



SCAN ME

Research Paper

THE PANDEMIC INSIDE THE PANDEMIC: AVALANCHE OF MISINFORMATION

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Abstract

The fatal pandemic that has hit more than 12,924,432 individuals and caused deaths of almost 5,69,082 so far regardless of the across the country lockdown having played anarchy with our lives. The current circumstance emerging out of COVID-19 has taken a harsher toll not withstanding the mortalities, miseries and distortions that pandemic has caused to human culture and world economy. This is a catastrophe that has taken the both lives and livelihoods. The virus spread is seeing no way of a let up at any rate sooner rather than later. India has edged up to the degree of the third most exceedingly awful hit country on the graph. However, amidst this pandemic can likewise turn into a snapshot of basic self-contemplation and reflection about what has turned out badly with ourselves and with the world. What is more, the path forward is yet to develop.

Key words: Fatal, Pandemic, Lockdown, COVID-19, Virus, Mortalities, Distortions.

HISTORY AND STRUCTURE OF CORONAVIRUS

They say necessity is the mother of innovation and every cloud has a silver lining!!!

In December 2019, at Wuhan, Hubei province of China, the infection started in bats and was transmitted to people, although the animal source of the outbreak is currently unknown. The symptoms of illness may appear in incubation time frame ranging from 2 to 14 days [1, 2 and 3] and is transmitted by surface contamination / inhalation of infected droplets both by symptomatic / asymptomatic individuals [4]. The infection can remain viable on surfaces for a considerable length of time in favorable atmospheric conditions [5]. The COVID-19 virus is spreading at an alarming rate in more than 200

countries and territories. There have been around 12,924,432 revealed cases of coronavirus infection, 569,082 deaths reported and 7,529,534 recovered till July 2020 (<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>).

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a huge group of encompassed positive sense RNA viruses (size range between 26.2 and 31.7 kb) with spike like projections of glycoproteins (diameter 80-120nm) on its surface [6, 7]. RNA genome of CoV is amongst the largest of all RNA-viruses [8].

There are seven strains of CoV genera namely 229E, HKU1, NL63, OC43, SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome)-CoV and 2019-novel coronavirus (nCoV) known to cause mild respiratory disease in humans [9,10]. Both CoV2019 and SARS CoV belong to β genus lineage. The coronavirus inside host first binds with receptor thereby fusing host and viral membranes [11]. The recent receptor recognition and analyses could provide an insight to help in epidemic surveillance against Cvid-19 [12]. Though vaccine development / drug discovery is challenging owing to lack of precision in RCTs (Randomised control trials), frequent recombination changes and as a preventive measure, the strict vigilance of viral changes in different hosts is of paramount importance [13].

