

Environmental Pollution in India

Environmental pollution is affecting the entire humanity. The land, water and air pollution is causing great concerns to the very existence of life on the earth. Day by day the environmental pollution is increasing. The needs of the people are increasing. The culture of over consumption is creating problems for maintaining the ecological balance. The nature is being exploited and science has helped in conquering the nature which is not a good sign for sustainable development.

The intensity of the problem is such that surroundings have not become safe for human life. The land is being over used by chemical fertilizers for the rise in productivity. After some time the fertility of the soil decreases. India is already having so many acres of land as wasteland. Desertification is on rise, over-grazing is another problem. Jhum cultivation destroys the forests for cultivation. In coming years sufficient fodder will not be there for animals. Green Revolution undoubtedly increased the production of crops but at the cost of fertility of soil.

Similarly on the water pollution front, the situation is alarming. Safe drinking water has not reached every village of this country. The rivers are heavily polluted. The Ganga, Yamuna waters are not safe for drinking. The wastes are carried away to the rivers. The religious sites of Banaras and Allahabad on the river banks are the dirtiest places. The people bathe there and leave the wastage at the river sites which are flown into these rivers. The water pollution is affecting the plants and animals living beneath the water. It causes various diseases also.

The Air Pollution is the most important cause for diseases like asthma, heart and lung cancer. According to one estimate, 52,000 people have died in 1995 from pollution related complications in 36 Indian cities. Ten to 12 percent of children in the age group 5 to 16 in Delhi suffer from bronchial asthma. Air pollution is caused mainly by industries and vehicles. The vehicles are mushrooming in the cities, especially in Delhi. The power cuts have led to use of generators which pollute the air. The level of noise pollution is crossing the limit of audible range and many people tend to develop hearing problems. The pollution in Kanpur and Agra is worse. The pollution has started affecting the Taj Mahal which can affect the tourism industry. That is why Supreme Court ordered the closure of polluting industries surrounding Taj Mahal. The Court also ordered for closing of polluting industries in Delhi. Any industry to open has to get environmental clearance from the concerned authority. In Delhi, at ITO crossing and Chandni Chowk areas if one stays for five minutes, the eyes get burning and feels totally uncomfortable.

It is said that poverty is the biggest polluter. In India half of the population is poor. The development has not taken rapidly as it could have taken in the last fifty years after independence. It becomes their need to survive and hence pollute the environment. The people cut the forests for living. The forests are all cut for setting up of industries. The forests in India should have been at least 33% of the total land as per the forest policy but it is not more than 21%.

The next hindrance to the conservation of environment is the overpopulation. How can the total land bear the burden of 98 crores of people in India? The earth's resources are scarce and many non-renewable. The coal, natural gas, and oil are non-renewable source of energy but the needs of development are putting pressure on these scarce resources. The people are becoming communists and the Western media through Television have constantly helped in creating artificial needs in the minds of people.

Industrialisation and urbanisation have made the situation worse. The increase of CO₂ levels in atmosphere has led to warming of earth which can lead to rise in sea levels. People will get worsely affected by submergence of coastal States. Also hole in ozone layer has been detected due to rise in chlorofluorocarbons which is used in refrigerators. Hole in ozone layer can lead to human beings exposed to harmful ultraviolet radiations which can cause skin cancer and cataract.

Environmental Pollution has to be checked at every level. Population has to be controlled at all the costs. Poverty eradication needs greater attention. The loopholes at implementation level have to be checked. The shift of development has to be towards sustainable development in which future generations are also safe. The use of non-conventional sources of energy like solar power, biogas, biomass, wind should be promoted in order to avoid pollution. In order to avoid the humanity from extinction all these efforts have to take place in an integrated and well planned manner. We are already under serious threats to survival and can't afford to risk more.