

Vol.19 No.05

August 2023

subh naui

a greener vision

**Celebrating
National Plantation Day
to meaningfully address
climate change**



Sweet Burden
Biodiversity

Water Your Garden Wisely
Gardening

Promoting Micro Livestock Farming
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IS THE BEST**



Sachal Traders

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Letters to the Editor

Cover Story April 2023

The harrowing impacts of climate change are being felt across the planet right now. I agree with the cover story that it is a issue of high security concern, and that we must place it at a high priority. Rather than react to these issues, we need a proactive approach, so Pakistan must change its present strategy quickly.

Fatima Yousuf, Islamabad

The cover story placed climate change above terrorism, and I cannot agree more. Also, I think we need to revisit the scale and scope of various crises facing our nation, and climate change is right up there. After all, if we get hit by mega floods, storms, droughts and extreme heat at an ever-increasing level, we stand little chance to survive, let alone progress forward and grow. Time to wake up!

Abbas Khan, Islamabad

What is Subh-e-Nau

This journalistic endeavor primarily focuses on the environment and public health sector, and is published every month. The dismal state of affairs in this sector demands public awareness and community involvement for the protection of our natural environment. The magazine cuts across a diverse range of environmental issues, which require thought and conveys action-oriented messages for the general public and decision makers.

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Chief Editor's Message

With climate change impacts becoming more intense and frequent by the day, it behooves us to act now and across all levels. It is true that Pakistan has done negligibly to the contribute to this existential crisis, however, we are finding ourselves to facing its worst impacts.

How can we bring about change to help itself and the rest of the planet? A way forward from the is crisis is the recovery of our forests and green cover including those in urban areas, which is critical in maintaining life as we know it. One untapped resource in our nation has been the mass involvement and mobilization of our citizens to the cause of restoring our lost greenery. In this regard, a National Day of Plantation, if implemented fully, would help us address not only our local environmental degradation, but also help with the ongoing and escalating climate crisis. Subh-a-Nau has advocated for this day, and this month's cover story details how such a plan can be carried out across Pakistan. The benefits of such efforts shall not only help address our present issues, but also will help build foundation for a better tomorrow.

We must engage the climate crisis by working together and involving our citizens in these efforts. To move forward as a healthy and flourishing nation in the climate change era, we have to address issues such as deforestation proactively and urgently. Failure to do so, endangers not only our existing population, but also our future generations.

Shahida Kauser Farooq
Chief Editor

Cover Story

Celebrating

National Plantation Day

to meaningfully address

climate change



Dr. Farrukh Chishtie

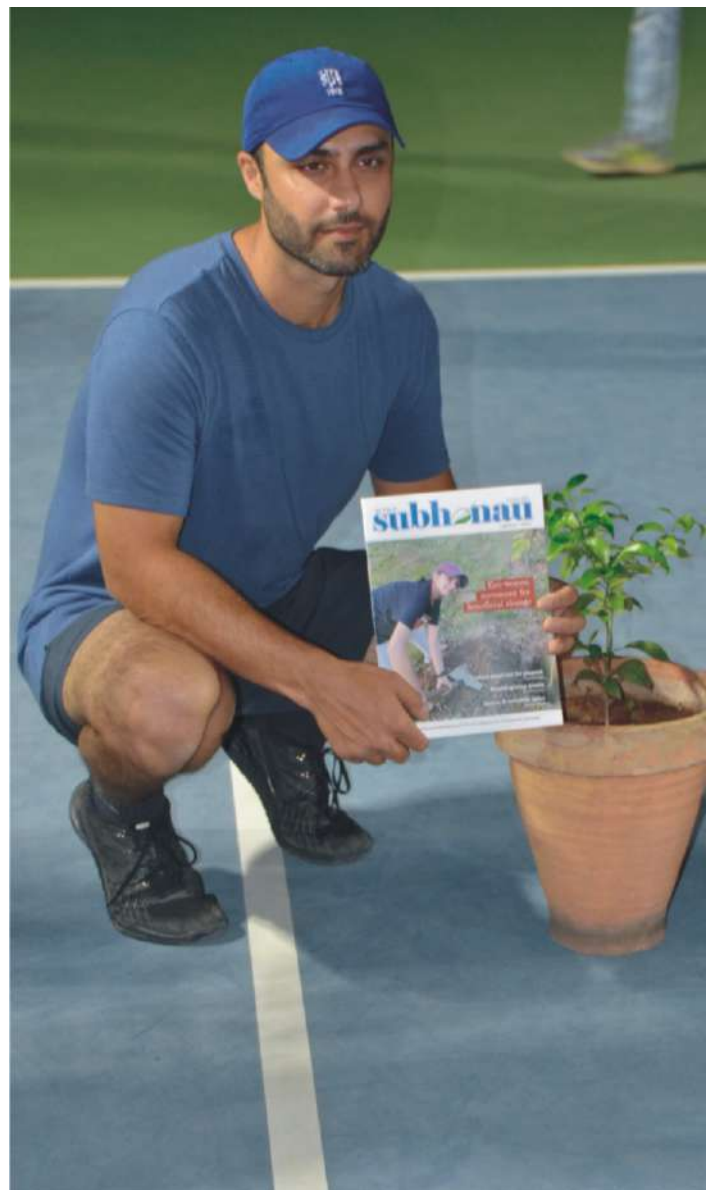
Forests and greenery play a crucial role in mitigating disasters and extreme weather events by acting as natural dampening mechanisms. These majestic trees not only safeguard mountains and lands from collapse but also help reduce flood damage. Furthermore, they actively combat climate change, the most significant challenge to humanity's survival.

The burning of fossil fuels is the primary driver of air pollution and climate change, leading to alarming trends in global warming. This dangerous human activity releases greenhouse gases that trap solar radiation in the atmosphere, causing abnormal shifts in weather and intensifying natural disasters.

Massive deforestation is the second leading cause exacerbating these dangerous effects. Forests, through photosynthesis, absorb carbon dioxide, the primary greenhouse gas responsible for global warming, and release oxygen, purifying the air. Forests act as vital carbon dioxide sinks, nurturing the food chain and protecting us from the harmful impacts of air pollution and global warming. The consequences of deforestation, such as prolonged and intense droughts and flooding, significantly damage economies, including that of Pakistan. And with coming days, these disasters are only going to get worse, if we, both individually and as a nation, do not act now.

Active afforestation drives should be supplemented by education, emphasizing the protective benefits of trees and greenery against calamities. Establishing a disaster-resilient nation requires long-term measures and strengthening ecosystems to defend against threats like locust invasions while ensuring sustainable development for all. A way forward in this would be to involve our citizens to curb deforestation in a “National Day of Plantation”.

National Day of Plantation



“ Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) states: “If the Hour (the day of Resurrection) is about to be established and one of you was holding a palm shoot, let him take advantage of even one second before the Hour is established to plant it.” (Authenticated by Al-Albani) ”

Subh-e-Nau played a key role in advocating for a “National Day for Plantation”, which is now mandated on August 18, but we can begin now and plant all year long till Pakistan is truly clean and green. Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) states: “If the Hour (the day of Resurrection) is about to be established and one of you was holding a palm shoot, let him take advantage of even one second before the Hour is established to plant it.” (Authenticated by Al-Albani).

Designating a "National Day for Plantation" and seasonal plantation events involving the population will rejuvenate Pakistan and foster unity for a just cause. Coordinating bodies and government support are crucial in ensuring successful implementation. Legislative backing and awareness campaigns, promoting the planting of indigenous and local trees, are essential for lasting impact.

Involvement of the media in promoting the spirit of festivity for plantation drives can create a sense of national interest and participation. Alongside government departments, local authorities, and civic organizations, the public must actively engage in planting and sustaining trees at individual and community levels.

Practically implementing such timeless wisdom first shows the commitment of the government and authorities in restoring the natural beauty and well-being of Pakistan. It would also project our nation as a



peace loving and environmentally conscious member of the world community. Hence, top authorities should be involved in declaring the spring season to include active plantation campaigns supported by the government. Since the upcoming spring season is in March, it should be declared now for August, alongside September, for heavy plantation so that this flows literally from the top leadership. The Prime Minister, for example, could possibly announce this

on national and international media.

A top-level coordinating body should be formed under the Chairmanship of a high ranking official, which exclusively handles and monitors this on a regular basis as the implementation period is short. The other option is to entrust the whole responsibility to one Department that can supervise the implementation of activities from the top right down to the grass roots level, addressing all problems along the way.