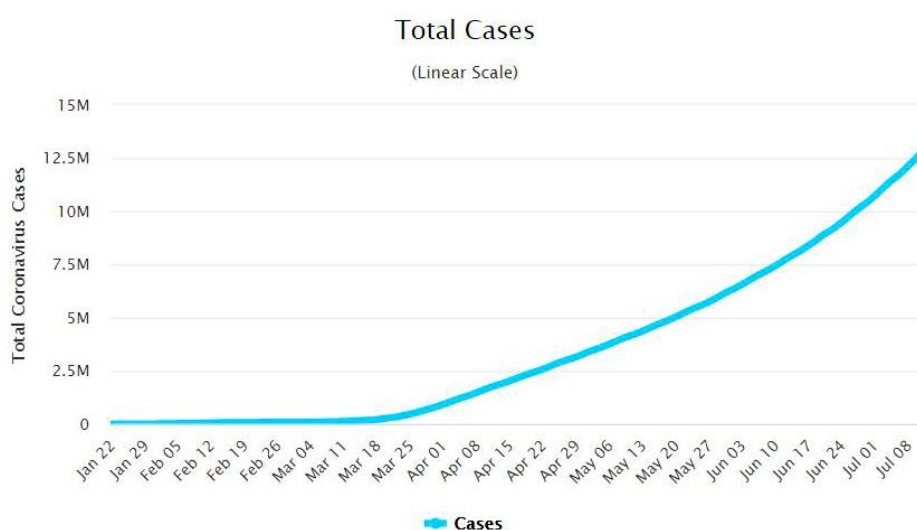


Fig. 1: Total COVID-19 cases

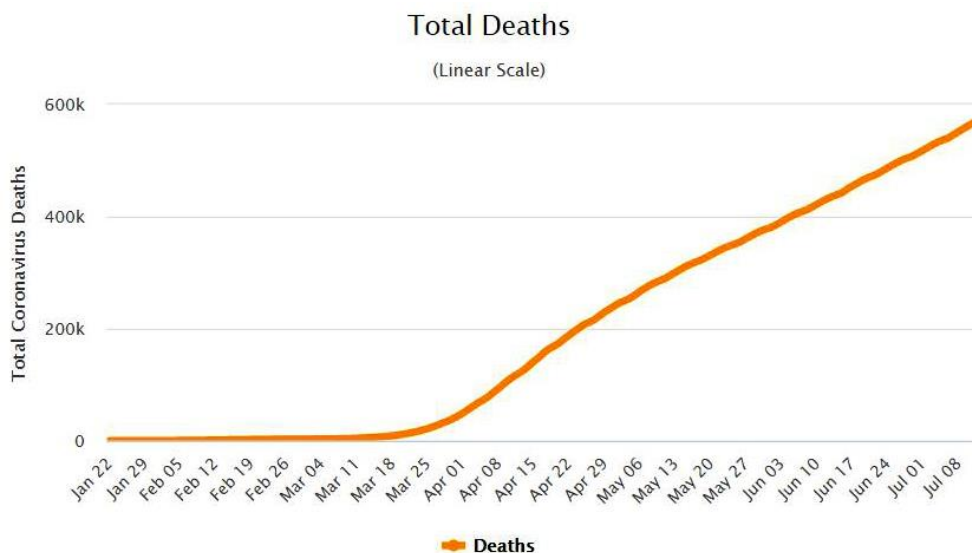


Fig. 2: Global Corona Virus Deaths reported till July 2020

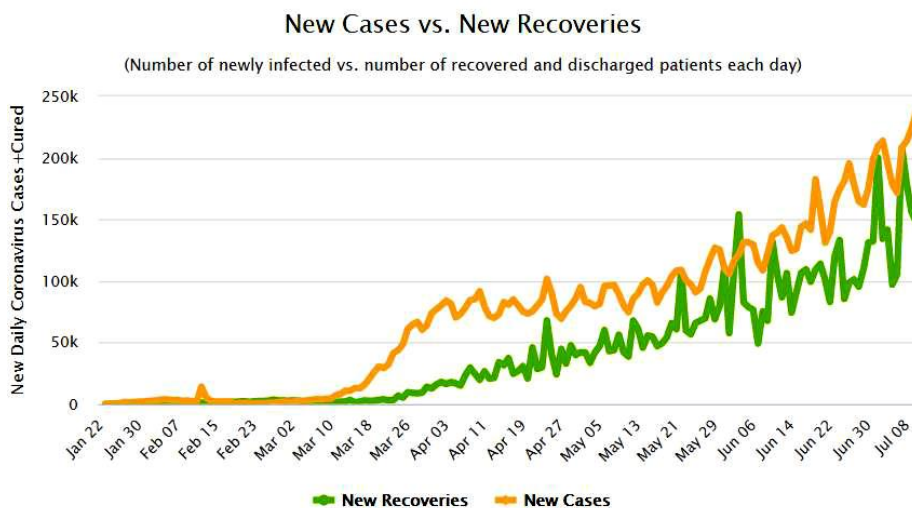


Fig 3: Increase in Number of Cases and Recoveries per day

Fig1-3: source: www.worldometers.info

COVID-19 MISINFORMATION

The coronavirus pandemic is dangerous and of high worry to the well-being and prosperity of humanity. However, very little is thought about the infection. It is significant yet ambiguous. Often epidemics get politicized, and a few people will utilize turn to create a scapegoat. The contrast between political misinformation and what we have now is that up personal interactions are not as conceivable with social distancing,

so heaps of individuals are filling their social needs through Twitter and Facebook. As the truth of life under isolate in the time of coronavirus has crystalized, so has the spread of confounding chaos of misleading information about Coronavirus (COVID-19). Indeed, even preceding the World Health Organization's choice on March 12 to name COVID-19 a pandemic, WHO chief general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus cautioned that the world wasn't simply battling a epidemic and has termed the phenomena the 'Coronavirus Infodemic'. The world has been engaging a storm of misinformation about COVID-19 with the WHO's various announcements on the emergency for quite a while now [14]. As quickly as the coronavirus has spread lately, menace of misinformation about the ailment has far outpaced it. The tidal wave of rumors has followed the spread of disease. The specialists around the globe are compelled to confront a torrential side of misrepresentations. Any sort of frenzy during this season of scourge because of unsubstantiated and malicious messages among masses will have annihilating impacts and aggravate the torments of individuals already suffering. Considering the gravity of the situation, to battle the spread of the pandemic different countries are taking every set of precautionary measures from advisory of social distancing, quarantine, to lockdowns and curfews. In any case, state guideline via web-based networking media is not appropriate as free speech is a flat out need in midst of a pandemic lockdown.

