THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON OUR ENVIRONMENT

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In the past two months, everyone has been very scared and worried, because of the recent pandemic: COVID-19. COVID-19 is a virus that entered the planet a few months ago, and started attacking the whole world country by country. It has completely taken over the planet like a greedy evil monster.

The environment has been poorly affected. Stray animals are roaming around on the deserted streets, looking around for food. These days, since nobody is leaving behind their left over food, these poor animals have nothing to eat. They could possibly die from hunger. There is a lot of water and electricity shortage as well. Everyone is constantly washing their hands, everybody is also sitting at home, so a lot of electricity is being used. But, on the plus side, as use of vehicles is decreasing, and factories are shut down, we can see less pollution in the sky, no boats or oil spills in the sea, the marine life is living peacefully and the birds are soaring gracefully through the clear beautiful sky.

Karachi, which is a very polluted city, has been looking beautiful these days. The famous and crowded SEA VIEW
of Karachi has never, ever looked cleaner and prettier. The beautiful skyline is easily visible from our balconies, when there are no planes or helicopters hovering in the usually busy sky. The environment has become cleaner and clearer than ever. And we have never got to see the beautiful nature properly- the way we are now. Even though the virus cannot be seen by the naked eye, everybody is really worried about the trouble it has caused and all the trouble it will be causing in the future. Soon after this pandemic will be over, everybody's lives will be different. The environment will be totally different. Everybody will be much more cautious from now on. People will be learning new things about the environment and nature. There will be less pollution. We will now know how to properly treat the environment. I predict, that after this pandemic, our planet will be a much better and safer place for humans and animals to live in. Everybody will be living peacefully and gratefully. All we needed was a virus to make us realize that never, ever take life for granted.

STAY HOME, STAY SAFE
I am Mother Nature. If you don’t know me yet, let me fill in for you. I am the watcher of my little blue and green planet which is called earth. Apparently it is in great danger, but not for everyone. One of the main species living on my world, called humans are suffering right now.

You see, humans have been living on my world for a long time for millions and millions of years and they have evolved a lot over time. For the past couple of centuries, they have been causing troubles and stress in my world for me and other species. The biggest targets are my animals, trees, Ozone layer and seas. Ozone Layer is the one who protects my world from the harmful heat rays of the sun.

From the past few decades, she has been complaining that a hole was forming in her and the protection was getting lesser and lesser. I was really concerned about this. The only good thing that would come out of this if things reached a peak was that, you would be able to cook marshmallows in a blink of an eye because of the heat but everything else would be bad. If the ozone layer died, my world would become as hot as molten lava. It is certain to say that the hole in the ozone layer was increasing due to air pollution. The biggest enemy of the air is carbon dioxide [CO2] which comes from the factories, cars and also air traffic. In fact, I have heard a story in which things get so bad that people have to move from earth into another planet. I seriously don’t want that happening over here for real.

The seas of my world were also in a dire situation. They were watching the life in them dissipating slowly and they were worried about the sea creatures dying. Thousands of oil spills occur in the world’s waters each year. Even the coral reefs were being polluted by all of this. Usually the seas are really brave and fearless but now, even they were ready to give up and surrender.

I could literally hear the trees begging and crying for mercy but as usual, the humans took no notice and just continued their horrible business of cutting them and collecting woods from them to make papers, furniture, houses, cottages and other buildings. People were also killing animals for fun, mostly for food and sometimes for making accessories and crazy stuff like that. It made me really mad and heartbroken to see the animals having the rough time and many were on the verge of extinction. With all this happening to the environment and me scratching my head wondering what I could do next, suddenly, I began to hear some news that many people were dying in China and then, I found out that there was a virus called coronavirus [COVID19] that was killing these people and it all started from a city in China called Wuhan and then things got worse from there.

It began to spread all over the world and it became a major pandemic for humans but then amid all that chaos and sickness, I suddenly started feeling better and very happy. If you want to know how this happened, it’s pretty apparent. When this virus attacked, there was a lockdown and curfew so everything got closed and humans were forced to stay at homes.
There were no cars on the road, no ships on the sea and no planes or helicopters in the sky. Everything became quiet and peaceful. Now all I could hear are the sounds of chirping birds, rustling leaves and crashing waves. The air is started to feel pure and gentle and I got a chance to breathe again deeply. My skies are turning bluer and clearer each passing day. In fact, the Ozone layer told me that its hole is shrinking and it’s nearly covered. I can see my seas getting more transparent and turquoise and I can see all kinds of fish swimming in them freely and more happily. There are also many plants and flowers now growing and blossoming on me which I have never seen before. The animals are also free and are roaming around with no fear of getting hunted. So you see, COVID19 is blessing in disguise for the revival of environment…for me. Even though humans have been cruel to me for many years, I can’t help feeling sorry for them. It’s like one part of my heart is really glad to see all the good changes this virus has brought for me but the other part is crying for humans. The human are dying, they are sick and unhappy to be confined at their homes and restricted in their activities. The fact is that I am nothing without humans. They are the ones who are running my world and their misery is my misery…their end is my end. If they wouldn’t be here, who will enjoy the beauty of me…my dazzling world? I wish from the depths of my core that my world will get free from this virus, that these tough times for humans will end soon and once it is over, humans will learn their lesson and they won’t ever take me for granted.

