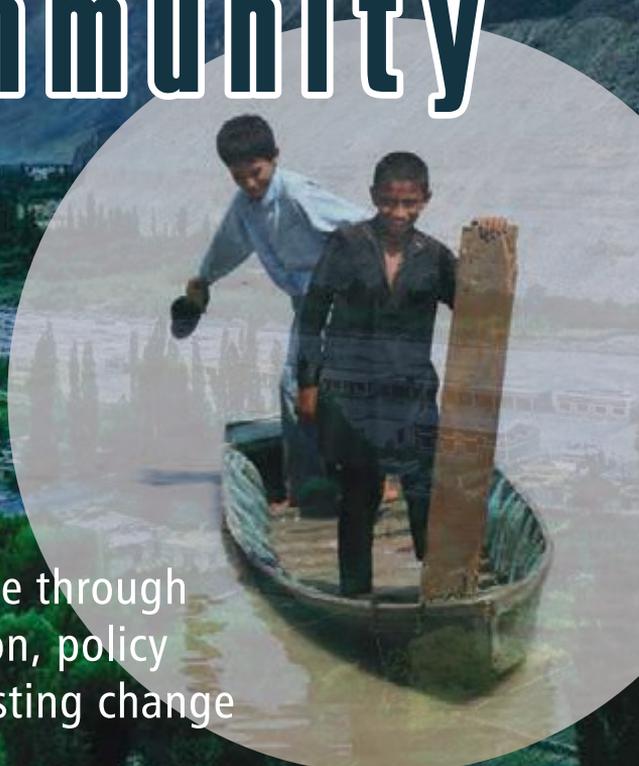


The Story Competition among Inter-University Students

# The Effects of Climate Change on My Village, City and Community



Empowering People through  
Research, innovation, policy  
and practice for lasting change





This document is an output from story competition on climate change. The story competition was organized by PEDTA International with collaboration of IQRA University Islamabad. PEDTA International would like to acknowledge and appreciate the contributions of IQRA University for providing us venue for the event and hosting more than 110 students across Pakistan from 10 different universities. Taking this as an opportunity, we would like to thank all those who participated in the event and shared their valued experiences. PEDTA International pays sincere thanks to our academic mentors and advisers for making this event a success. We highly appreciate the efforts of Dr. Ijaz Hussain, Dr. Mubashir Bhatti, Dr Muhammad Zaman, Mr. Shehzad Qaiser, Ms. Fatima Yameen, Mr. Ramzan Ali and Mr. Nazeer Tabassum. We would also like to pay our gratitude to PEDTA International team for their contributions, especially, Ms Binish Chaudary, Ms Zarfishan Farrukh, Mr. Shaban Ali, Mr. Muntazir Hussain.

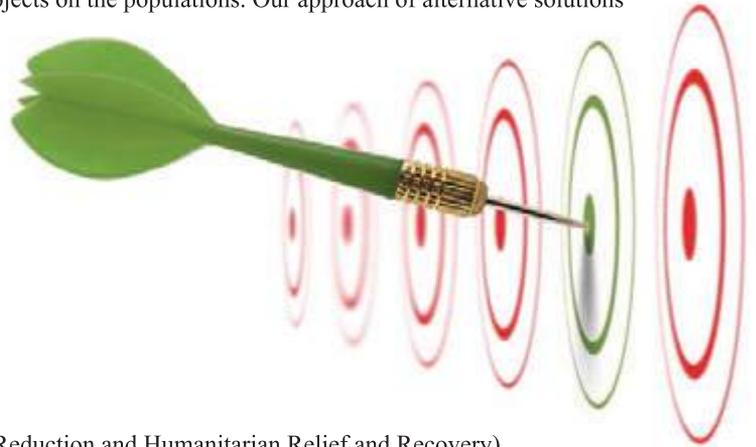
## About PEDA

People Empowering & Development Alternatives (PEDA) is an independent, non-political and non-governmental think tank aiming to providing alternative and innovative solutions to private, non-profit and public institutions on development and humanitarian issues.

## OUR MISSION

**Our mission is to research, innovate and inform policy and practice which lead to poverty reduction, alleviate the suffering and achieve sustainable integrated development.**

PEDA provides technical assistance to public institutions, donors, International Organizations, national civil society, and local grass root communities' networks to leverage the impact of program/projects on the populations. Our approach of alternative solutions towards the issues is based on in-depth problem analysis, research studies, consultation with primary and secondary stakeholders, dialogue among range of stakeholders and promotion of local solutions through new innovations and technology to rate social change and impact on the people lives.

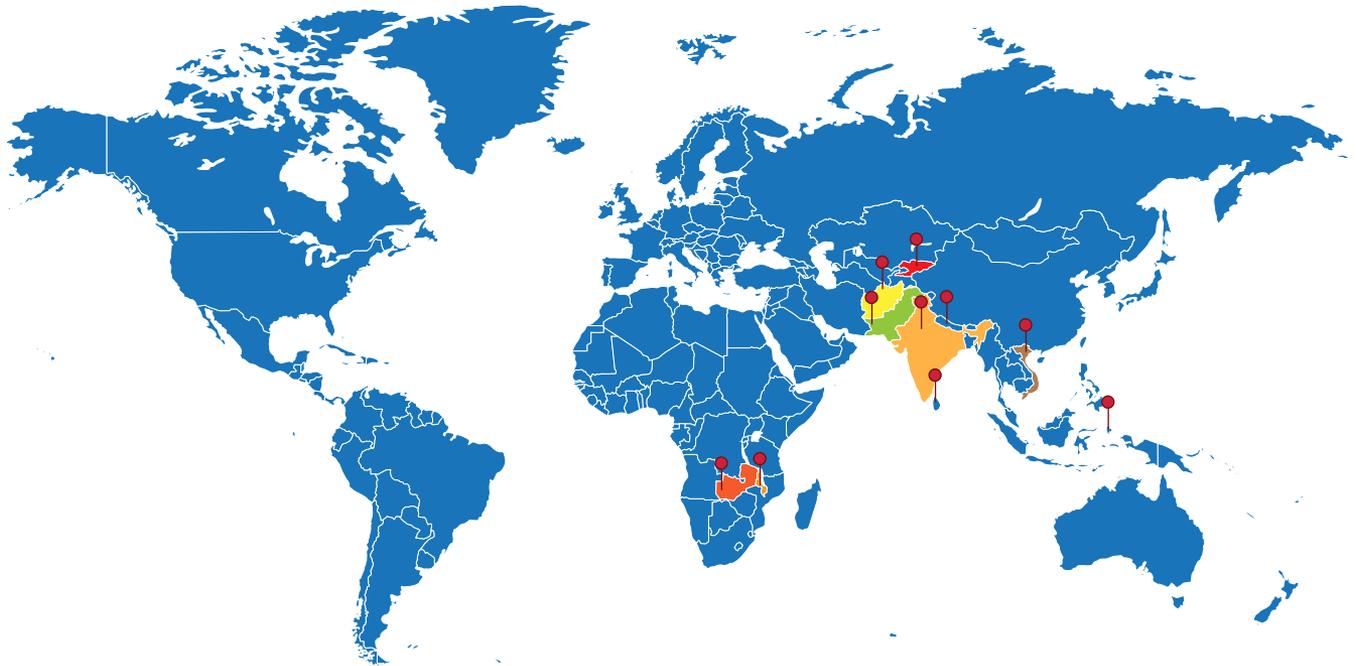


## Thematic Areas

- Environmental Governance (Climate Change, Disaster Risk Reduction and Humanitarian Relief and Recovery)
- Social Protection, Agriculture and Food Security
- Gender, Human Rights and Democratization
- Conflict Management and Peace Building
- Culture, Film and Entertainmen

## Where We Work:

PEDA International is presently working in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Zambia and Malawi and planning to expand our programmes in Nepal, India, Kirgizstan and Azerbaijan.



## Message of Executive Director PED A International

*Mujahid Husain*

Climate change is one of the biggest threats to the human lives and civilization. It increases vulnerability of most countries and have larger impacts on human security. We want to develop and bring together all the brilliant brains across global and Pakistan to address the issues related to climate change. The story contest among the students is an attempt to involve youth in climate change discourse. It is my hope that leaders around the world shall take decisive actions to combat climate change threat in United Nation's Climate Change Summit COP21. The good health of our planet is a national security imperative for all nations. We must join together to combat climate change.

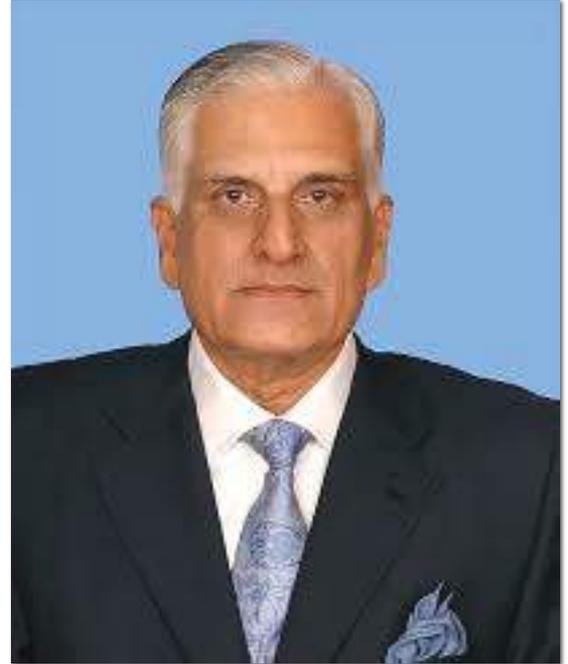


## Message from Mr. Zahid Hamid Minister for Climate Change Government of Pakistan

Ministry of Climate Change is cognizant of the fact that mass awareness on climate change and environmental issues is both crucial and instrumental for sustainable development. Climate Change is one of the most important aspects of environmental governance and it is a top priority for the Ministry to raise awareness of environmental problems among all elements of society, particularly youth.