The “National Day for Plantation” should be formally embedded as a part of our legislation. Following the declaration, a national policy should follow, the planning of which should start in parallel to the declaration. The national policy should be debated in the national assembly and adopted so that this becomes part and parcel of celebrating every season by plantation in the future. In this way, it can be ensured that this will not just be a one-time activity by the Government in power, rather a milestone to be remembered by the future generations.

The media should be involved at a large scale in bringing up the spirit of festivity for this day and for plantation drives in its vicinity. Hence, state media and information ministries should be involved to project plantation as the mainstay of celebration this spring plantation season. Special programs, songs, talk shows, dramas and spots should be made and aired so that people are not caught by surprise as to what the

Government is trying to do. The cause should be promoted as one of national interest.

There should also be an awareness campaign for informing people on planting indigenous and local trees which should be initiated in parallel with the ‘bringing up the spirit of festivity’ step so that people are prepared before the season begins in February. Open spaces should be arranged by local governments so that people have a place to plant the saplings. In addition, these authorities should promote plantation of indigenous or local trees citing their importance as well as overall benefit to the planet as well as Pakistan.

The Forest Department and the local governments should implement such programs and it is pertinent to mention that manpower under Government Departments should be fully involved. Of special help can be scouts, forest officials, horticulture departments and educators in this respect. To provide water for plantation, septic tanks should be installed for the purpose of recycling sewage water. New plants require relatively cleaner water that what is being used by city authorities now.

On the “National Day for Plantation”, all allied ministries, departments and institutions should plant at least 1,000 trees and sustain them. This will set an example for the public to follow. Ministers and Secretaries should be made directly responsible for this plantation. Forest and Local Government Departments should

“ On the “National Day for Plantation”, all allied ministries, departments and institutions should plant at least 1,000 trees and sustain them. This will set an example for the public to follow. Ministers and Secretaries should be made directly responsible for this plantation. Forest and Local Government Departments should assist the people in plantation by setting up camps where plants can be distributed, and instructions given on sustaining trees. Pictorial print material in Urdu should be made and distributed with the plants ”

assist the people in plantation by setting up camps where plants can be distributed, and instructions given on sustaining trees. Pictorial print material in Urdu should be made and distributed with the plants.

The rest of the campaign should focus on involving people at the grass roots level. City Governments should be entrusted the responsibility of identifying places, supplying plants and assisting people so that Pakistan is

literally transformed to a greener cleaner nation. At an individual/family level, people should be encouraged to use water saved in the kitchen, for example, after washing edibles such as vegetables, fruits etc. or after 'wuddoo' (ablution) for watering plants.

The vexing question is: Why does this level of awareness and care for the environment not catch on at the majority scale? It is because we are simply not aware of its impact

on our daily lives and this ignorance oftentimes allows us the luxury to take it for granted. Thus, most of are not involved towards the required care towards our natural gifts and hence the work of many caring individuals is diluted as a result. It should also be noted that taking care of our natural resources needs to be sustained across generations and the youth should lead the charge. It cannot happen overnight, however the spark of our youth towards such care will spread to our wider populace, otherwise we are bound to lose our existing green cover amongst many other such natural assets.

Deforestation must be stopped!

Deforestation, the widespread removal of trees and forests, is a critical environmental issue that significantly contributes to climate change and its associated consequences. The loss of forest cover disrupts the delicate balance of the Earth's ecosystem and exacerbates global warming, leading to severe weather events such as floods, droughts, and extreme temperatures. In 2022, Pakistan witnessed devastating monsoon floods which affected more than 33 million people, a clear manifestation of the interplay between deforestation and climate change.

Forests play a vital role in regulating the Earth's climate by acting as carbon sinks. Through photosynthesis, trees absorb carbon dioxide from the



Subh-e-Nau Plantation Campaign 2023: Plant trees to save our planet

Welcoming the Plantation season for an Evergreen planet

Geared towards involvement from community at all levels, plantation campaigns by SN are done with sustainability as well as placing indigenous plants as the only choice. All plantation activities will be done in the spirit of educating the participants, especially the youth emphasizing that their efforts are needed for the very survival of the planet as well as making Pakistan an evergreen nation in the process.

Indigenous tree species should form the key components of any plantation drive, not just this coming February and there are good scientific and health reasons for doing so. As is unanimously voiced by experts, this may take time; however, is the only way to ensure a long-term stability of our environment.

Plantation activities will be lobbied to occur alongside the need for a National Day for Plantation, as this will prevent further deforestation of our country. Advocacy campaigns in this regard will be presented to authorities, so that they can prevent mindless extraction of community-based forests.

Why are Indigenous Trees important for our Forest Ecosystems?

Bringing in exotic or “alien species” oftentimes creates unpredictable damage to not only the growth of our forest ecosystems and the environment, but also affects all living things. Take the example of the infamous Paper Mulberry in Islamabad which literally wreaks asthmatic havoc on us each summer, when there are record levels of pollen released by this foreign species. In addition, this tree is rendering our existing species extinct due to so-called “allelopathic effects” – these effects inhibit the growth of local plants by secreting chemicals in the soil.

Which species for reforestation purposes?

In Karachi and Baluchistan, what are commonly known as wilayati keeker (Mesquite) and beli were planted for the very reason that they grew fast, but this has restricted or even wiped out other indigenous trees and shrubs like Acacia senegal – local name Khor, Acacia nilotica – local name Kikar or Bhabar, Prosopis cineraria – local name kandi or jandi. These species must be replanted, and slow replacement of exotics must happen alongside.

The Northern forests in the earthquake affected areas mostly consist of Cheer (Long Needle Pine), Fir, Deodar and Kail (Blue Pine) varieties which should form the basis of reforestation efforts in the affected areas.

In the case of Islamabad, there are many beautiful trees in the area that are naturally part of the landscape, e.g., Shirin. Similarly, Sumbul trees should be encouraged as they also have economic value if the seeds are harvested as they are used to fill pillows. CDA should encourage harvesting of seeds of this tree as well. Banyan tree or Bur as is commonly known was planted for centuries. Sher Shah Suri planted these trees at regular intervals on the GT Road in sets of three with water ponds for horses. People also used to rest under these. Peepal is also a very good native tree for the purpose.

Further recommendations are Pine – local name Cheer, Sukh Chain, and Kachnar. Local Mulberry that produces black colored fruit is a very good choice, since the fruit has medicinal qualities of healing sore throats and infections.

Our country needs to rejuvenate itself every coming plantation season and involving our youth will ensure that the present-day climate crises address does not only happen today, but also in the coming days.

Join our Plantation Campaign 2023 this August!

Some Indigenous Trees of Pakistan



Neem



Cheer



Amaltas



Peepal



Kikar



Sukh Chain



Fig



Kachnar

atmosphere, helping to mitigate the greenhouse effect. As deforestation continues at an alarming rate worldwide, these natural carbon sinks are diminishing, leading to an accumulation of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. This excessive concentration of greenhouse gases traps heat, causing the planet's temperature to rise, leading to climate change.

The consequences of climate change are increasingly evident across the globe, and Pakistan is not immune to its impacts. One of the most devastating consequences is the intensification of extreme

“ In 2022, Pakistan witnessed devastating monsoon floods which affected more than 33 million people, a clear manifestation of the interplay between deforestation and climate change ”

weather events, particularly floods. In recent years, Pakistan has experienced a rise in the frequency and severity of monsoon floods, leading to catastrophic loss of lives, destruction of infrastructure, and disruption of livelihoods.

The link between deforestation and monsoon floods is profound. Healthy forests act as natural buffers against heavy rainfall, slowing down water flow and allowing the soil to absorb excess water. However, deforestation disrupts this process, resulting in increased surface runoff and the rapid flow of water, which exacerbates the intensity of floods. Moreover, the loss of trees reduces the soil's ability to hold water, making it more susceptible to erosion and landslides during heavy rainfall events.

In 2022, Pakistan faced a devastating monsoon season that led to catastrophic floods. The loss of forest cover and inadequate water management infrastructure in the country played a significant role in exacerbating the impacts of these floods. The floods not only caused widespread damage to homes, crops, and infrastructure but also resulted in the loss of many lives and left thousands of people displaced.

Furthermore, deforestation contributes to climate change, which in turn affects monsoon patterns. Changing climate conditions alter atmospheric circulation patterns, leading to shifts in monsoon rainfall patterns.



This can lead to more intense and prolonged monsoon seasons, further increasing the risk of flooding.

