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Discussion On Air Pollution In India's National Capital Region

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Abstract :- For the last several years, the problem of air pollution is arising in the country's capital Delhi and its surrounding areas. Especially in November and December, the level of air pollution reaches such a dangerous level that people have to face difficulties in breathing. Many types of diseases caused by pollution have disrupted life here. There is a mixture of poisonous gases in the environment here. Environment is the natural environment which surrounds us from all sides and which helps the humans, animals, birds and natural vegetation present on the earth to live. Development of a healthy person is possible only in a clean environment, that is, environment has a direct relation with daily life. According to the current circumstances, global warming is a serious problem related to the environment in the context of environmental protection and sustainable development. Protection of forests and lakes is necessary to prevent the problem of global warming. Trees should not be cut unless they cause any harm. At this time we need more and more tree plantation. Even one step taken by such a large population of ours can make a significant contribution to environmental protection.

Introduction with facts and material :- Air pollution is one of the main environmental problems, which mere attention will not suffice but it needs to be solved by collective efforts of all. Because the amount of oxygen in our atmosphere was 21% but gradually its amount is decreasing.

The dirt in the form of chaos, knowingly or unknowingly, spread by humans on the earth to fulfill their needs, has become the cause of pollution and is making humans face new diseases every day. Clean air is the basis of life, it provides oxygen to all living beings and by absorbing it, living beings survive on this earth. There are two types of human impact on the environment, direct impact and indirect impact.

(1) Direct impact :- includes planned and unplanned types of impacts. Because man is aware of the consequences of his actions. For example, change in land use, nuclear programme, climate change programme, construction and excavation etc. Direct effects are reflected in the short term and continue to affect the environment in the long run. These are also variable.

(2) Indirect impact :- This includes those effects which are not pre-planned or planned. For example, the effects of work done for industrial development are not reflected immediately. Most of these are related to pollution and environmental degradation. They bring about such changes in the system of circumstances, which prove fatal for humans.

Ozone layer is also getting affected a lot due to air pollution which is causing serious disruption in the environment. Due to increasing population, there has been unexpected increase in the needs of people and daily activities of human beings too which is forcing negative changes in the climate. At present the National Capital Region is facing severe air pollution.

For the last several years, the problem of air pollution has been arising in the country's capital Delhi. Especially in November and December, the level of air pollution reaches such a dangerous level that people have to face difficulties in breathing. Air quality index of Delhi is generally in the Good (0–50), Satisfactory (51–100), and Moderate (101–200) levels between March and September, and then it drastically deteriorates to Poor (201–300), Severe (301–400), or Hazardous (401–500+) levels during October to February due to various factors including burning of effigies during Vijayadashmi, bursting of firecrackers during Diwali, stubble burning, road dust, vehicle pollution and cold weather. During festivals, especially Dussehra and Diwali, we are releasing poisonous gases into the atmosphere through innumerable firecrackers. Due to which it becomes difficult to breathe in the environment. On top of that, there is a change in seasons during these days. Due to which slight cold is felt. Due to this cold, poisonous gases from industries, smoke from motor vehicles and dusty particles from the construction sector remain at the lower surface of the atmosphere. Because due to cold these poisonous gases are not able to rise up much. Which directly cause disease among humans.

The increasing number of vehicles in Delhi is considered to be the main cause of air pollution. Due to this air pollution the air quality index often reaches 'severe level'. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) have identified vehicular emissions as a major contributor to Delhi's rising air pollution. Therefore, to reduce vehicular congestion in Delhi, Eastern and Western Peripheral Expressways have been constructed around it. Whose length is approximately 270 kilometres. It is also known as Kundli-Manesar-Palwal (KMP) and Kundli-Ghaziabad-Palwal (KGP). This route connects Sonipat, Manesar, Palwal, Ghaziabad, Noida. Due to which vehicles do not need to enter Delhi. Due to this, efforts have been made to reduce the problem of pollution to some extent. Other side with an investment of crores of rupees, pollution caused by BS-VI standard compliant vehicles has reduced to a great extent.

The Post - Monsoon and Winter periods, from October in a particular year up till February of the next year, witness episodic events like extensive farm burnings during paddy harvesting season, bursting of crackers during marriages/ other celebrations etc. Coupled with the above, adverse climatic, meteorological, low temperature and calm wind conditions that generally prevail during

winters in the entire region impede effective dispersion of the pollutants from the region, resulting in to a spike in the daily average AQI in NCR during the period. The year 2022 in particular, witnessed the best air quality during post-monsoon and winter months owing to continual efforts round the year and concerted drives to prevent and abate air polluting activities particularly during these months. The smoke that comes out from burning the residue left after harvesting of crops also causes pollution.

In the last few years, air pollution has increased unexpectedly in this area and a huge decline has been recorded in the health index of the people. People are suffering from various types of diseases like asthma, headache, stomach diseases, allergies, heart diseases and even serious diseases like cancer, which is very harmful for our health.

- India has the highest premature deaths among under -5 children due to toxic air (WHO 2018)
- In 2017, 12.5% of total deaths in India can be attributed to air pollution (Outdoor + indoors)
- Death rate per 1 lakh people attributable to air pollution is 89.9 (Global burden of disease study 2017)

Till now we have been reading and hearing that 78% nitrogen and 21% oxygen are found in the atmosphere. But through research it has been revealed that the amount of oxygen in the atmosphere is continuously decreasing. According to a research, the amount of oxygen in the atmosphere is now only 19%. That means a huge fall of 2% in a short period of time. Given the lifestyle humans are living, it appears that this figure may increase in the future.