In doing so, I strongly believe that the participation of youth will be of immense value. I would like to appreciate the efforts of PEDDA International for organising the 'stories contest' to engage youth in the climate change discourse.

Ministry of Climate Change encourages collaboration with civil society organizations to address the issues of climate change and to enhance awareness of the people especially youth regarding adaptation and mitigation aspects of climate change, which have a strong impact on sustainable development.





# Effects of Weather and Environment on our Village

*Maria Akbar*  
Quaid-e-Azam University

I am Maria Akbar and I belong to Gilgit-Baltistan, Northern Areas of Pakistan. This part of Pakistan is blessed with natural beauty and is home of peace and prosperity. Here, I want to narrate a true story, a story of my family that happened just because of environmental changes.

The name of my village is Ghorsay. The beauty of Ghorsay is well known by both the inhabitants of the village and the people living in the vicinity of the village. This valley is situated in between the rivers of Siachen and Hushay. This land was so green and vegetated that the trees were large and laden with fruits, even their branches were long enough to touch the center of the river. People were so connected and in harmony that they used to exchange fruits like apricot, walnut, apple, grapes etc. among each other. People used to throw pebbles on the trees from one side and the fruits will fall on the other side of the river. Everywhere, there was happiness, brotherhood and love. People used to come here from far off places for tourism and some of them got settled here permanently. People from other places used to come here and get attracted by the beauty of the place. Even, the poor people also used to come here and get benefits from the fruits. This valley is also known as Kashmir. There were less facilities for the mobility of the people and they used to travel on foot. On the basis of self-help, people established the only school and a hospital in relatively plain areas for whole of the village community. The beauty and resources of Ghorsay suited to the people of neighboring villages and they started living here. Life was continuing on the pace so were environmental changes. For summers, people have made houses of bricks



and for winters mud houses were built. To deal with the cold, people used to burn woods for heat. With the passage of time, environmental changes keep affecting the climatic conditions and all of sudden flood hit the village and river changed its course towards the plain area where hospital and school was built. My grandfather's home was also flooded along with the livestock and other valuables. Grandfather bought a piece of land with the remaining money and settled a bit far from the river. Everyone in the village was worried and they were left with no other option. With every passing day, water level in river kept rising along with alarming rate of soil erosion. A large portion of Ghorsay was lost. Problems were increasing as the only hospital and school was no more. Children had no option to get education from. Young students then started going to neighboring villages and then teach children when they come back.

It was not an end to the troubles. The wind took the shape of storm which also caused land sliding. Ghorsay was disconnected from other villages and people had to use mountainous routes for mobility. In winters, people installed barrier to the river but in summer it broke down as the water level increases in the season. Everyone was now leaving the village and started settling down in other parts. Grandfather did not give up and he kept trying with the help of other people but all ended up in vein. It was winters and water level in river was down. Grandfather had to visit other village and he took boat. Unfortunately, as per God's will, the boat lost the balance and grandfather got drowned and passed away.

Now, the home was solely responsibility of my father along with his 5 sisters. By doing menial jobs, father earned some money and brought it home. In those days, aunty was pregnant and was soon expecting labour pain. Due to intense labour and hard work, all of sudden labour pain started and she needed to go to hospital. Due to the conditions, she could not be taken to hospital and both mother and child lost their lives. My father was unable to absorb the shock so he decided to migrate to Sakardu and settled there. Here then earthquake of 2005 hit Pakistan from its basis. It was highly destructive and people were left with no option but to get worried. On self-help basis, they decided to move towards life.

We are living in Sakardu and here there are large and huge buildings with a large number of cars for mobility increasing greenhouse gases causing global warming. This also affecting the ozone layer causing it to be ruptured. I am in Islamabad for higher education and here the trends are of industrialization which is polluting environment. Inconsistent environmental changes causing earthquakes and floods in the country making people afraid and fearful. In Sindh, drought hit Thar dessert. And innumerable people have lost their lives due to hot summer in Karachi. The loss of life and valuable was much in Chitral and Gilgit-Baltistan due to

earthquake.

My village that was known as Kashmir is now reduced to a strip and that day is not far when even this sign will be eradicated due to environmental changes.

Mountainous regions are very cold in winters along with unpredictable monsoon rain. This rain increases the water level in dams and dams are encroaching towards the cities around them. The reasons for this is our acts as we have cut the forest, polluted the environment for our personal gains and installed industries and vehicles which increased the dangerous gases in environments. We, with our own hands, have polluted our beloved Pakistan. Due to greenhouse gases, glaciers are melting and increasing water level. We can deal with this catastrophe if we cooperate with one and other and launch collective strategy. Being students, it is our duty to take part in plantation campaigns, dispose trash in dust bins and keep our environment clean.

Higher officials should take UN and other organization on board so that global warming can be curtailed and all countries should devise limits for the use of natural resources for progress and development.

My true story shows that how environmental changes affect the human lives and how they migrated from their places. Don't know how many people like myself have faced the atrocities or may be worse than that. Due to environment, my father has lost his father and sister doesn't know how many people faced the similar consequences. We should contribute as much as we can in security and prosperity of our country. We cannot control natural disasters but surely we can minimize their implications and affects. We should not waste drinkable water; we should plant flowers, trees and other plants, along with reduction in using sprays and other CFCs producing equipment. On national level, we should install solar power plant. Instead of industries, we should install and use hydro powers. May God keep this country safe from natural disasters.



# The days, when our village used to be healthy

**Abeerah Mehreen**  
Punjab College of Commerce

I am a very observant teenager. I live with my parents and siblings in the core of Swabi. Our father feeds us by working on his lands. He grows rice crop in the summer, and we help him with it.

Our whole life is surrounded by greenery. We wake up to the fresh breeze that soothes us inside out. The atmosphere and this heavenly weather is the reason why we live.

It was the summer of 2013 when we had worked really hard in sowing seeds for the upcoming rice crop. We celebrated with the sweetmeat it usually used to be fish from the stream across the mountain, which used to be my mother's specialty, but they stopped coming.

The rich people built factories nearby. We tried to stop them, but we all know that, 'the rich people want what the rich people want.'

And then came the bad time, for us, no rain in rainy season. We waited and waited forever. My mother went to priests and religious scholars for prayers and blessings because if there was no rain, even for another month, the whole crop would die of starvation, as rice needs a lot of water.

My mom tells me about those glorious days in her childhood, when it used to rain at least once in two weeks. When the village used to be healthy. When almost no one in the village used to be sick. When the winter season would prolong for five to six months.

At first, I and my siblings used to think it was some kind of an environmental fairy tale, but time makes you realize and see things clearly. After months of waiting, we felt the long awaited droplets of water falling from the sky. It rained and the wind blew making us happy.

But the happiness was not to last as the rain that we thought was a blessing didn't stop, and ended up becoming a curse for

us. Our whole house, our crops, our whole village drowned and was swept away by the flood.

My conscious cannot help but tell me that it's all our fault that we are going through this. I am not saying it's

personally 'My' fault, but we all humans in general. We love to criticize, yet we would don't stop littering when nobody is looking. Where science has made life so easy for us, it has made our environment a virtual hell.

I go to school in the blazing heat of the sun, thinking about the time, in the near future, when our village will turn into a desert due to this weather. When the glaciers will melt, and make our oceans and seas overflow.

We should stop this, yet we don't. With each passing minute, we observe, we mourn, we criticize and we move on. Instead of stopping, we have learnt to adapt. Adaptation can only take us too far before it gets out of control. We are leaving a worse planet for our kids. I pray to the Creator, to stop this curse upon us, make our weather better. Make our future better.

"Where there is a will, there is a way."





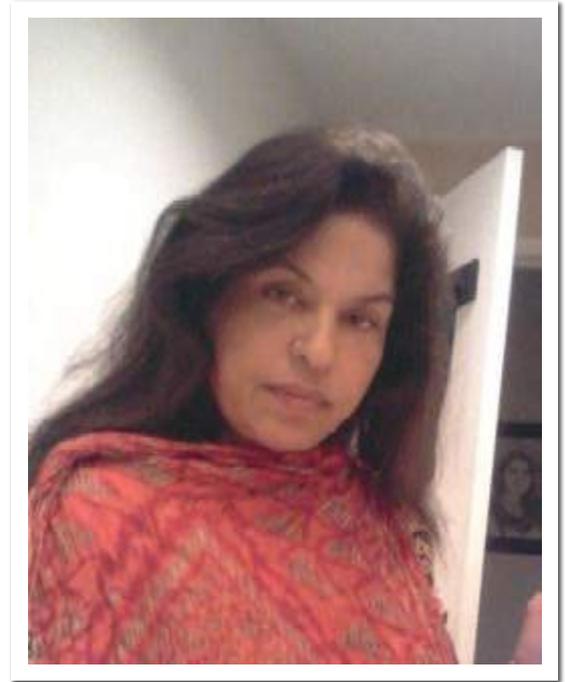
# Karachi needs more trees plantation

*Farhat Mansoob*

*Columbia University*

There is no doubt that Climate change is making a dramatic impact globally. Karachi, being in the coastal region, enjoys a tropical coastal climate with hot summers and mild winters. Thermal extremes have been recently reported all over Pakistan. Its city, Karachi, has been worst hit; particularly due to the phenomenon, which climatologists say makes a 45-degree day feel like 50-degrees. Subsequently, the government has come under fire for neglecting to sound the alarm in advance. In 1995, when I returned to Pakistan after attending a course on environmental education from Glasgow, United Kingdom, I was engaged by the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (Central) to conduct courses on Environmental Education in City Government Schools in Karachi-Central. I was given 178 selected school principals to train as Master Trainers at that time. I engaged some others to help me with the assignment. I successfully trained those principals through classes, brainstorming and workshops. Later on, those principals repeated the training with the teachers of about 600 schools of the City Government. All that training was repetitively supervised and scrutinized by me and my team members besides providing the necessary consultation those principals required. It all seemed great at that time as those principals, with the help of their proficient and hardworking teachers, trained thousands of students for this great task.

