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## **Lockdown and its effects on Society, Literature and Environment**

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**Abstract:** The aim of writing this paper is to analyze the consequences of pandemic and lockdown upon the life of common people. A pandemic has changed man and his way of living a normal life. This paper also comprises a thorough study of social and environmental changes and how the migrant workers lead their life in miserable conditions. The life of children and homemakers during the lockdown is discussed. This paper also includes the effect of the pandemic on the environment and literature. Certain books, with summary thoroughly study which has pandemic as a major theme.

**Key Words** – Lockdown, society, migrants, environmental changes, books on pandemic.

### **Introduction**

One year passed since the prime minister of India Shri Narendra Modi, had declared the national lockdown on 22nd March 2020. Before this date, people were unaware that such a drastic disease would come into existence that might curtail all their personal, social, and economic rights. Life was suddenly changed as this national emergency had bound them to remain in their homes. This was the first time after independence when a national emergency was implemented only because of the Pandemic. The first political emergency was implemented on 25th July 1975, when the former Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi had taken back all the human rights of people, and it took place six months to get back to normal life. The Oxford dictionary defines lockdown as ‘an official order to control the movement of people or vehicles because of a dangerous situation.’ (1916) In a lockdown, all social rights of humans are being curtailed and they are bound to confine themselves in the house, however, lockdown is done only for the protection of people. There are various natural and man-made factors affecting lockdown. Massive rainfall, heavy flood, tsunami are natural factors, man-made factors may include, war, political and economic factors, lockdown is mostly affected by pandemics. The human mind is curious to invent discoveries that are beneficial for the progress human, various new technology has made the life of man more easy and comfortable. But by coincidence, some new diseases also invented that are endangered to humanity and those do not have proper vaccination. These diseases affect a large area of the population. Without being any proper vaccination, man is confined to use some precautions to remain away from such contaminated diseases.

## Pandemics, Meaning and History

Pandemics, epidemics all are a name given to a disease that contaminates the whole community or world. Pandemic is a scientific name given to a disease when it spread to the whole world and affects a large area of the population. Oxford Dictionary defines a pandemic as, a disease that spreads over a whole country or the whole world.(1112) History is the witness of various epidemics and Pandemics, epidemics, and some of them have originated accidentally and some are caused by some insane and egoistic minds. Human history is filled with various plagues, epidemics, and pandemics. The first epidemic was burst in china when on an archeological site, skeletons of a large group were found buried. One of the plagues of Athens affected the eyes and throat of a large number of people. The plague of Athens was caused during the war between Athens and Sparta. The arrival of smallpox in the shape of the Antonio Plague had vanished the life of thousands of people. The plague of the Cyprian population was affected by blindness, fever, and vomiting. Also called Bubonic plague, the Plague of Justinian was caused by the bacteria named *Yersinia pestis*. This plague had affected the major area of Europe and one-fifth of the population was affected by this plague. The black death is a plague name given to epidemic that spread in most of the European and Asian countries. This plague affected most lymphs causing fever, diarrhea, vomiting. The virus of Black death remained alive in the air and when a man inhales this, he was dead, such as the danger of this bubonic plague. Causing the death of millions of people in Spain and Mexico, the Cocoliztli plague had symptoms of neurological disorder causing bleeding nose, abdominal and chest pain along with dark urine. The American plague or yellow fever was an epidemic that affected most countries of the United States of America causing muscle pain and fever. The great plague of London was the most endangered counted in the history of the epidemic as it had caused 75000 death in London only.

This was The first time when the term isolation or Quarantine come into existence when the isolation period was increased to forty days. like covid-19, this plague affected the respiratory symptoms causing pneumonic diseases. The great plague of Marseille vanished out the 1 lakh population of France and its other provinces. Another plague that affected most of the population of the world is the American polio epidemic, Spanish flu, Asian flu, aids pandemic and epidemic, H1N1 swine flu pandemic, west African Ebola epidemic, Zika virus epidemic, Covid virus 2019.

## Coronavirus, meaning and precautions

Coronavirus is a disease that originated from the word crown because the physical shape of this virus looks like a crown, this virus was spread all around the world from the lab of Wuhan, district of china. Some scientists believe that this virus is the same as that found in the bats but no theory had proved it right. This virus affected the respiratory system of humans, it includes difficulty in breathing. Lungs are affected much causing low inhalation of oxygen due to which a man dies and it is contaminated. From its origin to till now approximately two billion people have died and many of them get affected by it. On 31st December 2019, people of the world get terrified when Coronavirus was first announced by the Wuhan district, as the most contaminated disease-causing sudden death. No doubt its vaccine is developed but the danger becomes more serious when this virus had held all the continent population causing millions of death. This pandemic is caused by a virus that is alive in the air, hard and liquid objects. When an infected person went to a heavily populated area then it increases the danger of the community transmission of the diseases. When a person infected by coronavirus sneezes, this virus went into the air, infects other people. There are certain precautions that we must follow to remain away from such a deadly virus. The very first thing that we should do is to spend most of our time in the house until and unless it is mandatory

to go outside. We should keep social distancing, remain away from the heavily populated area. Whenever we go outside, we must keep sanitization with us, so that in necessary we should sanitize our hands regularly and thoroughly.

