

Topic : Natural Resources :

Blessing or Curse

Outline :

1 Introduction

Thesis Statement: The question that natural resources are blessing or curse has sparked various debates. Many believe that natural resources are curse. However, ground realities support that natural resources are blessing.

2 The Value of Natural Resources in 21st Century

3 Natural Resources are Blessing (Thesis)

- (a) Natural resources reduce dependency of a state
- (b) States that have natural resources exercise independent foreign policy
- (c) Natural resources provide employment opportunities

- (d) Energy generation becomes cheaper
- (e) Natural resources boost economy of a state
- (f) Survival in an anarchic world becomes easy
- (g) Natural resources allow tourism sector to grow

4 Natural Resources are Curse (Anti-thesis)

- (a) Natural resources invite foreign invasion
- (b) Natural resources become threat to national integration

5 Ground Realities Support that Natural Resources are Blessing (Synthesis)

- (a) Natural resources make economy stronger, states do not invade stronger nations
- (b) Fair distribution of natural resources ensure national integration

6 Conclusion

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Nationals of China, banged pots for straight three days on the order of Mao, to keep sparrows away from crops. However, locusts attacked on standing crops and caused a huge famine. Millions of people died in the famine. Without proper food, the Chinese people suffered various things ^{even} and death of their loved ones. It makes visible that natural ^{resources} which are a kind of blessing, without ^{these} a nation cannot survive. In short, the question that natural resources are curse or blessing has sparked various debates. Many believe that natural resources are curse. However, ground realities or support that natural resources are blessing. There exists many arguments that validates the thesis. These include that natural resources reduce the dependency on other states, and states having natural resources

enjoy their independent foreign policy. Moreover, natural resources provide employment opportunities to the people. Further, natural resources boost the economy of the state.

There are people who say that natural resources are curse. To substantiate, they provide various points like natural resources invite foreign invasions and it becomes the reason, behind the threat to national integration. By looking at these arguments, one may say that these are not valid, and are like making mountains out of molehills.

To develop deeper understanding that how the natural resources are blessing, one has to unlock the value of natural resources in 21st century. The world is fighting with climate change, food shortage, and energy crisis. On the other hand, supply chains are not operating

properly. People are unable to get proper food, employment, and practice their daily lives. However, natural resources provide solutions to all these contemporary issues. Via natural resources, people get employment opportunities, proper food, and independent states. Moreover, old civilizations like Indus Valley civilization, in a huge example of ^{showing} ↑ that natural resources are crucial for the survival of humans. All great civilizations such as Nile Valley civilization, Mesopotamian civilization, and Indus Valley civilizations lived in the areas full of natural resources. This supports that natural resources are necessary for the survival of humans.

The major argument that justifies the ~~thesis~~ ^{thesis} is that natural resources reduce dependency of a state. In contemporary world, states are dependent on one and other.

States are depended for energy, food, and other material. However, states with a huge natural resources, generate their own food, energy, and other crucial elements. Therefore, the dependency of the state reduces on other states. Moreover, a state with abundance of natural resources does not depend on long supply chains for its food security or energy imports. For example, Indonesia produces rice in a huge quantity. Many states are depended on it for rice imports. However, Indonesia does not depends on any state. Thus, this demonstrates that natural resources reduce the dependency of a state.

The next point that verifies the thesis is that state with natural resources enjoys their independent foreign policy. Countries which are dependent on others for major imports do not exercise their independent

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foreign policy. It is because global powers influence the foreign policy of that country. Moreover, often global powers manipulate the decision making of that countries having lower natural resources. Resultantly, dependent state does not fully exercise its will on various matters. However, states having a vast number of natural resources enjoy their independent foreign policy without being controlled by global powers. For instance, Iran despite the sanctions of the United States is doing oil trade with China. Moreover, the trade of Iran with China has helped Iran to survive despite being sanctioned. Hence, this proves that natural resources provide power to exercise autonomous foreign policy.

Another argument that validates the thesis is that natural resources provide employment opportunities. Natural resources work as

job generating market for people. In many states coal mining, salt mining, gypsum mining, and fertile soil provide employment opportunities. Moreover, these natural resources provide business opportunities to the people. To illustrate, the trend of using pink salt in food is growing these days. Various people do business of selling pink salt online platforms. It is less costly for the people to start their business.

It is because pink Himalayan salt is sold by government 3RS per kilo gram. (The Economist, 2023) Ergo, this illustrates that natural resources provide employment opportunities to the people.

A key point that demonstrates the thesis is that energy generation becomes cheaper due to natural resources. In 21st century, the issue of energy production is growing owing to the

increased population. Humans are using more energy and they are producing harmful gases. These gases are damaging the climate of the earth. However, states with a large number of natural resources and able to produce cheaper energy without damaging environment. Natural resources like water, sunlight, and wind corridors are generating cheaper energy which is even less harmful for environment. For example, China is a huge country with cheaper generation. China has installed thousands of solar plates in its deserts to generate solar energy from sun which is cheaper. According to Paris Agreement 2015 meeting, China will produce 80% of its energy from natural resources and it will be cheaper. Moreover, it will also protect environment. (The Amnesty International, 2015) This denotes that countries with natural resources produce cheaper energy, therefore, it is

a blessing.