In 1995, children from various schools supported by my team, school principals and KMC, planted trees in their schoolyards. The activity, which was served over a significant period of time, involved students from all levels. The participation of the children had encouraged the ownership and admiration of their schools; this had also promoted school attendance and positive learning events. The students



were educated on the importance of trees in environmental conservation e.g. the role of trees in climate change. During the learning sessions, and to enhance learning skills through activities and fun based themes, the children compiled songs and poems. . Teachers and school authorities were supporting the planting of trees as directed by the Karachi Municipal Corporation (KMC). Getting the children to participate in hands on experience is a highly motivating factor and thousands of trees were planted and nurtured by the school authorities and students themselves.

However, quite recently calamity struck Karachi. Citizens had been compelled to drink salty and polluted water provided by tankers, and face subsequent waterborne diseases. Many areas

in Karachi confronted water shortages, particularly flats and slums, due to the apathy of the same KMC who was slumbering and showing no interest in arranging more water for the city where the population had risen to a frightening level. This catastrophe shattered the whole plantation program because the central city where that entire plantation occurred was the most affected area due to water shortage. The City Government schools were again the most neglected areas for the authorities and as plants require water for growth the man-made drought devastated all the efforts and progress that our team had built over a period of time. I was shocked to observe that all the

greenery planted by the enthusiastic and wholehearted children were nowhere to be seen in any of the designated schools in virtually no time.



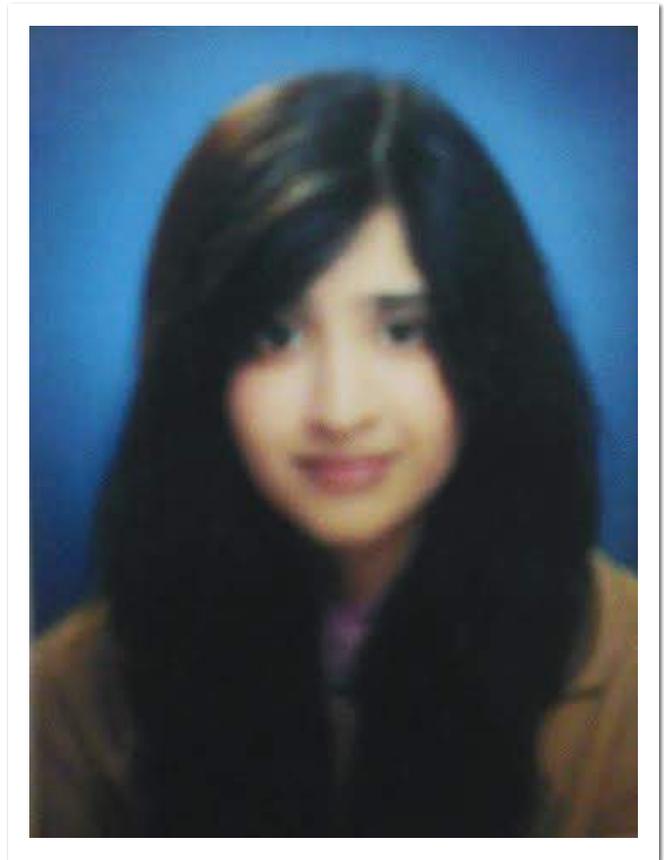


# Migratory birds are no longer coming to our village

*Sadia Amir*  
*Quaid-e-Azam University*

It was just last week when the rain wouldn't stop. It was the time of wheat cultivation in my native arid village in the north of Punjab. For the past few years such sudden unexpected environmental interventions had become quite frequent. People have now become accustomed to it and have left their fate in the hands of climate change. My family had to ultimately cultivate wheat when it rained, and now we probably won't get the same yield. Crops being ruined by external elements have become a routine. Agriculture is a gamble in my region. The lakes and ponds that I had grown up looking at have all dried up. The fruit that used to come with the spring now sometimes appear twice because of false weather change signals. The course of Nature is also decided by these environmental changes, many different migratory birds that I used to see in my childhood are no longer visible. The characteristics of different seasons in Pakistan that poets once romanticized are now only going to be available to our future generations in history books. And this is the count so far, don't know how much more of these nature's wonders would just vanish.

These are the things that have vanished in the 24 years of my life. It makes me sad to imagine, how much more of it will disappear. So while I can, I want to imprint every image in my memory somewhere, so not only would I be able to live it again. But also because maybe the count of every lost feature would make us more conscious about our injustices towards nature. And maybe, just maybe, there will be an end to this.





# People are building their homes' yards with cements not with plantation

*Kanza Javed*  
Quaid-e-Azam University

It was a sunny day and all the people were busy in their chores. It was the area of Pindigeb. Suddenly, thick black clouds overwhelmed the whole sky, and it started raining heavily. The rain continued for about three days and as there were many fields around, these areas were filled with water. The excess of water caused much erosion and destruction especially to the trees.

Many of the people in the area were helpless. Malik Asghar was one of them and was very worried as it was the time when the wheat had ripened. The heavy rain had destroyed the crop and made people homeless. Malik sb contacted many people at that time but nothing can compensate with the loss of crop.

The son of Chaudhary Salim was studying in Arid Agriculture University at that time and Malik Asghar contacted him for help. He talked to his friend for the solution of this issue but what could be done as it was raining heavily. The Son of Chaudhary Salim (Hassam) and his friends talked about these calamities. One of his friend said that these calamities are due to our sins, that rain become disaster instead of a blessing. Floods are due to climate changes that are the results of man's own creations, one of his friend said. Ali said that we were blessed with a brain. If Allah put us in problems then He also provided us with solutions. So we had to think over it.

The Next day all of them spoke to their teacher and discussed their apprehensions with him. The teacher told them to go to the Pindigeb and help the people there. These students were studying about environment and climate changes. Hassam talked to his father and told him that he and his friends would come to Pindigeb. After the rain stopped, all of them



met with Malik Asghar. With the help of Malik Asghar, they surveyed the whole area and by providing their knowledge and techniques, they helped the people as well as working in that area to cope with the upcoming floods.

These students went to schools and villages there and created awareness for a tree plantation campaign in the area. People started to build their homes' yards with cements.

Hassam and his friends also guided the people to take preventive measures and not just act when there was a calamity. . He also guided them to seek Allah's help and to abstain from bad deeds as well as bad thoughts, because man is judged by his thoughts and ultimately such nations had to suffer a-lot.



# My name is Pakistan

*Sidra Insar*

*Quaid-e-Azam University*

(I live in a city and I am not well aware of the problems that the people normally face in villages.)

Hello! My name is Pakistan and I was born on 14 August, 1947. Everyone suffered a lot, though they were Muslims and Hindus. Many people became homeless and they had to leave their beloved homelands where they were living for centuries and from where their ancestors belonged.

Everyone was very happy and enthusiastic at the creation of a separate homeland. Birds were singing songs, animals were grazing in the fields and everything seemed so charming. Because Pakistan is basically an agricultural country, farmers play an important role in its economic development. They were also happy for playing their part in the creation and development of the country.

As time went on, the ozone layer started depleting, and the temperature of the earth went up by only one degree centigrade. Yes! Only one degree centigrade and it went unnoticed by the world for a long time until and unless we started facing the adverse effects of environment and climate changes.

Glaciers started melting and Pakistan started to face a lot of problems. Floods occurred in 2013, 2010, and 2007. In 2010, a large part of Pakistan was in water, many people became homeless and the economy of Pakistan was affected so badly that we have not overcome it yet.

In Thar, a devastating situation was seen and that was the drought. Droughts are the thing that leads to desertification. And in overall areas of Pakistan many people suffer the adverse effects of droughts. Many people die each year in which mostly are the children.

Now I am going to share a story which goes back to 2010.

There was a farmer and he was so excited to harvest his crops that he slept peacefully. Next day when he woke up, he saw that everything was ruined, his crops were submerged in water, his house was destroyed and livestock had also drowned he was devastated and he could not understand who was to blame? Nature, Acid rain, pollution, industries or what?? He moved to some stable place for a short while and then came back when the situation was better. He went bare foot and without having any livestock or money but now due to the course of time he has settled himself again. This what we call adaptation, and exceeded levels of adaptation leads to resilience and people become more adapted towards the hazards of nature. Hazards are natural and nothing can stop it. Just what we need is awareness and adaptation. Awareness causes people to be aware of the hazards and upcoming disasters of nature while adaptation helps in progression and makes us mentally strong. Pakistan is facing a lot of problems and people have a little awareness about climate changes and its effect on the environment. Political issues are basically linked but now a ministry of climate changes has been formed and the government is serious about it now. Concluding with it, awareness should be provided to people.





# The Chitral I know echoes From Laughters to Cries

*Talal Haider*  
*Quaid-e-Azam University*

As I sit in my lounge sipping a cup of hot coffee, and watching rain drops trickle down the window like white pearls, I cannot help but wonder, and marvel at the different shades of Mother Nature. The very rain strikes a charming scene as if a young Beethoven is lost in composing a musical masterpiece. However, this rain strikes a different note in Chitral, more like a deaf Beethoven venting out his anger towards the heavens and ends up destroying the 'ivories'. Ah! The irony, I am from Chitral too. It is scary to watch the TV from Chitral and not just because of frightening thunder storms and lashing rain or the unstoppable surge of water gushing through the streets or even seeing the water cut through mud, bricks and metal. It is as unnerving to see the aftermath of the square kilometers of rubble, piled up bodies of humans and animals alike. It is as unnerving and chilling as watching a man risk his own life for a cow; his bread and butter, watching whole families drown, or the lucky ones who escape but are electrocuted. The sheer scale of the disaster is like a titanic that for once man feels humbled by the might of Mother Nature.

Centuries of technological research, impressive machinery, the best minds in the world, the most powerful computers in the world—all stand still, like some rowdy students waiting to be disciplined by the headmaster.

