



THE PATTERN OF CONVEYING THE GENRE OF ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

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Introduction

Until mid of March, people were enjoying their everyday life, but with the onset of the most traumatic event, everyday life turned into a new normal life. On 24 March, 2020 Prime Minister Narendra Modi enunciated a nationwide lockdown. The lockdown hit hard the emerging nation, India. The lockdown had demolished the social and economic scenario of the country. Fear, stress, and worry were engulfing the people. It stabbed the source of income of the daily wage earners. The shutting down of the industrial units has resulted in the sack of laborers. These factories drove the workers away without arraying food or accommodation for them. The migrant workers congested the trains and buses, but when these transport options were desert, they began to walk to their villages. Even the established authority did not assist in their way. These events not only focused on unemployment it also escalated several questions about the welfare of the people.

As reported by CMIE, 17.7 million salaried employees were fired from their jobs in April and 0.1 million in May 2020. The virus and lockdown had crushed the economic activity of the nation. Daily wage laborers, small enterprises, and hawkers were worse affected by the lockdown. These circumstances were converting the health catastrophe into a socio-economic crisis. The preponderant impact of lockdown was developing a bitter feeling among the people for the government.

In the last few decades, the concern for the environment has developed among the people. Overcrowding and the use of hazardous chemicals have tainted the environment. Although, the lockdown had commenced changing the environment in myriad ways. The depletion in the emission of greenhouse gases, diminution of air pollution, and clear water of River Ganga are some of the outcomes of the lockdown. As a result, the established power started to propagate that lockdown was an intrinsic action for safeguarding the environment. They highlighted the betterment of the environment that occurred during the period. The environment is treated as a stratagem for growing a positive image of the government.



Adaption of Environmental Reports

On April 6, 2020, Mint emphasized the exceptional occurrence in River Ganga. The article, Ganga flows cleaner in Haridwar, Varanasi, as industrial discharge remains low, amid lockdown stated that the water quality of River Ganga has drastically changed due to the lack of dumping of industrial wastes in the water and restriction of pilgrims. Marine lives are now visible in the ghats of Haridwar and Varanasi. The priests of Haridwar are delighted to witness such an improvement in River Ganga. Professor of Chemical Engineering and Technology, IIT-BHU, Dr. PK Mishra, informed that industries are responsible for 1/10th of Ganga's pollution. Due to the halt in the industrial work, River Ganga has healed itself up to 40 to 50 percent. Even the residents of Varanasi praised the change. They are satisfied and happy to see the shiny side of the lockdown. Additionally, the people of Kanpur share a similar sentiment. They feel blessed to eye such development in the water of River Ganga.

On April 9, 2022, CNN, through their report– People in India can see the Himalayas for the first time in 'decades,' as the lockdown eases air pollution highlighted the happiness of the people of Jalandhar for capturing the frame of the Himalayas ranges from their homes. This phenomenon occurred after 30 years because of the interference of lockdown in the regular activities of humans. The residents of Jalandhar shared images of the scenario on different social media handles.

Mumbai Live arrived with an article, Mumbai Witnesses 25 Per Cent Increase In Flamingo Migration, that attracted the attention of the netizens to the flamingo migration as it has increased by 25 percent in Mumbai. Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) stated that in 2019 1.2 lakh flamingos had arrived, and this number has escalated to 1.5 lakh flamingos only in the first week of April. As the involvement of humans is lower, animals and birds are moving freely. Few netizens shared the video of a thousand flamingos at a water body close to Navi Mumbai. Pre-pandemic places like Thane Creek, Sewri, and Talawe wetlands were over-peopled, but lockdown had crafted these places ideal for flamingos to migrate.

On December 11, 2020, WION called attention to the brighter side of the lockdown in the video, COVID-19 lockdown's positive impact on environment. The pauses in all commercial activities have impacted the various environmental parameters. As stated in a study conducted by the Global Carbon Project, the emission of carbon has reduced by seven percent in the year 2020. The fall in carbon release is 2.4 billion tons; it is more prominent



than the declines recorded in previous years. The United Nations has witnessed a dip of 12 percent in the outflow of carbon dioxide, and the European Union saw an 11 percent dip. China's contribution was not significant enough—only a 1.7 percent reduction in carbon emission; this is so because it considerably focused on recovering its economy.

