

Ever increasing environmental pollution and our responsibilities in modern era

Dr. Muhammad Majid Khan ¹ Dr. Hafiz Nasir Ali ² Dr. Ghulam Sakeena ³ Umer Shahid ⁴

1-Assistant Prof ,Department of Islamic Studies, Heritage international College, Chistian, Hasil Pur

2-Visiting Assistant Professor,Department of Islamic Studies,Thal University Bhakkar

3-Department of Education Punjab, District, Vehari

4-Ph.D Scholar,Sub inspector Lahore (Punjab Police department)

Abstract:

No doubt, this universe is a rare and beautiful gift of God's power to mankind, which is being gradually scattered and polluted by human beings themselves. While its bad effects are beginning to appear, then we inclined to appreciate its beauty, charm and maintain its balance. The Environmental Protection has become the center of attention at international level. The environmental pollution has spread all around and the campaign to make it pure has started in every corner of the world. Although, 1400 years ago, the Holy Quran through the last Prophet has taught to keep the environment free from impurities and to protect it from all types of pollution. It is one of the major threats to human life, which is caused by uneven weather, temperature, droughts, storms, floods and other human factors. This article will try to highlight the causes, problems along with our responsibilities for their eradication.

Keywords: Scattered, inclined, campaign, impurities and droughts.

The universe is a beautiful and unique God's gift to humanity, which is being harmed and polluted by human beings. Hence, the protection of environment has become the need of the hour. Some responsibilities are imposed on us, considering the current prevailing environmental pollution. By performing these, we can avoid and overcome environmental pollution. Some individual and collective responsibilities will be mentioned here, keeping in mind the teachings of the Prophet (PBUH).As accountability and responsibility make a person complete. It is mentioned in hadith thus:

"Be aware! Every one of you is a guardian and every one of you has to be accountable for his subjects, so the head of state and government, who is the guardian of the people, has to be accountable for its subjects. A man is the guardian of his

family; he will have to be answerable for his family."ⁱ

Such type of guardianship mentioned in the above hadith makes us realize our individual and collective responsibilities. Individually, subjects include our lives and all the things around us. Similarly, the head of the state or a ruler has collective responsibilities of all the people of his home-land. Thus there are two types of responsibilities.

1- Individual Responsibilities 2- Collective Responsibilities

Proper utilization of land:

The first and foremost unit to remove environmental pollution is the earth. The positive use of the earth can save us from this menace; we should not put dirt or things on the earth that cause pain to others. No doubt, Allah Almighty has subjugated the earth for man in every way so that he can fully benefit from it. As, Allah says in the Holy Quran thus:

"You did not see that Allah has conquered for you whatever is in the earth."ⁱⁱ

Hence, man will be able to benefit from the earth only if he keeps it clean and protects it from pollution because the earth has been made pure for worship in every way. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) said in this regard:

"The earth has been made a place of worship and purity for me."ⁱⁱⁱ

The above hadith shows that the land is pure and is also a means of purification, as in the absence of water, Tayammum is performed with soil. For example, for correct use of land and protection from pollution, it is also important not to throw dirt on the land, especially those places where there is a residence or on roads etc. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has cursed those people who litter the roads and places where people sit. So, it is important that we should follow the teachings of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to protect the land from pollution because the dirt on the land pollutes the land and pollution is dangerous for human health and their survival.

Correct use of barren land:

Optimum use of wasteland may also be helpful in reducing environmental pollution. Reclamation of wasteland increases the country's revenue and also reduces land pollution. Barren land is a land that has not been settled by anyone. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said thus:

"He who settles an uninhabited land deserves a reward" ^{iv}

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has encouraged the use of barren land and has described the act of planting a tree or irrigating the land as virtue and good deed.

