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CLEAN AIR: HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE IT

CASE STUDY/INSIGHT

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The very basic requirements for human survival are air, water and food. Human body will be able to survive even without food and water for few days. But it cannot function without air to breathe. This implicates that air is very important for human survival. Due to large scale industrialization and urbanization, air in cities has become impure to breathe. The concentrations of carbon dioxide and other pollutants in atmosphere have been increasing steadily causing issues such as unclean air to breathe, suffocation, etc. These are more predominantly observed in cities and industrial towns than in rural areas.

The increase in air pollution can be attributed to increase in number of vehicles, large number of industries, deforestation & destruction of agricultural lands for urbanization and conventional power plants. Development and environmental protection should go hand in hand. Too much degradation of environment will cause great danger for the survival of human beings and other living organism. It is high time that we start taking measures to mitigate the impacts of air pollution. It is everyone's responsibility to take actions to get accessibility to clean air.

To access clean air, the first and foremost simple step is to plant tree saplings. Individuals can plant trees near their house or streets and group of individuals can come together to plant trees along roadside. This should not be stopped only with tree planting but also should be continued by watering regularly. It is very common to see vehicles in roads emitting huge amount of smoke, which causes both air pollution and visibility issues. Such smoke emissions indicate that the vehicle is wasting fuel and engine is being damaged. When a vehicle is emitting high levels of smoke, it means that the vehicle has not been maintained properly. Such vehicles need to be serviced before they are used on roads. Public transportation is another method to reduce air pollution. Also, pollution and traffic norms should be followed strictly. Some houses have individual two wheelers or cars for each member of the family.

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When every individual start using independent vehicles, then the load of emissions and air pollution will become very high. Keeping energy security and air pollution in mind, it is advisable to use public transportation. Car-pooling can also be done while going for works or other events. For short distances, we can prefer walking or even cycling, which will also boost up our health.

Students may be encouraged to use bicycle for going to schools and colleges. Some colleges have prohibited the usage of two wheelers inside the college campus by students and are asked to use cycles. Promoting bicycles would be beneficial for both environmental and health aspects. By following certain simple sustainable practices in our daily life, ill-effects of air pollution could be reduced.

In terms of bicycle usage, Europe is leading the world and there is a great awareness among general public to use bicycle. Special bicycle lanes are constructed in all cities. These days, shared bicycles are available almost in all international cities to encourage the citizens to use bicycle, which is good for air and also for health. Let's take a pledge to use bicycle more and more in our daily life and drive safely respecting traffic rules.

