



Under the merciless s

ATHER NAQVI on the problems faced by the people who are exposed to heat in summer

S & Socia

One really has to think twice before stepping out under the merciless sun these days. To earn their daily bread and butter the Laborites have to face yet another wave of this summer's heat. This time it sweeps across the city severely. No one goes unaffected whether it is an employee or a student. The rich and the poor are equally disturbed; but are they? Let us leave this debatable issue for a while and have a glimpse into the today's city life.

The most badly hit of this scorching heatwave are the poor, the indoors and those who do the field work. Khuda Baksh sells sugar-cane juice. He is busy with his work, from head to toe. As he takes a break I, for the sake of starting up a chat, allude to the rising temperatures and this is like touching the right chords. He says that the shade that he has erected to escape the sun rays is met enough to make life any easier. But this pathetic situation is a blessing in disguise for him. He readily admits that

the high temperatures area push to his business. The more the heat, the more people being pulled to his 'Rerhi' (cart). He finds solace in the fact that he and others like him i.e., the

sugarcane juice sellers are in a relatively better condition as, according to him, they place their cart under same shade or tree permanently. The problem is with those, who have to sell their



items while visiting different areas, localities and 'Mohallas.' What an irony! The intense heat in the source of their earning.

signal to go green, says "If the air-conditioner of your car is working it's okay. But due to unusual heat most of the car Ac's

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What to speak of these vendors, even the common man who can afford a motorbike or a car is complaining about the heat.

Arshad Ahmad, a businessman who is anxiously waiting for the

are not properly working 'meanwhile the signal turns green and he presses at the accelerator.

The most badly-hit are those who commute by the public transport. The conductors of

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these vans and buses are bent on stuffing in more and more passengers in their vehicle without giving a minute's attention to the complaints (read curses) of the passengers.

Nabeel Asif is a government servant. When asked about how does he cope up with the heat, he says 'It's safe while one is in office but the moment you go out for some work you are reduced to a poor creature. He recalled that a couple of days back, the rainstorm brought a change but that proved to be a only temporary relief.

The present wave of heat is affecting everybody. Notably the children and those who have to remain under the sun due to the nature of their work. This heat

has caused a number of heart attacks. Many people have fainted as their body's defence system could not put up a resistance. To be at a safer side, doctors suggest to remain indoors during the peak hours of heat that is from 12 am to 4 p.m. They also suggest to take in a lot of water and juices. Dr Amjad Mahmood, an MBBS, says that water and juices must be a part of your breakfast. But one should also know the fact that there is no alternative of water. So clean water is one of the best preventive measures to beat the heat. He also stressed the use of cap and umbrella before going out in the open.

This is one thirty in the afternoon, a nearby school rings the bell and a swarming crowd of little kids and boys and girls rushes out. The first thing they do is to go for drinks. The heat is on. The little boys and girls think it suitable to enjoy a juice or an ice cream or even both before heading home. Amid all this 'pleasant mayhem' I spot a little kid who is licking his melting ice cream with a too obvious innocence on his face. What's your name I ask? 'Jaid' (Zaid) is the reply in his peculiar pronunciation. 'How pleasant is it? I say while being unable to hide my smile. 'Garmee' (heat!!) he shrieks and runs away.

The elder ones are more concerned about the increasing temperatures. Standing at the bus stops or lining up to deposit the bills, they have no option but to wilt in the disgusting heat. But we can find solace in the fact that nothing is permanent but change. So for the change to come, we have to wait for a while.

Even those sturdy horses and donkeys which always look active in their harness appear in a poor condition. The heat has really affected each and every one of the living things in one way or the other. With a break in the previously hot season there is a ray of hope for each one of us. ■