Presently with massive information on real time messengers, anecdotal tweets, WhatsApp groups, online digital social digital platforms, this marvel is further intensified. These insurmountable odds influence the efforts to contain the pandemic thereby increasing pressure to tackle. The global crisis of misunderstanding has crashed economies and wrecked lives of more than a million. COVID-19 spread to more than 200 nations, and with an ever increasing number of individuals compelled to remain at home during isolate, web utilization will undoubtedly be higher than expected as individuals have turned to online stages for working remotely, looking for information, connecting with friends and family and furthermore at the hour of emergencies individuals are anxious to share individual information and any deception at this urgent time can have obliterating impact (reinforcing confusion, anxiety and influencing their spirits). While it is a pandemic and it is an emergency, it is not a time to panic. We should view it as a hurdle that we can over-come.

It is astonishing how rapidly such large number of individuals on the planet and the nation have met the challenge and working hard to counter this tide. National and

International joint effort and collaboration is at its pinnacle. Sadly, alongside the best, the most exceedingly awful of the mankind also surfaces during emergencies! For the sake of news, spurious photographs and videos, manipulated government notifications, miraculous remedies, creating misguided information, fabricated solutions and a wide range of fake information is being spread everywhere throughout the world [15]. There is additionally another part. What they are doing may be with veritable goals, yet it is dangerous. Uninformed / Untrained individuals are assuming the job of science specialists and attempting to spread unsubstantiated data. While it is unintentional, it can still do considerable damage to our ability to battle with outbreak. Some hoax messages spread unnecessary alarm. The vulnerable populace is experiencing something called an 'information disorder' where it has gotten incredibly hard to disambiguate truth from misrepresentation to address the emergency. With regards to authenticity and dependability for any information, individual trust has moved from traditional to web-based life stages. Individuals who offer such advances believe that they are doing their bit to guard their locale, following the administration, and being capable residents by circulating information that is 'official'.

However official advisories are shared less, as people seem to draw upon information that they believe is important, and data that interests to their convictions. While this is an amiable practice among web-based social networking clients in typical occasions, during a genuine emergency, for example, the COVID-19 pandemic, it seems to swarm the story and twist messages from educated specialists. Thus, before posting/sharing any message, one should know about the ramifications of the same. One needs to cease from sending any messages without confirming, an excess of information, some precise and some not can makes it difficult for individuals to discover reliable guidance and trustworthy sources when they need it. Use fact checking services, there are many presumed fact checking destinations, which help individuals to verify claims made on social media.

Much has been expounded on the coronavirus and the haze of war, a large portion of it appropriately centered around logical research proceeding as the viral infection undermines the globe and the staggering on the ground reality in emergency clinics overpowered with COVID-19 patients while life-sparing supplies decrease. However, the emergency of intentionally planned disinformation is its own haze, presently intermixing with a phenomenal worldwide emergency that has completely overturned

business and steadily overwhelmed the sequence of media reports. What will happen to balance once things come back to normal? A planned and multidisciplinary approach is required. Will artificial intelligence have mastered the task, hindering the requirement for human commentators for the last time? Like most things analyzed through the nightmarish fog of the pandemic, the results are hazy at best.

COVID-19: BLESSING IN DISGUISE

Impact on Agriculture

The effect of COVID-19 on the economy is annihilating [16]. Its effect on farming is perplexing and varied across assorted portions that structure the horticultural chain. Even among the various fragments, its effect fluctuates broadly among various regions and among producers and agrarian workers. Building a resilient food framework is not about only production, yet in addition about guaranteeing access to nutritious food to individuals amid emergencies. The COVID-19 pandemic induced disruptions are placing new difficulties before agribusiness. The across the nation lockdown came at a grievous time for ranchers, as it was the collect season for the Rabi (winter) crop. The lockdown made a lack of transient workers availability during harvest affecting pre-sowing activities. Because of transportation and market issues and break in the supply chain, there are tremendous losses between the costs received by the ranchers and the costs paid by the purchasers. The increase in labor expenses and lack of access implies that ranchers are gazing at gigantic losses and thus permitting harvests to spoil in the fields. Once the lockdown is lifted, the costs of the agrarian items will crash quickly prompting an over the top fall in the farmer's income. Additionally, the cropping choices on upcoming kharif and rabi crops are influenced consequently making it hard for ranchers to design their future investments [17]. All these have without a doubt demonstrated that this pandemic in the nation has posed a threat to the agricultural sector. The end of the lockdown will not settle the issues. Despite what might be expected, they are probably going to be aggravated at the beginning of the new agricultural season. The most significant issue that ranchers need to overcome is the issue of loan repayments. Measures should be taken by governments and organizations to ensure the protection to farmer community. This effect will resonate over the bigger economy and will linger longer than a couple of months.

