Topic of the week for discussion: 3rd to 9th May 2018

14 of Indian cities figure in World's 20 most polluted cities list: WHO

Topic Introduction

History:

Usually, the people of India mainly depend on agriculture works from the ancient age of the nation. After Indian independent in 1947, human lifestyle was gradually changed and they search for new sources of income to survive.

Indian pollutions can broadly classify into four major types namely Air, Land, Noise and Water Pollution. There are several industries in India which are marked as highly polluting like Aluminum smelter industries, Cement, Chlorine, Copper smelter, Distillery industries, Fertilizer, Iron and Steel, Oil refinery, Petrochemicals, Pharmaceuticals, Pulp and Paper, Thermal power plants and Zinc smelter industries.

Reasons:

The rapid growing industrialization is leading lots of environmental issues by its uncontrolled polluted emission. Other reasons of pollutions in India are the destruction of forests, emissions of vehicles, land degradation due to use of poisonous insecticide for agriculture, shortage of natural resources, rampant burning of wood fuel and many more. Pollution is the main reason to lead lots of disease, health issues and long-term livelihood impact.

Air Pollution: There are some example of harmful elements of air like hydrocarbon gases, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, hydrogen sulfide and some greenhouse gases including carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide, methane and many more. Major reason to increase pollution in the air is industry emissions which increase the percentage of carbon monoxide and many harmful gasses. Vehicles also contribute up to 35% of air pollution in the big cities.

Water Pollution: Most of the Indian big industries produce a large scale of polluted liquid emission which is normally wash out through a canal into river. A recent report describes that around 29,000 million liters of liquid dirt are produced daily in India whenever there have a capacity of 6,000 million liters per day. Directly or indirectly river is the main source of water.

Land pollution in India is due to the poisonous pesticides and fertilizers as well as corrosion. Other main reason of this type of pollution is poor garbage disposal services in both the rural and urban areas of India. It is very common in India to find out a heap of garbage on the Street corners.

Noise pollution is also very common in India due to negligence of government. There have rule in the country to not exceed the normal range (65 decibel) of sound to control the sound pollution. But, no one follow this rule and government also not strict about this. People rampantly use loudspeakers, mikes or any sound system without rules of govt. some other reasons of sound pollution are the noise of industries and vehicles.

WHO Report:

According to Global Urban Air Pollution database released by World Health Organisation (WHO), 14 Indian cities have figured in list of world's 20 most polluted cities in terms of particulate matter PM2.5 levels in 2016.

These 14 cities include Delhi, Varanasi, Kanpur, Faridabad, Gaya, Patna, Agra, Muzaffarpur, Srinagar, Gurgaon, Jaipur, Patiala and Jodhpur. They were followed by Ali Subah Al-Salem (Kuwait) and few cities in China and Mongolia. In terms of PM10 levels, 13 cities in India figured among the 20 most-polluted cities.

The database measured levels of particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) from more than 4,300 cities in 108 countries. It estimates that around 7 million people die every year from exposure to particles in polluted air that penetrate deep into lungs and cardiovascular system.

Waste People Generate: India's urban population of 429 million citizens produce a whopping 62 million tonnes of garbage every year. Out of this, 5.6 million tonnes is the plastic waste, 0.17 million tonnes is the biomedical waste, 7.90 million tonnes is hazardous waste and 15 lakh tonnes is e-waste. India's landfills are bursting at the seams.

Around the word – Where India Stands: Globally, there are around 2,200 waste-to-energy plants, of which the European Union has 445, China has 150 and USA has 86. Despite its burgeoning population, India just has 8.

Usage of waste and methods to recycle:

Unused waste has the potential to generate 439 MW of power from 32,890 TPD (Tons per Day) of combustible waste. To put it in perspective, this much energy is enough to meet the power demand of a union territory like Pondicherry.

Researchers say India pumps around 0.6 tons of plastic waste into the oceans annually. Today science has responded and biodegradable plastics and those that are easier to recycle or repurpose will be important for reducing other waste streams.

Conclusion:

Every day in India, more than 1000 children die from drinking dirty water and it is reported that 80% of the population suffers from pollution-induced diseases and fatalities. The general public, children, tourists, businesses, municipalities, panchayats even animals - everyone is affected by the filth that litters our streets and pollutes our waterways.

It's not just about the way a place looks, mismanaged waste is harmful to our health and the health of our families. The Municipal Solid Waste Management Rules are here to protect us and the environment but unless they are enforced and adhered to they are of little use.

With over one fifth of the world's population residing in India, this has a massive impact on not just our country but our planet. A clean environment should be a basic fundamental right of every living creature but it doesn't just happen, we have to make it happen!

Read further:

https://currentaffairs.gktoday.in/month/current-affairs-may-2018

http://swachhindia.ndtv.com/top-10-things-know-indias-waste-management-woes-6374/

https://pulitzercenter.org/projects/asia-india-pollution-toxic-ecosystem-waste-population-ganges

http://www.indyatour.com/india/environment/indian_pollution.php