The Mighty Hindu Kush mountains, my beautiful people of Chitral, they withstood every challenge. They survived Alexander the Great, they survived the Mongol invasions, they even survived the world wars. But today, they look so helpless. A disaster brought upon them by man himself.

A result of our complacency and taking nature gifts for granted, she for once has stepped down from the heavens to

teach us a lesson.

What better lesson than giving us a 'Clean Slate'.

Now it is up to us to make the most of this opportunity. Together man and nature, we must strive to build a better world, a more peaceful place, where man and nature not only coexist, but grow and thrive together.

The Chitral on TV is not the Chitral I

know. The Chitral I know is a piece of heaven on earth, the Chitral on TV is a piece of hell on earth. The Chitral I know echoes of laughter, the Chitral on TV is a place of cries. The Chitral I know is full of colors, the Chitral on TV is full of red, the Chitral I know is flowing with sweet rivers, the Chitral on TV is flowing with blood, The Chitral I know is full of life, and the Chitral on TV is full of death.

Our relentless imperialist approach towards nature has driven us into a bottomless pit. We are pitted against a direct winner; Nature. But like a benevolent mother, she has overlooked our disobedience. But, she might change her mind. We must change our actions for where the mighty dissonance failed, we are bound to fail. There is but one way only to succeed.





# Our modern lifestyle contributing to climate change

*Momel Zoon*

*International Islamic University Islamabad*

Climate change is a global issue which is affecting the whole world. As climate change is gradual its effects take some time to be noticed. . In my story I'm going to tell you about a village named Gehl Tain in which there were almost 50 mud houses. Every household was self reliant. . There were almost 10-15 goats, 1-2 buffaloes and 5-8 cattle (Cows, Bulls) in every household. As there was plenty of water and a sufficient rainfall pattern there were also many pastures and a widespread forest which sustained the life of domestic animals and wildlife as well. Due to lush greenbelts domestic poultry was in plenty. There was also a huge variety of birds locally known as Koyal, Dodh shaker, tetar, totar tessa etc the Forest was home to foxes, lions, tigers, monals, klij pheasant (Ban kukker) many other animals and birds as well. All these assets were definitely contributing towards the prosperity of local inhabitants.

Agriculture, along with the livestock assets, was the major source of livelihood and earnings for the villagers while hunting of some wildlife species was also supporting their lives. About 70% cultivated land was used for the cultivation of rice crops (due to plenty of water). Crops and vegetables were cultivated locally. In fact, every piece of land was cultivated. There was a variety of fruit trees which included apricot, fig, walnuts, pear, apples, and plums.

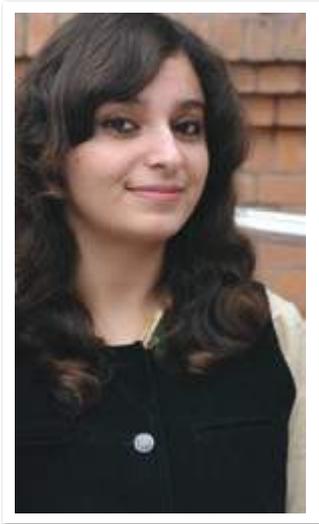
Pure milk, butter, cheese, yogurt was the most nutritious food available in the village. Local vegetables and crops were rich in nutrition which fulfilled the nutritious needs of villagers. Villagers were not connected to the market because of self-reliance. It rained enough in a month to support the eco system and a lot of natural springs and running streams were to be found. Due to the availability of enough water, villagers were able to rear a range of livestock, domestic poultry and to

grow different crops and vegetables for their daily needs and nutrition. In winter, there was about 2-5 feet of snowfall which helped maintain the underground water level and fertility of land due to which production increased.

The story now. Presently, there are almost 100 cemented houses. We can observe a range of development in communication, infrastructure and housing but along with the development the climate has changed too. Now we

can't see the old and rich economic, social and cultural ties and structures because everything has been changed with the climate. The fields are without crops. There are no pastures lands. Livestock and domestic poultry have been reduced badly. Only approximately 9 households in the village have still some of their livestock while the other households have lost all their livestock. About 80% of natural springs and running streams have disappeared. There is no source of water except 3 limited springs in the village and now all households are depending on only these three springs of water. Wildlife has vanished because of devastating deforestation. Even the local birds have disappeared. Due to the loss of local livelihood resources every man of the village has left to earn for his family. Because of this predicament there has been a significant rise in poverty and a loss in local production.

The pattern of rain changed too. Rain in March is extreme, and it's like a sudden cloud burst due to which a number of issues have appeared. Due to the uneven and heavy spells of rain land sliding



Soil erosion and flash floods are more common. As livestock, wildlife and agriculture are on the decline, villagers are now totally connected to the market for their daily needs. Now there is not a single field of rice crop in the whole village. There is no snowfall in winter, and the climate has totally changed.

Gender perspective of the village has also been affected. Almost all the men of the village have left their families and have gone to other cities to earn their livelihoods. Women

are alone and the burden of work has increased for them. We can observe the effect of inadequate nutrition especially in women and children because of unavailability of domestic poultry, meat and vegetables and dairy products. Definitely everything is changed in the village due to climate change.



# Modern Technology really owes an apology to ecology

*Muhammad Nasir*

*Institute of Management Sciences, Peshawar*



Climate is changing with a rapid pace for over the last decade and world has seen a significant increase in rising temperatures recently. This climate change has wide implications upon the prevalent order of rain and crops.

In my village wheat, chickpeas, maize, millet and brassica are sown and are cultivated to serve as food for the whole year. Changing climate has changed the order of rain for the last few years which in turn affects the perfect timing to sow the seeds. The poor start gives a weak foundation to growth of crops as lands here are totally rain dependent with no provisions for irrigation. The irregular rainfall patterns have adversely affected the crops as for the last four years; storms have destroyed standing crops that were waiting to be reaped. In fact, many people were forced to instead retrieve their

crops from the ground as nature had wreaked havoc upon their livelihood.

The period of winter has contracted which has caused variations in sowing of chickpea seeds. They are sown as farmers see it perfect to sow these seeds and when rain is immensely expected. We are completely rain dependent and when it does not rain as expected then it does hit us really hard. We have to work really hard to pick each single seed to somehow pass the current year.

Another aspect is that stormy rain has prevailed in summer and winter (where it would rain steadily without any breeze of air). These stormy rains shatter the mud made rooms and walls of houses almost every year now as it has been a routine for the last few years leaving us homeless. My own home has been a part of this year's devastation where rain left our wall shattered from all sides a week ago.

We are at the mercy of Allah when it comes to unexpected heavy stormy rains and hailstorm. We can confront these situations by forestation. Planting trees can have a far reaching positive impact for us as it would help in diminishing temperature to an extent and it is also helpful in reducing the speed of a storm. Another preventive measure is building small dams to store water when it rains and then using it for irrigation. This is all because of global rise in temperature. Modern Technology really owes an apology to ecology.



# We are more exposed now to floods landslides and avalanches

*Khurram Shahzad Ali Khan*

*IQRA University, Islamabad*

The climate change is real and no part of the world is left untouched by its influence. My story concentrates on my village Ghizer district of Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan. Increasing instances of ultimate change has induced natural disasters which are threatening mountainous communities. Rock sliding; landslides, avalanches and earthquakes are some of the major effects of ultimate change.

Firstly, floods happen every year and are the main causes of socio-economic disruption in the area. Important sources for these floods are glaciers and lakes situated at the higher attitude alpine zones. These sources cause flooding as a result of heavy rains, thunder storms and melting snow. Moreover the summer temperature has continued to rise too.

Secondly, livelihood assets are also increasing at risk. The steep topography of the area and the snow and glacier melts in the high mountains and frequent precipitation has exacerbated the threats. Many villages in the upper (single cropping) zones remain isolated for two to three months each year due to landslides, floods, avalanches or some other occurrence.

Gilgit-Baltistan's district is prone to medium to low intensity earthquakes which occur throughout the Karakorum mountain region at frequent interests. Prioritizing long-term vulnerabilities, it hits extreme poverty, urban and forest fires, road accidents, poor quality of houses and public infrastructure, disease outreach and deforestation.

To conclude, the ultimate change is affecting the livelihood of people in their life. However, people in the district of Ghizer should not only be aware about the mitigation measures of the natural calamities, but should also be trained in how to change their livelihood.





# Preservation of our environment is not liberal or conservative challenge, it's a common sense

*Akhlaq Ahmad Ali*  
Quaid-e-Azam University

A few decades ago, there was a village near the mountains, in the valley. There was greenery everywhere, farms all around, trees in abundance, near and over the mountains. People of that village lived in harmony with nature and happily. They would grow their own food and were sufficient.

Then came some foreigners with their modern technology and mesmerizing vehicles and machinery. They impressed everyone in that village with their fancy and luxurious lifestyle. The villagers were impressed and envied them because they had to work all the day in their fields to grow food whereas the foreigners would use the machinery to do so. The foreigners proposed to set up that machinery in their village for them and make factories and industries. The villagers agreed happily as they would get a luxurious life and houses made of bricks instead of mud, so they began to industrialize the village.

The villagers were happy as for before they would work all day for living whereas now they were free of all that.

As the time passed, the village turned into a modern industrial state. They were happy because they were not getting tired at work and they would move, really fast now from one place to another through vehicles.

The villagers didn't think of the consequences of this luxurious and non-tiring life. And then, when the village fully turned into an industrial state, the consequences appeared. Now, with so much carbon emissions from the vehicles, factories and industries, the environment became polluted. The ozone depletion occurred. The villagers were now astonished to realize the consequences their deteriorating health. Now they



were suffering from cataracts, immune inhalation, skin deterioration and cancer. They didn't know what to do now as they were ignorant and didn't know the reason behind it. Global warming also caused by the harmful emissions, contributed to their problems. And with deteriorating health, the floods also appeared because of it. Now they were in real problem. The flood destroyed their whole village and caused devastation everywhere.

