



Positive Aspects of COVID 19 Pandemic: A Blessing in Disguise

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ABSTRACT

COVID 19 is undeniably one of the deadliest diseases that humanity has ever seen. It continues to affect the lives and livelihood of people appallingly across the world. Maximum discussions focus towards the apprehension of catching the infection, dwelling in homes, overpopulated nursing homes and shut down of all kinds. But, here let's discuss the positive side of COVID 19 pandemic. As COVID 19 has spread its influence all over the world, affected countries have either announced lockdown or have implemented severe restrictions in their respective countries. Because of this, everyone dwells in their homes. Thus, exercising social distancing and functioning from home. All of the above is directed at restricting the transmission of coronavirus and expectantly ostracising the fatality from COVID 19. These transformations have also brought about some unanticipated emanations; some good things have come out of the pandemic as well. Positive effects of COVID 19 are seen on reduced road traffic, and road traffic accidents lowered levels of air pollution which has to lead to lowered heart attack rates and rejuvenating environment. Crime rates have fallen, and expenses are reduced in most places. Community action, communication amongst families, behaviour, sanitation, hygiene, online and distance education has positively impacted by COVID 19 pandemic. COVID 19 despite a bane for humans, can be thought of a boon for living beings. The habitats and elements have been purified with the stringent use of petrochemical products. To breathe fresh air and to consume purified water is a boon by itself. Now, it is time for humans to lead a caring life to every bounty bestowed on them by Nature. This thoughtful and considerate life will give hope for a healthy, stress-free life.



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BACKGROUND

The world has been transformed, in a matter of months. It seems like everyone is talking about the COVID 19 pandemic. COVID 19 is undeniably one of the deadliest diseases that humankind has ever seen. It continues to dreadfully affect the lives and livelihood of people across the world.

Most of the people who were contaminated or deceased from this disease widen every day from a coronavirus that was formerly unfamiliar since emerging in Wuhan City in December 2019. For trillions of others who have not captured this infection, their unified lifestyle has reciprocated by it. Maxi-

mum discussions focus towards the apprehension of catching the disease, dwelling in homes, overpopulated nursing homes and shut down of all kinds. But, here let's discuss the positive side of COVID 19 pandemic.

Description

As COVID 19 has spread its influence all over the world, affected countries have either announced lockdown or have implemented strict restrictions in their respective countries. In India, lockdown for 21 days was announced by the Prime Minister of India from midnight of 24th March 2020. The world's most extensive lockdown means all industries, departmental stores, shops, and places of worship are straight-away sealed, most public transports stopped and construction work terminated.

Because of this, everyone dwelled within their homes, exercising social distancing and functioning from home which all is directed at restricting the transmission of coronavirus and expectantly abbreviating the fatality from COVID 19. These transformations have also brought about some unanticipated emanations; some good things have come out of the pandemic as well. So, instead of concentrating on pessimistic effects of COVID 19 pandemic, let's focus on the positive aspects of this pandemic and act purposefully to continue these positive effects as time moves on.

Road traffic and Road traffic accidents

In Wuhan, China, the streets are uninhabited after the Government enforced a stringent lockdown. In London and Italy, The most pervasive travel regulations are applicable in Great Britain & Italy. Traffic in New York City was predicted to downgrade 35% compared within a year ago.²The public curfew in India on 22nd March culminated in the lowest one-day traffic pollution levels, a study from CREA said (Oroschakoff, 2020). Moreover, flights schedules have been abolished worldwide. All these lockdown and travel restrictions are having an impact on traffic and pollution, which has ultimately resulted in a significant reduction in deaths due to traffic accidents and air pollution worldwide.

Statistics in New York suggests that instructions to restrain avoidable travel are having a compelling effect on air pollution. According to researchers at Columbia University, carbon monoxide emissions (mainly due to cars and trucks) have decreased by around 50%. At the same time, there was a significant drop in CO₂ and methane levels in New York (Mcgrath, 2020). According to Gufran Beig, a scientist with the System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research (SAFAR) under India's

Ministry of Earth Sciences Wright (2020), the average nitrogen dioxide levels declined by 40-50% in the cities of Mumbai, Pune and Ahmedabad, during the first three weeks of March, compared with the same period in 2018 and 2019. Other dangerous pollutants, PM 2.5 and the larger PM 10 also dropped steeply, the report added (Oroschakoff, 2020).

Air Pollution and Greenhouse Gas emissions

According to air pollution research organisation, the Center for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA); Wright (2020) energy use and CO₂ emissions had dropped significantly in China in this period. Experts have predicted an overall fall of about 1% in China's carbon emissions this year (Oroschakoff, 2020; Mcgrath, 2020). Because of diminished car journeys and industrial activity, China and Northern Italy have documented a significant decline in nitrogen dioxide (Mcgrath, 2020). Satellite images released by NASA and the European Space Agency show an impressive minimisation in nitrogen dioxide emissions in the UK, Spain and Italy (Wright, 2020; Henriques, 2020). Pollution levels in New York have decreased by nearly 50% compared with this time previous year, because of various measures to stop the spread of the virus (Henriques, 2020). Lower oil demand worldwide could have further decreased emissions.

