

Editorial

Environmental Pollution and Health Hazards: Present and Future Perspective of Bangladesh

AFM Arshedi SATTAR

Assistant Professor, Department of Microbiology, National Institute of Neurosciences & Hospital, Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh; Email: afmasattar@yahoo.com; Cell no.: +8801611109942

Huge environmental pollution is reaching worrying proportions worldwide¹. The massive increase in emissions of air, soil and water pollutants due to economic and industrial growth in the last century made air, soil and water quality an environmental problem of first order in a large number of developing country like Bangladesh². Currently it is established as an emerging problem in other regions of the world as well³. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), about one-third of disease burden is contributed by environmental hazards⁴. Urbanization and industrialization along with economic development have led to increase in energy consumption and waste discharges. The global environmental pollution, including greenhouse gas emissions and acid deposition, as well as water pollution and waste management is considered as international public health problems, which should be investigated from multiple perspectives including social, economic, legislation, and environmental engineering systems, as well as lifestyle habits helping health promotion and strengthening environmental systems to resist contamination⁵⁻⁷.

Different pollutants of the environmental causes various adverse health effects beginning from very early in life of which the most important harmful effects are perinatal disorders, infant mortality, respiratory disorders, allergy, malignancies, cardiovascular disorders, increase in stress oxidative, endothelial dysfunction, mental disorders, and various other harmful effects⁸⁻⁹. In majority of time immediate effects of environmental

pollutants are usually stressed; however, wide range of hazards of air pollution from early life and their possible implication on chronic non-communicable diseases of adulthood should be underscored¹. Environmental particulate exposure has been linked to increased risk of morbidity and mortality from many diseases, organ disturbances, cancers, and other chronic diseases¹⁰⁻¹¹. Therefore it is time to take action and control the pollution. Otherwise, the waste products from consumption, heating, agriculture, mining, manufacturing, transportation, and other human activities will degrade the environment.

There are many major attributable risk factors causing environmental disease burden and increase health hazards in this subcontinent⁴. These traditional environmental health hazards are lack of access to safe drinking water, indoor air pollution from solid fuel combustion, and lack of sanitation and hygiene⁸. In addition to that there is a notable economic growth in the past decade due to urbanization and industrialization which lead to modern environmental health hazards (MEHHs)¹¹. These perhaps supersede traditional hazards as critical contributors to environmental disease burden in the continent. Traditional health hazards and risks should be managed which will provide the future better world.

MEHHs are products of rapid development in the absence of health and environment safeguards, as well as the unsustainable consumption of natural resources¹¹. MEHHs include water pollution from populated areas

and industry, urban air pollution from automobiles, radiation hazards, land degradation, climate change, and emerging and reemerging infectious diseases¹⁰. In Bangladesh there is lack of waste disposal processing plant in the industries which lead to environmental pollution. All the wastes are deposited in the soil, mixes with water and air. Therefore, the environment of this country becomes an unfavorable for future generation.

The increasing significance of MEHHs is now a public health issue in Bangladesh. The presence of development-related activities capable of generating these hazards; evidence of the occurrence of these types of hazards in environmental media as a result of development activities; evidence of human exposure to some of these hazards; and evidence of adverse effects among Bangladeshi populations. Chemical-specific pollutants are toxics from industrial activity, air pollution from automobiles, and pesticides from modern agricultural practices⁸. Chemical hazards is solely based on the relative preponderance of data for these types of hazards and is therefore very narrow in terms of the scope of possible MEHHs that are products of development.

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