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COVID 19 - the Nemesis for Humans

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Man of 21st century was moving fastly to conquer everything that came his way. He learned to tame wilderness of animals and the ferocity of waters in oceans. He rocketed himself to the moon and was now bidding for a landing on Mars. He had become claimant decoding genome of himself and creatures around him. He had started growing flesh in his laboratories. But he was so oblivious of his nemesis in the nature which struck him in the midst of all his shiny progress. His nemesis descended upon him in the form of a microscopic germ – the abominable Covid 19.

Covid 19 struck humans like a bolt from the blue. It destroyed the entire fabric of our social structure. All public places suddenly got turned into danger zones. It appeared in Wuhan, China and then spread all across the world in just few weeks ‘time. The virus started hunting humans like a merciless predator. The more it was confronted, the more it became ruthless. “Lock down yourself!”, said the doctors and medical specialists. “Cure we do not know for infection from this pathogen”, they admitted. This announcement from doctors terrorized all the governments. Saving humans from an invisible enemy attacking them fiercely became most difficult of all challenges. The nemesis had begun and it continues to date without any respite.

Covid 19 has captivated all of us in our own homes. I myself as child find it difficult to understand the restrictions imposed by this typical situation. I am not allowed by my Parents to leave the home for any activity whatsoever. My friends also cannot leave their homes. Our schools have been closed. All entry to parks, play grounds, shopping malls, zoos, museums has been banned. I cannot go to even mosque for prayers. My whole life has changed so much. Everyone is now required to maintain social distancing to keep himself and those around him safe and healthy. These strange measures have made life for me so boring and dull.

Now like everyone else I am also worried as to where would all this end? Shall we get back what we always had with us without even noticing how precious it was? Today all animals except we the humans are free to move and enjoy themselves. During this lock down period I learned from my grandparents that our neighbourhood looked totally different from what it has become today. Earlier there existed more trees, birds and animals closer to our settlements. Air was fresher and stars in the sky twinkled so brightly. But more recently we did not observe such things around us. We instead have lesser greenery and more concrete; lesser air and more smoke; lesser animals and more machines; lesser glitter of stars and more haze in the sky at night. Covid 19 my grandparents say have made them breathe in
the same fresh air under the same clear sky which they had when they were children of my age.

Helpless have we become now before this diabolical nemesis called Covid 19. This ruffian has blear all our senses. It is sneering at our advancements of this century and has knuckled under our modern technology as fiddlesticks. It has come more as Divine wrath against human interventions into nature. We have been cutting forests, polluting atmosphere and causing extinction of other animals. No wonder, we are being rebuffed in the same coin. We have been pushed back to our self-made abodes and now we face terrible nemesis of the burden of this uncontrollable disease. It is time for us to mend our ways and learn to become benevolent with nature around us. Only such love and affection can prepare us to defeat this nemesis i.e. Covid 19.
"COVID-19 and its impact"

As the world wrestles with the unprecedented implications of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, "we are facing a human crisis unlike any we have experienced" and our "social fabric and cohesion is under stress."

These are hard times but we have been through worse, so courage, staying calm and counting on one another can get us through. Precisely resilience is the best response to this drastically worsening Pandemic.

As Pandemic has put much of the globe in lockdown, Sports has not been immune. That is why nobody can say with any certainty that when sports will return after virus forced shutdown. On the contrary, we cannot ignore the fact that no match, no competition and no league is worth risking a single human life. Since the damage caused by Pandemic has been dramatic, even the players are in no hurry about returning to action.

It is not about mere sports or players; this pandemic has affected all aspects of society in many different ways. Similarly, it is well said by Sindh’s Chief Minister “We can revive the sinking economy but we cannot revive those who lose their lives during this Pandemic”.

As the daily wagers and minorities, are suffering, similarly the Muslims in India are being attacked and branded as virus spreaders. Fear is staring at them from everywhere. People need a small reason to beat them or to lynch them because of COVID-19. Therefore, in accordance to my personal opinion there is urgent need to counter these prejudices.

Furthermore, when we come to economic environment in Pakistan and all around the world so it is prominently observed that gold hits historic high in $54.576 USD per kilogram and Oil prices edge lower after output cut.

Moreover, the ‘market watch’ denotes that KSE-100 dives 1000 points on fears of COVID-19 impact. Whereas on the other hand there has been proposed global consortium, plans to pour billions into Pakistan through mega projects like house schemes, Reno dig mining and Diamer Bhasha dams.

However, we cannot neglect the fact that this is the unexpected period of time during which an asset remains useful to its owner. When an asset is no longer useful to its owner, then it is said to be past its economic life.

Besides, it is essential to ban exports of food to amid COVID-19 because we thoroughly need to rely on our resources to ensure our food security.

