



# FOUNDATION *for* RESTORATION of NATIONAL VALUES

ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः। सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः।  
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु। मा कश्चित् दुःखभाग् भवेत्॥

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## NEWSLETTER

August 2018



### **Protection of Our Environment**

*In recent decades, environmental problems have increased as the result of human activities and unplanned management of technological development. Therefore, a controversy between the importance of conservation and preservation of ecosystems and the necessity for development, with the concomitant sacrifice of the environment has arisen across the world. The term "environmental protection" can be defined as the prevention to conserve and preserve the standards of healthy level of environment by reducing the production of pollutants or polluting substances. Various human activities have induced many undesirable effects such as pollutions, greenhouse effect, global warming and soil erosion on the environment which can pose a threat to human health, economy, natural resources and gene pool of ecosystems. For instance, everyone is aware that water tables are going down in the cities and availability of good drinking water is going to be a major problem in the immediate present and near future. How do we preserve scarce resources such as water? The moot question is the imperative for development and at the same time preservation of the environment. In other words, the pertinent question is how to ensure sustainable development?*

### **Environment Protection Act 1986- Protecting India's Environment**

On a cold wintery midnight, in December 1984, when the city of Bhopal was sound asleep and the workers at Union Carbide India Ltd. pesticide plant were completing their routine tasks, no one was aware about the tragedy that was about to strike the city. Forty tons of toxic gas (Methy-Iso-

Cyanate, MIC) was accidentally released from Union Carbide's Bhopal plant, which leaked and spread throughout the city. The result was a nightmare that still has no end; residents awoke to clouds of suffocating gas and began running desperately through the dark streets, victims arrived at hospitals, breathless and blind. The lungs, brain, eyes, muscles as well as gastro-intestinal, neurological, reproductive and immune systems of those who survived were severely affected. When the sun rose the next morning, the magnitude of devastation was clear. Dead bodies of humans and animals blocked the street, leaves turned black and a smell of burning chili peppers lingered in the air. An estimated 10,000 or more people died. About 500,000 more people suffered agonizing injuries with disastrous effects of massive poisoning, while owners fled the scene due to weak environmental and civil laws. The Bhopal Gas Tragedy was a catastrophe that had no parallel in the world's industrial history.

### **The watershed moment that led to the formulation of EPA**

Environment Protection Act of 1986 came as a repercussion to Bhopal gas tragedy and India's involvement in the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment held at Stockholm Sweden. The Act empowers the Central government to take remedial measures as well as actions to protect the environment in the country. The aim of the Environment Protection Act of 1986 is to improve and protect the human environment, most importantly to prevent such hazards from happening and causing damage to the ecology.

### **Provisions of Environment Protection Act 1986**

This Act has been brought into force from November, 1986. Its salient features are:

(a) *Conferring powers on the Central Government to:*

1. Take all necessary measures for **protecting** quality of **environment**,
2. Co-ordinate actions of States, officers and other authorities under this Act,
3. Plan and execute a nationwide programme for prevention, control and abatement of environmental pollution,
4. Lay down standards for discharge of environmental pollutants,
5. Empower any person to enter, inspect, take samples and test,
6. Establish or recognise environmental laboratories,
7. Appoint or recognise government analysts,
8. lay down standards for quality of environment,
9. Restrict areas in which any industries, operations or processes may not be carried out subject to certain safeguards,
10. Lay down safeguards for prevention of accidents and take remedial measures in case of such accidents,
11. Lay down procedures and safeguards for handling hazardous substances,
12. Constitute an authority for exercising powers,
13. Issue directions to any person, officer or authority including the power to direct closure, prohibition or regulation of any industry, operation or process,
14. Require any person, officer or authority to furnish any prescribed information and
15. Delegate powers to any officer of a state or authority;

(b) *It confers powers on persons to complain to courts regarding any violation of the provisions of the Act, after a notice of 60 days to the prescribed authorities;*

(c) *The Act makes it obligatory for the person in charge of a place to inform the prescribed authorities regarding any accidental discharge of any pollutant in excess of prescribed standards.*

The concerned authorities, on receipt of such information, shall take remedial measures to prevent or mitigate pollution caused by such accidents and expenses incurred by the authorities in respect of remedial measures are recoverable with interest from the polluter;

(d) *It prescribes stringent penalties for violation of the provisions of the Act; and*

(e) *Jurisdiction of civil courts is barred under the Act.*

The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 were amended to bring their provisions at par with those of The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and to give more powers to the implementing agencies.

## India at bottom of 2018 global environment performance index

Despite passing of the Environment Protection Act, India is among the bottom five countries on the Environmental Performance Index 2018, plummeting 36 points from 141 in 2016, according to a biennial report by Yale and Columbia Universities along with the World Economic Forum. India also ranks 178 out of 180 as far as air quality is concerned.



India has been attracting adverse comments on issues related to the environment — for valid as well as wrong reasons. The country has received bad press for its failure to check air pollution. It has also been said that environmental degradation costs India \$80 billion per year or roughly 5.7 per cent of its economy. Disadvantaged groups are more vulnerable to climate change.

During the Paris Climate Agreement, India has committed to using 175 GW of renewable energy by 2022. However, India has development imperatives. India's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), finalised before the Paris Climate Agreement, aims to reduce the emissions intensity of its GDP by 33 to 35 per cent by 2030. India also aims to use 40 per cent of its cumulative installed electricity capacity from non-fossil fuel based energy resources by 2030. The country has

committed to an additional carbon sink of 2.5-3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. According to several international evaluations, India is on course to achieving the pre-2020 goal of reducing the emission intensity of its GDP by 20 to 25 per cent over 2005 levels.

