**PLAY :- LIFE IN THE TIME OF CORONA**

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SCENE ONE

31st JANUARY 2020

THE HOSPITAL IN SOUTH-WEST KERELA.THE INDIAN STUDENT RETURNED FROM WUHAN, CHINA (FIRST AND BIGGEST HOTSPOT OF CORONAVIRUS) IS TESTED FOR CORONAVIRUS AND QUARANTINED IN HOSPITAL.

**STUDENT** :- OH GOD!WHAT WILL BE THE RESULT?

(DOCTOR *ARRIVED AT THE DOOR OF QUARANTINED ROOM AND SAW STUDENT PANICKING*.)

**DOCTOR (***FROM DOOR***) :-** Please calm down, my boy, please calm down!

**STUDENT :-** Sir, what are the reports?

(*DOCTOR is standing at the door only.)*

**STUDENT(***panicking)* **:-** Sir ,please tell fast.

**DOCTOR**(from door only)**:-** Yeah, but be calm. So, when you were travelling from **WUHAN**, you may have came in contact with coronavirus positive person and therefore result of your test is positive. But please be relaxed, your symptoms are mild and we assure you that you will be fine.

(*STUDENT WAS ALREADY IN PANICK AND AFTER HEARING THIS, HE STARTED CRYING.PARENTS WERE ALSO NOT ALLOWED TO MEET HIM.)*

**DOCTOR :-** Please, be brave. Virus has not caused much damage to your lungs and our team will surely beat this virus.

**STUDENT***(crying)***:-** Where are… Where are my parents?

**DOCTOR :-** They are in my room and will meet you soon. Remember my son not to come close to them and also please help us to trace the people you may have came in contact with.

(*FIRST CASE OF CORONA VIRUS WAS OFFICIALLY REPORTED AND NEWS WENT VIRAL. DOCTORS WERE NOT EQUIPPED WITH PPE KITS AT THAT TIME, SO THEY HAVE TO BE EXTRA CAUTIOUS.NO INFORMATION OF TREATMENT WAS AVAILABLE AND EVEN DOCTORS OF THE HOSPITALS WERE TERRIFIED BUT THEY HAVE TO GIVE FALSE HOPES TO THE PATIENT.)*

**SCENE 2**

**22nd March 2020(JANTA CURFEW DAY)**

*A SLUM IN GUJARAT.TWO MIGRANT WORKERS (HUSBAND AND PREGNANT WIFE) ARE SITTING IN ROOM ALONGWITH THEIR 3 DAUGHTERS.PM MODI ANNOUNCED JANTA CURFEW AND REQUESTED PEOPLE TO NOT GET OUT OF THEIR HOUSE AND TO MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING. BUT PEOPLE “GATHERED” IN SLUM TO APPRECIATE CORONA WARRIORS BY STRIKING UTENSILS.*

**HUSBAND:-** Pass me that thaali. Clock is about to tick five.

**WIFE:-** Take it yourself. Don’t you see my condition?

**HUSBAND:-** Now, you can’t even joke in this house.

**WIFE :-** Crack some nice jokes not these shitty ones.

**HUSBAND :-** Don’t take too much advantage of your pregnancy.(Pause) OK now I am going.

(*GROUP OF PEOPLE WERE ALREADY BANGING UTENSILS, WHEN HE CAME OUT.HE JOINED THEM.)*

**MIGRANT 1:-** This is very nice of MODIJI to appreciate CORONA WARRIORS.

**HUSBAND :-** Yeah he don’t leave hands of any group or minority.

**MIGRANT 1 :-** Only because of him, our country will not suffer drastically from this pandemic.

**HUSBAND :-** Even America has considered our power. See the success of **NAMASTE TRUMP EVENT** in our PM’s very own GUJARAT**.**

**MIGRANT 1 :-** Yeah but he lost in DELHI assembly elections to that scoundrel KEJRIWAL. DELHIITES must have lost their mind while voting.

**HUSBAND:-** That reprobate supports those anti-national muslims at SHAHEEN BAGH. He don’t embrace our ancient HINDUTVA ideology.

**MIGRANT 1:-** Yes, you are absolutely right. But now we should return our places. Political talks never end.

*(AFTER RETURNING TO HOME AND HAVING DINNER.)*

**HUSBAND :-** Now ,I have to overtime at work as our income is already halved and we don’t have much savings left.

**WIFE :-**  Doctor said child will take birth this week only.

**HUSBAND :-** Yes, I know. That only adds to our misery.

**WIFE :-** Pray that this time it is a boy. Otherwise, it will really add to the misery.

**HUSBAND :-** Oh ,I do pray for it everyday.

(*GETS A QUIRKY LOOK FROM HIS DAUGHTER.)*

**HUSBAND :-** Don’t give me those looks. I could have handled one or two girls but three! … and after that I have to handle your these nuisances. (staring towards wife). I really hope that this time it is boy, otherwise it will get impossible for me to manage expenses of four daughters and then we will have to wait for another two years for the boy. Ahh.. even the thought of it is giving me anxiety.