To mitigate the impact of deforestation and climate change on monsoon floods, urgent action is required. First and foremost, there is a need to prioritize reforestation and afforestation efforts. Planting new trees and protecting existing forests can help restore the balance of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and improve the resilience of ecosystems to extreme weather events. This can be reliably achieved through a “National Day of Plantation.”

Additionally, improved water management practices are crucial for mitigating the impact of floods. Investments in flood control infrastructure, such as dams, levees, and reservoirs, can help regulate water flow and reduce the severity of floods during monsoon seasons.

Public awareness and education about the importance of forests and their role in climate regulation are also essential. Governments and environmental organizations should collaborate to raise awareness about the consequences of deforestation and the urgency of climate action.

In conclusion, deforestation is a significant driver of climate change, which, in turn, leads to intensified monsoon floods and other extreme weather events. Pakistan's 2022 monsoon floods are a stark reminder of the need to

address deforestation and its impacts on climate change. Sustainable forest management, afforestation, and improved water management practices are key to mitigating the effects of climate change and reducing the risk of devastating floods in the future. It is a collective responsibility to protect our forests and combat climate change to safeguard the well-being of current and future generations.

Raising awareness and fostering care for the environment, especially among the youth, is vital for sustained efforts towards conserving natural resources. Pakistan's green cover and other natural assets can only be preserved through collective and continuous action, driven by a sense of responsibility for our planet's well-being.

The destruction of forests has been a key factor in the increased devastation caused by recent natural calamities. For instance, mangrove forests, which were cut down for short-term economic gains, could have mitigated the impact of the Indian Ocean tsunami. Similarly, wetlands in New Orleans acted as natural buffers against storm surges before they were eliminated for development projects.

To comprehensively address climate change impacts, disaster risk reduction plans must be developed. Long-term mitigation strategies are essential alongside short-term recovery measures to

“Raising awareness and fostering care for the environment, especially among the youth, is vital for sustained efforts towards conserving natural resources. Pakistan's green cover and other natural assets can only be preserved through collective and continuous action, driven by a sense of responsibility for our planet's well-being”

prevent greater losses from occurring. Tree plantation and environmental care have emerged as effective strategies due to their natural protection mechanisms, which also entail lower costs during natural disasters.

Developing nations, like Pakistan, can significantly contribute to climate change mitigation by actively engaging in tree plantation efforts. Efforts to reduce emissions from burning fossil fuels should continue, but planting trees offers a more achievable target due to its lower economic cost and ease of implementation. ■

Sweet Burden

The father neither feels offended nor choked by the massive surge of the gummy babies nor does he gargle to wash his mouth.

No one has yet heard a fish speak to the offspring during training at cradle or in adolescence, nor has any one understood with any amount of certainty the mode of transmission of message to the youngsters, but we know that all surviving fries get highly trained in the art of survival, to play in the aquatic courtyard, to swim for the joy of life, gambol in sheer ecstasy or hide and lurk at the approach of danger, just like their parents were trained by an apparently silent code of socio cultural equilibrium, manners and mode by their ancestors.

Yet, when we watch a small, fresh water Cichlid (tilapia is one) we get a glimpse of the cryptic enigma. The papa opens his mouth at the approach of period which is a signal for the toddlers to rush in to the big mouth for refuge. The father closes his lips without puffing his cheeks or showing any sign of discomfort. There is no sound or commotion in the buccal cavity. The crowded gang lies dormant in a brotherly clasp, huddled in a fleshy castle, ears cocked if all is well, as they are impatient to emerge once more.

When the danger passes, the door



| Koala Bear |



| Chimpanzee |



| Monkey family |



| Baboons |

“ The baby neither gets thrown out by the thump when the air-borne mother lands on the ground nor does its milk-teeth clang by the impact. The feathery pouch, soft and gentle has a loving-mother's touch”



| Opossums |



| Brown Bear |



| Seahorse |

opens at which the youngsters pour out again, I am sure, giggling and jostling, fish-fashion, as children do to resume hop-skip-and-jump from a point where they left it a while ago.

The father neither feels offended nor choked by the massive surge of the gummy babies nor does he gargle to wash his mouth. He is immensely happy that he has saved his brood from destruction and slaughter and at the same time passed on to them the technique of defense so that his grand children and their future progeny may live in peace.

This part of the upbringing must be a mother's responsibility, as is usual in higher strata, but oddly enough here, she watches the dutiful husband in admiration, smug and content, that the bothersome brats have left her alone to forage, frolic (after all she also is a fish) given her time for leisure and relaxation by a refreshing chit-that with the

| *Sea fish* |

neighboring ladies.

Cichlid-fathers are not the only heroes sharing the sweet burden; there are others in several categories, spread all over the globe in various groups concentrating most in Australia where a board of animals carry their young ones in a protective pouch over their bellies, wherein they cuddle and suckle, sleep and snore, rest and dream, some in slumber, some in day light.

The Kangaroo tops them all. Whether mamma nibbles at the grass, leaps or bounds, jumps or jogs, the baby is safe and warm; jostled by the violent muscular movements nor feeling stifled or

chilly. The pouch is a marvel, neither too shallow nor too deep, custom made, correct to the millimeter.

The baby neither gets thrown out by the thump when the air-borne mother lands on the ground nor does its milk-teeth clang by the impact. The feathery pouch, soft and gentle has a loving-mother's touch. As it were, it has thus two mothers simultaneously: the real one out and away and the other close and all around exuding compassion, all the while.

The list is long and each more interesting than the other like the papa frog of Surinam who carries

the eggs laid by his wife on his back where they incubate and hatch. The bears, the monkeys, baboons and chimpanzees carry their babies on their humps clasping the mamma by a strong grip of a fold of skin and hair.

The opossums have a prehensile tail with which the young ones, a crowd of unlucky thirteen (the mother has only that many nutritional supplies) ride mamma's back while she looks for lunch.

But the strangest amongst this bunch is a sea fish that has the fins of a fish, gills to breathe, a posterior that tapers like a tail and the face of a horse.

This novelty, as an object inviting great curiosity in marine aquaria, measures less than two inches, from head to foot. Devoid of the speed of a steed or a bushy tail to swipe at the annoying flies, it neither neighs nor stampedes, but seems to hang in the air if the water is crystal clear, hardly swimming like a fish and is very aptly called the Sea Horse.

The 'mare,' if we call her by this name, as she lays her minuscule eggs, picks them up with his beak and puts them in a pouch at his front where they incubate and hatch. When the babies ate ready to emerge, he feels their movements upon which the pregnant pouch is pressed and the young 'colts' are pushed out in the, cool, safe medium where they start a fresh life, eating like the papa not the grass and oats of the horse but minute plankton that they can see without; knotting their eyebrows for a close look.■

Water Your Garden Wisely

Of the numerous problems a gardener, in the city or otherwise, has to deal with is that of sourcing a regular supply of increasingly precious water needed to keep their plants alive and thriving during hot, dry weather and this, naturally coming second to everyday household requirements can be a major headache indeed.



Possibly, you count yourself amongst the very few who obtain plenty of water through pipelines; being not so lucky you may be at the mercy of tankers guys who charge what they like for water of questionable quality. You may even have your own tube well though the odds are

Whatever your water source though, each single drop you use, whether in the house or in the garden, should be monitored with care otherwise we will all end up regretting past wastage of this essential liquid. It is all too easy to get carried away when watering the garden and, admittedly, I have

raise the scent of wet earth to your waiting nostrils, but, not any more. These days, in my large garden, the invigorating perfume of wet earth comes only after it has rained!