Everyone I spoke was grateful of public’s donations for food and other assistance- but also acknowledged that the emotional toll is almost unbearable. Since hospital, emergencies are transformed in the age of COVID-19 so the doctors are the only ones to gesture goodbyes to the ones who are dying.

Now as the industries are temporarily paralyzed so it has resulted in less air pollution that eventually turned Ozone layer into a better condition, which had been terribly impaired.
Therefore, we cannot ignore the magnificent benefits of this lockdown including that coast-to-coast travelling had not been faster before than what it is now.

Some patients in hospital beds are marked “D.N.R” and “D.N.I”- “do not resuscitate” and “do not intubate”. If you have not already, this is the good time to prepare those medical instructions for yourself and those you love.

Prepare these preventions because the funeral homes are also extremely overwhelmed globally.

Death is an often undignified and wrenching transition but it has become particularly brutal now. We humans evolved to support one another but viruses evolved to take advantage of our bonds. Therefore, in a time of plague people often die alone in isolation.

Basically, we should learn from others because “virus knows no borders” and it is awful to call this virus as “Chinese virus”. And secondly if we do not learn from others, the same thing could happen anywhere and everywhere by the time we realize this, it is going to be too late…

Let me give the last word to Nicole Del Valle, the young doctor who bravely reassures patients all day and then go home to cry. She has a message for those who live in places not yet halted by the virus, who doubt the cause for mask and social distancing.

“The hospital are still very overwhelmed’, She said. “It’s really hard as an emergency physician to see people suffer without their families at bedside .It’s hard time for everyone here. We are telling people to please stay home.”
The natural disasters occurring in any part of the Earth alter the living pattern of organisms’ communities for a certain period of time. Even a slight shock of earthquake has proved to be much hazardous for the system of human societies. A time was witnessed when the order of the entire universe began to amend gradually. After the reformatory revolutions from stone age to industrialization, there arose a turning point with spread of COVID-19 when nature took a break; a sigh of relief after years of sickness. Man never abstained from his self-created vicious cycle which gradually led to the deterioration of his health and put the survival of many creatures at stake. Moving ahead with a firm industrialist narrative, he never abandoned activities causing carbon emission and drove the planet to the verge of ozone depletion. Continuing the malicious act of illegal hunting, humans caused disappearance of wildlife sanctuaries. Starting from the market of Wuhan in China, COVID-19 was transmitted from bats to pangolins and further to humans. Few cases were reported in other countries but a surge was seen in these cases and gradually the whole world ended combating this crisis. With the death toll rising day by day, countries implemented immediate orders of lockdowns. After few months nearly half of the world’s population was bound to stay indoors to control the excruciating situation pertaining increasing death toll caused by COVID-19.

Man is a social animal but unfortunately he never harmonized with nature whole-heartedly. The spread of COVID-a challenge for humanity led to create vast distances among socially dependent humans in a highly interconnected world. The critical measures which should have been taken to curtail the outbreak of COVID-19 are the instant implementation of strict lockdowns, provision of adequate medical facilities and free testing kits, cancelling international flights and cross-border trade promptly and launching of awareness campaigns by the government. The act of adopting preventive measures by public urgently could have improved the situation. Countries must have taken steps in minimal time with a maximal effect. Mutual efforts of all nations for research work on this global issue must have been the foremost priority.

The implementation of lockdowns resulted in restriction of movement of people, reduced the working of industries and transportation. The instantaneous changing of circumstances gave a new life to Earth and bestowed it with an opportunity to heal after years of affliction. The ozone layer begins to recover. The levels of air...
pollution have dropped drastically in many populated countries like China, South Korea, India and Italy. The amelioration of air quality is very beneficial in improving quality of life. The visibility of sun halo in Karachi portrays the songs of glee being sung by the atmosphere. The waters of Venice depict immense beauty due to absence of tourism. Germany comes close to reaching its climate goals. The air possesses reduced levels of NO2 and CO2. The roads seem free of trash, the water as clear as glass. Thus, nature alters its appearance and recovers its beauty. The undeterred comeback of wild animals on roads depicts the breakdown of shackles of hunting pressure and habitat destruction. The joyful swimming of dolphins in several water bodies is a manifestation of the glory of nature. The lockdowns prove that the whole Earth can become a wildlife sanctuary if humans sacrifice their personal interests for the sake of Earth.

Government must specify working hours for industries and must replace solar energy with fossil fuels to maintain lower levels of air pollution. The disinfecting of recycled garbage must be ensured. People must continue to socially distance themselves and simultaneously avoid excess use of air conditioners and gas heating systems while staying indoors. Even after the situation is manageable, the governments must arrange lockdown on Earth day observing love for Earth.

The greatest impact COVID-19 has had is on the behavior and psyche of humans. Man has become more concerned regarding significance of health and terrifically aware that economy can never flourish by putting health at risk. The survival of health depends very largely on the safety of environment. The only element which can ensure that this time is a turning point for humanity is man’s love for mother nature.
WINNERS OF POSTER MAKING COMPETITION

Muhammad Moosa Khan, Grade 1

Tayyiba Faran, Grade 2

Damisha Khan, Grade 3

Aaban Abtab, Grade 4