



The Covid Pandemic And Inadequate Vaccination in INDIA: A Bitter Experience

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TOPIC: THE COVID PANDEMIC AND INADEQUATE VACCINATION IN INDIA: A BITTER EXPERIENCE The whole world including India has been passing through a critical phase due to covid pandemic. It has been an unprecedented problem for the human beings who get infected of corona virus. Though various attempts have been made to find out a complete package of treatment through scientific researches, yet no country has been able to come out with any effective medicine for this dangerous virus. Key words: Unprecedented problem, Budgetary allocation, Corona, Pandemic, Supreme Court of India, Philanthropy.

ABSTRACT

The whole world including India has been passing through a critical phase due to covid pandemic. It has been an unprecedented problem for the human beings who get infected of corona virus. Though various attempts have been made to find out a complete package of treatment through scientific researches, yet no country has been able to come out with any effective medicine for this dangerous virus.

KEY WORDS

Unprecedented problem, Budgetary allocation, Corona, Pandemic, Supreme Court of India, Philanthropy.

India being the fifth largest economy of the world has suffered heavily due to the present unseen enemy of corona virus. It has been the main cause of death for nearly two lakhs people during last fourteen months. The people of India do not feel safe and get frightened owing to the alarming situation and continuous loss of life due to the existing invisible enemy which has been killing a lot of persons day- by- day. In past, our country has confronted with three wars with Pakistan, one with China also many attacks by extremists resulting in loss of numerous lives. However number of deaths due to corona virus have outweighed the number of loss of lives due to wars and attacks so far. The economy has fallen down and still the present invisible enemy has been grasping lot of human life with a rare hope of its control and stoppage.

The budgetary allocation in India on health and family planning by concerned ministry has been Rs. 65,000 crores in the year 2020-21, while

such allocation for defense purpose has been Rs. 71,000 crores that is slightly more than the previous one. The Government of India has neglected the health services for many decades. Infact, it must take health in priority like defense of the country. It has been put as 5th rank out of 195 countries on the basis of a report of Hopkins University of U.S.A. It is proved beyond reasonable doubt that the country has not been able to tackle the second wave of Corona because of the crisis of hospital beds and shortage of oxygen cylinders. It is now doubtful how the country with population of 135 crores will be able to tackle the third & fourth wave of corona as it has taken many lives in its second wave. According to the view of Bharamas Mukherjee, Professor and noted expert of Global Public Health, Missigan University, U.S.A., India may be confronted with deaths to the tune of 4500 and infection to the tune of 8 lakhs perday in the pick of second wave, expected in the first and second week of May, 2021. Moreover new variants of virus with expected fear of third and fourth waves is also in the way to come. Above all, due to these reasons any new pandemic other than corona may also affect several parts of the world and for such unforeseen circumstances, no country of the world including India is ready to face.

Invention of Vaccines

Many countries including India have invented and developed vaccines to arrest the malady of Corona and its spreading. India has come-up with two vaccines i.e. covaxin and covishild being produced by serum Institute of India, Pune and Bharat Biotech, Hyderabad respectively. There two vaccines have been considered as panacea for the people of the country, but despite this, the second wave of virus has snatched many lives and infected a large number of persons. While India is having a vast area and huge population, it is also facing some crucial social issues like poverty, itinerancy, backward new and unemployment. There issues are responsible to add a feather in the ongoing problem of covid pandemic. Moreover, the measures adopted by both Union and states to tackle the existing problem has been like a drop in the ocean.

The Serum Institute of India being the largest company of the world in vaccine production, has not been able to produce the required number of vaccines to tackle the present unprecedented situation. The C.E.O. of Serum Institute, Mr. Adar Punawala along with his family members has shifted to London because of ongoing threats on him by some powerful persons including few state chief ministers. Though this giant organization has been playing a significant role in making India as vaccine capital all over the world, yet its C.E.O. is afraid of threats and pressures inflicted upon him and his family members. Mr. Punawala, though has been provided with 'Y' category of security by the Government of India, yet he has shifted from India and has been planning to establish new centre of production of vaccines in other countries including the great Britain.

The alleged threats and pressure being inflicted on the C.E.O. of Serum Institute is not at all unexpected rather it is quiet natural. The role of Union Government, since very beginning, in respect of production of vaccine, fixation of its rate, distribution and marketing has not been free from bias. It has now decided to buy 50% of total produce of vaccines and rest has been left to states and private entities. While doing so, the Union Government has boosted the powerful corporate or states or organizations in making of hoarding of vaccines creating artificial scarcity for small states like Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Uttrakhand etc. Which do not have enormous fiscal power like bigger states.

Many state Governments are busy to keep storage of More and more vaccines they may be able to arrest the spreading of virus and thus same the life of the people. Many corporate entities have also been creating pressure on companies producing vaccines in India to earn heavy in come in this alarming situation. Infact, there is dire need to distribute corona vaccines proportionately to states and districts as per the rate of infection and deaths in those places.

Recently, a division bench of Hon'ble Judges in Supreme Court of India, has also expressed

deep concern over the fixation of price, distribution and marketing of corona vaccines. The court re-integrated and observed how could a company get right to choose customers in the alarming situation of pandemic which has badly effected majority of the states in India ? The opined that, ever other countries like U.S.A. has taken the control of all methodology, availability of raw material and distribution of Covid-related Vaccines, but in India it is just opposite.

The situation has been alarming due to heavy infection and death rate in the country. According to a Government record, four lakh people are infected and three thousand are dying per day. The medical facility has crippled due to shortage of beds, medicine and oxygen and consequently the union and states have become helpless.

Step to be taken

It is hoped that India may face third and fourth waves of Covid pandemic due to delay in vaccination process and new variants of virus. Many states including Maharashtra have started preparation to tackle those unseen phases of devastation. It is now urgent to take all precautionary measures to face 3rd and 4th waves and the gross mistake committed during or before 2nd wave is not to be repeated. It may be done if we change our behaviour and nature in stopping all the public gatherings like assembly election, Kumbhamela and other congregation of people. These events have contributed like super spreader in the country. There has been total failure of government machinery and more is expected from philanthropic persons. But at the same time, many persons are busy to earn illegitimate income due to exorbitant price of oxygen cylinder medicine, ambulance chares, hospital charge etc. Now SOS messages are sent by Hospital authorities to demand Oxygen to fulfill their need.

Looking to the failure of governmental machinery, many philanthropic and helping persons, organizations and groups have come forward to render assistance to covid affected people. They are also using social media at the times of seeking help and as a result medicines, oxygens and other amenities are provided with. In this social pursuit, there are many social activists, politician, artists and religious organizations who have come together to render medicinal help and oxygen facility alongwith food with drinking water. So two categories of parsons are seen in this precarious situation; firstly those who render help taking risk of life and secondly those who remain busy in hoarding, profiteering and black marketing of essential medicines and such commenatities are sold of ten times exorbitant price. It is also necessary to maintain co-ordial relationship between union and states based on the principle of co-operative federalism. In addition, many other vaccines like phizer, sputnik, moderna, Johnson & Johnson should be procured by the Government. It will help us to contain and guard the new mutant of corona virus in time to come.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, it is evident that at one level or other, the Government of India failed to tackle the unprecedented problem of corona virus. Infact this invisible enemy has put to an end of many lives which did not happen in all the wars fought sofar after freedom struggle.

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