And so in a short period of time, the whole village along with community vanished from the face of the earth, all because of their desire for a luxurious life.

The conclusion of this short story is not that we should not use technological development but that we should use everything carefully and think about the consequences of everything that we do and wish for. We should use vehicles, but first we should ensure regular maintenance so that it doesn't cause huge carbon

emission problems.

Take the example of Pakistan, ninety percent of our vehicles are not fit to run on the roads but people don't. And when they realize, unfortunately it will be too late. Same is the case of factories and industries too, their machinery is worn out, so somebody should take notice.

“Preservation of our environment is not liberal or conservative challenge, it's a common sense.”

Lan Somer says, “The environment is in us not outside us, the trees are our lungs, and rivers our blood stream and what you do with your environment ultimately you do with yourself.” cutting plants, forests and using the vehicles which polluted the environment.



# My story is about the climate change in Peshawar, and its effects

*M. Nabeel Ahmed Khattak*  
Quaid-e-Azam University

I have been living in Peshawar for the last ten to twelve years, and I have faced and also noticed the climate change and its negative impact on Peshawar, as well as on other parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa too. In previous decades I faced the flood problems, recently the earthquake disaster, and these all are the effect of climate change.

Now the main issue of Peshawar, in environmental point of view is pollution, such as noise pollution and air pollution. If I elaborate, I could include the industrial or social environment, and I might not be wrong. Because the changing environment is the main headache of Peshawar in this regards. In older times there were no vehicles, no such industries and a reduced pollution. Climate change leads towards flood disaster. In flood disasters my friends and some of our relatives in Charsada suffered continuously- they lost their houses, their pet animals and also lost valuable crops.

Once I visited my home village in Karak. It was 3 o'clock on a summer afternoon when I came outside. After half an hour I fell down and my condition was unconscious. I was taken to the hospital for heat exhaustion and also I could see that animals were also suffering from the heat too. This is all an effect of climate change. My view regarding climate change and its effect on society is not so good, because everywhere in the world, every country suffers when climate changes take place such as in Canada. Also if we take the examples of India, Japan and sandy storms in North America, these disasters were due to the climate change there. But if we take examples of Pakistan, most of the contributors to climate change are manmade as people are changing the climate, by cutting plants, forests and using the vehicles which polluted



the environment.



# The villagers' coup

*Hamza bin Mazhar*

*Army Public Schools and Colleges System  
Westridge Branch*

Vandalism and the destruction of public and private property had become common in our village since a new landlord with an extensive lust and desire for money and power came there. Our village was a minor heaven with an immense amount of crude oil just below a few feet. It did not take much time before he had a work station erected. The drilling of the ground was a rather annoying noise but little could the villagers do against a man with much more resources than them. They were left hopeless when the drilling and piercing deprived them of sleep causing insomnia. Soon, the landlord started dumping the chemical waste in our pure water lake exterminating its resources. The lake once held the most beautiful species of aquatic organisms which were now washed upon the shore like lost voyagers. He was uncontrollable and the effect of change in climate was profound. . People started dying and epidemics spread out of our village into our surroundings. The smoke from the refinery had a direct effect on the villagers' health. Reports came that people were suffering from headaches, anxiety, stress and innumerable kind of disorders. Many people tried to stand up against the landlord but his influence on the local Chiefs made it hard. Although it was difficult but many people were confident they could succeed. The landlord was now emitting more carbon dioxide through his activities and the temperature was up to an intolerable level. The heat waves wiped our village off our cash crops and local plantations and resulted in even worse condition of our village. The forests were cut and burnt for further increasing of his refinery size.

The villagers' coup e dat was well organized and the

industry was soon demolished but the impact of this lasted for a long time. It took a long time for the village to recover from the damage that cost the lives of hundreds of villagers.



Trees were planted, water was purified manually, and public transportation was encouraged instead of individual transportation. Further steps were taken to prevent this hazard in the future. For example the villagers were presented with the opportunity to get awareness about the climate change and its effects.

As one of the villagers said “We should promote the use of public transport and stop using of personal cars. In this way, I believe we can achieve this if we think globally instead of personally. I believe harmony between humans and nature will return if we stop these changes”.

# Effects of climate change in Gilgit-Baltistan

*Iftikhar Hussain*  
IQRA University, Islamabad

In Gilgit-Baltistan climate change has a potential impact on agriculture. There has been a direct influence of climate factors on the productivity of agricultural products. Fluctuations in climate variables such as temperature and precipitation make the farmers activities under the risky environment, resulting in variation in farmers' income. It is an ecologically fragile region characterized by extreme of altitudes that range from 2000 m to over 8000 m including K2, the second highest peak in the world. The region is significantly impacted by global warming and climate change, which affects natural environment and subsequently the lives of the locals.

The Gilgit-Baltistan area is under cultivation. The climate change and its impact are becoming increasingly evident in Pakistan, especially in the mountainous regions. The mountain area agriculture is relatively unstable and low in productiveness.

Gilgit-Baltistan furthermore, is situated in the extreme north of the country and the region is connected to the rest of the country by only ground route named the Karakorum highway, which is often blocked due to land sliding. Due to land sliding people have to face lots of difficulties and the conditions become worse for them, because of the blockage of the main route from which the goods like food items and others necessities items are transported. The management there is also very slow, and they take months to clear the roads and free them for transportation.

Another thing that makes the life of people in Gilgit-Baltistan worse and miserable is having no gas pipeline over there. People have to cut the trees to use them for cooking and to keep themselves warm.





# The recent climate changes have a disastrous impact on the wildlife in Gilgit Baltistan

*Abdullah Wahid*  
Quaid-e-Azam University

Jewel, the snow leopard was on her way to recovery after losing three of her cubs. Due to the decrease in the snowfall which was a direct result of all deforestation by men who lived near here. Jewel, shocked by sudden demise of her cubs was determined to find the cause of it. Moving down the mountain, she observed a transparent bag. This bag which was left back by the humans had choked Anna, her youngest cub to death. She stood there for a while and then took the plastic bag and buried it.

Further down the river, a strange smell caught her attention. This river water was polluted by the factory which was built there to process wood from the forest. This river water poisoned Phill, Jewel's second cub. Knowing that she cannot do anything to divert that river away from other animals. She continued down the path and suddenly a bright yellow object got her attention. A huge machine was paving way for humans to move objects across the river. This machine had accidentally crushed Max, Jewel's eldest cub to death. . Furious and angry, Jewel charged on the driver of the machine and killed him, and roared as if she was telling them that they are destroying her environment. Suddenly gunshots were heard and a moment later Jewel's body was flowing down the polluted river.

I am a resident of Gilgit-Baltistan in the North of Pakistan. A trekker and camper, I am also fond of the wildlife of Pakistan especially the Northern Areas. The recent changes in climate have had a disastrous impact on the wildlife of Pakistan in general, and Gilgit-Baltistan in particular, due to the huge glaciers in the region on which the wildlife depends very much. Until something is done to counter this climate

changes, many endangered species are at sever risk of becoming extinct.





# Climate change has never been just an environmental issue. We need to look it with broader canvas and think out of the box

*Syeda Gulrukh Hameed*  
International Islamic University Islamabad



Kashmir is known as heaven on earth with its bracing climate and scenic beauty. Fertile, green and Scenic Mountainous valleys are characteristics of my home town district Bagh (Pakistan administered Kashmir PAK). My native village Hullar is a lush green, densely covered by tress with pretty appealing view of Bagh city along natural stream (locally known Mahal).

My village was blessed with countless number of springs, fresh and healthy drinking water was overwhelmingly available. Water flow from springs was creating melodious sound, birds, and wildlife numbers of species were seen along flowing water. Climate change has never been just an environmental issue. We need to look it with broader canvas and think out of the box.

Unfortunately now a days springs could be rarely found, birds more than 90% species perished and wildlife migrated to high mountainous or jungles. Number of disputes has been noticed in the village just because of water scarcity. It's quite alarming that now springs are fully protected and being locked by the some of the community members. Now natural springs are individual's property no more public. This is not only against the law of nature but our indigenous practices and values as well.

My maternal grandmother is kind enough to narrate the decades old evolving process around environment, weather patterns and mega shift in climate. She referred that around 20 years back our village was receiving heavy snowfall annually, which was great source to enrich the ground water. Round the year considerable number of population getting fresh water through multiple natural springs. She described that now situation is absolutely changed, huge number of

springs dried up. Few springs which still sustained are fully protected, each drop of water stored in water tanks and distributed through water supply schemes. Therefore pretty beautifully birds and wildlife are part of history for my age fellows and Youngsters.

The dry weather has also affected the areas which are famous for rains and snowfall in winter. The intensity of the dryness has even been witnessed on high mountainous areas which used to be covered with many feet high snow in the beginning of autumn in the past. Hilly areas are experiencing dry spell of weather. We see less snowfall and sometimes no snowfall throughout the winter. The peaks of Lass Danna, Toli Peer, and Ganga Choti in Bagh District which are located at high altitude are still waiting for snowfall. While more variable rainfall levels raise the risk of failed crop years. Extremely hot and dry

weather, during coming years can be foreseen.

Climate change has never been just an environmental issue. We need to look it with broader canvas and think out of the box. As climate is rapidly changing and we have to change, if we wish to sustain the humanity and other species on this planet.

**Now natural springs are individual's property no more public. This is not only against the law of nature but our indigenous practices and values as well.**

**Climate change has never been just an environmental issue. We need to look it with broader canvas and think out of the box**



# Save Nature, Save Yourself

***Khadim Hussain***

*Quaid-e-Azam University*

Paari is a small mountainous village of Gilgit-Baltistan characterized by steep slopes, dissected by the rivers and streams. Farming communities comprise a high percentage of low income households, solely reliant on natural resources and agriculture.