**SCENE 3**

**23rd MARCH 2020 ONWARDS**

*(MODIJI ANNOUNCED COMPLETE LOCKDOWN FOR 21 DAYS AT 8:00PM ON 23rd MARCH 2020 GIVING ONLY FOUR HOURS OF TIME TO POORS.HUSBAND AND WIFE(MIGRANTS) ARE TERRIFIED.FROM NEXT DAY ONWARDS, PEOPLE CAN GO OUTSIDE ONLY FOR BUYING ESSENTIAL ITEMS.POLICE WAS PLACED AT EVERY CORNER OF THE CITIES AND TOWNS TO ENFORCE THE LOCKDOWN.)*

**WIFE***(panicking)* **:-** Modiji has announced lockdown. We can’t go outside for 21 days means no work. We have money to buy only 7 days of ration. What will we eat for rest 14 days? What will happen to our child? We can’t even go to our paternal village for .

**HUSBAND :-** Don’t panick! Don’t panick! This is not good for your health. We will find some way out of this. Government must have done something for feeding us. You please remain calm.

**WIFE***(crying)* **:-** Oh god! What will happen to us?

**HUSBAND :-** Please be calm! I have Rs.350 in my account. It will be enough for a week’s ration and in 7 days we will find another job.

**WIFE :-** But no one will give any sort of work in this lockdown. Oh god, what will we do?\

**HUSBAND***(turning towards his daughters)* **:-** You three please go inside. *(to his wife)* please don’t create mess in front of them else it will be difficult to handle them.

**WIFE***(wiping her tears)* :- Yes yes I will be quiet but please find some solution.

**HUSBAND :-** Let me go to our migrant friends and together we will find a solution.

*(WIFE IS SOBBING IN THE CORNER. HUSBAND LEAVE THE HOUSE TO MEET OTHER MIGRANTS.)*

**MIGRANT 1**:- What will we do now? We are jobless now. We can’t even go to our villages to take shelter and we can’t pay rent without any source of income.

**HUSBAND :-** You are talking about rent! I don’t have money for buying ration of more than a week.

**MIGRANT 2:-** Yeah, same with me!

**MIGRANT 1:-** I think we should gather to raise our voice.

**HUSBAND :-** But government has instructed us to maintain social distancing.

**MIGRANT 2:-** But they have left us with no option.

**MIGRANT 1:-** Yeah, he is right. We haven’t brought CORONA in our country. This has been brought by elite people who have privilege of travelling to other countries then why should we suffer?

**HUSBAND :-** But how will we gather? They have placed police everywhere.

**MIGRANT 3:-** I think we all have ration of a week. So we should wait for 5-6 days, if government don’t take any step till then, then we will protest.

**MIGRANT 4:-** I agree with him.

**HUSBAND :-** OK, then. If all of us agree then we will wait for 5 to 6 days.

*(MIGRANTS AGREED TO WAIT FOR 5 TO 6 DAYS.)*

**SCENE 4**

**3th APRIL 2020**

*(POWER STATION IN MUMBAI.)*

**HEAD***(rings bell to call peon)* **:-** Call all the employees for a urgent meeting.

**PEON :-** Yes, sir!

*(MEETING STARTED)*

**HEAD :-** There will be the sudden drastic decrease in power usage at 9:00 PM tomorrow for 9 minutes. We have to prepare the grid not to fail by this. Please suggest some ideas for that.

**EMPLOYEE 1:-** During the peak evening hours, i.e. from 6:10pm to 8:00 pm ,hydroelectric generation would have to be reduced and conserved for providing flexibility during the 9-minute event. In this time, thermal and gas generation would have to be scheduled in such a way that these stations become able to manage the peak.

**EMPLOYEE 2:-** All defence mechanisms, such as frequency protection relays and automatic demand management systems, would have to be in service and healthy condition.

**HEAD :-** What is the expected power consumption drop ?

**EMPLOYEE 3:-** It will be around 12,452MW based on the consumption pattern on March 29.

**HEAD :-** Will we be able to pull this?

**EMPLOYEE 2 :-** We can only hope so.

**HEAD***(laughing)*  **:-** Yeah, We can just hope so. By the way, we can also do one more thing in addition to hoping. We have to send message to the people that they should leave their other electrical appliances like fan, ac, refrigerator etc. ON. Share this message to every social media platform and say them to share it as well.