When we are out of the home, we must be aware not to touch anything and covered our face and nose with masks. We must not touch our noses and eyes. It is better to greet people with joining hands instead of a handshake. We must avoid traveling until it is necessary. Whenever we go out to bring households thing like groceries, we must wash them and after entering into the house, take bath and ensure your hygiene, avoid eating food prepared outside. In this crucial time when our life is at risk. It is necessary to eat healthy and immunity booster food and keep our body fit and fine, enough to defeat this virus. The government of India is still asking people to take better precautions regarding sanitization, keep social distancing, wear Masks and wash hands regularly.

Indian Television also performing its best in these worst conditions, many sanitizations products are being launched, and still are in queue to be launched. Now people are more careful about their health and cleaning.

### **Pandemic and its effect on society**

Pandemic directly affects the society, as it is linked to human and human is a social animal. He works under society to fulfill his basic needs, it is the society only that makes him civilized. It is almost impossible for him to bind himself in one place living with limited resources. This is the social behavior that he displaced from one place to another in search of food and shelter. Most of the village people left their native place and went towards the city for a better life. This increases the population of the city causing a limited place to live. People are living very close to one another and due to increase in population, various problems caused like less water supply, lack of proper cleanliness, causing the birth of various bacteria and mosquitoes. And these bacteria, are responsible for spreading viruses causing various diseases. Coronavirus is such a disease caused only in lack of proper sanitization.

This virus has affected many lives all around the world causing national and international lockdown, closing the various government and non-government services. The majority of workers lost their jobs, resulting to live a miserable life without money and food. Being jobless, al the workers started to move to their native place. As all the transportation services were closed, these poor people along with their small children were forced to cover a long distance on foot to reach their home. They carry their luggage and their little children were sitting on the luggage, it is hard to believe that how much these migrants had suffered during the lockdown. Some of them walked along with the railway tracks to locate their way back home, they all covered a distance of a thousand kilometers without food and money. No doubt, the death of coronavirus infected people gradually increased, alongside this the death rate also increased of these migrants. For taking shortcuts these people walked through the railway track and this leads to major train accidents losing their lives and hopes of going back to their hometown. They hired other modes of transportation like trucks. And filled themselves in large amounts, leading to a road accident. Others have died of the scarcity of food and water. Life becomes more dreadful when these workers carried their little children by road when it was the month of June-July and the Sun was shining at its highest peak. Due to a break in production, the economic graphs fall, leading to the increase in demand for the commodity. Some profiteers increased the price of the commodity and it raises the black marketing of basic things like food, water, sanitizations, etc.

This lead to more unrest in society and crime rates like stealing things, robbing, and even murdering for money increased. Lockdown had put a major effect on the life of workers, who were forced to migrate from their working place to their native towns or villages. Migrant is a process when one person moves to another place for a social, economic, political, and psychological cause. Oxford defines migration as, the movement of large numbers of people, birds, or animals from one

place to another. There are many types of migration that are affected by natural and psycho-social cause. Internal migration is a movement of man within the state, country or the continent, opposite to it is external migration, which includes the people who moved out to another state, country for better job conditions, or the causes may differ. Emigration is a third type of migration and in this people left their native state to shift into another country, Immigration is a term used for the people who moved to other countries. The return migration mainly comprises the people who moved back to their native place. Last, but not least is seasonal migration, where people migrate because of weather and climate conditions,

its example may include the Gujjar and Bakarwal tribes of Jammu and Kashmir, In a lockdown, the life and role of house women face more challenges. No doubt after a long period women get the opportunity to spend days with their husbands and children. After lockdown schools and offices were closed, so children and men were confined to live within the house. The whole family comes together and everybody gets the chance to understand the behavior and liking- disliking of one another. Men, who remained most of the time out of the house get the opportunity to spend time with family. The routine schedule of women changed, now apart from household jobs, she had to perform the role of tutor to teach her children and its the benefit is that those women who were busy in the kitchen get the opportunity to learn digital technology as children were joining their class by online mode. Children life was also changed, as they learned social behavior in schools and remaining in the house they were able to understand the personal and psychological aspects of their mother and other family members.

