The hidden positive effects of COVID-19 pandemic

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ABSTRACT

The Coronavirus disease spread like fire, and millions of cases have been reported worldwide, and thousands have died. So, many countries around the globe ordered lockdown to stop the spread of the Coronavirus, which caused significant economic fallout. But every incident has two aspects, positive and negative. This article aimed to study the positive effects of COVID-19 pandemic on some specific factors and to study this topic, data is collected from various websites, web blogs, newspapers and reports on the internet. This pandemic enforced the cancellation or postponement of multiple events, which leads to a reduction in travelling and subsequently there were fewer vehicles on the road, which leads to a decrease in air and water pollution. Road traffic accidents and crime rate had come down suddenly. Due to lockdown, there was a reduction in transportation and industrial activity which allowed Mother Nature to recharge and replenish. Due to lockdown, people spent quality time with their family, fulfilled their hobbies, learnt many new skills and understood the importance of sanitation, hand hygiene and social distancing. This pandemic is a lesson for us to learn many new things. This crisis revealed that there is a need to improve our healthcare system and clinical researches. Immunity of an individual can play an important role to fight these kinds of viral diseases, and these diseases can be avoided by simply following the basic concepts of Ayurveda. This lockdown showed the short-term depletion in greenhouse gas emissions, but this is not an option for long-lasting climate change, and we have to think about a sustainable solution to save the environment.

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INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 is an infectious disease which is caused due to the SARS-CoV-2 [Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Corona Virus 2] and suddenly it spread all around the globe. This disease outbreak was identified in Wuhan, China in December 2019 and on 11 March 2020; the WHO [World Health Organization] announced it as a pandemic (COVID-19 Pandemic, 2020). Till now millions of cases have been reported from worldwide, and thousands have died. But at the contrary thousands of cases have also been recovered from this disease. This virus usually spreads through the close human to human contact often via droplets or droplets fall on the ground or surfaces. That’s why to combat this disease; physical distancing plays an important role. So Government of India ordered nationwide lockdown on 24 March 2020 to restrict the spread of disease (COVID-19 pandemic lockdown in India, 2020). Along with India, many countries in the world took the decision of lockdown, which caused significant
economic fallout (Gopinath, 2020). But it is rightly said that every coin has two sides, that means every situation or incident has two aspects, positive and negative.

**Air pollution, Water pollution and Global warming**

This pandemic enforced the cancellation or postponement of various sports, cultural, political and religious events, which result in the reduction of travelling. Subsequently, there were fewer vehicles on the road, which leads to a decrease in consumption of petroleum product and a remarkable reduction in air pollution has been seen. The cities which used to have a poor quality of air have been reported cleaner air. Another reason behind the decreased air pollution is in the shutdown of various factories which consumed a large amount of coal. As per the image released by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration [NASA] on 21 April 2020, showed low aerosol levels in northern India just after a week of lockdown. Due to lockdown, India's electricity expenditure fallen by 18.72 % till 3 April 2020, as per the data given by the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago (Aggarwal, 2020). According to the World Meteorological Organization, this lockdown showed the short-term depletion in greenhouse gas emissions, but this is not an option to combat the long-lasting climate change (Taalas, 2020). Another report by the European Space Agency [ESA], showed the remarkable reduction of around 40-50 % of NO₂ [Nitrogen Dioxide] in Mumbai and Delhi, which is differentiated by the same period as last year (Singh, 2020).

Not only air but also water quality of rivers had also become improved. The vice-chairman of the Delhi Jal Board, named Raghav Chadha has said that cessation of industrial waste has caused a positive impact on the water quality of Yamuna River (Ani, 2020). Citizens of Jalander, a city in Punjab state of India have been posted photographs of the Himalaya from more than 120 miles away, which is visible for the first time in last 30 years (Elliott, 2020).

**Road traffic accidents and Crime**

Most of the people are locked in their respective places due to lockdown and the roads are empty, that’s why the number of deaths due to road accidents had come down suddenly. Due to lock down not only good but people with criminal instinct are also locked in their homes which caused in declination of crimes.

**Nature**

Due to lockdown, there was a reduction in transportation and industrial activity which allowed Mother Nature to recharge and replenish. Because of decreased water traffic in the Arabian Sea, Dolphins were seen leaping above the water surface, and it became easier to spot them near Marine Drive (Dsouza, 2020). Meanwhile, a wild Puma was spotted in Santiago, which is the capital city of Chile. It was captured roaming around the city during a night-time curfew (David, 2020).