More to the point: an average garden hosepipe uses approximately 1,200 liters of water an hour and, depending on the size of your garden, this could be the time it takes to get the job done. The 'malis' tend to perform this easy chore for far longer than you would yourself so just imagine how much water and money they are actually wasting in the process! For hosepipe lovers though there are a number of water saving devices of which the best, in my opinion, is a nozzle attachment which can be set to spray, mist, drip, gush or even switch off right there and then instead of racing all the way back to the garden tap to which the other end of the hose is attached with water flooding out in the process. This handy thing also means that, if you are conscientious enough, you can switch off in-between moving from one patch of garden to the next or even from plant pot to plant pot if you like. This device saves both time and liters and liters of water, which would be otherwise wasted.



| Mooli |



| Swiss chard |

that the water table in your locality is further down every year and the water pumped up either saline or brackish.

done this myself in the past as there is something beautifully hypnotic about watching water spray out from a full pressure hose pipe to wash dust off leaves and

Garden hosepipes are generally available from half an inch up to three quarters of an inch in diameter. The half inch one, adequate in most cases, uses approximately 20 liters of water per minute if left unchecked and one of three quarters of an inch approximately 35 – 40 liters per minute with both being far more if water pressure is extremely high:

Here are a few things to watch out for

- ▶ Anything containing chlorine/bleach is poison to both soil and plants. Those containing ammonia are better.
- ▶ Do not use soap powders which promise to make your whites whiter than white, stick to those for coloured cloths instead and totally avoid fabric conditioners/softeners.
- ▶ Do not use any cleaning product containing boron, borax or boric acid and clean drains with boiling water rather than acid or lye-based products.
- ▶ Most cleaning products are alkaline in nature but, unless you have acid soil, then use those which are acidic or pH neutral.
- ▶ Totally avoid solvents, paint thinner, motor oil and petroleum products used in vehicles plus any household cleansers containing even a trace of petroleum products as these are lethal to the garden.

up to 100 liters per minute therefore 6,000 liters per hour for the large diameter pipe. Bearing in mind that the majority of plant problems stem from over watering this is really something to think about and then take the appropriate action. Soil does not need watering unless you stick your index finger in up to the second joint and find it still dry unless, that is, plants are still very

small in which case only to the first finger joint only.

Sprinkler systems, extremely inefficient at the best of times, waste an astronomical amount of water, a regular garden one uses in the region of 800 litres per hour, which all goes within its immediate radius with the outer and inner areas not getting enough and the central belt being drastically soaked. Although uses

expensive to install and maintenance is a nightmare as, number one the drip holes often clog up with soil and/or impurities such as calcium in the water and, number two, you do not know if there is a blocked drip or not until selected plants suddenly start wilting. Even though drip irrigation does make maximum use of far less water than other methods, it tends to cause more problems than it solves.



| Papaya |

less water than a hosepipe, sprinklers, unless you install more than one, need to be moved around from spot to spot which absorbs lots of time and, speaking frankly, they should be totally banned.

Then there are the much touted drip irrigation systems, relatively

Watering cans, carrying two at a time for ease of balance, are considered an old-fashioned way of watering the garden and, although labor intensive, can be the best environmentally speaking. The reason for this is that they can be filled with something called 'grey water' which is recycled household

waste water and, before your turn up your collective noses at the very thought, but if you are sensible about it and garden in an area where water shortages are endemic, particularly at hot times

household washing up, clothes washing, hand washing, showering/bathing etc. and Not 'black water' which is sewage water even though this too, when correctly treated, is viable for

etc., and you can remove most of these by simply straining the water through a very fine meshed sieve or muslin cloth both of which should be regularly cleaned. Grey water, used in the garden and in plant pots, recycles the nutrients it contains, feeds the plants in the process and encourages biological soil activity, which purifies it further.

Before using grey water for your plants though, you must thoroughly check the labels on soap powders and detergents as some contain ingredients harmful to the soil and your plants if used on regular basis.

For your own sake do not leave grey water standing around in buckets waiting to be used as it will become a health hazard by attracting flies and mosquitoes which will breed in it plus, it will begin to smell. It is best used as fast as possible and any faint unpleasant aroma in the garden will quickly disperse and no, it will not lead to an increase of flies/mosquitoes in the soil as it is absorbed fast. Commercial methods of treating grey water are utilized in some countries but are not really applicable on a home-based scale. Grey water can safely be used on all plants except root vegetables as these tend to store up any impurities in their edible parts.

Being water conscious always, in the garden and otherwise, helps preserve this precious resource for future generations, and assists the health of our fragile planet all round. ■



| Melon |



| Tomatoes |

when the plants need watering most, then you should grit your teeth and get on with it.

Grey water is water from

garden use.

Grey water for garden use should contain the very minimum of grease, food particles, detergent

Promoting Micro Livestock Farming

Micro Livestock Farming is a small-scale practice of raising animals for food with minimal resources. This could be executed in residential zones of rural and suburban areas where there's adequate space available.

Small animals like chickens and rabbits as well as the medium sized ones similar to goats and sheep could be raised in these micro-level livestock farms. The 'backyard farms' not only provide the domestic farmers an alternative source of income, but they also are considered eco-friendly because of having a lower carbon footprint.

Subh-e-Nau has been working for the Environment and Public Health Concerns since the 1990s. We have played our role in making Pakistan a clean, green and a sustainable country through various projects; promoting Micro-Livestock Farming is one of them. The organization has recently donated a goat and some chickens to a needy family in Karachi. This small backyard farm is helping them generate some extra money which is the need of the hour as Pakistan is going through the worst economic crisis. Additionally, this micro farm is also proving



“Subh-e-Nau has been working for the Environment and Public Health Concerns since the 1990s. We have played our role in making Pakistan a clean, green and a sustainable country through various projects; promoting Micro-Livestock Farming is one of them”



to be helpful for the environment as the livestock are fed on fruit and vegetables' waste hence reducing the trash volume from the overburdened municipal solid waste system. And the animals' manure can be used as a natural fertilizer, perfect for organic kitchen gardens! In general, Micro Livestock Farming has the potential to create livelihood, provide fresh and healthy food and improve environmental quality by reducing organic waste and producing natural fertilizers for crops. Subh-e-Nau had similarly helped the underprivileged people in the past too. We had provided

livestock with necessary training to the families of paraplegic victims to set up their backyard farms. This was the part of Subh-e-Nau Livelihood Program launched after the 2005 Earthquake which caused massive life and property loss in Kashmir and Northern Pakistan.

If you have some space in your backyard, consider starting a micro farm. It requires very little investment and offers great returns. Nothing could be more nutritious than a fresh organic egg straight from the backyard to your dining table! ■

Internet Addiction and how Gardening could help

Gardening is a healthy hobby. It is not just good for the environment but also is beneficial to hobbyists including their well-being.

Scientific studies have proved that spending time with plants brings many health benefits; stress relief included! The significance of mental health has become more important as we are getting disconnected from nature. Although modern technology has made our lives easier, it also is adversely affecting our wellbeing in many different ways. Misuse of the internet is one example of technology's side effects. As the internet becomes more accessible, people are increasingly spending a large part of their leisure time on screens. Social media or Internet obsession is now being classified as a behavioral addiction. Unchecked urbanization with shrinking greenbelts and parks can also be considered as a push factor behind this problem. And this isn't just about wasting precious time but spending prolonged hours on screens without a meaningful purpose is adversely affecting people's health. Lack of physical activity can lead to joint pain, hypertension, weakened immunity and most importantly, poor mental health. It can disturb your sleep, exacerbate depression and anxiety and may also lead to violent behavior, particularly if you're addicted to playing video games or watching content containing violence. Engaging youth in constructive outdoor activities is the first step in solving this problem. I was supervising the spring plantation and clean up activity at KMC Sports Complex Karachi about 3 months ago. Along with local staff, I



“It is time to reconsider our priorities; we must restore the lost urban greenery to fix environmental damage while providing youth a healthy alternative to internet addiction. The government should make new parks and to improve the condition of existing ones”

One of the volunteers is a young man who revealed that he's facing the same problem; internet addiction leading to severe mental stress and insomnia. He'd spend hours watching useless videos and playing games with very little physical activity and social life. However, as he became our volunteer and started taking part in gardening, he began to experience improvement. Less internet usage, better quality sleep and lower stress level all because of turning to nature! In fact, we are naturally attracted to nature; seeing green trees with amazing wildlife relieves stress and make us happy. Therapeutic Gardening is an experts' recommended treatment for addiction recovery.

It is time to reconsider our priorities; we must restore the lost urban greenery to fix environmental damage while providing youth a healthy alternative to internet addiction. The government should make new parks and to improve the condition of existing ones. And as a socially responsible citizen, keeping these parks clean is our collective responsibility. Public awareness campaigns to attract youth towards nature may also help. Schools, colleges and corporate business organizations should conduct such activities encouraging the public to adopt a green and healthy lifestyle. Providing security also is important as the citizens, particularly the women and children, are afraid of going out due to the rapid rise in street crime incidents.■

also tried engaging the park visitors to become our volunteer. Some good citizens joined the activities and we worked together to improve the park's garden and jogging track which was in an abysmal state.

Live sustainably: how to be a conscious consumer

Excessive consumption drives climate change, which in turn further damages nature.

Reduce your impact on the environment and the planet with these top tips.

