

Lockdown-the literal meaning is " a state of isolation or restricted access instituted as a security measure". Lockdown has been imposed in many countries from last one or two months due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. While some people are obeying it others are not only disobeying it but are also creating problems for healthcare workers and police. Lockdown has affected humans, animals and nature in many ways. Many people face job losses and health anxiety during lockdown. A review published recently in Lancet, which studied literature on the psychological impact of quarantine during previous exposure such as SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) found proof of a range of psychological conditions like confusion, depression, stress and emotional exhaustion. Lockdown may have different meanings for the poor and rich people. For the poor who work on daily wage, lockdown is merely a curse which has made

them deprived of food. But for the rich people its just a restriction on their outings with friends and family. Similarly lockdown has different impact on people living in villages and those living in cities. While the people of villages are busy harvesting their rabi crops, those living in heavily populated cities are just enclosed in their homes with little movement outside. They can only go out to buy their essentials. Lockdown has many positive effects on people. It has made people discover their hidden talents. While some are busy showing their cooking skills others are flaunting their drawing skills. As a result of this whatsapp and other social networking apps are flooded with such pictures and videos. Many people are working from homes via teleconference. Students of various schools and colleges are studying via videoconferencing and Pdf notes. One of the positive effect of lockdown in India is that people have switched to the DD National

channel to watch the shows- Ramanand Sagar's Ramayana and Mahabharata. All the 90s kids are watching these shows with their parents. Lockdown has made people realise the importance of spending time with their families. Many people are spending time reading the books which they could not read due to their busy schedule. Some people have composed songs on the current situation. Besides all these things, marriages, exams, meetings etc. all have been postponed. It seems that life has come to a halt. There are some instances where people are unable to attend the funeral of their relatives ( due to the imposition of Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), which is very unfortunate. Many people who are away from their homes have no other choice, as they have to stay there until the lockdown ends. The psychological effect of lockdown can be predominantly seen on drug addicts. The lack of drug/liquor availability has made them stand

in queue outside the rehabilitation centres (as was seen in Punjab). There are some people who have to do their jobs regardless of the lockdown imposed. These are doctors, paramedical staff, veterinarians, police, cleaners etc. Lockdown has indirectly affected the animals also. They are regaining their access to the nature and are enjoying much more than before. Birds can be heard chirping, peacocks can be heard screaming. All these sounds were earlier masked by the ever increasing noise pollution. People have also started noticing them and are loving their playful behaviour. As a result of decreased human movements on roads, the wild animals such as deer, civet cats and even cheetah could be seen roaming on roads in some cities of India. But then also, this year there are much lower toll for roadkill of animals by cars and trucks. Poor countries fear an increased threat to wildlife because the pandemic means less money and

personnel with which to conserve endangered species and habitats. Pets are somewhat unhappy as now they cannot go out for morning and evening walk with their owners. Stray animals are enjoying their life as they were doing before the lockdown because they haven't got masters to lead them. Tamed animals suffered least, as they get food and water at their place as it was before. The lockdown period is turning out to be extremely testing for shelterless animals and those who are in pet shops. While the shelterless are unable to get enough food and water, those in pet shops are finding themselves in a similar situation now. Following the lockdown, many pet shops owners have abandoned the incarcerated animals across the city. Lockdown has greatest effect on nature. Many people think that the nature is healing itself. Many of the pollution causing industries have been closed, number of vehicles running on road has reduced. All this has

lead to less emission of dust and poisonous gases into the atmosphere. The electricity consumption has reduced considerably. The clouds seem to be more bluish, leaves appear more greenish, and air is more fresh now. The mountains look more beautiful now. The moon looks bigger and more beautiful than it was before. It appears that it has moved closer to the earth. Stars appear like white pearls in dark sky. It seems that the nature has attained its best form ever. It looks like the good old days are back when nature was not manipulated by us. According to United Nation Environment Programme, 75% of new infectious diseases come from animals. Compared with the past, they pass more rapidly to humans through wildlife trafficking and deforestation and then spread across the globe through air travel. The water of holy rivers of India has become pollution free. This is a great achievement in itself, the mission which could not be accomplished by the

expensive projects launched by the government, has been achieved merely by a lockdown of a month or so. Reduced human activity has allowed water in the canals to self-cleanse to reveal the floating fish inside. The earth's ozone layer shows improvement amid lockdown. Researchers who study Earth's movement are reporting a drop in seismic noise — the hum of vibrations in the planet's crust — that could be the result of transport networks and other human activities being shut down. They say this could allow detectors to spot smaller earthquakes and boost efforts to monitor volcanic activity and other seismic events. To conclude, lockdown has many positive effects and some negative also. After decades of relentlessly increasing pressure the human footprint on earth has suddenly lightened. Some people think that there should be a lockdown of one or two weeks every year. But the economic losses which a nation

will face have to be considered. It seems that this pandemic is our karma (deed), which wants us to realise that the planet earth is shared equally by all the creatures created by the creator and only humans are not the sole masters. United Nations environment chief Inger Andersen, put it -nature is sending us a message that if we neglect the planet, we put our own well being at risk. Honourable Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narendra Damodardas Modi, while announcing the 21 day nationwide lockdown (which is now extended) also stressed on "Sanyam and sankalp" or "restraint and resolve" to get through the crisis. At the end we will surely emerge as winners. Remember every dark cloud has a silver lining.