

## **Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Environment**

From the day life started on Earth, it has provided all the living creatures with food and shelter. Man being the most intelligent of all the species observed nature and learnt. He started experimenting all his new ideas and paved the way for new inventions, from carving out a spear to hunt to using wheels for transportation, man got it all from mother earth. As the brain cells evolved and the man started learning more and more, his greed increased and what he was supposed to save he destroyed. With the invention of atom bombs and nuclear weapons, he terrorized mother earth. He has forcefully acquired the great forests and deep seas. He invented the air conditioners, refrigerators, mobile towers for his comfort and destroyed other life forms on earth. Many animals are extinct today because of human beings.

The coronavirus which is believed to be originated from Wuhan's wet market has proved to be a great threat to human beings. After killing thousands in China, it had made its way into all the great nations across the globe. With total cases of 7 million and nearly half a million deaths already, it has challenged the economic structure the man had built and threatened his existence in the world. Even with all the advanced science and technologies scientists across the globe don't seem to have the vaccine to cure COVID-19. The only solution the world leaders could think of is social distancing and enforcing lockdown across countries. All the industries, factories, IT companies, tourism, transportation are halted. Human beings are quarantined in their homes.

The novel coronavirus which has turned out to be Perseus, the Greek God of destruction to mankind, has turned out to be Pan, the Greek God of new life to animals and nature. While human beings are indoors, nature is healing. The environment has a small window to breathe during the lockdown. There is news about Nilgais roaming freely in the streets of Noida, monkeys hoisting a pool party in a posh society of Mumbai. We have seen the mesmerizing visuals of the flock of flamingos migrating to Mumbai. Officials confirmed that this phenomenon was possible because of the improvement of the water and air quality, which in turn improved the quality of algae, which is the primary food source of flamingos. Cities have woken up to the unprecedented views of the Mountain ranges visible to the naked eye. River Ganga, the sacred river of Hindus, which was one of the most polluted rivers of India, is healing and returning to its ancient days of purity. The Yamuna river shocked everyone last year with toxic foam appearing on its surface, has appeared clear during the lockdown. The reports released by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) of India has shown that there was a drastic decrease in nitrogen and carbon dioxide in the air. Nature's self-healing process has left millions around the world in awe.

Covid-19 and lockdown which was imposed as the result of novel coronavirus have shown us a new path of possibilities and self-realization. Earth, which we believed was harmed beyond saving has shown signs of recovery. People have realized the importance of trees after being tortured by the scorching heat of summer days. People are finally understanding the impact of climate change. The Quarantine period has taught human beings the importance of freedom. The coronavirus might finally put an end to the zoo culture where animals are prisoned for a lifetime. More and more people are switching to a plant-based diet after understanding the harms of consuming meat. Environmentalists believe that this could be a solution to control carbon emissions. Countries are planning on a fifteen days annual lockdown every year. With the newfound way of life, we were

able to curb global emissions. But, once the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions are removed and life returns to normal, we should learn from our past and change the way we live. Can we all pledge not to waste or pollute the water we drink, can we all plant the seed of the fruit we just ate, can we all decrease using the air conditioners and refrigerators, can we all move around using bicycles instead of carbon emitting vehicles, can we all start respecting nature and not destroy it in the name of development.