1. Eat less (and better) meat and dairy

You might be surprised to discover that farming animals is one of the biggest contributors to climate change. Meat and dairy production causes 14.5% of planet-warming gases. Rainforests are being felled for soya, most of which is being used to feed factory-farmed pigs and poultry. Eating less meat and dairy can free up land for more tree planting and forests – good for nature and for tackling climate change. Eating more plants and less meat is good for your health. Processed and red meat is linked to heart disease, bowel cancer and other illnesses.

2. Avoid palm oil

Palm oil is cheap to cultivate, which is why it's used in so many of the products we buy. When David Attenborough recently





returned to Indonesia, he was shocked at how much forest had been replaced by oil-palm plantations. 12.5% of Southeast Asian Forest has been destroyed to make way for palm oil and other commodities. The iconic orangutan lives in these forests. As its habitat disappears, so too does its chances of survival. Palm oil is widely used in lots of products, including cosmetics, shampoos, margarines, bread, crisps, ice cream and cleaning products. Some products say they contain sustainably-sourced palm oil – inferring that they are not

linked to deforestation. But now we cannot be sure that these claims are reliable.

3. Reduce food waste

That feeling you get when you throw food out. Not good, right? Millions of tonnes of food go to waste globally every year. Stop wasting, and the guilt trip.

4. Buy less stuff

Most of us could probably do with less stuff in our lives. Unfortunately, we are hardwired to feel good about getting something new. Retailers feast on this weakness, tempting our pleasure receptors with upgrades and sales. Rising demands for raw

materials to make these things – like oil, metals and water – are damaging the environment. Repairing rather than replacing can also lessen the load on your wallet and the planet.

5. Use good wood

First, try to buy reclaimed or pre-loved wooden furniture wherever possible, and recycled paper products. Next best is to buy wood and wood products from local sources. Trees remove planet-warming carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere. Friends of the Earth is campaigning to double the amount of tree cover in the UK. Tropical rainforests are one of the most wildlife-rich habitats in the world. Trees give us shade, clean up air pollution, and provide

wildlife habitats. In rural areas trees can hold back flood waters and prevent soil erosion.

6. Reduce plastic pollution

It is impossible to go for a walk without finding plastic waste: from

crisp packets to bottles and bags. But some forms of plastic are not even visible to the naked eye. Around a third of our clothes contain tiny plastic threads. When washed they can escape into the sea and end up in the stomachs of fish. The problem of plastic



pollution is now big news. Images of sea life entangled in our plastic waste are being broadcast around the world. It's an issue that politicians cannot avoid. The UK government need a new law to phase out plastic pollution.

7. Eat less (and better) fish

Our seas are much emptier than they used to be because of overfishing. Some types of fishing are particularly harmful. Mangrove forests are cut down to

make way for farming prawns, and dynamite fishing damages coral reefs. Fish farming is rapidly increasing, leading to serious environmental harm. For example, mangrove forests are being cleared to farm prawns. Mangrove forests are huge wildlife-rich carbon stores. Coral reefs are also being overfished. Dynamite fishing damages the coral and kills all the fish in the area – including juvenile fish which then get discarded.

8. Share and donate

From cradle to grave, the stuff we buy has a big carbon footprint. Consider pooling resources with

your neighbours so that you can share things like lawnmowers and power tools – you could even start a carpool.

9. Buy from sustainable businesses

As manufacturers and retailers strive to provide us with the cheapest possible products, they cut corners – harming people and the planet. It is often the poorest in the world who bear the main brunt. So, when you do buy new, look for brands that are transparent about the materials they use and the working conditions of their employees.

10. Recycle and compost your waste

What has waste got to do with global warming? More than 50% of our waste gets sent to landfill or burnt in incinerators. Both release planet-warming gases into the atmosphere. It is much better to recycle and compost. For example, 20 times more energy is used to make a new can than one from recycled sources. Though buying less stuff or buying second-hand is even better. Mining materials to make new products causes climate pollution. Recycling lowers the demand for these damaging materials. Methane is a climate change gas. Composting reduces methane emissions from landfill and enriches soil for growing plants and food. Some local authorities have food collections for composting, and separate ones for garden waste.

11. Bank and invest ethically

The most destructive projects do not get off the ground without finance from banks or investors. Shun planet-wrecking practices by switching to an ethical bank. There is a growing movement to stop investing pensions in coal, oil, and gas. Ask your employer where your pension money is invested. ■

(Courtesy: Friends of the Earth UK)



Rainwater Harvesting Needs Urgent Attention

Despite receiving extensive rainfall, the groundwater table in our urban towns is rapidly shrinking. Rainwater harvesting must be deployed across Pakistan to conserve and address the key concern of rapidly dwindling water resources.

The rapid shrinking in our groundwater table is mainly because the urban greenbelts have been replaced by impermeable layers of concrete, stone and asphalt where rainwater cannot infiltrate to recharge the aquifers. Adding fuel to the fire, people are increasingly pumping out groundwater by drilling. As rain falls, more water escapes and very little enters into the ground. This not only results in groundwater depletion but also contributes to flash floods.

The Capital Development Authority has made it mandatory for all the new buildings to have a rainwater harvesting system. It is a good move, but it is still too little and too late. The laws should be implemented and expanded to the entire country. Following recommendations could be helpful in conserving groundwater and reducing urban flooding:





“ Rainwater Harvesting should be made mandatory for all existing buildings; begin enforcement from commercial businesses, schools, and large sized homes ”



- Rainwater Harvesting should be made mandatory for all existing buildings; begin enforcement from commercial businesses, schools, and large sized homes.
- The government should convince and assist the citizens to set up rainwater collection systems.
- Specialized institutions like PCRWR should actively play their role; they could provide technical assistance to industries and big businesses to install rainwater harvesting and well recharge systems.

- Business owners with extensive water usage i.e. Car Wash should be required to install rainwater harvesting setup.
- Print and electronic media, as well as social media influences, should play their role by running public awareness campaigns about the importance of rainwater harvesting.
- Rawalpindi Development Authority initiated a water conservation pilot project in selected mosques in 2021. This should be expanded to as many worship places as possible■

China on course to hit wind and solar power target five years ahead of time



China is shoring up its position as the world leader in renewable power and potentially outpacing its own ambitious energy targets, a report has found.

China is set to double its capacity and produce 1,200 gigawatts of energy through wind and solar power by 2025, reaching its 2030 goal five years ahead of time, according to the report by Global Energy Monitor, a San Francisco-based NGO that tracks operating utility-scale wind and solar farms as well as future projects in the country.

It says that as of the first quarter of the year, China's

utility-scale solar capacity has reached 228GW, more than that of the rest of the world combined. The installations are concentrated in the country's north and north-west provinces, such as Shanxi, Xinjiang and Hebei.

In addition, the group identified solar farms under construction that could add another 379GW in prospective capacity, triple that of the US and nearly double that of Europe.



Photo Credit: China News Service/Getty Images

Kela photovoltaic power station on the Yalong River in Garzê Tibetan autonomous prefecture, China

China has also made huge strides in wind capacity: its combined onshore and offshore capacity now surpasses 310GW, double its 2017 level and roughly equivalent to the next top seven countries combined. With new projects in Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, Gansu and along coastal areas, China is on course to add another 371GW before 2025, increasing the global wind fleet by nearly half.

“This new data provides unrivalled granularity about

China’s jaw-dropping surge in solar and wind capacity,” said Dorothy Mei, a project manager at Global Energy Monitor. “As we closely monitor the implementation of prospective projects, this detailed information becomes indispensable in navigating the country’s energy landscape.”

The findings are in line with previous reports and government data released this year, which predicted that China could easily surpass its target of supplying



A coal-fired power plant in Shanghai. China approved more coal power in the first three months of 2023 than in the whole of 2021

a third of its power consumption through renewable sources by 2030.

China's green energy drive is part of its effort to meet dual carbon goals set out in 2020. As the world's second largest economy, it is the biggest emitter of greenhouse gases and accounts for half of the world's coal consumption. The Chinese president, Xi Jinping, pledged in 2020 to achieve peak CO₂ emissions before 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2060.

A coal-fired power plant in Shanghai

A coal-fired power plant in Shanghai. China approved more coal power in the first three months of 2023 than in the whole of 2021.

The report attributed China's remarkable progress in expanding its non-fossil energy sources to the range of policies its government has implemented, including generous subsidies to incentivise developers as well as regulations to put pressure on provincial governments and generating companies.

China began operating the world's largest hybrid solar-hydro power plant in the Tibetan plateau on Sunday. Named Kela, the plant can produce 2bn kWh hours of electricity annually, equal to the energy consumption of more than 700,000 households.

