**Respect the Nature**

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The world is dealing with serious issues. The world’s problems in the past could be divided into two categories: those caused by nature and those caused by humans. But in modern times, the domains of both natural and man-made challenges are overlapping. The sophistication of the world is one of the causes of this overlap. One central problem, which is instantaneous and causal human development and prosperity, underlies all other problems, such as poverty, hunger, lack of access to quality education, and climate change. Climate change in particular emerges as an existential threat to humankind ? a threat to existence. Climate change now can be evaluated in monetary terms as it incurs financial losses to businesses which may be termed a “Climate Deficit”.

For example, a severe drought in Panama is creating long queues and delays at the Panama Canal, causing shipping disruptions and further highlighting the impact the climate crisis is having on global trade. It is an artificial waterway that connects the Atlantic and the Pacific Ocean and has been a major thoroughfare for international trade for over 100 years. The Panama Canal Authority (ACP) has limited the number of vessels passing through the canal for several dry months due to water scarcity. Restrictions were also imposed on ships’ depth while in the canal, curbing the amount of cargo they could hold. The ongoing drought in the Panama Canal is posing “unprecedented challenges” and has “no historical precedence.” No historical precedence indicates that we are deteriorating nature at an exceptional pace. We are not respecting nature what we must do to bring the synchroneity between our activities and nature.

Sustainable, resilient and long-term international strategies should be devised.

Today, the canal connects nearly 2,000 ports in 170 countries. The top origin and destination countries are the United States, China and Japan. In 2022, over 14,000 transits were completed through the canal by ships carrying more than 291 million long tonnes of cargo.

In recent months, however, traffic through the canal has slowed due to a prolonged drought that has diminished the amount of available water used to fill the canal locks, which require 101,000 cubic meters of water to fill. The water is drawn from the nearby lakes. As a result, wait times for ships arriving at the canal have increased from a matter of hours to several weeks, according to S&P Global. Several private shipping companies have reportedly implemented surcharges for clients moving goods through the canal. The Panama Canal drought crisis highlights the increasingly disruptive impact that the climate crisis is having on global supply chains and finances.

Another pertinent example of climate deficit is the recent floods in Pakistan in 2022. According to Forbes, Pakistan has faced a loss of about $40 Billion due to devastating floods. However, it emits less than one per cent of the world’s planet-warming gases. But Pakistan was made liable to pay such damages at the behest of other nations’ causal development and prosperity.

Sustainable, resilient and long-term international strategies should be devised and implemented with true letter and spirit through grant dialogue among the international community. Compensations must be made to those who are not involved in this endless circle. Human development, progress and prosperity are inevitable for the countries but they must pledge to respect the nature and environment where they perform their jobs.

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