

HAZARDS OF POLLUTION
OR
DANGERS OF POLLUTION
OR
MAN AND ENVIRONMENT

**“Certainly, this is duty, not a sin
Cleanliness is next to godliness.”**

–John Wesley

The problem of air, noise and water pollution is assuming serious proportions. Increasing industrialization is playing havoc with the environment. Industrial wasters, smoke and other gases are polluting the air in a big way. Apart from industries, the density of traffic is also contributing to air pollution. The emission of smoke and toxic chemicals have been raising the level of Sulphurs dioxide in the atmosphere. The permissible limits of noise pollution have been exceeded in the cities of Kolkata, Delhi and Mumbai. Air pollution is responsible for respiratory ailments, T.B., skin allergy, eye ailment even cancer and mental retardation of children. Proliferation of chemical industries has accentuated the problem. There are even more dangerous chemicals in use in the country that MIC of the Union Carbide factory at Bhopal.

River waters have been polluted largely because of discharge of untreated industrial wastes and municipal sullage and drainage of pesticides and fertilizers. All these have adversely affected their self-purifying mechanism by destroying their natural aquatic species.

Exhaust from automobiles is a significant source of air pollution. A large number of vehicles emit three to four per cent of carbon monoxide which is dangerous to health. Increase of chemicals in the atmosphere causes acid rains hundreds of miles away. These rains damage the soil, destroy vegetation and aquatic species in river and sea. They also corrode buildings.

The thin layer of ozone in the atmosphere is a form of life-sustaining system. It cuts out ultra-violet rays and allows the heat generating infrared rays

to reach the earth. But due to industrialization and consequent pollution, the rate of depletion of the ozone layer is large. Its inability to absorb ultra-violet rays may lead to “green-house” effect and wide-spread incidence of cancer.

Marine pollution is yet another problem caused by the discharge of sewage and harbor waste in coastal waters. Oil pollution arises from tanker accidents, refinery effluents and oil pipelines. This results in the destruction of marine life and poses a threat to our eco-system.

Nuclear pollution threatens life more than any other pollution today. Accidents can happen in nuclear plants and when these happen, these can be catastrophic for large sections of the people. Nuclear radiation endangers the entire life-support system — plants, vegetation, animals, water, air and human health. Apart from all these pollutions, a serious threat to the globe arises from the pollution of outer space. Space debris has become a reality on account of the litter and garbage of thousands of space objects, dead satellites, spent rockets, motors and nuts and bolts.

The release of gases by rockets has adverse effects. Re-entry of large objects into the atmosphere may also effect radio communication. Thus the ultimate victim of every kind of pollution, directly or indirectly, is man himself. Humanity today stands puzzled. A disaster threatens mankind in the near future. In just a hundred years, air may become unfit for breathing while water may become unfit for human consumption. Scientists today are busy finding out ways and means to fight this terrible hazard of pollution but they have not so far succeeded in their mission.

In the recent past, the Supreme Court of India has taken note of increasing pollution in the country. In several judgments announced by the Court, it has directed the people to see that as far as possible pollution of air water is avoided. Vehicles of all types have been required to conform to certain fixed norms in the matter of the gases being added by these to the air. Similarly factories and other commercial units have also been asked to stick to the anti-pollution norms laid down by the government. Local bodies have been asked to use better hygienic conditions. All these steps are likely to go a long way in fighting out of menace of pollution but a lot remains to be done.