It is only the first phase of a massive clean energy project in the Yalong River basin. The installation has a 20GW capacity now and is expected to reach about 50GW by 2030.

Despite China's careful planning, its energy transition is not without its challenges. In recent years, record heatwaves and drought crippled hydropower stations, resulting in power crunches that brought factories to a halt. An outdated electricity grid and inflexibility in transferring energy between regions add to the uncertainty.

The Kela plant is located in the sparsely populated west of the country, where more than three-quarters of coal, wind and solar power is generated. But the vast majority of energy consumption happens in the east. Transporting energy thousands of miles across the country results in inefficiencies.

The way China's grid is organised can incentivise building coal plants around renewable generators. Much of the new renewable capacity is not connected to the local energy supply and often bundled with coal power to be transmitted to areas of higher demand.

More coal power was approved in the first three months of 2023 than in the whole of 2021.

"China is making strides," said Martin Weil, a researcher at Global Energy Monitor and an author of the report. "But with coal still holding sway as the dominant power source, the country needs bolder advancements in energy storage and green technologies for a secure energy future." ■

(Courtesy: Guardian UK)

صبح نو مہم

پانی بچاؤ، درخت لگاؤ، پاکستان سرسبز بناؤ

پاکستان سمیت پانی کا مسئلہ اس وقت دنیا بھر میں شدت اختیار کر چکا ہے۔ بارش ہمارے پاس قدرت کا انمول عطیہ ہے اور اس کا پانی بچا کر ہم اس کی کمی پر آسانی قابو پاسکتے ہیں۔ بارش کا پانی بچانے کا طریقہ انتہائی آسان ہے۔



بارش کا جمع شدہ پانی باغبانی اور فرش دھونے سمیت مختلف ضروری مقاصد کے لیے استعمال کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ پانی کا محتاط استعمال ہمیں روزمرہ کاموں میں پیش آنے والی بہت سی پریشانیوں سے بچا سکتا ہے۔




Subh-e-nau
An Environment and Public Health Concern
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Greta Thunberg: A real-life inspiration

“I am Greta” is a compelling and thought-provoking documentary that delves into the life and activism of Greta Thunberg, a young Swedish environmental activist who rose to global prominence for her passionate fight against climate change.

Directed by Nathan Grossman, “I am Greta” provides an intimate and candid look at Greta's journey from a solitary protestor to an international climate icon. The documentary captures Greta's incredible determination and unwavering commitment to raise awareness about the urgent climate crisis. It begins with her solo school strike for climate outside the Swedish Parliament in 2018, showcasing the spark that ignited the youth climate movement worldwide. As we follow her on this turbulent journey, we witness the struggles and sacrifices she makes to be heard by world leaders, and the overwhelming emotions that come with shouldering such a heavy burden at a young age. One of the film's strengths is its raw and unfiltered portrayal of Greta as a person, showcasing her vulnerabilities, frustrations, and moments of doubt. Despite her stoic public persona, “I am Greta” gives the audience a glimpse into the toll her activism takes on her mental and emotional well-being. This portrayal humanizes her and reminds viewers that behind the fierce activist is an

ordinary teenager trying to navigate an extraordinary global challenge. The documentary also offers an unflinching look at the harsh criticism and relentless attacks Greta faces from climate change deniers and powerful figures who dismiss her message. The film highlights the unfortunate reality that some people are more focused on discrediting her age and passion rather than addressing the pressing issues she raises. Grossman's skillful direction allows the audience to experience Greta's journey as if we are standing beside her throughout her various endeavors, including her emotional and impactful speeches at major international conferences and rallies. The film's cinematography captures the beauty of the natural world, which starkly contrasts with the stark realities of environmental destruction presented throughout. “I am Greta” is not just a film about climate change; it's a call to action for everyone who watches it. It emphasizes the importance of listening to young voices, recognizing the urgency of the climate crisis, and taking meaningful steps to protect

the planet for future generations. While the documentary is inspiring, it occasionally falls into the trap of hero-worship, glossing over some of the complexities and critiques surrounding Greta's activism. The film could have offered a more balanced perspective by exploring the diversity of opinions and solutions related to climate change. However, it is essential to remember that this is Greta's story as seen through her lens, and it does justice to her message and dedication. In conclusion, “I am Greta” is a powerful and emotionally charged documentary that offers an intimate look into the life and activism of one of the most influential climate activists of our time. It serves as a timely reminder of the urgent need for collective action and highlights the potential of youth to bring about meaningful change in the world. Regardless of where one stands on the climate debate, this film deserves attention and respect for its portrayal of a young girl who sparked a global movement with her unwavering passion for a better, sustainable future. ■



'Washed away': Pakistan's melting glaciers threaten millions with dangerous flooding

Climate change-induced glacier melting in the Shounter Valley, Pakistan, is causing flash floods and endangering thousands of people. The Shounter Valley in Pakistan held Kashmir, is often described as 'heaven on earth'. It is renowned for its majestic mountains, waterfalls, lakes and glaciers. But now the adverse effects of climate change are increasingly evident in these breathtaking landscapes. Local volunteer Muhammad Luqman is deeply concerned about the future "The rate at which glaciers are melting, I fear that if this glacier bursts, as it did in Gilgit-Baltistan last year, and a flood occurred in Pakistan, 15,000 people in this area would be in danger," he says. Flash

floods in 2010 wreaked havoc on Shounter Valley, causing land erosion and extensive damage to crops and residential homes. Residents of Domail Pine village witnessed the troubling consequences firsthand. They saw flood waters rising rapidly in the stream that flows near their homes, carrying water from the towering glacier. Muhammad Rasheed Mughal, a 75-year-old villager, recounts the impact of last year's flood, which washed away bridges, residential houses, and land. "Last year's flood swept away bridges, residential houses, land and everything. There has been heavy snowfall in the mountains this year," he says. "If the glaciers burst again this year and there is a flood, the remaining village will be washed away. We have no one to rely on, just sitting there with Allah's help". Pakistan boasts over 7,000 glaciers, one of the highest totals for any country on Earth. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), by 2018, over 3,000 lakes had formed due to melting glaciers in the Gilgit-Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa regions of Pakistan. 33 of these lakes are considered at risk of flooding, posing a serious threat to over 7

million people residing downstream. Last year, the country experienced an unprecedented deluge and unexpected monsoon rainfall. It resulted in one-third of the nation being submerged and claiming the lives of 1,700 people. Pakistan estimates floods have affected more than 33 million people, mainly in Sindh and Baluchistan provinces. Another study published last week found that glaciers across the Hindu Kush Himalayan mountain ranges could lose up to 80 per cent of their volume this century if global greenhouse gas emissions aren't rapidly reduced. Kathmandu-based International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development warned that flash floods and avalanches would become more likely in coming years. The availability of freshwater could be curtailed for nearly 2 billion people who live downstream of 12 rivers that originate in the mountains. Ice and snow in the Hindu Kush Himalayan ranges are an important source of water. The rivers, which flow through 16 countries in Asia, provide fresh water to 240 million people in the mountains and another 1.65 billion downstream.

(Courtesy: EuroNews Green)

Bank Alfalah Plants 15,000 Mangrove Trees in Collaboration with WWF-Pakistan



Bank Alfalah has initiated a #GreenWayForward, a plantation drive with World Wide Fund for Nature Pakistan (WWF-Pakistan), a leading organisation that works on ecosystem conservation. This collaborative effort aims to contribute to the reforestation of mangroves and improve natural resource management in Pakistan. WWF-Pakistan has been at the forefront of environmental conservation since 1970, and together with Bank Alfalah, they plan to plant a minimum of 15,000 saplings at the Wetlands in Sandspit, Karachi, symbolising the total number of employees at the Bank. In addition to the planting initiative, WWF-Pakistan will provide comprehensive post-care for the saplings for one year. This includes regular monitoring and the replacement of the planted saplings, ensuring long-term sustainability. The plantation of 15,000 mangrove trees signifies a monumental step towards safeguarding Karachi's coastal ecosystem. The Mangroves of Sindh's coastal zone are extensive, covering about 600,000 hectares. They play a pivotal role in mitigating the impacts of climate change, acting as a natural barrier against erosion, storm surges, and coastal flooding. Moreover, these coastal forests support exceptional biodiversity by serving as vital habitats for various

