

## MEDIA WATCH

# Air Pollution – The Silent Killer

By Izzat Imtiaz

**N**owadays, air over major cities throughout the world has become overburdened with gases produced by automobiles. The death rate due to automobile pollution is increasing rapidly in the metropolitan areas. With passage of time, people realized that polluted air has serious effects on their health, climate and economics.

Like many other mega cities in the world the ambient air quality of Quetta, Pakistan, is also deteriorating nowadays. Quetta, the capital city of Balochistan, was established as a military garrison by British raj. It was planned to accommodate 100,000 people. Today, Quetta is home to approximately 3 million people.

Quetta is not only the capital city but also the only metropolitan city of Balochistan. People from all 31 districts of the province live in Quetta because it's the only city where living standards are comparatively better as compared to other districts. This means that problems in Quetta affect the people of Balochistan as a whole.

Quetta is like a cup shaped valley with an (lat. 30° 11 'N long. 66° 57 'E) is elevated at 1799 m above sea level and covered from all dry mountains. In Quetta Air pollution is the number one problem because of its cup shaped. The atmosphere in the city is so polluted that thick layers of the lethal gases like carbon dioxide, lead particles, etc, always exist in the environment. Air pollution in and around Quetta city is mainly caused by the rapidly increas-

ing number of vehicles, especially the smoke emitted from rickshaws, buses, trucks, vehicle, motorcycles, etc. There is not a proper traffic management system in Quetta city and road spaces are limited.

According to a 2011 World Health Organization (WHO) report Quetta shares fourth place on the most pollut-

Like many other mega cities in the world the ambient air quality of Quetta, Pakistan, is also deteriorating nowadays. Quetta, the capital city of Balochistan, was established as a military garrison by British raj. It was planned to accommodate 100,000 people. Today, Quetta is home to approximately 3 million people.

ed city list.

The source's of air pollution in Quetta and the unique problem arising out of the emission from the vehicles, industries and etc. Automobile exhausts and certain industrial pollutants produce O<sub>3</sub> by photochemical reactions. The particulate matter, particularly less than 10 µm in size, can

pass through the natural protective mechanism of human respiratory system and plays an important role in genesis and expansion of allergic disorders. Air pollution has significant effects on exacerbation of asthma, allergy and other respiratory diseases.

Ambient air quality was monitored along with micrometeorological data. The status of air pollution can be determined by a questionnaire survey to estimate the allergic symptoms and exposure to assess the respiratory disorders.

In order to emphasize air pollution the theme of World Environment Day 2019 is also related to "Beat Air Pollution" so we have to focus on this problem. I suggest using low cost sensors. We can also use and hire reference method equipment, ideal for local authorities and those working within tight budgets. This would provide the ideal solution for the high-quality trend and indicative monitoring performance. Some of them are: Diffusion Tubes, Zephyr — Air Quality Sensor, E-Sampler — Laser Backscatter Particulate Monitor, ES-642 Particulate Monitor, Hire Smog Box — Portable 'reference method' direct NO<sub>2</sub> monitor with GPS and tracking and Hire Smog Mobile — Mobile Air Quality Monitoring Laboratory (100% emission free mobiles). A strategic air quality management plan can also be proposed, for the mitigation of air pollution problems in the city, different measures to be adopted to maintain the balance between sustainable development and environmental management.