RESEAPRO JOURNALS

SHORT COMMUNICATION

OPEN ACCESS

COVID-19 management-the Indian experience

Snehasish Mishra and Puneet Kumar Singh

School of Biotechnology, Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology, Odisha, India

The global COVID-19 pandemic that descended upon humanity suddenly, spreading rapidly, has wreaked havoc and forced human civilization to a "new normal". There is a paradigm shift and challenge to introspect and reorient our many taken-for-granted ideas and thoughts about life. Countries like Germany, France, and the UK, among others, having advanced healthcare facilities, saw a jump from 100 to 100,000 cases in less number of days compared to less privileged countries like India. According to Worldometers, the US, Spain, and Germany, respectively took 25, 30 and 35 days to cross the 100,000 tally [1].

At the early stage of the pandemic, the Indian government imposed the national lockdown, preventing most of the economic activities and prohibiting movement. The GDP growth fell to 4.2% in the fiscal 2019-20 and 3.1% in January-March 2020 [2]. This draconian nationwide closure, although it could not be controlled, delayed the transmission of the virus [3,4].

As the lockdown began, India had only 320 cases (mostly confined to a region), with 10 reported COVID-19 deaths in a more than 1.3 billion population. India became the 3rd worst-affected country, with around 20,000 new daily reported cases. The pandemic continued to spread exponentially, and the total infected cases was 10.35 million, with 9.93 million recovery cases and 1,49,000 deaths [4].

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare developed a very effective COVID-19-specific App. Arogyasetu and has floated 24/7 alert helpline numbers (+91-11-23978046 and 1800-180-1104). India has broadened its research facilities and done mass testing [4], and WHO has praised the commendable medical development of India in managing COVID-19 [5].

India is known for its traditional medicines in the form of AYUSH (Ayurvedic, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy). The polyhedral powder Nilavembu Kudineer and Ayush Kadha were promising against dengue and chikungunya fevers in the past. With the COVID-19 outbreak, the Ministry of AYUSH released an "Advisory for Coronavirus", mentioning useful medications to improve individual immunity.

India has expertise in specialized medical/pharmaceutical products with industrial production facilities, and the government has established fast-track research to develop rapid diagnostic test kits and low-cost vaccines. The Serum Institute of India (Covishield) and Bharat biotech (Covaxin) vaccines have been approved by the Drugs Controller General of India for emergency vaccination, even as the fourth phase of clinical trial is ongoing [6]. The first phase of vaccination, which includes health and frontline workers, has covered more than 1.56cr cumulatively in India by Feb 26, 2021 [7]. The second phase of inoculation of the COVID-19 vaccine has been initiated. Looking at the surge in infection rates in various Indian states, Central Govt. has commanded the state Govts. to utilize private hospitals to ramp up immunization in the community [8]. Vaccines being developed worldwide will be enough to contain this deadly virus, but definitely, it can check its resurgence. India has become the third highest nation to vaccinate after the USA and UK in less than a month.

India came forward aggressively for the international community by supplying medicines, vaccines, and emergency services in with the age-old great Indian philosophy Vasudeva Kutumbakam meaning "the whole world is a family". Last but not least, humanity has encountered such challenging situations earlier also and has successfully come out the winner against all odds, and the same glorious feat is set to be repeated. It is a matter of time when COVID-19 is defeated and human civilization wins.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

References

1. 100 to 100k Covid cases in 64 days: Where does India stand on world curve?. Business Standard, https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/100-to-100k-covid-19-cases-in-64-days-infection-spread-in-india-slower-120051900547_1.html , Accessed on January 05, 2021.
2. Ghosh J. A critique of the Indian government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. J Ind Bus Econ. 2020;47(3):519-530.
3. Goel I, Sharma S, Kashiramka S. Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in India: An analysis of policy and technological interventions. Health Policy Technol. 2021;10(1):151-164.
4. Kumar SU, Kumar DT, Christopher BP, Doss CGP. The Rise and Impact of COVID-19 in India. Front Med. 2020;7:250.
5. WHO praises India's 'impressive' commitment to combat coronavirus. Mint, https://www.livemint.com/news/india/who-praises-india-s-impressive-commitment-to-combat-coronavirus-11584456975670.html Accessed on March 17, 2020.
6. Ghosh P. Covaxin approval: All you need to know about Bharat Biotech COVID-19 vaccine's efficacy, price - India news - Hindustan Times,

*Correspondence: Snehasish Mishra, Bioenergy Lab, BDTC, School of Biotechnology, Campus 11, KIIT,751024, Odisha, India, e-mail: snehasish.mishra@gmail.com

https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/bharat-biotech-s-vaccine-gets-primary-clearance-all-you-need-to-know-about-covaxin-s-ecacy-price/story-oMQlTg6bvaDoLyyRQou5cO.html , Accessed on January 02, 2021.

7. Pib's bulletin on covid-19, https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=%201702268 , Accessed on March 03, 2021.

8. India Coronavirus highlights: Give priority to elderly for admission, SC directs private hospitals. The Indian Express, https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-coronavirus-live-updates-active-cases-deaths-maharashtra-pune-delhi-vaccination-hospitals-7212136/, Accessed on March 03, 2021.