Proper usage of water:

An important responsibility regarding water pollution is to use water properly and prevent it from being wasted. Today there are drains and sewers everywhere, many diseases are spread by them. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has given important principles to protect the environment from pollution by ordering to keep the houses and streets clean. When sewage gets embedded in well water, it causes disease. So, it is the government's responsibility to ensure good drainage, and we also have an individual responsibility to protect water from pollution. The Last Prophet (PBUH) of Allah has said as:

"None of you should urinate in standing water, nor bathe in a state of janabat." ^v

The study of Seerah Tayyaba shows that there are teachings in the hadith of the Prophet to prevent water pollution. For the correct use of water, it is also important that it should not be wasted, but should be used according to the need. It is prohibited in the Holy Quran also. Divine guidance is:

"Indeed, spendthrifts are the brothers of Satan." ^{vi}

Wasteful spending or waste of things is not correct in any way, whereas water is one of the great blessings of Allah. Therefore, the prohibition of unnecessary use of water has also been made in the blessed seerah, because when water is wasted, its drainage is also a problem. When the water is stored more than necessity, it will cause pollution. The Prophet (peace be upon him) has declared excessive use of ablution water for worship is considered extravagancy. He (peace be upon him) passed by Hazrat Saad (R.A) while he was performing ablution and said:

"Is this extravagance in the water of ablution?" He said: "Yes, even if it is a flowing river." ^{vii}

If we look at the environment, we will see the unnecessary use of water. We must individually try to use less water so that this excess water does not cause pollution. This effort is one of the ways to prevent water pollution. This effort will prove to be an excellent and effective strategy in preventing water pollution.

Prohibition of cutting of trees:

One of the most important sources of protection from environmental pollution and providing clean and clear air to humans are trees and dense forests full of trees. Where trees and plants provide fruits, grain and wood for furniture, lush green trees in densely populated forests absorb environmental density and provide clean air. In Islam, on the one hand, cutting of trees is prohibited; on the other hand, plantation is also encouraged. The Prophet said:

"Whoever(a Muslim) plants a plant or cultivates, and whatever a bird, a human or an animal eats from it, it will be a charity for him." ^{viii}

Islam and its pure teachings emphasize cleanliness and hygiene so that the environment can be protected from pollution, impurities and filth. An important source of protection from environmental pollution is plantation of trees. Therefore, we should plant more plant seasonal fruit plants and other trees in our homes and educational institutions so that our environment and atmosphere remain clean. No doubt, this individual effort of ours to plantation will help create a collective environment of plantation.

Improvement of sewerage system:

A major cause of water pollution is poor sewage system. Especially in Pakistan, it is becoming the cause of pollution. The drainage water of sewers and the discharge of dirty water into rivers and seas are also damaging to aquatic life.

It is a general concept that water is a great gift of nature. Water is necessary for the survival of human life. Due to its importance, every year on March 22, World Water Day is celebrated all over the world including Pakistan. No doubt, water is the basic unit of life; on the other hand, the chemical and polluted water is a serious threat to healthy life. The defects of the sewage system have polluted the rivers and canals of the country. Due to lack of drainage system, pollution is increasing which causes diseases. It is also our individual responsibility to improve the sewage system in our house along with surroundings.

Noise pollution and noise moderation:

Nowadays, noise pollution is also an important problem of the environment. The loudness of the sound to a great extent affects the human hearing. In relation to control of noise pollution, the teaching of Islam is that it is necessary to moderate the sound, and excessive sound is forbidden without a proper need because it causes noise pollution.

"And low your voice, indeed the worst voice is of a donkey." ^{ix}

It is important to keep our voice low to avoid noise pollution; it may be our own voice or the sound of a loudspeaker or the sound of any machine, so that there is no noise pollution. For the prevention of noise pollution, we can get guidelines from the Prophet's life that he who remained silent was saved. Moderation of sound is important to avoid noise.