plant and animal species. The #GreenWayForward plantation drive with WWF aims to increase the forest cover of mangroves as it demonstrates Bank Alfalah's commitment to ensure a greener tomorrow. Bank Alfalah has taken a promising step towards sustainability by pledging to plant 100,000 trees across Pakistan by the year 2030. This ambitious initiative showcases the Bank's dedication to environmental conservation and combating climate change. They aim to promote a tripartite partnership between the government, civil society, and the public-private sector to work towards a greener environment and a sustainable nation collaboratively. "Corporate partnerships play a vital role in advancing our conservation efforts and building a sustainable future. We appreciate the support of our corporate partners in driving initiatives that contribute to environmental sustainability. Together, we can address the challenges of climate change and work towards preserving our precious ecosystems for future generations. With this, we are constructing resilient coastal ecosystems to create a sustainable future." said Hammad Naqi Khan, Director General, WWF-Pakistan. Atif Bajwa, President and CEO of Bank Alfalah, stated, "Bank Alfalah is committed to environmental sustainability and playing an active role in addressing climate change. Our partnership with WWF-Pakistan for planting 15,000 mangroves is the first step forward in preserving our planet for future generations. We believe that by working together, we can take due action to preserve our ecosystem." In light of the devastating floods experienced in Pakistan last year, a consequence widely attributed to the

climate crisis. While recognising this urgent need to address this environmental challenge, this partnership urges communities and individuals to actively engage in tree plantation drives actively, fostering a collective effort towards building a sustainable future for our community.

(Courtesy: Pro Pakistani)



Wall collapse kills 12 sleeping laborers as relentless rains wreak havoc in Pakistan

At least 12 people died while four suffered injuries on July 19, due to the collapse of a wall of an under-construction underpass in the Pakistani capital, an official said. Aftab Iqbal, a district-level officer in Islamabad, told EFE that a portion of concrete from the wall fell on laborers who were sleeping in makeshift camps in the capital. He said 12 laborers were killed and four others injured in the incident. Since the monsoon rains started on June 25, at least 111 people have died, and nearly 200 suffered injuries in Pakistan, ranked among the top 10 most-vulnerable countries to climate change. The Pakistan Meteorological Department predicted heavy rains in different parts of the country from July 18 to July 23. According to the weather department,

monsoon winds from the Arabian Sea entered the upper and central regions of the country last evening before intensifying on July 19. According to the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), rain-related incidents across Pakistan killed nearly 100 people, including 41 children, since June 25. As per the authority, more than 130 houses have been damaged. The heavy rains have forced authorities to evacuate over 14,000 people over the last several days after floodwaters from two rivers swollen by monsoon inundated dozens of villages in eastern Pakistan. The inundation occurred after neighboring India diverted waters from dams into the Ravi River, which flows into Pakistan. Sutlej River, which originates from India, overflowed too, inundating many villages in various parts of the Punjab province. However, the flooding by the two rivers caused no casualties. Although Pakistan contributes less than 1 percent of the greenhouse gases causing global warming, its location makes it extremely-vulnerable to climate change. More than 7,000 glaciers, the highest outside the poles, are rapidly melting in the country due to climate impacts. The country bears the brunt of two major weather systems – one causes high temperatures and droughts, and the other brings monsoon rains in the summer. Last year, monsoon rains followed by floods affected 33 million people and killed 1,739 in Pakistan. The calamity also caused \$30 billion in damage to the country's economy. The monsoon season usually begins in July and continues until September. (Courtesy: *La Presna Latina*)

Pakistan's per-capita surface water to decrease to 860 cubic meters by 2025

According to data available with WealthPK, the availability of surface water for per capita consumption has been consistently declining in Pakistan since its creation. In 1951, the amount of surface water that was available for per capita consumption equaled 5,260 cubic meters. The level of water dropped to 1,000 cubic meters per capita by the year 2016. Now, as the threat of climate change increases in its potency with every passing year, and as the rate of population increase is not showing any signs of slowing down, per capita availability of water is going to further pass into stressed levels. If climate-related disasters are not taken care of and if Pakistan continues to go down the path of current population growth levels, it is estimated that Pakistan will suffer losses amounting to 18%-20% of its GDP by the year 2050. The total investment required to mitigate the risks posed by climate change amounts to \$348 billion from 2023 to 2030. Similarly, as a party to the Paris Agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Pakistan is obliged to submit Nationally Determined Contributions in order to join the global effort to shift towards a green and sustainable future. The estimated cost of fully implementing the new projects and transitioning the existing projects towards green and sustainable methods of production will be \$200 billion. Given that Pakistan continually faces revenue

shortages, perennial problem of foreign exchange and obligations to service its debts, it will be very difficult for Pakistan to see through its international obligations as well as create necessary conditions for averting the dangers and threats of water shortage and climate change. Water shortages have increased the frequency of droughts. Droughts then result in the loss of crops and livestock for agricultural households in the plains. Consequently, the threat of hunger, food insecurity, poverty, malnutrition in children, and decreased productivity start to loom large. Additionally, those people who fall prey to disease, hunger, poverty, malnutrition and resulting disabilities become dependent on the state for their care. This puts extra burden on the coffers of the state to take charge of the unproductive agents of the economy. Reduction in agricultural productivity due to low water levels and unscheduled rains have already cost Pakistan \$1.77 billion in the last two years as Pakistan had to import the requisite amount of wheat for domestic consumption. Despite being an agrarian economy, Pakistan is still falling behind in fully assessing the gravity of the situation and adapting its productive methods and consumption behaviours to the evolving scenario. It is highly recommended that the government and the people of Pakistan undergo a serious session of introspection to assess how they are going to move forward into the future with such alarming prospects of water shortage and wheat losses. ■ (Courtesy: *The Nation*)

Creature of the Month

Asian Elephant

A three-foot-deep watering hole in northeast India hums with buzzing insects and chirping birds. Suddenly seven Asian elephants stomp through the grass surrounding the pool and splash into the water. It was bath time for the herd! Asian elephants live in the tropical forests and grasslands of Southeast Asia. They're a little smaller than African elephants but can grow nine feet tall and weigh nearly six tons. That's heavier than two medium-size cars! Even newborns are on the hefty side, weighing some 200 pounds. Given their size, it's no surprise that these guys are big on food. Adults can eat 300 pounds in one day, nearly 75 times what the average human eats! An Asian elephant's ideal meal includes roots, grasses, fruit, and bark. Much of an Asian elephant's time is spent searching for grub. In fact the animal may travel 50 miles a day to find food. Asian elephants also enjoy taking dips in the water. To cool down their backsides, the animals will fill their trunks with water and spray it over themselves like a hose. Moreover, Asian elephants are gentle and super-social. Related females live with their young in herds. (Adult males go off on their own.) To communicate with each other they use rumbles, bellows, growls, and moans. Some of their vocalizations can be heard more than a mile away. Talk about a long-distance call!



Flower of the Month

Japanese Honeysuckle



Japanese honeysuckle is an extremely vigorous perennial vine that is deciduous in northern climates but often evergreen in warmer areas. It is prized for its long bloom period and fragrant flowers that bloom all summer and into fall, but it is also sometimes despised because its "vigorous" growth habit that all too easily strays over into invasiveness. Japanese honeysuckle is a climber that twines thickly around any vertical structure, whether it is a trellis or a tree. The vines bear fragrant white flowers, tinged with pink, that attract butterflies and hummingbirds from late spring into fall. The flowers gradually fade to yellow, and it is not uncommon to see white, pink, and yellow colors all at the same time. The flowers give way to black berries that are mildly poisonous to humans. This plant contains carotenoids in the berries and glycosides in the stems and vines. These are considered mildly toxic, and symptoms can include stomach pain, diarrhea, irregular heartbeat, and vomiting. But the effects are usually mild, and occur only when large quantities are ingested. You should not plant this vine where children are around, but the plant does attract butterflies and hummingbirds, and many birds enjoy eating the berries. The vine is often planted because it does well in shady locations and in dry soils. Japanese honeysuckle is largely without serious insect and disease problems, as befits a vine with a reputation for being vigorous to the point of being invasive. The botanical name of the plant is *Lonicera japonica*; common names include Japanese honeysuckle, golden-and-silver honeysuckle, and Japanese honeysuckle weed. It is native to Eastern Asia including China, Japan, and Korea.

Poem

Hungry Spider

I'm just a red spider in charge of my web.
Suspended I swing in a gentle breeze.
My eyesight is poor, but I can see the light
that mottles the sun through the wafting trees.

My internal organs are shrinking inside.
My hunger is hollow from tail to head.
I'm waiting and waiting. A fly will come by
and catch on my finely-spun silken thread.