**EMPLOYEE 4:-**  I don’t think message will reach to many.

**HEAD :-** Well that’s all we can do and also start implementing above suggestions from now only. Also tell me how much time it will take to restore grid if it fails.

**EMPLOYEE 1:-** There are quite a few chances that grid will survive after these precautions. Even if it fails, it will fail partially. It will take 4 to 7 days depending on intensity of grid failure.

**HEAD :-**  Be prepared for that also.

**EMPLOYEES :-** Yes,sir.

**HEAD :-** Thank you. Meeting is over. You guys can leave now.

*(MEETING WAS CALLED OFF. ALL WERE VERY NERVOUS ABOUT WHAT WILL HAPPEN DAY AFTER TOMORROW.)*

**SCENE 5**

**5th APRIL 2020**

*(ROOM IN MIGRANT’S HOUSE. WIFE HAS GIVEN BIRTH TO A BOY THIS TIME. BUT THEY DIDN’T HAVE ANY MONEY TO FEED THEIR CHILDREN. THEY ARE PREPARING DIYAS TO LIGHT THEM AT 9:00 PM.)*

**HUSBAND :-** Ok, now I am switching off the lights.

**WIFE :-** Just a minute, let me settle on bed first.

**HUSBAND :-**  I already said you to settle before 9:00 pm. Why are you always so late?

**WIFE :-** I was feeding the child. It’s not my fault. Why are you always so irritated?

**HUSBAND :-** Oh, not again. I don’t have time to quarrel with you. Now, I am switching off the light. Only one minute has left for clock to tick nine.

*(HUSBAND GOES OUTSIDE THE HOUSE TO LIGHT THE DIYAS AND RETURNED TO HOME AFTER 15 MINUTES. GRID FORTUNATELY SURVIVED.)*

**HUSBAND :-** Ration is going to end in 2 days. Queues for distributing food packets are also very long. You seldom gets a food packet in those queues and even if you get it, that packet is not enough for five of us. I think now, we workers, should unite to protest. Either they should give food to us all or send us back to our village.

**WIFE :-** Yeah, now it is getting really difficult to survive.

**HUSBAND :-** let me go to our migrant friends and discuss this.

*(HE GOES TO THE ROOM OF OTHER MIGRANT HIDING FROM POLICE AND CALLED OTHER MIGRANTS QUIETLY. MEETING STARTED.)*

**HUSBAND :-** Now, what we have to do. We waited but nothing happened.

**MIGRANT 1:-** I think we don’t have any other choice but to protest.

**MIGRANT 2 :-** But police will catch us and beat us. There is no point in uniting.

**HUSBAND :-** No, we will communicate to our respective migrant friends and will say them to share it further that we all have to meet at railway station. We will go individually to station hiding from police.

**MIGRANT 3:-** But in that case, we also have chance of catching infection.

**MIGRANT 4:-**  Anyway we are going to die of starvation. It’s better to protest and then die.

**HUSBAND :-** So, do you all agree?

*(All migrants agreed monotonously. All migrants spread this message to their respective friends and gathered in front of railway station on next day.)*

**Police***(with speaker)* **:-** We request you all to return to your home as all trains are stopped in this corona time.

**LEADER :-** But we don’t have any other option left. You either send us our village or give us food.

**POLICE :-** Government has started scheme to feed you all. Please be patient.

**LEADER :-** But the food is not enough to feed us all. Everyday 20% of labourers are left from the scheme and they don’t have any option but to starve.

**POLICE :-** Please cooperate with us. Otherwise we have to take strict action.

MIGRANTS DENIED TO GO BACK.

*(VIOLENCE STARTED AT THE LOCATION. MANY LABOURERS WERE INJURED. TEAR GAS BOMB WERE THROWN AT THE LABOURERS. PROTEST STOPPED AND THEY HAVE TO RETURN FORCEFULLY.)*

**SCENE 6**

*(IN THE ROOM OF MIGRANT’S HOUSE.)*

**HUSBAND***(crying)* **:-** They thrown us back to home. Government is not listening to our basic demand of food. We don’t have food to feed our new-born. What will we do now?

**WIFE** *(became unconscious due to starvation):-* Pl.. please bring.. please bring food. My body is not able to produce milk for our baby.

**HUSBAND***(to himself)* **:-** Oh god! I am really feeling very helpless. Please help. Please help.

*(2-3 DAYS PASSED WITHOUT FOOD. THEIR NEWBORN FOR WHOM THEY WERE PRAYING SO MUCH DIED. WHOLE FAMILY WAS IN GRIEF. MEANWHILE, BJP(RULING PARTY) IS DOING VIRTUAL RALLY TO SHOW THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS OF PAST ONE YEAR TO THE PEOPLE.)*