

## Coronavirus disease - 2019 pandemic: Strengthening the preparedness of the nations to mount an effective response

*Received:* 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021; *Accepted:* 10<sup>th</sup> August 2021; *Published:* 01<sup>st</sup> October 2021

### Dear Editor:

The coronavirus disease - 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak has become a cause of alarming concern for the public health authorities, since it was first reported in the Wuhan City of China [1]. Since then, as on 18 May 2021, the total of 162184263 cases has been reported across the affected nations and territories, while the infection has accounted for the death of 3364446 individuals due to the disease-associated complications [1-2]. Further, we must note that the virus has been reported in 222 nations and territories, with the American region and the South East Asian Region being the worst affected [1].

The available epidemiological parameters have indicated that the virus is being transmitted from one person to another through close contacts and airborne droplets [2-3]. The infection has been declared as Public Health Emergency of International Concern and eventually as Pandemic. This decision has been taken mainly because of the potential risk of the spread of the disease internationally and the fact that many secondary transmission cases has been reported outside China [2-4].

In addition, most of the nation currently lacks laboratory facilities to diagnose the infection and are not ready with the response plan & significantly lack preparedness [2, 4]. Moreover, considering that many aspects of the infection is still unresolved and the disease has a high case fatality rate in comparison to seasonal influenza, the infection has to be given immense public health priority [1].

Acknowledging the magnitude of the problem, the World Health Organization has formulated a strategic preparedness and response plan to

ensure that the magnitude of the disease in other nations can be minimized [5]. Emphasis has been given towards reduction in the human-to-human transmission (including with health care workers), early identification, isolation of patients, provision of therapeutic care, and expediting research activities not only to enable development of diagnostic tool, and therapeutic options, but also to gain insights into the epidemiological attributes of the disease and the genome of the virus [2-5].

Another major cause of concern has been ensuring the availability and accessibility of vaccines to all the sections of the general population to both minimize the risk of acquisition of infection and also to reduce the severity of the infection, if acquired.

Further, efforts have to be also taken to strengthen the risk communication mechanism, surveillance system and reduce the social and financial consequences of the disease through the concerted efforts of different stakeholders [4-5].

However, for all this to happen, the actions have to be three-pronged, namely international collaboration to share all the information pertaining to the disease epidemiology, dynamics, & technical assistance, improving the preparedness of the nation (through better and prompt detection, treatment, follow-up of the contacts, infection prevention, community awareness, strengthening of the international health regulations, etc.), and accelerating the area of research [2-5].

In conclusion, the coronavirus disease-2019 pandemic has spread a sense of fear and apprehension among all the stakeholders, and it is

the need of the hour to approach to this public health emergency in a concerted and coordinated manner.

**Financial Support and sponsorship:** Nil

**Conflicts of interest:** There are no conflicts of interest.

### References

1. World Health Organization. Weekly epidemiological update on COVID-19 – 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021; 2021. Available from: <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/weekly-epidemiological-update-on-covid-19---18-may-2021> [Last accessed on 2021 May 20].
2. World Health Organization. Statement by WHO's Regional Director Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari on our collective fight against COVID-19; 2020. Available from: <http://www.emro.who.int/media/news/statement-by-whos-regional-director-dr-ahmed-al-mandhari-on-our-collective-fight-against-covid-19.html> [Last accessed on 2021 May 20].
3. Al-Tawfiq JA, Memish ZA. COVID-19 in the Eastern Mediterranean Region and Saudi Arabia: prevention and therapeutic strategies. *Int J Antimicrob Agents*. 2020; 55:105968.
4. World Health Organization. 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019- nCoV): Strategic preparedness and response plan. *Geneva: WHO press*, 2020;1-20.
5. Al Nsour M, Bashier H, Al Serouri A, Malik E, Khader Y, Saeed K, et al. The role of the Global Health Development/ Eastern Mediterranean Public Health Network and the Eastern Mediterranean field epidemiology training programs in preparedness for COVID-19. *JMIR Public Health Surveill*. 2020; 6: e18503.

**Cite this article as:** Shrivastava SR and Shrivastava PS. Coronavirus disease - 2019 pandemic: Strengthening the preparedness of the nations to mount an effective response. *Al Ameen J Med Sci* 2021; 14(4):350-351.

This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial (CC BY-NC 4.0) License, which allows others to remix, adapt and build upon this work non-commercially, as long as the author is credited and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

## Saurabh RamBihariLal Shrivastava<sup>1,2\*</sup> and Prateek Saurabh Shrivastava<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Medical Education Unit Coordinator and Member of the Institute Research Council and <sup>2</sup>Department of Community Medicine, Shri Sathya Sai Medical College & Research Institute, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth (SBV) - Deemed to be University, Ammapettai Village, Nellikuppam, Chengalpet District, Tamil Nadu, India

---

\*All correspondences to: Dr. Saurabh RamBihariLal Shrivastava, MD, FAIMER, PGDHHM, DHRM, FCS, ACME. Professor, Department of Community Medicine, Shri Sathya Sai Medical College & Research Institute, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth (SBV) - Deemed to be University, Ammapettai Village, Thiruporur - Guduvancherry Main Road, Sembakkam Post, Chengalpet District-603108, Tamil Nadu, India. E-mail: drshrishri2008@gmail.com