Cleaning of houses, neighborhoods and educational institutions:

One of our individual responsibilities in reducing pollution is cleaning our homes and educational institutions. Islam gives great importance to cleanliness. Allah Almighty has arranged the cleanliness of humans according to His will. Allah Almighty says about purity and cleanliness:

"Indeed, Allah loves those who repent and those who are pure^x "

We should not throw garbage in the streets and markets to keep our houses clean. Keep the classrooms, houses, streets, school and neighborhood clean and urge others to clean them too. Don't feel shy in this cleaning; this individual effort of ours will help in cleaning the whole city.

Disposal of medical waste:

Hospital waste is one cause of pollution. There is a dire need to dispose of this waste in a proper way. It is our individual responsibility along with the hospital administration to dispose such waste at the designated place only.

Use of large vehicles unnecessarily:

To reduce noise pollution, the use of private vehicles and the horn should be as per the need, instead public transport should be used.

Avoidance of smoking:

Smoking should be avoided and such things should not be burnt which produce smoke as it causes pollution as well as diseases. Particularly, the use of plastic bags should be avoided and the use of cloth bags should be promoted.

Collective Responsibilities:

Individual responsibilities are mentioned to reduce environmental pollution. Similarly, some are our collective responsibilities also as a nation. As a society, when we try to prevent environmental pollution, there will be more success. Discussions and seminars are held around the world, including Pakistan, regarding the awareness of environmental pollution and measures to prevent it, but when these measures are at a low level, if they are not implemented, due to which there is not enough success in eliminating pollution. There are some collective practical measures by following which we can reduce environmental pollution to a considerable extent.

Plantation and government initiatives:

Deforestation is the main cause of both air and land pollution. Plantation can reduce both types of mentioned pollution. The most important thing in relation to plantation is to prevent the cutting the existing trees. One of the major reasons of the deterioration is the deforestation and the removal of greenery from the world. To a great extent, the density can be controlled, if the trees are prevented from being cut and new trees are planted.

"If the Day of Judgment comes upon one of you and he has a palm tree in his hand, then he should give it a pulp".^{xi}

In the teachings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) there is a prohibition of cutting trees even in the state of war.

In Islam, where the cutting of trees is prohibited, tree planting has also been recommended and those who plant trees have been promised a great reward in case they are eaten by animals etc.

Islam encourage plantation, as it is both an individual and collective effort. There is a dire need for planning at the country and national level. In this regard, the government has taken an excellent step and started a forestation campaign in the name of "Clean Green Pakistan" which is going on very successfully.

Under this program, saplings and trees were planted in the entire country including educational institutions in February and March. With the special interest of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, people from all walks of life actively participated in it. If this campaign continues successfully like this, we will be able to reduce environmental pollution soon.

Billion Tree Tsunami Project Significant progress in plantation:

An important project regarding tree planting was started by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government in the previous period under which the target of planting one billion trees in three years was set. Under this project, one billion 13 million trees were planted in three years.

This project was very important to save the country from environmental pollution. Five lac people also got temporary employment in the billion tree tsunami. It was the only project of its kind that was certified by the international environmental organizations and urged other countries to start similar projects. If such projects are spread across the country, it will be a major step towards reducing environmental pollution, as the current government has such experience.

Organization of conferences and seminars on environment:

An important step towards the elimination of environmental pollution is the organization of conferences and seminars in this regard, through which

awareness is created among the people. The harmful effects of environmental pollution and preventive measures are highlighted among the people. There is a need to hold such meetings and discussions so with awareness, we can benefit from each other's experiences to reduce pollution.

The World Environmental Conference under the United Nations was held in December 2019 in Spain, but this conference fell victim to the stubbornness of economic powers.

The purpose of this conference is a consensus plan of action was to be drawn up in the context of this in Paris in 2015. The requirement is that such a conference should be effective regardless of mutual self-interest.