There is a decreasing frequency but increasing intensity of rainfall in the summer while there is a delay or complete absence of rainfall in winter. . The mountainous regions suffer from high onslaughts of natural disasters such as floods, landslides, hailstorms, earthquakes and prolonged drought. When August was coming to an end the abruptly high temperature rose to an extent that the ice sticking to the hills started melting. It was the highest recorded temperature ever noticed. Even then, people were not sure about any sudden natural calamity.

On the other hand, the crops were ready to be harvested. Particularly, it was the harvesting time of wheat. Since, Paari is famous for its apple throughout Gilgit-Baltistan. Countless apple trees were furnished with golden apples. It was visible that everyone was expecting for an extra-ordinary outcome. It was an afternoon, when the blue sky was adorned with clouds. In no time, it started slight raining. People took it easy but with the passage of time, it adopted the shape of a torrentially heavy rainfall. It was so powerful and aggressive that it destroyed the fields of wheat and maize badly. On the other hand, clay made houses became its victim. Rain water reached inside homes due to ceiling leakages. Villagers spent the whole night under the sky.

It was midnight when electricity disappeared after the failure of the main transformer. This incident enhanced the chaos and fear among the villagers. In such a critical situation, the youth proved to be devoted volunteers. They approached the

most affected areas to take out disabled and old people. In the morning, people felt the intensity of the danger from the horrible flood across hill. It abolished all houses on its way leaving a path of destruction in its way. It changed plain fertile fields into



rough barren heaps of land. Countless fruit trees vanished under the flood. Above all, it demolished the fundamental infrastructure like roads, hospitals, electricity supplies and clean water reservoirs.

Rainfall reduced the abodes of cattle into heaps of mud. Poultry farms suffered immensely. The death of cattle and wildlife could bring forth several infectious diseases. Livestock, agriculture, and wildlife suffered causing great economical loss.

Villagers migrated to the neighboring village. Since Paari, is isolated and away from other regions. A bridge connected its inhabitants to the outer world as indeed this was the lifeline for their survival. Villagers had covered hardly some of the distance, when the bad news of the bridge spread like fire. This news shocked the villagers and some even fainted at the news. Once again, the youth sought an alternate way to take

people across river by using chair-lifts.

Meanwhile, rescue teams reached at the spot and took villagers to the refugee-camp setup by local government bodies.

This calamity demolished the villagers' hopes. No clean water, no stock of food left behind but only desolation and destruction. After an inspection, it was reported that it would cost four crore to rehabilitate villagers.

In remote areas, weather forecasting centers are key to avoiding any natural calamity. All the primary infrastructure

should be consolidated. Awareness events including (seminars, speeches and debates) should be conducted to unveil the hazardous factors, causing pollution of environment.

Global and local organizations can launch an organized movement named as "Save Nature, Save Yourself".



# One Tree at a Time

**Ahmed Shaheryar Ejaz**

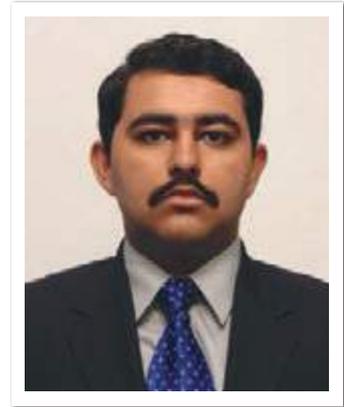
*IQRA University*

My most clear memory of climate change is that of my father's own activism. One year ago he took me with him to our native Quetta from Islamabad, a journey of 1,200 km all the way to just plant a tree. We went by train and the tree sapling travelled with us in a clay pot. Carrying it from station to station and train to platform and then back was a chore- my chore- it was hard heavy work and finally after a few hours of it I asked my Dad why? I wanted to know why he insisted on this sapling keeping us company. He looked at me like the wise at the foolish and began his explanation. He explained that the climate of the world was changing but most importantly Quetta was getting warmer and it no longer snowed there. This baffled me. After all, what did planting a tree have to do with snowfall?

Father informed me that a man and nature are indivisibly linked and the great quality of mankind is that we can change our environment to suit our needs. Man is inventive and ever seeks to utilize nature for fulfilling his needs. But even though for ages men & nature existed harmoniously, this balance has been lost in the last few decades. In nature nothing goes to waste, but humanity creates such large amounts of leftovers that nature has been unable to cope and now it is changing under this strain. The change is for the worse, he said, the rains either fail or kill, the air is toxic and the land is becoming barren. Old and reliable cycles, no longer exist as they used to. All because of human greed and carelessness.

The magnitude and scale of this problem of climate change that he described compelled me to ask but what can one tree do? "Not much," he said "on its own, "but it can begin to change things. He continued, "if just a few of our daily time was given to planting or watering one plant, then in a year we

could plant thousands. " "Then why even try?" I asked, "if as you say it is mostly the developed world's fault then let them deal with it. " "Climate has no borders" he replied. "Global warming is global but the change and remedy is local. "



But still I insisted 'why should I care, I am just a boy'?

He looked at me wistfully and then made it clear that as a member of the next generation. I would inherit this problem and live to see it for many years. "It's not fair," I said. "Life is not fair," came the reply. "And what if it isn't enough?" I asked, "what if things still don't change?" "Then find another way," he said. "After all necessity is the mother of invention, and there has never been a need greater than this today's need". He then declared that "the cards that a man is dealt with are his fate but how he plays them decides his destiny play yours smartly." He added, "even though we can't stop this natural disaster of climate change, we can stop the human acts that have led us to this point".

We can all stop climate change if we do it one tree at a time. Those were his words. They are an honest advice that I believe we can all benefit from. I am happy to say that we successfully planted that tree have added many to it over the years.



# The story of Swat

*Abdurrahman khan*

*National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences*

I member the stories my grandmother used to tell me about her village. She would say the lands were lush green and there was plenty to eat, but now that same land is covered with factories and cement houses, all due to change in yields that resulted in many villages selling out their lands. As I got older, the visits to my village became less frequent; however the rapid changes the area went through were apparent in the air and in the soil. Smog began to cover the area every morning in a chilling and blinding blanket. The soil turned to dust, and was no longer suitable for plant growth. Many people in the area developed lung and chest problems and the younger generation began to develop deficiencies in calcium, iron and deficiency related diseases. The people of the area by this time had changed professions from humble farmers to factory workers. The area quickly developed into a textile industry where noise pollution become abundant as the health of the people grew poorer. On a family trip to Swat valley we planned to reconnect to our farmer ancestors, and once again breathe in the fresh agricultural air. Along the way we visited a restaurant beside a rapid stream, where we drank tea and enjoyed the local fish. The trip was such a success that two years later we planned to re visit the very same restaurant. When we embarked on our journey again to revisit our favorite places, sadly along the way, we saw devastation that had been caused by the overflowing of the stream (due to glaciers that had melted up high in the mountains). The restaurant along with the nearby houses had been wiped out clean, leaving no sign behind to remind us of the amazing time we had there once. The changes in the environment have grown aggressively in



the last few years. The area where I reside today is proof of that every day. The winters are on the extreme cold side, and the summers are unbearably hot. Even with will alone, the people think these disasters can be overcome, but the sad truth is, some damages are rectifiable and if not confronted now, the disasters to come may be irreversible.



# The drizzling sound of rain in my village

*Asad Ali*  
IQRA University

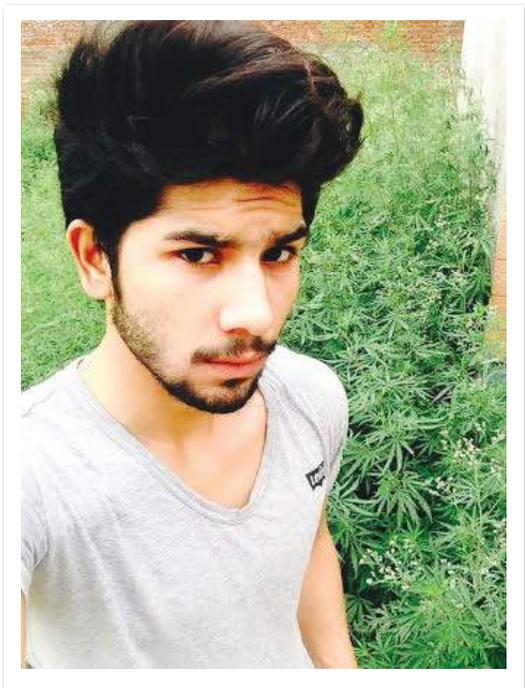
It was a bright sunny morning, and everything seemed perfect. Our village is named after our great kin Shah Kund, known for its greenery and wholesome crops. Shah Kund is located near the Sarai Alamgir. I can all remember 10 years from now this place was as peaceful as it could be, every time I remember the old times it takes me right back to the fields, my favorite place in the world. I could feel the wind whisper in my ears and the drizzling sound of rain made me feel like I was in some heaven on earth.

Sadly, things have changed now immensely. As the years have passed by, industrial development has increased and there are a lot of factories and brick and chemical mills here now, which I believe destroy the ecosystem and influences the climate, especially in nearby areas.

This place felt like a garden full of wheat, rice and vegetables. The fields were so far off that we could almost see them touching the horizon. But as the years have passed by, the rate of rain in this area has increased by 20 percent and this place is now categorized as unsuitable for agriculture and better for industrial factories, but I believe that it is due to these chemical factories that these changes have come about. The climate is influenced by them and if we try, we just might be able to turn the tables.

The other day, the thought occurred to me that we must protect our environment. We should start a new campaign and demand the government to help us. With this in mind, my friends and I set out to spread this message. Our campaign showed people how our country is made for agriculture, how blessed we are and how we must cherish what we have and ask the government for better agriculture security and

resources. The climate affected my village badly, especially the poor whose only way of income was agriculture. I have seen fields go to waste which could fill hundreds of empty stomachs because of natural disasters and my heart aches for these people who spend day and night working hard but for nothing. Now, I believe that my campaign will give the adequate awareness to these people on how to protect themselves from disasters. Together, we can make a change and demand better security, organization and resources. It is our job as a Pakistani citizen to look into these matters and make sure our country gets a maximum chance to develop and to be progressive.