Another significant point supporting the argument is that natural resources boost economy of a state. There are various states which are not developed enough to generate their revenue from industries, technology, or artificial intelligence. These states often depend on natural resources to grow their economy. Countries like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Pakistan highly depend on their natural resources for their economic growth. For instance, the major factor that contributes to the economic growth of ^{Pakistan is} agriculture. The fertile land of the country grows many crops, fruits, and trees. According to Syed Akbar Zaidi, agriculture is the lifeline of the Pakistani economy of the Pakistan. Economic Survey 2023-2024 notes, agriculture contributes to the economy of Pakistan 20%. This manifests that natural

huge contributor to economic growth.

A crucial argument proving the thesis is that survival in an anarchic world becomes easier.

Realism supports the idea that world is anarchic and states must work for their survival. Many states face sanctions from powerful supranational organisations and global powers. However, natural resources of these states ensure their survival. Despite judging the actions of Russia - one can get an idea that the state is facing 5000+ sanctions from the United States.

(Al-Jazeera, 2025 May) The country is ensuring its survival via trading of oil and natural gas. Russia is doing trade with China. It is exporting its oil and gas to China. Despite frozen SWIFT foreign reserves and 50+ Billion dollars freeze, it is ensuring its survival. This validates that natural resources ensure the survival

of a state in an anarchic world.

Next aspect ensuring that natural resources are blessing in that it boost tourism in a state. Tourism is a growing sector of modern world. People in this busy world, try to get some peaceful escape from boring lives. Many states are surviving on its tourism sector. The tourism sector is blessing for these states. For instance, Maldives a state with islands and beautiful landscapes, generate its revenue via tourism sector. Maldives is highly dependent on its tourism sector for its economic growth. Each year millions of people choose Maldives for their holiday vacations. Similarly, Bali in Indonesia, and Bora Bora in Arabian perform same functions. This show that natural resources boost tourism sector of a country thereupon it is a blessing.

Notwithstanding, there is another perspective that natural resources are curse.

People those who support this view justify their claim as that natural resources invite foreign invasion.

State which own natural resources in a huge number are not safe from foreign invasion. In older times, Indian Subcontinent was a victim of foreign invasion due to its natural resources. In modern times, the growing race of technology has impacted states many states.

For instance, the global powers are fighting over to control the critical-earth-minerals. States with strategic minerals are facing foreign control.

States like Congo and Burkina Faso are becoming new battlefield for global powers to attain natural resources.

(Global Crisis Group, 2024). These states hold a vast resources of cobalt, lithium, and gold. Therefore, they face many

issues related to foreign interventions.

This verifies that states with natural resources invite foreign invasion.

Another point is

that natural resources become threat to national integration. When a single province of a state own natural resources but all other provinces get benefits from it via unequal distribution, the host province feel alienated.

People of that province show grievances. It is because of the unequal distribution of natural resources. For instance,

Balochistan always complaint about getting low share from its own natural resources. Moreover, Pakistan is facing a huge wave of unrest due to this reason. According to people of Balochistan they do not get equal share. (Al-Jazeera, 2015 May)-

As per Article 161 on constitution of 1973 of Pakistan, first right of natural

resources is of a province but they do not get the right. Therefore, natural resources become curse to national integration. This substantiate that natural resources fails dis-integration in a state. Thus, it is a curse.

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Point raised earlier by opponents is about that natural resources invite foreign invasion is not valid. It is because natural resources make economy stronger, states do not attack stronger nations. Natural resources are key to grow economy of a state. Via growing economy, states makes its defence system stronger. Therefore, countries avoid to invade. As Kissinger notes that "Deterrence is a bargain that stops states from attacking because they fear the punishment." Moreover, strong economies have that power of deterrence. This supports that stronger economies stop states

from invading. Therefore, natural resources are blessing.

In the same vein, the argument that natural resources become threat to national integration is not verified. It is because fair distribution of natural resources ensure national integration. The problem is not the natural resources, but the problem is the unfair distribution of natural resources.

Therefore, ensuring parity in distribution states can achieve national integration and powerful state. Therefore, There are number of states which share their resources equal among the people and ensure national integration.

For instance, Afghanistan is called 'the graveyard of empires'. It is because the national integration of these people is stronger and they distribute everything equally.

Thus it is substantiated that national

integration can be achieved via distributing resources equally.

To encapsulate the whole discussion, the debate about natural resources has raised various questions. However, it is a blessing not a curse. Arguments of their ^{verify} ~~verify~~ this stone like natural resources reduce dependency and state exercise their independent foreign policy. Moreover, natural resources provide employment opportunities and boost economic growth. On the other hand, opponents provided their view such as natural resources invite foreign invasion and are threat to national integration therefore, it is a curse. ~~By~~ However, the points of opponents were neglected through a short arguments. At last it was proved that natural resources are blessing.