

I strongly believe that climate crisis is an impending devastation if we as a human do not get our acts together in this. Our planet is warming due to excessive green house gas emissions, in particular the carbon dioxide gas.

My country Tibet, which is the highest plateau in the world, is currently suffering most from the climate crisis. Alarmingly, the temperature increase on the Tibetan plateau is two times greater than that of the global temperature increase. Tibetan plateau currently holds 46,000 glaciers, the third largest after the Arctic and the Antarctic pole. Because of that Tibet is also known as the “Third Pole.” The glaciers on the plateau are now melting at an average 7 percent annually and scientists predict that if the rate of melt continues to keep the same pace, then it may lose two-third of its glaciers by 2050. This meltdown of glaciers will endanger millions of lives downstream in countries like India, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia who depend on the glacial melt river waters originating from Tibet.

Climate education plays an extremely important role in combatting the crisis. Ten years back as a teacher, I initiated to start an environmental club in our school and worked with students on a project to replace around 550 incandescent bulbs by the more energy efficient lamps. The students got involved-replaced the bulbs, calculated the energy savings, and signed pledge sheets to never again use inefficient light bulbs. We also presented our findings, both energy and cost savings, to other students and staffs of the school. As such I believe, we made a significant contribution in creating individual as well community impact. Most importantly the students had a joyful experience along with the learning that happened while taking part in the project.

World leaders and decision makers should create avenues for teachers and youth in schools and universities by providing grants and other supporting tools for projects and research works. These could be implemented through public-private partnerships. Along with it a concrete environmental educational curriculum in schools and universities should be developed. They should also promote the concept of Green School Campus and University to instill the concept of interdependency in our youth. We can only get our acts together in this fight when we understand and appreciate interdependency.

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