

# COVID-19: A SLAP IN THE FACE OF HUMANITY

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 Analysis

COVID-19 continues to ravage the world, a host of prominent world personalities, the high and mighty, rich and poor, sick and healthy, young and old, religious and irreligious. This is a classical reminder that we are all equal, regardless of our social status, culture, religion, occupation, or financial situation. This disease is perhaps reminding us that we should treat each other equally.

Through this virus, we have been reminded of our limitation of knowledge and capacity. On 11-12 February, the World Health Organization convened 300 international experts to, among other things, help better understand how the disease is transmitted, develop treatments and establish full integration of social science research in the response of the outbreak; however, the spread of the virus continues unabated. UNHCR in particular is extremely concerned about the spread of the virus to active

war zones such as Syria and Yemen, where healthcare systems and infrastructure have been decimated by the conflict, and would not be able to handle an outbreak.

In less developed countries let alone slum areas, recommended measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 such as self-isolation and social distancing are impossible because of crowded living conditions and the inability to access clean water as a basic preventative measure of frequent hand washing. The circumstances that some of the less privileged have to endure are hand in glove with the spread of COVID-19.

COVID-19 shook the world unlike other "diseases" called "oppression", "starving of innocent young souls in Yemen", "annihilating helpless souls in Syria", "blockading oppressed souls in Gaza", "ethnic cleansing of minorities in Myanmar" etc., that kills thousands of helpless disadvantaged people every day. The

world keeps quiet because those diseases do not affect the high and mighty. COVID-19 has indeed humbled the tyrannical governments and pharaohs of the 21st century. They have lowered their pride and begun to realize that life is nothing but a candle in the wind that could be blown away right under their watch, a prime example of man's helplessness.

Airports and boarders have been shut down, but the virus has defied every restriction and reminds us that we are all connected and something that affects one person will most certainly affect others. The state borders that we have put up have little value as this virus does not need a passport. The US, the world's super power, as of today has more confirmed cases than the rest of the world; Washington DC, the seat of world power is on lockdown and self-quarantined; Italy, the seat of Vatican is now a ghost town with hundreds of deaths every day; Saudi Arabia, the seat of the two Holy Mosques is gradually crippling from the virus; China, the economic capital of the world with its hustle and bustle has quieted down; even Turkey, the mouthpiece of the oppressed Muslim minorities is finally silenced to its knees!

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What has been happening at the US-Mexican border may soon be happening inside the US as states close borders on each other to prevent the people of the states hit with the pandemic flee and spread the virus even more. This is a quick reminder to us that life and all that is in it, is nothing but vanity.

Suddenly, the entire universe has come to a grinding halt because of a virus. It has the power to stop so many agendas even for the most powerful people. The world can indeed be a better place if the kind of respect we have for Coronavirus, is the same respect we have for humanity.

If we are going to survive as a species worthy of survival, we have to get beyond the limits of surviving the virus and draw closer to humanity. We will have to open our hearts and minds and remember that we are all human. There might not be any cure for COVID-19, but there is a cure for the far more deadly problem threatening the survival of humankind, and that cure is valuing one another. Our true work is to look after each other, to protect each other and to be of benefit to one another. Covid-19 is a disaster that ought to bring the best of humanity in us.