Sky.com has reported, "Up to 100,000 premature deaths caused by air pollution in China could be avoided if the country's economic slowdown continues at its current rate over the next year." Centre for International Climate Research in Oslo has said, "As the burning of fossil fuels has dropped, air quality has improved significantly, and the impact will be felt worldwide" (Amir, 2020).

Data recorded from the main cities of India showed a significant drop in levels of harmful microscopic particulate matter released by vehicles and power plants as PM 2.5 and nitrogen dioxide. The sudden decrease in pollutants and the consequent blue skies suggest an incredible transformation in India, which has 21 of the world's 30 most polluted cities, according to the IQAir AirVisual's 2019 World Air Quality Report (Wright, 2020).

In New Delhi, data shows the average concentration of PM 2.5 and nitrogen dioxide has gone down by around 70% in the space of a week after the lockdown began (Henriques, 2020). Other Metropolitan Cities, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and Bangalore have also recorded a compelling drop in these air pollutants (Wright, 2020). According to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), air quality in India has significantly improved; now abiding in the "moder-

ate" category as against familiar "poor", "inferior" and "severe" categories ([Express, 2020](#)).

Researchers have accepted that they perceive significantly lower seismic vibrations. According to Lecocq, information from a seismometer reveals that actions to suppress the spread of COVID-19 in Brussels caused human-induced seismic noise to fall by about one-third. This fall in human-induced sound might improve the sensitivity of detectors to natural waves at similar frequencies ([Jafery, 2020](#)).

Environment /Global warming

While people are confronting with COVID 19 and have started confining themselves within their residence, the environment is using this moment to revitalise itself. In the Venice canal, Italy water has also become clear due to lack of water traffic, and NASA images had shown a rapid drop in pollution in cities across the globe ([Harvath, 2020](#)). A charming snow-clad Dhauladhar mountain range, part of the Himalayan range in Himachal Pradesh, was visible for the first time in Jalandhar, Punjab on 3rd April ([Chronicle, 2020](#)).

As people everywhere in the world following safeguards against COVID 19, "I think one of the interesting things about it is, wow, the earth bounces back," says Dr Win Everham, FGCU professor of ecology and environmental studies. Everham believes in a time of ambivalence, "It's kind of cool that it's happening at a moment where everybody's under a lot of stress and reconnecting with the natural world maybe helps them deal with some of that stress" ([Harvath, 2020](#)).

Like air and water, wildlife has also started acknowledging changes. Everham said more than 16000 birds have returned to the campus in a week ([Harvath, 2020](#)). Several reports have appeared showcasing the comeback of many species to their natural dwellings, like the return of dolphins to the Italian port, according to report in the New York Times. In Kerala's Kozhikode, a Malabar civet, which is severely threatened animal, was observed walking on the road ([Express, 2020](#)).

To conclude, when you shut down manufacturing plants and vehicles for a short period, it can even slow down global warming and rejuvenate the environment.

Crime Rates

These restrictions are bringing relief to the residents as well as the police from the 'seasonal' crime. The graph of crime rate has been witnessing a downward trend for the last few days across India. Since people on the streets have decreased due to lockdown, street crimes and catastrophic road accidents

are showing a downward trend and increased police protection. Closed borders have added towards a low rate in robbery and vehicle thefts.

According to Delhi Police, the crime rate in the city has fallen intensely. In the second half of March, most crimes like molestation, fights have diminished by half, and a few others like robbery, kidnapping and extortion saw a drop of 80% ([Today, 2020a](#)).

"Drinking in public has reduced to nil owing to the lockdown. The closures of colony roads have reduced accidents," according to Mandeep Singh Randhawa, Delhi Police PRO. Crimes against senior citizens have drastically decreased as all of them are staying at their homes ([Today, 2020a](#)). As per a senior police officer in Kolkata, criminal activities in the city, including dacoity, eve-teasing, snatching and pick-pocketing, have almost halved during the lockdown period ([Firstpost, 2020](#)). Scrutiny at the borders has caused a hindrance for criminals from the surrounding states.

Online and Distance Education

While the short term impacts of COVID19 on higher education have been largely disorderly in a negative way, some AACSB member schools were waiting for a "silver lining" to what they have perceived. In the survey on COVID 19, respondents were asked about any anticipated positive effects of the actions they have been forced to tackle with the COVID 19 crisis. ([Blog, 2020](#)). The most natural possibly positive outcome shared was that the school and/or university might further evolve and broaden its digital offerings. Many respondents agreed that this event might boost schools to reassess their faculty's approach to online delivery of education and online learning assessment ([Blog, 2020](#)).

This crisis will provide a platform to inspire more faculties to reevaluate their approach to technology and is used to provide a more engaging student experience. It has accelerated the rate of change in the right direction, especially concerning the development of online and integrated degree programs and short courses.