Life of every person moved to new aspects and they learned new things and get the opportunity to observe and analyze the other aspects of social behavior.

#### Effect of Pandemics upon Environment

The other thing that is mostly affected by the lockdown is our environment. The environment is a the mixture of gases and living and non-living things that surrounds us and directly or indirectly affect our lives. Due to excessive production in factories, heavy vehicle moving on roads and exploitation of natural resources has brought disastrous effect on our environment. The air quality in some areas is very poor raising a serious threat to the health of humans. The brief study of environmentalists tells us that due to lockdown production is stopped, and fewer vehicles are moving on the road, it has brought fruitful changes in the environment. Now the Himalayan ranges can be seen from Amritsar. The sky is clear with fresh air and less pollution.

The life in the forest is blooming, due to less water pollution, the quality of river water has improved. Due to fewer baths on the Ganga Ghats, the water is clean and we can see the aquatic life that blossoms under the water.

The Center for Research and clean Air has reported that due to less emission of carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide the air quality is much better. The rivers in Italy and on other continent are cleaning and aquatic life in this area are growing faster. As fewer boats are moving in the water, it is helpful to set down the soil dissolved in the water and by this, the water is crystal clear.

Lockdown has backed up the environment that had been degraded days before, no doubt life had been stopped but this had given a chance to the environment to heal itself. Wordsworth in his poem The Nutting described that there is also life in the forest,

I felt a sense of pain where  
The silent trees, and saw the intruding sky.—  
Then, dearest Maiden, move along these shades  
In gentleness of heart; with a gentle hand

Touch—for there is a spirit in the woods.

The environment can heal itself, what we need is to take care of our nature. We must be conscious regarding the health of our environment because human life can blossom only when we have a

healthy environment. We should stop wasting water, whenever necessary should use public transport, grow more and more trees. Nature has the power to heal itself, but as we are using natural resources, it is our duty to take care of our mother nature.

## Pandemic and Literature

Literature and society both are interlinked with each other and in fact, literature is the mirror of society. Writers are inspired by the facts and traditions that run in society. In this pandemic era when everyone is busy analyzing the death rate and other consequences of Coronavirus, writers are indulged in writing the effect of this virus on the common people. The history of literature is filled with the fiction and non-fiction are written upon the epidemics and pandemic.

The book *Faith, Reason and the Plague in Seventeenth-Century Tuscany*, written by Carlo Cipolla is an essay in which the writer tells us about the bubonic plague that had spread in Northern Italy. The local health workers worked according to their experience, on the other side the church believed that it was a curse that God had given them because of evilness, they convince people to believe in this rather than to observe it. The local residence stuck in panic as the plague had infected most of the resident. The disease had increased the death rate making the condition more horrible. Cipolla had done a case study of one-fifty families. Health workers were unable to control the epidemic and people died continuously. This book deal with how in the epidemic era region and science come opposite to each other. *Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation and the Loss of Aboriginal Life* by James Daschuk is based upon the health disparities among the ethnic group of Canada and Canadian local residents. The Canadian Prime Minister Mr. John A. Macdonald, designed a new policy to remove the indigenous people, his policy was to keep these people deprived of food and starved to death. This policy was criticized by Sarah Carter and he has given a new term 'genocide' to this policy. *The Making of Tropical Disease: A Short History of Malaria* by Randall Packard deals with how the tropical area is the house of growing Malaria parasites. In the regions where there is a lot of rain falls, malaria patients are found in major amounts and many people have died. The writer discusses that this disease found in Africa, southern Asia, and Pacific Island. The other novels that are rewritten on pandemics are *Blindness* by Jose Saramago is a novel published in 1995, *A beginning at the End* by Mike Chen, *The end of October* by Lawrence wight, *The great believers* by Rebecca Makkai, etc.

## Conclusion

There are political, social and economic factors that affect the human behaviour. The other new aspect that emerged is the contaminated diseases, that affect the social, environmental and psychology of man. Coronavirus, emerged as the biggest Pandemic of 21<sup>st</sup> century as many people has lost their lives and still some lives are in danger. It is a contaminated disease and to break the contamination line various governments had put lockdown, people were stopped to go outside of the home. Many people lost their jobs, some were forced to go back to their home. As all the factories were stopped, the air pollution, water pollution was decreased.

This virus had changed the psychology of human as many books are being written upon pandemics and epidemics. We should aware about the proper sanitization and cleaning, so that we should remain away from this deadly disease.

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