Role of media:

Nowadays, the role of media and other news organizations is the most prominent for highlighting the problems and suggest possible steps to solve them due to its sensitivity. Since environmental pollution is a global problem, media has a greater responsibility to raise this issue and aware the masses about it. Whether it is electronic media or print media, it is the responsibility of all to broadcast programs and articles in newspapers and magazines regarding environmental pollution to create effective awareness among the people. The media should also avoid propaganda in this regard and only factual facts should be conveyed to the people. So, it is very important to be honest the media and media persons so that only the true facts can come forward as wrong statistics can only cause fear and panic.

World Environment Day 5 June:

Including Pakistan, The World Environment Day is celebrated on June 5 all over the world. The purpose of which is to create awareness among the masses about the improvement of the environment and elimination of pollution. In most countries of the world, walks, rallies, seminars and other events are organized on this Day.

World Environment Day is celebrated on June 5 every year since 1974 to highlight the problems and causes by climate change along with the solution. Every year, experts choose a different theme to celebrate this day so that the same issue should be discussed on this global day.

If it is discussed further accordingly, pollution can be effectively highlighted on this day. The United Nations should also urge and emphasize member states to hold ceremonies on this day.

Location of nuclear plant away from population:

A collective effort to eliminate environmental pollution is to keep industrial factories and especially nuclear plants away from the population. Nuclear plants use such materials that contain volatile substances that are

extremely dangerous to human health. Similarly, other industrial factories and fertilizer factories are also causing environmental pollution. Therefore, it is necessary that nuclear plants and other factories should be far away from the population so that water and air pollution can be avoided. All factories and mills not only be kept away from the urban population, but they should also be kept away from the seas and rivers so that aquatic creatures should also be protected and the water of the oceans should not be polluted.

Measures to prevent fumes and other harmful effects:

Environmental pollution is an important problem of today. Smoke from motor vehicles, exhaust gases, smoke from chemical materials, falling into the river, burning of garbage and other factors are the major causes of pollution. Along with the smoke, a major problem is the vehicles and machinery which causes noise pollution. Smoke is also a part of pollution, it's all its types are harmful. Smoke is described as a punishment thus in the Holy Quran:

"So wait for the day when clear smoke will come out of the sky ^{xiii}"

The Holy Quran declared smoke as dangerous and harmful centuries before today. It has been confirmed in modern times and thus smoke has been declared harmful. Among the causes of smoke burning of plastic bags, smoking and indiscriminately use of machines are included.

It is need of the hour to address all the causes of smoke and noise at the government level. The use of horns in vehicles should be as per the need. Likewise, standard engines and fuel should be used to avoid smoke. Appropriate legislation should also be made in this regard.

Effective legislation to eliminate environmental pollution:

Effective legislation will also prove fruitful for the elimination of environmental pollution because if there is a process of punishment or fines in case of spread of pollution, it will be greatly reduced. There are laws in this regard also which need to be made more effective, national and institutional laws should play their role.

As a nation we have been lazy to obey the laws whereas the nations that strictly obey the laws are successful in enforcing all the things practically.

Similarly, there are laws regarding the establishment of industries but they are not implemented properly. There is a dire need to ban the use of plastic bags in Pakistan because they are an important cause of pollution, but this law is not implemented mere in few cities.

In the teachings of Islam, making noise in the mosque was considered a vice and a sin Therefore, all the companions of the Prophet, may God bless

them and grant them peace, used to avoid it, but later they declared it a crime. This shows that legislation is very important for the solution of matters.

Corona virus and environmental pollution:

Corona virus has become a terror for the world today. Millions of people are being affected by it and the death toll has crossed the figure 255,000. This virus is a message from nature to all of us that man that is causing a constant damage to this planet; in fact, it is harming the entire humanity.

The fire in Australia last few years before and the attack of millions of locusts on standing crops in Kenya & Africa and the sudden spread of other dangerous viral diseases are all such messages. The entire world has to think beyond all political, religious, economic and racial differences so that our future generations can be safe. So, we must take practical measures to protect this beautiful planet from the threats posed by global warming, pollution and climate change.