I hope it's a fruit-fly. A tasty dessert
that's flavoured with apples and orange peel.
My venom glands ache with the hope of release
to con-vert my prey to a liquid meal.

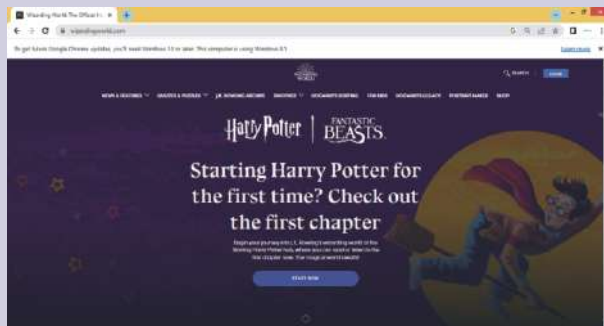
Celia Berrell

Source: <https://www.sciencerhymes.com.au/environmental-poetry>

Interesting website

POTTERMORE

<http://www.pottermore.com>



Pottermore.com is the official entertainment and news channel for the Wizarding World. It offers the latest magical news and features, the authentic Sorting Hat and Patronus experiences, and original archive content from J.K. Rowling. Pottermore.com has been creating innovative digital experiences for fans of the Wizarding World since 2012.

Quote

“The generation that destroys the environment is not the generation that pays the price. That is the problem.”

~ Wangari Maathai

International days



Water Quality Month

August is the time of year when many people are enjoying the last bits of summer recreational activities involving water. But these bodies of water are threatened by increasing water pollution. Water Quality Month reminds us to take a long, hard look at what our household and community are doing to protect sources of fresh water.



World Honey Bee Day

World Honey Bee Day, previously known as Honey Bee Awareness Day, is an idea put together by beekeepers in the USA, who petitioned the USDA in 2009 for an official day to honour honey bees and beekeeping. A few years down the line, people across the globe are holding a date of observation every year.



World Mosquito Day

World Mosquito Day was first established in 1897, when the link between mosquitos and malaria transmission was discovered by Sir Ronald Ross. It aims to raise awareness about the causes of malaria and how it can be prevented, as well as fundraising for research into the cure of malaria. ■

A Flavorful Herb with Surprising Health Benefits

Curry leaves offer a plethora of health benefits beyond culinary use, that have been cherished for centuries.

In the world of culinary delights, herbs and spices hold a special place not only for their ability to enhance flavors but also for their potential health benefits. One such herb that stands out for its incredible medicinal properties is curry leaves, also known as "kadi patta". These aromatic leaves are a staple in Indian and Pakistani cuisines, adding a distinct taste and aroma to various dishes. However, beyond their culinary use, curry leaves offer a plethora of health benefits that have been cherished for centuries.

1. Rich in Nutrients:

Curry leaves are packed with essential nutrients that contribute to overall well-being. They are an excellent source of vitamins A, B, C, and E, as well as minerals like iron, calcium, and phosphorus. These nutrients play a vital role in maintaining healthy skin, improving vision, supporting the immune system, and strengthening bones.

2. Diabetes Management:

One of the most significant health benefits of curry leaves is their potential to help manage diabetes.



Studies have indicated that these leaves possess anti-diabetic properties that may aid in controlling blood sugar levels. The presence of compounds like glycosides and alkaloids in curry leaves can stimulate insulin-producing cells in the pancreas, leading to better insulin utilization.

3. Digestive Health:

Curry leaves have long been used in traditional medicine to alleviate digestive issues. They possess

carminative properties, which means they can aid in relieving gas and bloating. Additionally, curry leaves may stimulate the secretion of digestive enzymes, promoting better digestion and reducing the risk of gastrointestinal problems.

4. Anti-inflammatory and Antioxidant Effects:

Antioxidants are essential for neutralizing harmful free radicals in the body, which can contribute to chronic diseases and premature aging. Curry leaves contain powerful antioxidants like flavonoids, phenols, and beta-carotene, which combat oxidative stress and reduce inflammation, thus safeguarding cells from damage.

5. Heart Health:

The antioxidants in curry leaves also extend their benefits to cardiovascular health. By lowering oxidative stress and inflammation, curry leaves help maintain the health of blood vessels, reducing the risk of heart disease. Additionally, their potential to regulate cholesterol levels can further support heart health.

6. Weight Management:

For those looking to manage their weight, curry leaves can be a helpful addition to their diet. These leaves have low-calorie content while being rich in fiber, promoting a feeling of fullness and reducing overall calorie intake. Moreover, they aid in better digestion and metabolism, contributing to a healthier weight management process.

7. Hair and Skin Care:

The benefits of curry leaves are not

limited to internal health alone; they also play a significant role in maintaining healthy hair and skin. The nutrients present in these leaves, particularly vitamin A and antioxidants, promote hair growth, strengthen hair roots, and prevent premature graying. When applied topically or consumed regularly, curry leaves can help achieve radiant and youthful-looking skin.

8. Stress Reduction:

Curry leaves have been used in traditional medicine as a natural remedy to reduce stress and anxiety. The compounds found in the leaves have a calming effect on the mind, potentially aiding in stress management and promoting relaxation.

Incorporating curry leaves into your daily diet is easy and can be done by adding them to various dishes, such as soups, stews, curries, and salads. They can also be used to prepare herbal teas or infused oils.

However, it's important to note that while curry leaves offer numerous health benefits, they should not be considered a substitute for medical treatment or professional advice. If you have any existing health conditions or concerns, always consult with a healthcare professional before making significant changes to your diet.

In conclusion, curry leaves, with their exceptional flavor and potent health benefits, deserve a prominent place in our culinary repertoire. So, the next time you savor a dish with these aromatic leaves, relish not only the delightful taste but also the nourishment they offer for a healthier and happier life. ■



Here are two delicious and easy-to-make recipes that feature the wonderful flavor of curry leaves. Enjoy!

Curry Leaf Rice (Karivepaku Annam)

Ingredients

- 1 cup basmati rice (or any long-grain rice).
- 2 cups water
- 1 tablespoon ghee (clarified butter) or vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon mustard seeds
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- ½ cup finely chopped onions
- ¼ cup curry leaves, washed and dried
- ¼ cup roasted peanuts (optional, for crunch)
- ½ teaspoon turmeric powder, Salt to taste

Instructions

Rinse the rice in cold water until the water runs clear. Soak the rice in water for 30 minutes, then drain and set aside. In a large saucepan or pot, heat the ghee or oil over medium heat. Add the mustard seeds and cumin seeds and let them sizzle for a few seconds until they start to pop. Add the chopped onions and sauté until they become translucent. Stir in the curry leaves and roasted peanuts (if using) and cook for another minute or two. Add the soaked and drained rice to the pot, along with turmeric powder and salt. Mix well until the rice is coated with the spices. Pour in the water and bring it to a boil. Once boiling, reduce the heat to low, cover the pot, and let the rice simmer for about 15-20 minutes or until the rice is fully cooked and fluffy. Remove the pot from heat and let it rest for a few minutes before fluffing the rice with a fork. Serve the flavorful curry leaf rice as a side dish with your favorite curry or enjoy it on its own.



Curry Leaf Chicken

Ingredients

- 1 lb (450g) chicken pieces (with bone or boneless, as per your preference)
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 2 tomatoes, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons ginger-garlic paste
- ½ cup plain yogurt
- 1 teaspoon red chili powder (adjust to your spice level)
- ½ teaspoon turmeric powder
- 1 teaspoon garam masala, Salt to taste
- ¼ cup curry leaves, washed and dried

Instructions

In a large pan or skillet, heat the vegetable oil over medium heat. Add the chopped onions and sauté until they turn golden brown. Stir in the ginger-garlic paste and cook for a couple of minutes until the raw smell disappears. Add the chopped tomatoes to the pan and cook until they become soft and the oil starts to separate. Now, add the chicken pieces to the pan and mix well, ensuring they are coated with the onion-tomato mixture. Add red chili powder, turmeric powder, garam masala, and salt. Mix the spices evenly with the chicken. Reduce the heat to low, cover the pan, and let the chicken cook for about 15-20 minutes or until it becomes tender, stirring occasionally. Once the chicken is cooked, add the curry leaves to the pan and mix well. Let it simmer for another 2-3 minutes to allow the flavors of curry leaves to infuse into the dish. Turn off the heat and let the curry rest for a few minutes before serving. Serve this aromatic curry leaf chicken with steamed rice or bread like naan. ■



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