

ISSN 0970-7247

THIRD CONCEPT

English Monthly
Annual Subscription Rs. 200

Vol. 31

No. 369

NOVEMBER 2017

Rs. 20.00

- ❖ **2012 Doha Conference on
Climate Change**
- ❖ **Entitlement Issues in MGNREGS**
- ❖ **Development Dynamics
in Arunachal Pradesh**
- ❖ **The Nudge Theory**
- ❖ **Domestic Violence against Women**
- ❖ **Dr. Ambedkar & Water Policies in India**



An International Journal of Ideas

Vol. 31 No. 369 NOVEMBER 2017 Rs. 20. 00

Third Concept aims at providing a platform where a meaningful exchange of ideas can take place among the people of the Third World. The attempt will be to communicate, debate and disseminate information, ideas and alternatives for the resolution of the common problems facing humankind. We welcome contributions from academics, journalists and even from those who may never have published anything before. The only requirement is a concern for and desire to understand and take the issue of our time. Contributions may be descriptive, analytical or theoretical. They may be in the form of original articles, reactions to previous contributions, or even a comment on a prevailing situation. All contributions, neatly typed in double space, may be addressed to:

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Published, Printed and Owned by

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Designed by: Pt. Tejpal

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New Foe!

Environmental pollution, in the form of filthy air and contaminated water, has emerged as humankind's new foe that is killing more people every year than all war, violence or disaster in the world. According to a recently released study by UK-based Lancet medical journal, environmental pollution claimed about nine million deaths in the world in 2015. The study further discloses whopping financial cost, some \$4.6 trillion in annual losses — or about 6.2% of the global economy. Findings of this study puts India on the top of list of individual countries where one out of every four premature deaths in 2015 or some 2.5 million deaths occurred in India, followed by China, with more than 1.8 million deaths. Various other countries like Bangladesh, Pakistan, North Korea, South Sudan and Haiti also see nearly a fifth of their premature deaths caused by pollution.

While pointing out that pollution is a gigantic problem that is not catching people's serious attention because look at scattered bits of the environmental pollution, some experts opine that he estimates of about nine million deaths is just a partial estimate, and the number of people killed by pollution is undoubtedly higher and will be quantified once more research is done and new methods of assessing harmful impacts are developed. Lamentably, the world's poorest fall an easy prey to environmental pollution and experts are unanimous in their assessment that bulk of pollution-related deaths take place in low or middle income developing countries, "where policy makers are chiefly concerned with developing their economies, lifting people out of poverty and building basic infrastructure, and environmental regulations in those countries tend to be weaker, and industries lean on outdated technologies and dirtier fuels. Apart from aerial pollution, water pollution is also assuming serious dimensions. It becomes discernible from the UN statistics that 844 million people in the world – one in ten – do not have clean water, and around 289,000 children under five die every year from diarrhoeal diseases caused by poor water and sanitation and it amounts to almost 800 children per day, or one child every two minutes. Every minute a newborn baby dies from infection caused by a lack of clean water and an unclean environment.

Water pollution presents a grim situation because Planet earth is already faced with water scarcity and pollution of surface and groundwater resources make it more serious because water is a finite resource. According to UN data, about 42% of healthcare facilities in Africa lack access to safe water and nearly half of all people using dirty water live in sub-Saharan Africa, and one-fifth live in Southern Asia. At current rates of progress, everyone in low- and middle-income countries won't have clean water until 2039. Almost all rivers in India are contaminated because of unscientific manner of discharge of domestic, municipal and industrial wastewater into the rivers. According to 2007 study, discharge of untreated sewage is the single most significant factor of pollution of surface and groundwater in India. According to one estimate, between 1991 and 2008, the flow of untreated sewage has doubled from around 12, 000 liters per day to 24, 000 liters per day. There is yawning gap between generation and treatment of domestic wastewater in the country

Some experts opine that the problem is not only that India lacks sufficient treatment capacity but also that the sewage treatment plants that exist do not operate and are not maintained. The bulk of the government-owned sewage treatment plants remain closed most of the time due to improper design or poor maintenance or lack of reliable electricity supply to operate the plants, together with absentee employees and poor management. The wastewater generated in these areas normally percolates into the soil or evaporates. The uncollected wastes accumulate in the urban areas causing unhygienic conditions and releasing pollutants that leach into surface and groundwater. This contributes to deterioration of the water quality. There exists a close proximity between pollution and poverty and controlling pollution is definitely prone to help address many related problems, from climate change to malnutrition because inter- and intra-linkages cannot be ignored. Given the fact that the UN is hosting its first-ever conference on pollution December this year, one can hope that the world body will come out with some tangible solution to keep this new foe at bay.

— BK