When environmental pollution increases, epidemics spread rapidly, which creates problems for humans. Corona virus is also such epidemic that spread due to pollution. This epidemic is said to have originated from eating bats in China, as it is Haram. The use of Haram and impure things causes pollution, while Islam has allowed the eating only Halal things. There is proper guidance in Quran thus:

"O people! Eat what is pure and lawful in the earth^{xiii}"

The use of halal and pure things prevents from pollution and diseases. Cleanliness is much emphasized in Islam. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said, "Cleanliness is a part of faith." Corona virus is closely related to pollution, so it is necessary that we must follow the teachings of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and get rid of this epidemic.

Sports and recreational activities:

It is very important to have a healthy environment of sports and recreational activities. It creates a healthy society which will help to get rid of diseases and epidemics.

Mass Sanitation Programs:

Collectively, complete arrangements should be made for cleanliness. Neighborhoods, schools and hospitals should be kept clean. Along with individual efforts, there should be a proper and effective cleaning system at the government level to combat pollution.

Conclusion:

The following are the conclusions drawn from this research titled "Ever increasing environmental pollution and our responsibilities in modern era".

- 1-Environmental pollution in its broadest sense includes all types of pollution. As, pollution has a very broad meaning
- 2-Environmental pollution has become a dangerous problem at the global level. It is the responsibility of all the society members to fight for its solution in the light of the teachings of Islam.
- 3-Almost all the instructions failed to remove the pollution due to lack of awareness about it and laws, which are not being implemented.
- 4- 2. A possible solution to soil pollution is cleaning and preventing soil contamination.
- 5- Individual and collective efforts are needed to reduce all types of environmental pollution .Keeping water clean and protecting it from dirt, planting trees will help in reducing pollution.

Suggestions and recommendations:

- 1- It is the responsibility of scholars to make people aware and committed to Islamic teachings regarding environmental pollution. In this field, members and people can play an important role to explain the dangers of environmental pollution.
- 2-There is a need to include more content in the educational curriculum regarding environmental pollution so that students can know its importance from the beginning and make efforts practically to solve it real life?
- 3- Seminars and conferences should be organized at the national and international level about environmental pollution so that it can be combated collectively.
- 4- Print and electronic media along with social media should play an active role in this regard and create awareness among the public that they may not cause environmental pollution, in this way environmental pollution can be reduced.

References

- ⁱ Sahih Muslim, Muslim bin Al-Hajjaj al-Qashairi, Kitab ul-Imarat, Chapter Fazilat al-Amir al-Adil, Maktaba Rehmania, Lahore, 2013, H- 4724.
Al Quran ,Hajj 65:22ⁱⁱ
- ⁱⁱⁱ Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitab al-Salaat, Ch. Qol al-Nabi, Jalat li al-arz masjid, Maktaba Rehmania, H- 438.
- ^{iv} Musnad Ahmad, Research: Shoaib Arnaut Adil Murshid and Akhroon, Mosisat al-Rasalat, V.3, P- 313.

^v Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitab al-Wazoo, Ch. Al-Bool Fil-Mama al-Daim, Maktaba Rehmania, Lahore, H- 239.

^{vi} Al Quran ,Bani Israel, 27:17

^{vii} Sunan Ibn e Majah, Kitab al-Taharah, Ch. Ma jaa' fil-Qasad fil wazoo, H- 425.

^{viii} Musnad Ahmad, Mossat al-Rasalah, Kuwait 2001, vol.21, p.88, H-13389

^{ix} Al Quran ,Luqman, 19:31

^x Al Quran ,Al-Baqara, 2:222

^{xi} Musnad Ahmad, Shaibani, Musisat al-Rasala Beirut, Lubnan, 1421 AH, V.3,P-194.

^{xii} Al Quran ,Al-Dukhan, 10:11

^{xiii} Al Quran ,Al-Baqarah, 168: 2