However, building on the gains of the past few years will require a concerted effort from the government and civil society. Governments may lay down norms but policing and penalising people cannot be the basis of a robust model of environmental protection. Protecting the environment should not be the government's business alone.

The need of the hour is not just for people to act responsibly but also to take responsibility for others, report misdemeanors not just of individuals but also of institutions and corporates. In other words, the environmental credo of the country should be: "Do your own green good deeds and ensure others do that as well." Take, for example, Delhi's air pollution. Dust and vehicular emissions are among the major causes for the foul air over the city. These can only be controlled by a combined effort of civic authorities, resident welfare associations, individual citizens and the government machinery.

This is not to say that the government has no role in mitigating pollution. The environment ministry has taken up air pollution on mission mode. In January, 1994 the government notified amendments to the Environment (Protection) Rules 1986 making it mandatory for construction agencies to take dust mitigation measures. The government has written to major construction agencies like DMRC, NBCC and NHAI to comply with these rules. The amendments lay down: "No building or infrastructure project requiring environmental clearance shall be implemented without an approved Environmental Management Plan, inclusive of dust mitigation measures." The rules are applicable in all cities where the Particulate Matter (PM) PM 10 and PM 2.5 levels exceed the limits set in the National Ambient Air Quality standards. The annual PM 10 limit is 60 micrograms per metre cube. For PM 2.5, the standard is 40 micrograms per metre cube.

The Sustainable Development Goals talk of responsible consumption and production. They also underline the need for urgent action to combat climate change. That responsibility and urgency

has to be shared. A tough action means that some will suffer — but the end justifies the means. The end here is the greater common good. The bottom line is that we are in it together.



**One of the most basic methods for improving is, of course, recycling.** Plastic items with every number of resin identification code is recyclable, but varies from location to location.

**1. You can reduce the water wastage by:-**

- \* Reducing your bathing time
- \* Install a low-flow showerhead
- \* Turn off the water in the sink while shaving or brushing your teeth
- \* Submerge a full water bottle in the toilet tank to shift or move water and make it a low flow model to save water with each flush
- \* Fix leaking pipes
- \* Recycle water in your home
- \* Where possible, try not to use water as a cleaning solution. Baking Soda and Vinegar can work just as well as other cleaning products.
- \* Install aeration nozzles on all taps

**2. When going shopping, make it a habit to bring your own eco-bags and say no to plastic bags as much as possible.**

**3. Send your drinking bottles, paper, used oil, old batteries and used tires to a depot for recycling or safe disposal; all these very cause serious pollution.**

**4. Use Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) -free products.**

CFCs are released from aerosol sprays, air conditioning systems and refrigerators. Some cosmetic products too, contain CFCs. Some countries have already banned the use of CFC products. CFCs contribute to ozone depletion and greenhouse effect. Using CFC-free products is the simplest way to prevent the harm they cause to the

environment.

**5. Park the car. Walk, cycle, bike or use mass-transit whenever you can. Vehicle traffic is a major contributor to smog.**

**6. Join a library instead of buying books.**

**7. Print double-sided. If possible, advocate to make your office or school paper-free.**

**8. Buy used furniture and re-purpose it. You save money and trees (plus, create original furniture!)**

**9. Ways to contribute for cleaner air-**

\* Painting your house? Use a latex paint. Oil-based paints release hydrocarbon fumes.

\* Get a tune-up. Properly maintained vehicles get better gas mileage and emit fewer pollutants.

\* Don't top off your gas tank. Overfilling causes spills that release hydrocarbons and other toxic chemicals into the air.

\* Conserve energy. You'll lower your utility bills and help avoid peak demands on utility plants.

\* Don't burn your yard waste. It's illegal in many areas of Ohio because burning yard waste releases mold spores, soot, and other contaminants that can aggravate allergies and cause respiratory problems.

\* Plant a tree. Trees absorb carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas.

**10. You can conserve energy in your home by-**

\* Switch off or unplug any chargers or appliances you don't need on.

\* Insulate your house.

\* Reduce leaks in ducts.

\* Reduce heating usage in the winter.

\* Replace inefficient appliances with ENERGY STAR® models.

\* Change to energy efficient light bulbs.

\* Setting your freezer temperature 0-5 or refrigerator temperature at 36-38.

\* Minimising door opening while using the oven.

\* Avoid using chemicals to clean your home, use a microfiber cloth.

Source: <https://www.mapsofindia.com/my-india/society/environment-protection-act-1986-protecting-indias-environment>  
<https://www.avaaznation.com/social-issues/world-environment-day/>  
<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/energy-and-environment/india-ranks-177-out-of-180-in-environmental-performance-index/article22513016.ece>

<https://www.iasabhiyan.com/india-ranks-177-180-environmental-performance-index/>

## NEWS & EVENTS

□ On July 13, 2018, an activity with the students of grade VI was conducted at SKV, Malviya Nagar, to promote values like honesty and Kindness with the help of case studies and group discussion.



□ On July 31, 2018, a teachers workshop was organised at DUSC school, Maurice Nagar. The teachers had come up with various challenges they are facing in the school. The teachers were divided into four groups and three strategies were decided, i.e., two minutes silent-sitting will be done at the beginning of each class; each class will prepare a chart for do's and don'ts. The chart will be displayed in the class and all the students along with their teachers will follow the rules displayed on the chart paper. The third strategy was the workshop on Good Parenting for all the parents.



**Dear Readers,**

**FRNV invites stories from its readers on deep-rooted values that have helped us in our everyday lives. Some of these stories will be featured in the next issue of our newsletter. So put your thinking caps on, recall the values integral to your life which you cherish and write to us at [shilpi@valuefoundation.in](mailto:shilpi@valuefoundation.in).**