, green

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energy projects in developing states are not given importance yet as these projects have not replaced the fossil fuel based power production in many states.

According to the report of COP 28, none of the state seems to attain net carbon zero in upcoming 30 years. In the continuity of the same, Trump withdrawal of Paris climate agreement shows that climate induced calamities have political roots. All these non serious attitudes of states show that <sup>causes of</sup> natural disasters lie in the political mismanagement and not in a natural discourse of the climate phenomenon.

Rapid industrialization in the global North and Global South is another reason for climate induced disasters having political roots. Global North is in a competition with Global South. This competition has been translated in US-China economic and technological war. Industrialization

ultimately results in the environmental degradation through production of poisonous gases. This rapid industrialization can be controlled by a cooperative international environment. But the current economic and political international system is based on anarchy. This system reflects a war of all against all. The current US China economic and technological rivalry has resulted in rapid growth of industrial competition damaging the environment. Thus, the environmental depletion due to industrialization is also due to a political rivalry rather than natural cause.

In the continuation of industrial competition of states, industrial regulation has become utopic leading to further industrial ecosystem degradation. According to the UNEP report of 2023, 40% of the US industries, 46% of the Chinese industries and 39% of Russian weapon industries are not following the environmental protective protocols (EPP) by the UNEP. Similarly, there is no concept

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strategic environmental assessment (a protocol for environmental protection at policy level) in developing states including Pakistan and India. Due to competition in industrial production, states do not apply harsh regulations on industries. Thus environmental safety in such states is at stake. This is another major cause of environmental pollution and its associated impacts on climate linked disasters having political roots.

In a nutshell, political mismanagement is the major cause of natural calamities and climate link disorders. Political mismanagement of shared resources, political rivalries among the states and political priorities of leaders ~~are~~ leads to policies which impact the mother Earth. Over exploitation of natural resources disguised in political gains is major driving force of climate calamities rather than the natural incidents.