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National Seminar on Environmental Issues and Present Society: Challenges and Possibilities for its Preservation and Restoration (21-22 December, 2021)

Background of the Seminar

The importance of maintaining a natural balance in environment has attained maximum seriousness among the policy planners in the past few years. The major concerns are on increasing population pressure and industrialization. The human impact on the environment or the environmental impact or degradation is assessed mainly by the combination of an already very large and increasing human population, continually increasing economic growth or per capita affluence, and the application of resource-depleting and polluting technology. The combating impact of these factors have resulted in increasing carbon footprint, shrinking forests, depleting rivers, sinking water tables, melting glaciers etc. The recent phenomenon of Chennai going waterless created a furore among the planners, citizens and the environmentalists. The time has come when the cost of development has to be seen against the dent being created on the environment for the present and future generations.

Environmental degradation is one of the ten threats officially cautioned by the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change of the United Nations. It defines environmental degradation as "the reduction of the capacity of the environment to meet social and ecological objectives and human needs". There are many examples of environmental degradation throughout the world. A recent example is the 2019 Amazon rainforest wildfires and the Australian bush fires which are still burning. The Amazon makes up 60% of all rainforests. It is the earth's lungs and with it getting destroyed is posing a huge threat to the environment and the whole world. The effects of the deforestation will pose major impacts on the world around us. The constant cutting down of trees is getting rid of our oxygen supply as well as the absorption of CO₂. With the continuation of deforestation we will have less available oxygen in the world which could be a detrimental problem for human health.

India has major water pollution issues. Discharge of untreated sewage is the single most important cause for pollution of surface and ground water in India. According to a World Health Organization study, out of India's 3,119 towns and cities, just 209 had partial sewage treatment facilities, and only eight have full wastewater treatment facilities. Over 100 Indian cities dump untreated sewage directly into the Ganges River. According to NASA groundwater declines are highest on Earth between 2002 and 2008 in northern India. Agricultural productivity is dependent on irrigation. A collapse of agricultural output and severe shortages of potable water may influence 114 million residents in India. In July 2012, about 670 million people or 10% of the world's population lost power blame on the severe drought restricting the power delivered by hydroelectric dams. Traditional fuel (fuel wood, crop residue and dung cake) dominates domestic energy use in rural India and accounts for about 90% of the total. In urban areas, this traditional fuel constitutes about 24% of the total. Fuel wood, agri-waste and biomass cake burning releases over 165 million tonnes of combustion products into India's indoor and outdoor air every year.

On per capita basis, India is a small emitter of carbon dioxide. In 2017, World Bank estimates that it emitted about 1.7 tons of gas per person, in comparison to the United States' 16.5 tons per person, and a world average of 5.2 tons per person. With 17 percent of world population, India contributed some 5 percent of human-sourced carbon dioxide emission; compared to China's 24 percent share. Vehicular emission and increasing greenhouse gases have been the primary forces which have caused substantial damage on our environment. The pressure of rising population has forced the automobile industry to substantially increase the production of two and four wheelers. The increasing pollution on roads is

severely hampering the biological growth of human beings and they are continuously living under the threat of respiratory ailments. India being an agriculture country is also heavily dependent on monsoon agriculture. As a result of this during non-monsoon season the dependence on underground water has been exponentially increased over the years. It has substantially depleted the water tables. Apart from this lack of desire/research/inaction among the planners towards water conservation measures has resulted in colossal loss of irrigation water for producing crops.

A NITI Aayog report expresses that 21 Indian urban communities, including Delhi, Bengaluru and Hyderabad are probably going to run out of groundwater starting 2020. We have to guarantee through law and approach intercession that water gathering, and consequently groundwater revival, is made compulsory. The effects of depleting resources are shared most by the rural poor and people living in adjoining city areas. Poor people suffer most when water, land, and the air are polluted because in most cases they lack the capacity to cope or adjust to the changes in the environment. Environmental risk factors are a major source of health problems in developing countries. The poor, particularly women and children, are most affected by environmental health problems, and traditional environmental hazards—lack of safe water and sanitation, indoor air pollution, and exposure to disease vectors—play by far the largest role.

However, the increased public awareness in the past few years towards restoring our environment has started showing some inclination by the planning authorities for a better policy perspective in this manner. Environmental clearance in big industrial projects has become a mandatory necessity. Proper waste disposal, recycling of plastic, treatment of sewerage before mixing with river are some of the welcome steps being taken up by the government. The impact assessment prior to the start of a big project also ensures environment friendly measures being adopted during the construction period.

Under this background, it is proposed to organize a national seminar during 30-31 March, 2020 to discuss threadbare the issues concerning our environment and supplement them with suitable measures and techniques.

Themes of the Seminar

	Themes	Sub – themes
1.	Air, Water & Soil Pollution and its impact on Health	Air, Water and Soil Pollution and Public Health Concerns, Urbanization and associated issues, Global warming and its effects.
2.	Environment and Society	Issues of Environment Poverty, Environmental Activism and its effects, Issues of Self Governance in protecting environment, Socio-Economic Dimensions of Environmental Challenges.
3.	Management of Natural Resources	Natural Disaster Management, Environmental legislation and policy, Solid Waste Management, Industrial and Municipal Waste Water Management, Rain Water Harvesting, Energy Resources, Natural Resource Management
4.	Governmental Initiatives towards Environment Restoration	Analysis of government efforts to increase the use of non conventional power and its usefulness. Possible ways of preservation and restoration of Environment.

MPISSR invites to participate in the National Seminar. We propose to bring out an edited volume of the selected papers presented in the Seminar. MPISSR will reimburse travel cost and will arrange local hospitality for the invited delegates.

Submission of Full Paper along with ABSTRACT: **November 19, 2021**

All communications may please be sent to:

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