If a professor deliberately prepares his/her class for online lecture, in future, these courses might be transferred online to fascinate more students. This preparation may increase the array of courses offered online in the future. So, higher education will be better adapted to react and continue operations in case of similar events.

Heart Attacks

During the lockdown period, the number of cases going to hospitals with heart attacks has come down all over the country. Doctors in states like Gujrat,

Punjab and cities like Delhi, Bengaluru and Mumbai have registered less number of cases. Data compared by an organisation of state government hospitals have recorded 40% drop in the number of patients coming with complete blockage of heart blood vessels (ST-elevation myocardial infarction), and up to 70% decline in patients beginning with the partial block (Non-ST elevation myocardial infarction). This is in similar with a dip in heart attack cases reported in the US, Italy and Germany. While some experts believe that this downgrade is due to reduced pollution and traffic-induced stress, others think that mild cases are not reaching the hospitals (Narayan, 2020).

Community action

While few people are seen violating lock-down norms laid by the Government, most Indians are strictly following these norms. One response to the corona virus outbreak is that many communities have taken big steps to protect each other from the health crisis.

The Prime Minister of India and Chief Ministers of individual states have urged to the peoples of Country for Financial help. Various non-government organizations, social forums, major business houses, film stars, sports players and common Indians are donating generously and helping the needy ones not only with food, medicines and shelter but also with other consumable items. Few of them are production of personal protective equipment (PPE), respiratory systems, testing kits, establishing compatible treatment facilities, providing essential items, groceries and cooked meals to the needy families (Madhukalya, 2020).

COVID 19 has shown that communities can make the difference when they look out for each other. This lesson could be precious in dealing with climate change. Expeditious action could also be taken at community level on climate change if the threat it poses will be treated as urgent. "It... shows that at the national or international level, if we need to take action we can," Donna Green, associate professor at University of New South Wales's Climate Change Research Centre in New Zealand, told CNN (Harvath, 2020). Community action has sparked hope for the climate in the longer term, according to Nicholas (Blog, 2020).

Sanitation and hygiene

Persons, who were previously resistant to take bath, have started regular bathing and washing their hands. Persons, who were previously ignorant about importance of hand wash with soaps or sanitizers, they are now practicing it regularly. Most of

the people have started regular cleaning of mobiles and other daily appliances to make them germ free. People are recognizing the importance of sanitation and sanitation workers. The citizen of Nabha, Punjab, showered flowers and on cleanliness workers from their terraces and also acknowledged them with a big round of applause and patted on back for their service during the COVID 19 lockdown (Today, 2020b).

Behavioral change

During the corona virus outbreak, habits that are mutually good for the climate are less travelling or lowering on food waste. Most of the people have also adopted habits of sanitation and personal hygiene. As maids are also on holidays, people have started managing their household chores on their own, which has made them independent. Kids have started helping their elderly in household chores. People have started cooking variety of foodstuff at home, which has reduced outside food /junk food consumption in their diets and healthy food consumption has increased amongst youngsters.

The behavioural changes occurring because of lock-down could carry over beyond the current corona virus pandemic. "We know from social science research that interventions are more effective if they take place during moments of change," says Nicholas (Harvath, 2020).

A study led by Corinne Moser in 2018 at Zurich University of Applied Sciences in Switzerland found that when people were unable to ride cars and given free e-bike access instead, they drove much less when they ultimately got their car back (Blog, 2020).

So, times of change can lead to the initiation of deep-routed habits. If at least few people will follow these behavioural changes routinely in their daily life even after this pandemic is over, it will be the biggest advantage of this pandemic.

Communication

Because of this lockdown, three generations in a family are sitting together and enjoying each other's company. Parents have started spending time with their kids, which was missing in their daily busy schedule previously. Most of the people can't find time for their hobbies in their routine schedule, but now because of these compulsory holidays they have started enjoying their hobbies. Overall communication amongst family members has improved significantly.

Inspite of social outpacing and being stuck at their homes, some people feel more linked. People are receiving more phone calls, text messages, and private messages on social media sites than earlier.

People may be confined, but they are collaborated more than usually both to old and new friends, family members, and colleagues. In routine busy lives, people hardly take time to slow down, stay home, and go inbound. So, this crisis is giving people with this new opportunity.

Expenses

Average travelling time for employees in Metro Cities is around 2 hours to 4 hours. As most of the people are working from home, it has reduced their travelling time and expenses. It has also reduced frequent eating out and other travelling expenses for a family.

CONCLUSIONS

COVID 19 continues to dreadfully affect the lives and livelihood of people across the world. But don't only concentrate on the pessimistic effects of COVID 19 pandemic. Instead, focus on affirmative aspects in personal life and the universe everywhere. We can hope that this pandemic enriched habitat all over and backed soothe Mother Earth. We can hope for a world where people are healthy, and we should help others escape out of nervousness & stress in the course of this crucial time. Challenge for us is to carry these affirmative things going firm post-pandemic.

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