**Behavioural change**

People spent much more quality time with their loved one. Many people felt relaxed and enjoyed their family time. Many of us realized the importance of sanitation and hand hygiene once again. Social distancing proved that the Indian tradition of greeting “Namaste” is the best. Many people started yoga as their daily regimen, and they managed to improve themselves by learning many new skills and overcome their weaknesses. People learnt to adjust to limited goods and stopped the unnecessary shopping and travelling. In these lockdown days, all family members came closer to each other as they might have spent this much of time together since last many years. School going children who were craving for the love of their parents have spent happy time once again. People managed to take care of their old parents. Human being understood the importance of life and showed gratitude that they are safe. Individuals again admitted that the pure air, healthy food and shelter are the prime need for living and other things are optional. They understood the necessity of conservation of mother earth. Many people fulfilled their hobbies and interests by writing poetry and articles, painting, cooking, gardening. People became more techno-savvy and familiar with the terms like a webinar, online classes, online transaction, online medicine delivery etc. A new trend of online lectures and meeting has been started. This pandemic opened the doors of new opportunities in the context of new ideas and jobs shortly.

Many internet-based industries are flourished. In this pandemic, Doctors, nurses, healthcare workers, Police and sanitation workers were able to make room in people’s mind. They had been given analogies like God, COVID Warriors and Hero. People showed their gratitude towards them by various actions like clapping, clanging utensils and ringing bells to express solidarity. Ayurveda, Ayurvedic doctors and AYUSH department had played a unique role in this pandemic. They created awareness in the people, worked as front line warriors and informed about various home remedies and immunity booster preparation to fight against Corona. Ayurveda concept like Rasayana, Dhupan, Janapadadwamsa, Din-
charya, Ritucharya in the prevention of these types of viral diseases had been reestablished.

**Foreign relations and goodwill gesture**

In this crisis, India tied the strong bond of friendship with many countries like United States, Germany, Spain, Seychelles, Dominican Republic, Bahrain, Mauritius, Brazil, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Nepal and Maldives by exporting drugs including Hydroxychloroquine [HCQ] which are very important to fight against COVID 19 (Raghavan, 2020). Even India has a dense population. It proves its ability to the world by taking significant steps and restricting the spread of the virus effectively.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The data related to this concern subject is collected from the websites of various organizations like WHO, NASA, Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago, European Space Agency and World Meteorological Organization. Along with these different web blogs, newspapers, research papers and reports of a variety of government agencies like Delhi Jal Board, have also been referred.

**DISCUSSION**

This pandemic of COVID 19 has taken away so much from us. People loosed their loved ones, loosed their jobs, and some people had to spend this period of lockdown alone at another place far from their family. Poor people had to face difficulty with their daily food for survival, and countries had to face the most massive global recession and unprecedented collapse in economic activities. But along with these bitter memories, these crises taught us some valuable lessons too.

People became more aware regarding many terms like COVID 19, virus, viral diseases, how an infection can spread, the importance of sanitation, social distancing and mask, the role of immunity, biological weapons, infectious diseases etc. This pandemic not only improved our knowledge regarding vaccine formation, clinical researches, quarantine facilities, hospitals and healthcare facilities, the capacity of our pharmacies and Pharmaceutical companies available in the respective countries, our strength and weaknesses to cope up with any such kind of pandemic in future, also made us realized that our medical facilities are not sufficient to deal with these kinds of crises. It has been seen that the many developed countries in the world are unable to stop the spread of the virus and had difficulty to deal with it. This pandemic will create a long-lasting impact on the mind of individuals. This incident will influence especially young minds who are supposed to select their career options. In this crisis, we saw that people came together to help the needy and created new examples of humanity, empathy and love.

Pollution of air, water and land make us more vulnerable to fall sick. In this era of technology, we were blindly running behind the worldly things and forgot to take care of the environment. Conservation of health and prevention of diseases is the first aim of the Ayurveda. Immunity of an individual can play a vital role to fight these kinds of viruses. Diseases can be avoided by simply following the basic concepts of the Ayurveda like Dincharya, Rutucharya, Ratricharya, Bramhcharya, Annapan vidhi, PATHApathya, Sadavrutta and by avoiding the etiological factors like Viruddhahar Sevan, Vegavrodha, Ratrijagar, Diwaswap and Pragyaparadha. It is important to create awareness in the society for Ayurvedic treatment modalities like Panchkarma, Suvarnaprashan, Garbhasanskaretc. along with various kinds of herbs and herbal preparations stated by AYUSH department to boost the immunity.

**CONCLUSION**

We should take this pandemic as a lesson and be ready with a specific road map to handle this kind of disease in future. People should take care of their physical and mental health using Ayurveda and yoga. This crisis revealed that there is a need to improve our healthcare system and clinical researches. We need to understand that this lockdown showed the short-term depletion in pollution, but this is not an option for long-lasting climate change, and we have to think of a sustainable solution to save the environment. Another critical point is, if this short duration of non-interference of the human being can make a of positive effect on our atmosphere then there is no doubt if we will try on our level best for the conservation of nature then it is possible to attain the previous glory of earth. We can say that situation is still in our hands to save the planet.

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**Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.
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