# The story of Nagina

*Khadija Khan*  
Quaid-e-Azam University

This story is about a little girl named Nagina and how her family was affected by the floods back in 2010 in Pakistan. Nagina's house was near a canal. It was made of mud just like any other house of the village. Nagina used to study in 8th grade in primary school of her locality. Her father was a poor farmer who used to work all day long in the fields and her mother was a simple house wife who used to be busy all day in chores. Nagina, when she used to come back from her school, always tried to help her mother and teach little things to her younger siblings.

On one hot day when she was coming back to her house, she saw that the canal water was rising to a dangerous level. The very next day when they were watching television they come to know about the huge flood that was expected to come within a few days. The poor family was very frightened and they were afraid that the flood would destroy their crops, there would be water everywhere and their house would be taken away with the flood.

So the day came when the water level in the canal was spilling over and it was slowly and gradually moving towards their house. Nagina came out of her mud house and saw that the whole village was about to be submerged. Her younger siblings were also frightened when they saw the whole scene. Nagina told them that in her science class they were taught that due to the global warming, frequent floods, drastic climatic changes, and earthquakes would come. On one hand we are utilizing the resources and on the other hand we are disturbing the balance of the earth.

When her father returned, he was in tears; he was unable to

explain what scene he had witnessed. Not only the humans were affected but the whole village, the whole community was affected by the disaster caused by the flood.

By that evening, a maximum number of houses were underwater and there was no shelter, no food to eat. People were scared to death and all hopes and were on Allah.

Nagina's house was somehow intact and they

were thankful to Allah. But her father was so depressed because of the destruction of his crop field.

So, this was a really hard day for Nagina and her family. And the family had no idea that this was all because of the misuse of the resources which cause disequilibrium in the balance of the earth.

Just like her family, there were thousands of families who were affected by the flood.





# The ugly face of development in Islamabad

*Palwasha*  
*Quaid-e-Azam University*

The place where I live is the capital of the country Pakistan, which is Islamabad. I have been listening to stories about the kind of climate Islamabad had some twenty to thirty years ago. In those days, there used to be snow fall at least once a year. I used to be amazed at the idea of snow falling in Islamabad and it almost use to make me laughs. That must have been beautiful but why can't we enjoy that kind of climate now a days? While I never understood the reason behind it in my childhood, I am now witnessing it on daily basis.

I am around twenty years old, and when I was ten or twelve maybe, the summers were not that hot but now the start of summers, so of winters, is changing with every passing year. The summer season is getting longer as compared to its length in precious years. Winter used to give us a little hint of its arrival before the actual winters would come. The people of capital city used to enjoy spring and autumn season as well. But this winter and the last one just arrived in one night. And the next day was shockingly cold. Isn't it weird you may ask? But actually I think no, it's not.

What do you expect from the environment if you cut off or snatch its breath? A person cannot stay alive if you ask him or her not to take a single breath for a minute or two or three maybe. I have a current example of it. The great torture to the nature of Islamabad was done by the roads everywhere including the recent Metro Bus Project. Islamabad was known for its beauty but now it's turning to a hub of roads. For example, the beautiful Kachnar Park in the sector of I/8/4 has been destroyed by the government and they are planning to make roads there too. Every nature spot is being destroyed in order to be modern. They could have provided the facilities to

rural areas, so that they won't migrate to urban areas and the need of roads or I must say more roads will automatically diminish. But yeah if they would follow this rule, where would they develop their business from? In a year or so, we the people of Islamabad, won't see a single green belt. That's the major thing contributing to the climate changes. I must say either we are going to have a full year summer or only a month or two months of winter in the coming years.

People say that only youth can bring a change in a society. I do not agree to it in the perspective of climate changes. Planting a tree is not something that only young people could do.

Everyone can plant a tree or save a tree. You just have to be sensitive about your surroundings. If our government would have been a little sensitivity about our climate, they would never destroy our assets of nature. If we control our inner self by not throwing garbage in streets for example, then it would be an easy task to take care of our natural assets.

All of the European countries are progressing, not because they have been expanding their roads but because they have been taking care of their natural assets. If our country would not destroy our natural assets, we can earn billions of dollars from tourism like Paris. That's like a dream for us.

We can start from today from now on, to stop destroying our nature or at least not waste what we already have.





# Environmental changes are been forcing people to migrate to upper areas due to the increase in temperature

*Saad Abdullah*  
Quaid-e-Azam University

I belong to the village of Haveli Azad Kashmir and it has an extremely pleasant climate and environment. My village has been blessed with the mountains of the Himalayan range, beautiful valleys, fascinating rivers, streams, and stunning scenes. The climate of my village is often cold. I live in Islamabad with my family but we go regularly to our village in summer vacations.

The climate as it has affected the world due to global warming has also affected the climate of our village. The temperature is increasing every year and is disturbing the whole ecosystem. Birds of cold weather are migrating from there and the whole food chain is being disturbed. Environmental changes are been forcing people to migrate to upper areas due to the increase in temperature. It is affecting people both mentally and physically. Common people of my village are dependent upon the scarce quantities of crops that are cultivated in those hilly areas. Climate change has also affected the fertility rate of crops and the production is gradually decreasing as the time is passing by.

As the population is increasing and the area is covered by houses, the flora and fauna of the village is being ruined. Climate is also causing floods, sudden rains that are unpredictable and very destructive in nature. Now the birds are singing no more.

Environment plays an important role in everyone's life it is now globally becoming the first priorities of developed nations and super powers, America and china are taking measures to control or to slow the rate of climate change. It

has affected the global politics so much that a new discipline of environmental politics has been started in many universities.





# Climate effects on border city Parachinar

*Shahyar Haider*  
IQRA University, Islamabad

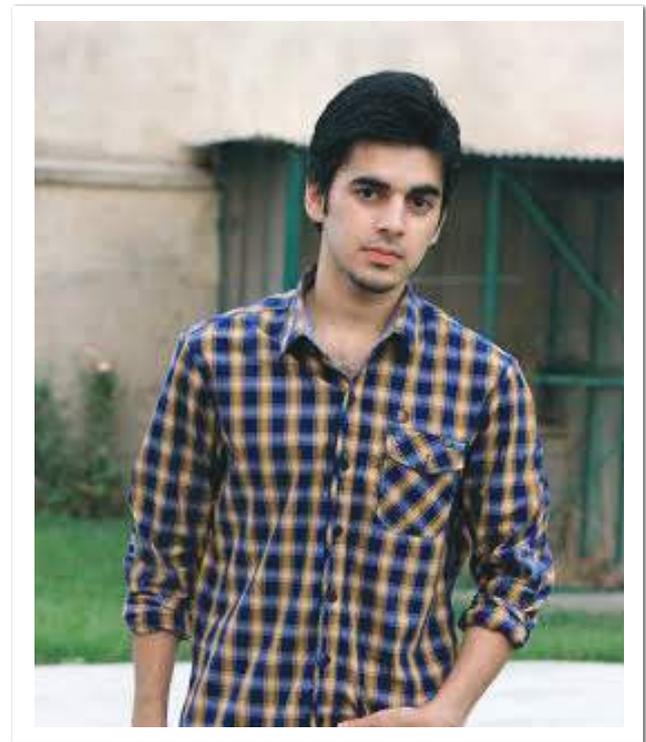
Climate can have both adverse and pleasant effects on the community but it varies greatly depending on the topography and geographical location of the place.

The place where I came from is known as Parachinar, and it is located on the border of Pakistan and Afghanistan and it is known for some of the harshest winters that drop down to -19 degrees. It is deemed as one of the coldest places in Pakistan, and all this extreme weather comes with a price. Our village is geographically located at a place that is free from floods even though the average rain is one of the highest in the country. The high amount of rain however, takes its toll on people and the agriculture sector, as 90% of the people depend on agriculture sector and heavy down pours and unseasonal rain can manipulate how they would spend the rest of the year.

Winter which is harsh and sinister; has a completely different effect. The whole area turns to white and scarcity of water starts to show up as the natural source of water freezes, people cannot grow crops.

The result of temperature falling down below freezing point forces people to rely heavily on wood in order to light up the chimney's in the houses for survival but seven months of harsh winter leads to deforestation in the area which further leads to global warming, people living there have no other choice other than to rely on wood and therefore ,there has been reduction in trees. Of course this leads to land sliding and since it is a mountainous area, people are always under the risk of land sliding, which has the capacity to destroy infrastructure and crop fields.

An effect of climate change varies from person to person depending on his financial capacity. Climate affects mostly



those who are not financially strong. People need to understand that no one has the capacity and ability to completely stay out of the realms of climate but they can manage to minimize the effects of climate by analyzing the nature of the climate and taking adequate steps to counter them.



# The Afghan war has contributed to climate change on border town

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Peshawar

I belong to Parachinar which has a long border with Afghanistan. Parachinar enjoys four seasons a year and the population depends hugely on agriculture. There are many streams and the Kurram river flows with the mountains range. Once when I was child the Kurram River ran dry and there was extreme drought in my home town. People had to bring water from far away and that drought lasted for 3 years.

Generally, the weather remains almost pleasant, during summer weather remains pleasant and in winter the temperature decreases to -12 degrees. A few years ago weather was very pleasant but now the summer is getting warmer and winter colder.