The Hindu, in its news report, Kolkata air quality improves with the dip in number of vehicles, publicized on May 9, 2021, stated the refinement in the air quality of Kolkata occurred because of the lockdown. An officer of the West Bengal Pollution Control Board informed that sulphur, carbon, and nitrogen particles in the air have visibly come down with the traffic on the road. According to Environmentalist S.M. Ghosh, this situation is suitable for Covid-affected patients as-well-as individuals suffering from respiratory problems. The report further disclosed that at Bidhannagar, the AQI level was 51, Jadavpur 39, Rabindra Sarobar 56, Ballygunge it was 63, and at Fort William it was 60. From February to March, the AQI level was marked as poor, but in April, the AQI level reached a satisfactory level.

On June 3, 2021, India Today circulated a news article, Delhi breathes easy as Covid-19 lockdown lowers pollution levels again on their website that highlighted the positive impact of Covid-19 lockdown in Delhi. The quality of air has improved after the closure of industries, malls, and marketplaces due to the second wave. Additionally, compared to last year, which is 2020, there are no differences in the nature of the air. The average PM2.5 level measured in May 2019 was 95 ug/m³, indicating that the lockdown immensely reduced Delhi's PM 2.5 level. From January to May 2021, the average PM2.5 concentration was 121 ug/m³. The alarming situation is that despite the lockdown in April and May, the air quality is better than average this year. It suggests that the average air quality for the first five months of this year may have been worse if the lockdown had not occurred that year. The Executive Director of Research and Advocacy with the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), Anumita Roy Chowdhary, said that Delhi's air required this lockdown to recover itself.

Theoretical Interpretation

Predominately the lockdown had a detrimental impact on the population. The lockdown was developing a deleterious effect on the behaviour and psychology of the people. The children and young people had to stay at home, which created undesirable effects on mental health, relationships, and education; millions of people lost their jobs, and gradually those people were moving towards depression. Often enough, these situations were pushing the citizens against the established power.



In the recent past, the beat of environmental reporting has not confined itself to the tag of the environment; the outlook of environment reports has spread to the political, economic, and social spheres. The established power has used environmental journalism as a stratagem for creating a positive outlook of the people towards the act of lockdown. Different theoretical interpretations will substantiate the statement.

The agenda-setting theory proposed by Dr. Max McCombs and Dr. Donald Shaw shows how the media filter and mould the incident rather than reflecting it. Even the media focuses on some particular incident to showcase it as the most dominating event. Media corporations advantageously portrayed the act of lockdown as it healed the environment that was drastically changing and becoming a threat to the people. The news articles hammered that the established government has saved nature to a great extent by imposing the lockdown. Additionally, the lockdown has given some more time to the future generation to discover alternatives for their future. The media has made its audience aware by prioritizing the news of nature. In this scenario, environmental news reports are disseminated as an issue of policy agenda, media agenda, and public agenda.

Before publishing the information, the media houses block the unwanted information and shape the remaining. This process is known as gatekeeping. The concept of gatekeeping was developed by Kurt Lewin. Gatekeepers procure the information before disseminating it. They decide on the information to be altered and sent to the mass for consumption. The process of gatekeeping depends on the agenda of the media house. The environmental news was altered in a way that seems to be pro-government. It highlighted the positive effects of the lockdown on the environment and the pleasing statements of the locals after witnessing the favorable changes. Even the processed information was directing the audience's how he or she should perceive the information and frame their perception. Here, the media wants to convert all the backlashes and structure a favorable image of the established power in the mind of the people.

However, from a critical perspective, the model of propaganda is also implemented by the media before circulating the news. By introducing the model of propaganda Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky have assisted to recognize how the media manipulates and changes the attitude of the population through propaganda. The media organizations are obliged to the established government for advertisements and information sources. As a consequence, they cannot be anti-government. The stability of the established power is



essential for the survival of the media houses. At the time of lockdown, the environmental news was of great importance for developing a supportive image of the government. During the lockdown, the environmental news items were circulated regularly, but now the frequency has reduced; there are hardly any follow-up stories on the condition of the environment in the phase post-lockdown.

Conclusion

The news coverage on the betterment of the environment has immensely contributed to object-based success. The news articles were able to persuade people to develop a positive attitude toward lockdown and the government. Individuals are satisfied that the massive break in their activities has contributed to the improvement of the environment. The multifaceted nature of the environmental news has actively assisted the political domain. However, the undeniable fact is nature has restored itself during the lockdown. If more plans are executed, the environment can be brought back to its previous form. Every state and every nation will have to work simultaneously to boost the environment. Humans are present because Earth exists; the destruction of the environment is framing the question of the existential crisis of human beings and other living creatures. When there is still time, the government of all the counties should think about various actions for safeguarding the environment and globally controlling the impact of climate change.

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