

“Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less”- I guess, this quote by Marie Curie accord well in this global battle against the Corona pandemic, which, apparently is creating tremendous havoc in our lives like a frail ship in thunderstorm.

‘Lockdown’, a word more dreaded than nuclear explosion these days, a word, no millennial has ever come across with until very recently, a word, that might have taken the liberty of leisure and fun from the lives of people worldwide but have surely given us the boon of safety in these times of chaos, is, surely having different implications on different people all around the globe. While many are forced to work from home and aimlessly walk from one room to another in the hope of ticking time away, others such as chatty as myself, find it to be a real struggle to not being able to catch up with their friends and acquaintances in person. While most of us have taken various hobbies such as cooking, gardening, painting, blogging, reading, making Tiktok, binge watching Netflix and what not, there are many people out there who are just enjoying quality time with their family and loved ones, which they were yearning to do since a long time. And honestly, one can easily relate to them, for, you see, the times we live in, it demands a very costly price. All this time, Man was being increasingly hit by the barrenness of a busy life. But now, all of a sudden, this fast paced lifestyle has come to a halt.

While the modern life has largely been put on pause with millions of us cooped up indoors as governments try to curtail the spread of Covid-19 pandemic, there's a ray of shine as our mother nature rejuvenates. Internet is flooded with pictures of Dhauladhar Range being visible for the first time in Jalandhar due to a significant drop in air pollution. In fact, there has been more than 10% drop in air pollutants in cities like Mumbai, Delhi, New York, Hong Kong. The waters of Ganga have been the clearest of all time and even the researchers are surprised what Rs. 20000 Crore worth project of Namami Gange could not achieve in years, the entire lockdown did in few weeks. Not only Ganga, but the waters of Venice, Italy are cleaner than they have been, so much so, in fact, one can see all sorts of fish in the canals. A never seen before incident also took place along the eastern coast of Odisha. Over 4,75,000 endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles have come ashore to dig their nests and lay eggs. All of these recent evidences indicate that man has been the greatest enemy of nature but now, that, it has been put on hold with all of his activities amidst the Coronavirus lockdown, Nature has surely gained an upper hand as it restores its bliss!

The Coronavirus lockdown is also having a dramatic impact on animals across the globe too. The pandemic is thought to have originated at a market selling wild animals in China, throwing a spotlight on the global wildlife trade. Many Animal Right societies and organizations have been urging governments to ban live animal markets, and stop illegal

trafficking and poaching of wild animals. In the wake of initial outbreak in Wuhan, China introduced a ban on all farming and consumption of live wildlife and is expected to become law later this year.

Zoos across the country have been closed as part of national lockdown and zookeepers says that animals are missing the attention of humans as, both, their visitors as well as their handlers have been reduced significantly. Also, many street animals, who used to rely on food given by humans, are going hungry. Many died too. Although, volunteers are trying best to cover as many areas as they can foot. However, the main issue lies in feeding the strays on the outskirts of cities and areas that are disconnected with residential areas. Many problems have also been faced by pet parents as they fail to travel to get pet food. They can't walk their pets as they used to, before, especially in the hotspots for Coronavirus infection.

However, the wildlife is running.....wild! A herd of deer was caught on camera walking the streets of Haridwar during the COVID-19 lockdown. And Wild boars have been spotted in the very center of Barcelona, mountain goats in Wales, wild monkeys in Lopburi, Thailand.

So far we can say the Lockdown has been very subjective in regard to its effects on different beings. However, for humans, it has been real hard, in particular. For all these years' man has evolved himself for the fast paced world. From leaving early to offices and work, sometimes skipping a meal or two

just to get right onto the everyday schedule, working 9 to 5 like robots every single day; now that it feels like someone stole the chronosphere from the time's castle and pushed the reset button. And now that we are inside our homes all day, doing just nothing, or, close to nothing and we've apparently all the time in the world and, to be honest, deep down inside, we've all wanted this laid back lifestyle to be a regular thing. There's no denying! No inhibitions, no waking up early, no more last minute catching metros or buses to the offices, no more work files, no more delaying your planned vacations, no more working late night shifts etc. etc.! All relaxed! But, alas! Do we feel happy? Are we all enjoying this newly found 'free from work' concessions? I bet, not.

Though, we all wanted to just sit down for a moment in time and relax, but not like this. Not as a part of a compulsion imposed by the governments, but as a free choice; not at the cost of thousands of lives being lost every single day and people mourning the loss of their loved ones, or, the global economy crashing down more and more as each day passes by. And some of us are not even that lucky to have a place called home. Many daily wagers and factory workers are seen stranded on deserted roads for several kilometers on foot, carrying their children in their arms with nothing to eat or nowhere to rest. As they fail to make both ends meet, they are headed for their homes from the cities. Although, both, the state and central governments are already doing their best to uplift their miseries and a lot more is to be done. Every community is

equally sharing the responsibilities, may it be in the form of obeying the law or, actively donating for the relief funds; feeding the homeless; showing gratitude for everyone who is engaged in this battle against the Corona pandemic or farmers and manufacturers carrying on the supply of essentials such as food and other goods in the time of crisis. Everyone is doing their best.

Then, there are many who are defying all odds and going above and beyond the call of duty. Our doctors, healthcare workers, people engaged in sanitization and cleaning work, police force, delivery agents, media reporters and all the 'Corona Warriors' are doing their possible best to provide essential services nationwide. Many also got infected in the process and some lost their lives too. We, surely, would not be able to thank them enough for their allegiance.

In the end, it would not be wrong to say, someone has opened the Pandora's box and released the deadly sins upon mankind in the form of this novel coronavirus, for no one has ever imagined anything like this to happen. Nothing is gonna hit as hard as life, but it ain't how hard you can hit. It's how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward. It's how much you can take and keep moving forward. That's how winning is done. And, in the end, we will win. Definitely!