Unexpected rains and snow fall is now occurring and is harming crops. In summer because of increase in temperature, snow and glaciers on mountains are melting and local population whose life depends on agriculture are facing a decrease in water for their crops. Few years ago there were hardly any vehicles in the area and most of the houses were made of mud, but the number of vehicles and use of cement can be seen everywhere. The population grows day by day as a large number of refugees rushed to our area and city because of the war in Afghanistan, This large displacement of refugees put pressure on the surrounding ecosystem. Fields of crops turned into houses and the city expanded. The use of weapons by US army against Taliban in 2001 caused far greater devastation on the environment and the time I was a child when the war started on Afghanistan I still remember how the dust was looking on clear skies of our beautiful home town. Not only was the vegetation and human health affected, but

also the wildlife: Forests were cleared in order to provide wood for building shelters and creating cooking fires. The migrant bird's routes from Siberia to Pakistan are over Parachinar, Kurram Agency. Migrant Bird



such as cranes, snipes and pelicans enter the country via Parachinar, Kurram agency. But due to the war in Kurram agency border areas, and climate change, the migrant bird's entry is decreased. How beautiful were those days when we looked at those migrant birds on skies of my home town, but unfortunately its becoming a dream and some day we will lose all of these migrant birds too. Because every year millions of migratory birds are displaced and die due to environmental changes.

The government should be serious about the environment and with the help of people; the government should take solid action to tackle climate change. The best way is to induct a special chapter on climate in textbooks to increase awareness in children and tell them how to protect our beautiful world from pollution and other harmful activities, which lead to harm in our environment.



# Villages, Climate Change and Development: An Unholy Trinity

*Arslan Waheed*  
Quaid-e-Azam University

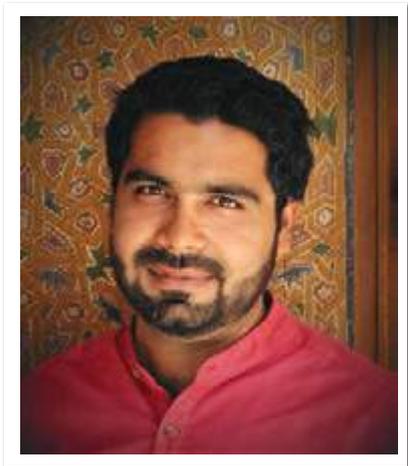
Villages and countryside has always been regarded as the natural sites where humans are living in close contact with nature through the environmental blessings that has been bestowed to us. To what extent it is sustainable and true? With the advancement of human and technological progress at an unprecedented rate, the human themselves started a war against environment. My village proved to be my ethnographic site to witness these changes since my childhood.

I still remember our home in the village was remembered due to its closeness with the 'Mango Orchard'. There were a few but large and old trees of mangoes since my grandfather's time. These mango trees were more a source of shade, freshness and greenery instead of being just bearers of fruit. Along with that, these mango trees were the only trees in that area that could provide shelter to many birds, insects, and worms that are essential for ecological balance and to involve nature in sustaining the eco-system.

These were good days; even I remember the whispering of leaves and chirping of birds from those trees. With the passage of time, it was not some natural calamity but the decision of human administration to cut all of them so that a road could be built for vehicles and other so-called modern transportation. Now, without any trees to tackle the effects of heavy traffic on the road, the people are suffering a lot from smoke, dust and pollution. Even I am unable to eat properly or keep eatables covered from smoke and dust because it is excessive and out of control.

Not only this, in my neighborhood, I have witnessed the people who became sick and physically retarded because of

excessive pollutants in their diets and bloods. The whole of the landscape of our village is changed. What I could hear in my childhood i.e. chirping of birds, their melodious sounds, their nests and worms that could play an important role in fertility of soil



are now lost. All I can hear now are horns, and the rush of traffic. Villages, once considered to be close to nature, have now turned to a contested site in which natural forces are overcome by man-made disasters in a long term, as I witnessed; the cultural aspects of human life also became miserable as the people are spending more on the medicines instead of healthy food.

I am not arguing against the development neither I am narrating this as a failure of development but surely as inefficiency of the planners to come up with the sustainable projects to incorporate nature into their plans rather than destroying it. Surely I miss the melody of birds, shades of mango trees, a small gathering of neighborhood beneath the trees and the fresh oxygen that I used to inhale early in the morning. Now there is nothing left but individualism, smoke, noise and horns that surely nature did not bless us with.



# Disturbing Ruins of Islamabad

*Binish Chaudary*  
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Green lanes covered with colorful flowers on both sides of the road pleased eyes of the passengers, pedestrians going to their activities every morning. This was the view of Islamabad, a beautiful, enthralling and close to nature city of Pakistan Islamabad stands out as unique as nature even in its new constructed state of the art look. This thing makes it a living miracle and thereby, the second most beautiful capital of the world.

The growing populations of the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad have demanded some new infrastructure for the citizens of the twin cities, which came in the emergence of housing societies in the surroundings of Islamabad. The beautiful green plains outside Islamabad are now converted into developed societies bigger plazas and huge buildings. Areas which were fascinating, peaceful spots a feisty panorama for the vision and food for intellect with attractions all about it, portraying the blessings of nature, are now showcasing the developed picture of a modern city.

These societies and others like these are established by cutting trees and eliminating green plains. It has suffered from the havoc of time and ruin as per the law of change. Earlier when I went out, I had a feeling that nature is connected with us in this real piece of heaven. Living in a city which was a beautiful blend of natural beauty and modernism makes me think that I am blessed to have this nature's blessing. But in the last ten years the city has changed in to a modern city comprised of buildings, and shopping plazas. Portraying a more sort of robotic dimension of a city, something has vanished from the landscape. No more beautiful birds are seen like the old days. The most

recent event which makes me think are we continue disturbing our nature for our growing needs is the cutting down of Kachnar park, a famous Park and jogging track in I-8.

Yesterday I was sitting in the park and thinking that a few months ago; the Park was totally different as it is today. The park was full of people, and young kids enjoying their time in the lap of the nature, but today hardly I have seen 10 to 15 people in the whole park. A park spread on one kilometer area, lost its attraction because it was cut down by the Capital Development Authority for the expansion of Islamabad highway.

The Park is cut down from around 100 meters to 200 meters in length and width from all sides. And the construction process stopped people from coming to the park. The area which was so calm and peaceful and free of dust is now full of dust and distortion that no one likes to come there. Islamabad has always been my living passion and seeing it devastated cuts me from inside.

I am wondering if we continue with this mindset to cut down our parks, our tracks for expansion of highways. Already we are facing effects of cutting down trees in the form of



increased numbers of floods, drought, increase in heat waves, extreme weather conditions and many other environmental issues.

Our climatic conditions are totally changed and disturbed, we have observed that there is a huge lack of rains in the certain period of time. Either there is no rain or heavy rain resulting floods in the country. We need to think how we are contribut-

ing towards the environment, if we continue disturbing our environment by our own hands we have to face serious consequences of that and whatever we contribute towards the nature it will pay us back accordingly.



# The life of Denu

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Rain was stopped. The weather was still cloudy and dark. So was the life of Denu. Due to rain and flood, all of his crops were destroyed. All of his hard work was flooded with the water.

“I don’t know how to compensate my loss”, said Denu to his wife. “How many times I have told you to call your son Hassan back to village. After all, he is getting education in agricultural studies”, Bano replied to his husband’s anxiety. This reply of Bano’s left Denu with no other option but to make a call to Hassan.

Hassan was now in village but he is unable to relax because of the conservative and old thoughts of his father and the loss. “Father! Since how long I have been telling you that you and all the other farmers of the village have to get rid of traditional and primitive mode of agriculture. Otherwise, the loss is inevitable”, said Hassan. “Son, it is natural, what we humans can do”, replied Denu to his son. “I accept, my Father, we cannot fight with nature but we can make adopt certain ways to reduce the loss to its minimum”, Hassan was trying to convince his father. “Ok son. Do, whatever you want to do. I cannot bear loss anymore” This acceptance gave Hassan enthusiasm and energies that he wanted.

After a week, Hassan called his friends and laborers to village and it was decided that latest agricultural reforms will be introduced in the village under the leadership of Hassan to avoid the damages and losses of the flood.

According to a plan, Hassan and his friends cemented the embankments of rivers and laborers were instructed how to build a strong and decisive blockade/barrier for the river. “Son, what are you doing? It is for what benefit? Asked Denu who has been watching whole of the scene for quite



some days. “Father, we are cementing the river channels so that the water from flood and rain that may enter in field may not be wasted. Instead of entering in fields, this water will be stored in a reservoir. This will increase agricultural land as well”. Hassan detailed answer convinced Denu about the modern education and the fruits of education that yields positive effects. After the work of one month, those channels and barriers were constructed and completed and Hassan was planning to go back to his university. This time he was very satisfied and motivated that the environmental changes won’t bring any harm to my father’s income and it will not be wasted.

Next year in rainy season, Denu and Bano were not sad but happy and their eyes were watered with that happiness because the reservoir was full of water and there was no damage to crops this time.



# We are losing an important aspect of our lives – which is our environment

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In a wooden house which was nearly wrecked located in Murree. My grandma was sitting next to a half cracked window staring at the snow which was on the roof tops of other houses. Grandma! Grandma! I called her twice but she didn't pay an ear to my calling. I walked towards her and stood next to her sofa. In a soft tone I asked her what she was looking at? She said changing time. I was a little confused "what do you mean by changing time grandma"? She locked her lips for a moment and with a breath, she replied; Zaira! Have you ever tried catching snowflakes? I said, no, why would I? She again said, have you ever wondered why all trees are different and why none of them is the same? I said no granny life is too busy, I don't get time for such silly things. She said, my dear daughter what I said when I was referring to changing time? You guys are missing some important aspects of life. She said I remember a poem I once read. "What is this life if full of care, we have no time stand and stare", no time to stand beneath the bough and stare as long as sheep or cows" I said I have read this poem, the name of the poem is Leisure. She said reading the poem is not important, it's the understanding which matters. She wasn't happy with the changing environment of our village, and I thought to myself maybe she is right. We are losing an important aspect of our lives. And we are running towards industrialization, urbanization and development but we forgot about our Mother Nature. Life has changed a lot. We don't seem to care about the shape of trees, the kind of birds living in our habitat and the shape of snowflakes. This race has

turned us into beasts, and these beasts are born inside us. Which could be killed by the love of Mother Nature but we have killed her from our surroundings and forgot her in our race.





# Story Contest Activities Pictures







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