

COVID-19: Nature's Call For Balance

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Abstract

The present year 2020 has seen a disastrous pandemic called Coronavirus or COVID-19. It has affected each and every aspect of human as well as non-human beings. Among the pausing of all the human actions, one positive thing could be observed i.e. flourishing of natural world and its creatures. According to the theory of Deep Ecology, there should be a balance between the existences of both the worlds on the planet Earth. But over use of natural resources and the interference of humans in natural world has increased to the extent that it has disturbed the peaceful and balanced way of life of non-human creatures. During this pandemic, the lost chirping of birds could be heard again. Nature could be seen enjoying its freedom without any human controlling or human interference. Although the results of Coronavirus have been proved negative for humans on one hand but on the other hand, they were beneficial for the natural world.

Keywords: Coronavirus, pandemic, natural, deep ecology, interference, disastrous.

“While we are panicking about COVID-19, mother Earth is healing.”

Coronavirus disease also called COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered virus Coronavirus. This disease has been proved fatal and menacing for the human beings. It is said to be originated in China in December 2019. The World Health Organization declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of international concern on 30th January 2020 and it was declared as a pandemic. Till date, more than 8.14 million cases of COVID-19 have been reported in more than 188 countries and territories. It has led to more than 4, 40,000 deaths along with recovery of more than 393 million people. The pandemic has severely affected global, social and economic activities.

It has affected sporting, religious, political and cultural events and activities. Besides all these negative impacts of the pandemic, it has also brought with it some positivity in the environment. As this virus is spread amongst people in close contact so to control and cease the spread of this infectious disease, a complete lockdown was announced by the government, as it will keep people within the confines of their houses and will stop them from coming into contact with other people. The complete lockdown and stoppage of all sorts of activities has created a peaceful environment resulting into less pollution, less emission of green gases in the environment.

COVID-19 can be considered as a message from nature which was being exploited at the hands of man. Man forgot that on the planet earth, they are not the only one to live and make use of each and everything present on earth. He should also keep in mind that the other world (plants, trees, animals) also exists and has a right to live. Man should not interfere in their peaceful environment causing disturbance through cutting down trees, hunting and killing animals so that they can make things out of their skin, horns or teeth for the fulfillment of their materialistic purpose. But Nature has its own way to keep things in balance that have gone out of balance for them. The silence of these innocent creatures and mega fauna was broken in such a way that it emerged as an outrage in the form of COVID-19 which took away lives of thousands of people and refrained them from doing any sorts of cultural, economic or religious activities.

According to UN's environment chief, Inger Andersen, nature is sending us message with the coronavirus pandemic and the ongoing climate crises. He said humanity was placing too many pressures on the natural world with damaging consequences. He also warned by saying that failure in taking care of the planet means we are failing to take care of ourselves. Andersen said, "At the end of the day, with all these events, nature is sending us a message." She added that:

"There are too many pressures at the same time on our natural systems and something has to give. We are, intimately interconnected with nature, whether we like it or not. If we don't take care of nature, we can't take care of ourselves. And as we hurtle towards a population of 10 billion people on this planet, we need to go into this future armed with nature as our strongest ally."

This paper is an attempt to analyze this outbreak of COVID-19 from a Deep Ecological perspective as the theory of Deep Ecology also commands a balance between the existing worlds i.e. human world and non-human world. The pioneers of Deep Ecology movement Arne Naess and George Sessions believe that the world does not exist as a resource to be fully exploited by humans and the ethics of deep ecology hold that the survival of any part is dependent upon the well being of the whole. The eight principles of the movement given by the pioneers are meant to serve as a guide for better understanding of the movement. Some of these principles convey the requirement of a harmonious relationship of both human and non-human world.

First principle of Deep Ecology states that **the well-being and flourishing of human and non-human life on earth have value in themselves. These values are independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes.** Through this principle it has been made clear that if humanity wants its well-being and desires to flourish then it has to respect the value of the non-human world as well. If they continue interfering and disturbing the other living beings then the situations and diseases like COVID-19 or Coronavirus will keep on evolving as an outrageous action taken by nature to preserve itself from humans. As the third principle states, **humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.** This principle calls for an understanding on the part of humans to respect the value that the other world holds in it. They can maintain this balance by making proper use of resources provided to them for their basic needs and not being greedy for gaining more and more material pleasures.

Many pandemic outbreaks like COVID-19 and the fifth principle of the movement convey a message directly or indirectly that **present human interference with the non-**

human world is excessive and the situation is rapidly worsening. Government has also taken various steps to save the natural bounty at its level by beginning many movements like Narmada Bachao Andolan, Swach Bharat Abhiyan. But this is not the responsibility of only government rather human beings should also be conscious about their duty towards the other living and non-living beings and interdependency of the two.

To conclude, this can be said that if man desires to keep enjoying the benefits of natural resources and its beauty and wants the future generation to enjoy the same, then he should stop doing such activities that degrade or endanger that beauty. Along with working towards the technological and industrial advancements, there is need to preserve the natural flora and fauna for the generations to come. This is the time when humans should “realize that everything is connected to everything else.” (Leonardo Da Vinci)

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