As the amount of poisonous gases, especially carbon dioxide, is increasing in the Earth's atmosphere, the ozone layer that protects the Earth is becoming thinner. Due to which the harmful rays of the sun are falling directly on us and causing serious diseases like skin cancer. We have to review these reasons and find solutions to them. Prima facie, the main reasons responsible for air pollution are means of transport, construction work of buildings, smoke coming out of chimneys of brick kilns, densely populated areas, increasing urbanization and industrialization and burning of crop residues.

All these reasons are related to another important reason, increasing population, which is most responsible for air pollution. If we find a solution to this one reason, we can control air pollution to a great extent. Due to increasing population the means of transport have increased. Which are essential for their transportation. The increasing population needs houses to live. Because of this, construction of buildings is also necessary.

Bricks are required the most as material for the construction of buildings. More and more kilns will be set up to supply bricks. The poisonous smoke coming out of the chimneys of kilns is causing air pollution. Due to increasing population, densely populated areas are being formed around the National Capital Region. Zig-zag technology was adopted in about 2500 to 3000 brick kilns in the National Capital Region. As a result, pollution has reduced significantly.

Gurugram, Faridabad, Noida, Bahadurgarh, Sonapat and Ghaziabad fall in the category of densely populated areas. Due to which carbon dioxide gas increases in the atmosphere. Due to increasing population, it is natural for increasing urbanization and industrialization. To meet the needs of the people and provide them employment, new industries are set up which emit many chemical waste materials, poisonous gases and smoke, which causes pollution. A permanent solution to this critical problem is possible only if Green Revolution is encouraged in Delhi. Afforestation should be promoted around Delhi. Resources for employment, education and health should be developed in villages. The way educational and health institutions are there in Delhi, establishing similar institutions in different areas of the country will reduce the burden of population in Delhi and NCR.

There are heaps of garbage in the National Capital Region and Delhi. Out of which many types of poisonous gases are emitted. There are currently three landfill sites in the capital Delhi. In Okhla, Ghazipur and Bhalswa. According to a study of 2023, 14 metric tons of garbage is currently

accumulated in these three sites. Of these, there is 14 metric tons of garbage in Ghazipur, 8 metric tons in Bhalswa and 6 metric tons in Okhla. A mountain of garbage has formed at all three sites. The mountain in Ghazipur is 53 meters high, in Bhalswa it is 54 meters high and in Okhla it is 50 meters high. The deadline for leveling the Ghazipur landfill site has been fixed for December 2024. The surprising thing is that in 2019 the height of the Ghazipur landfill site had reached 65 meters. That is, the mountain of garbage here had become so high that it was just 8 meters shorter than the Qutub Minar.

Take a look at these simple ways to manage waste efficiently at home.

- Control plastic use.
- Segregate waste.
- Reduce paper use.
- Say yes to composting. Plan your meals in advance.
- Buy good quality clothes.
- Pay your bills online

Conclude:- We have to find alternatives and solutions. Our personal awareness and positive thinking can also control the increasing population. To prevent pollution, more and more trees will have to be planted. For this, a campaign needs to be launched on a large scale. Every year we have to set a target for tree plantation. To achieve this, everyone, whether child or old or young, will have to work hard. The aim of plantation should not just be to stop the saplings but every year they should be assessed as to how many saplings survive and how many more saplings need to be planted. There should also be a provision for strict punishment against cutting of trees. Garbage has to be disposed of properly.

The surprising thing is that even in finding its cause and solution, superficial and misleading things are said. Sometimes burning of stubble by farmers around Delhi is said to be the cause of pollution, while sometimes water sprinkling is seen as an easy solution, which is nothing more than a ridiculous option. There is also an irony that compared to the amount of stubble burnt in Delhi, plastic is burnt here in residential and industrial areas many times more. Since there is very little paddy cultivation in Delhi and surrounding areas and wheat crop residues are converted into straw to feed cattle, hence incidents of burning of crop residues are rare here. Burning of stubble is also talked about to hide the evil of burning uncountable plastic waste. The concrete solution for this is that there should be a complete ban on the use of plastic in the capital Delhi. Plastic should be disposed of chemically instead of burning. Use of single-use plastic will have to be stopped and special attention will have to be paid to the five-point program regarding plastic i.e. Refuse, Reduce, Re-use, Repair, Recycle. There is a need to make a law for this. Only when we become aware we can get rid of our problems. We can provide a good and healthy life to our next generation. The government will also have to pay special attention to this as soon as possible. Otherwise, all the efforts made will prove to be inadequate after running out of time. People should use car pooling or public means for transportation to office or anywhere else. Due to air pollution the temperature of the earth's atmosphere is increasing day by day. According to a research, if air pollution continues to increase at this rate, the temperature of the earth's atmosphere will increase by 3 to 4.5 degrees by the year 2049. Due to which all the ice in the form of glaciers present on the earth will melt unexpectedly. As a result, there will be severe floods and the entire earth may be destroyed. Therefore, only increased plantation can save us from such natural disasters like floods etc. From these trees we will get oxygen in the form of clean air. These trees can provide us with maximum rainfall. This will provide relief from poisonous gases, dust and other polluted particles spread in the environment. The life expectancy of the people here will increase. We have to return to our natural lifestyle. People of the society will have to be instilled with a sense of responsibility and duty in various ways. Because man has created this problem with his own hands. Therefore, man will solve this problem at his own discretion. So that our future generations do not face the disasters, problems and health related disorders that we are facing in present. May they have a clean and very beautiful life with a better tomorrow.

Source :-

- WHO report
- From Various Article on Google information and input
- Drishti IAS
- Aaj tak