Impact on Environment

As the anthropogenic activities are limited in most of the regions, the natural environment has begun healing itself. Processing plants, transport and vehicles have all come to a standstill. Carbon emanations have diminished and the nature of air has seen a phenomenal improvement. It is surprising to see a decrease of 85.1% in PM2.5 levels in one of the India's most contaminated city (Ghaziabad), when contrasted with the fixation only three months back [18]. Articles and reports in dailies and other electronic media uncover the improvement number of waterways of India including Ganga, Cauvery, Sutlej and Yamuna. According to Karnataka State Pollution Control Board, the nature of water in Cauvery and its tributaries is likewise back to what it used to be before decades [19]. The discharged contaminants has drastically fallen in Buddha nullah which conveys effluents from 2423 industrial units into Sutlej River in Punjab during this lockdown [20]. The essential driver is absence of modern effluents entering the streams because of lockdown under this pandemic. The DO levels of stream Ganga according to reports has gone over 8 ppm and BOD levels down under 3 ppm at Kanpur and Varanasi [21] which went around 6.5 ppm and 4 ppm in 2019, respectively. As per the water monitoring status by CPCB, 27 out of 36 observing units at various places wherein the river Ganga streams were discovered reasonable for spread of natural life and fisheries and washing [22]. Scientists accept that oneself purging property of stream Ganga has improved which has upgraded the water quality by forty to fifty percent during this lockdown [23] Researchers have asserted that water quality has amazingly improved at Haridwar Ghats which is up to drinking norms [24]. The Ghats are likewise shut for individuals washing up in the water or dumping waste in it has halted. This has brought about water looking obviously cleaner with oceanic life moving around [18]. Anthropogenic activities are the significant reason behind environmental deterioration, however in most recent two months, it has become clear that still it very well may be re-established altogether if adequate mitigative measures and government policies are arranged before expelling all the limitations.

Impact on Wildlife

The lockdown would have affected the urban natural life, for all intents and purposes with improved air quality and reduced pollution and traffic. This change would absolutely have affected wildlife in a positive manner. The extant of urban wildlife that incorporates creatures, for example, the small Indian civet, jungle cats, mongoose, jackal, squirrel along with various creatures of land and water, reptiles and

aerial birds, which have learnt to exist together with human populace [25]. More than likely, it is only that individuals did not have the opportunity to gander these animals that existed previously together. An investigation by TRAFFIC finds a critical increment in detailed poaching of wild creatures in India during the lockdown time frame that is not confined to any topographical district or state or to a wildlife territory [26]. Reports of poaching frequencies for utilization and neighborhood exchange have dramatically increased during lockdown, although, there was no proof of wildlife products stockpiled for future exchange. The most spiked increase in poaching was accounted to be of ungulates principally for their meat, and the rate hopped from almost eight out of 35 (22%) revealed cases during pre-lockdown, to 39 out of 88 (44%) during the lockdown. In addition, there was increased poaching of giant squirrels, pangolins, monkeys, rabbits, porcupines, civets and wild cats. Albeit in international market, some have been consistently in demand, most during the lockdown duration for meat or for neighborhood exchange. Cases for these rose from 17% to 25% between the pre-and lockdown periods [26]. Simultaneously, the novel coronavirus flare-up and reaction has been joined by an enormous infodemic. Misinformation is expanding and it gets hard for the individuals who are not specialists, to filter out the credible, reliable information. While the sharing of falsehood around creatures does not normally represent an impending peril, it adds to the clamor that squares access to authentic data. In the long haul, the apparently innocuous falsehood could affect outlooks and perspectives of individuals consuming information [27].

Impact on Indian Economy

The stun is happening in just about a comparative way in all nations of the world leading to economic slowdown period. The countrywide lockdown has carried about every single financial movement to a halt. In India, since the first COVID-19 case was accounted, the economy had weakened essentially. As indicated by the official data, GDP development eased back to 4.7% in 2019, the least level since 2013. Joblessness arrived at a 45-year high. Industrial yield towards the end of 2019 fell by 5.2%, the most noticeably awful in 14 years. Investments in private sector had been stale for quite a long while and declining and consumption expenditure had likewise been falling, without precedent for quite a few years [28]. The demand and supply disruptions are probably going to proceed considerably after the lockdown is lifted. It will require some investment for the economy to come back to a state of normalcy. Three significant

segments of demand-investment, exports and consumption are probably going to remain repressed for a prolonged period [29]. Given the huge size of the populace in India, the unstable circumstance of the economy, particularly of the financial sector in the pre- COVID-19 period, and the economy's reliance on labor, lockdowns and other social distancing measures would be colossally troublesome. Policy makers need to scale up as the situations develop to limit the effect of the stun on economy and pave the route for recovery, to avoid long haul economic crisis [16].

CONCLUSION

As adversity acquaints man with himself, this pandemic has given a chance to think about opportunities and provide a superior comprehension of what our identity is, the thing that we ought to do and how might we do. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that we can no longer proceed with the savage misuse of nature. It is phenomenal that the lockdown period has prompted nature recovering. We saw blue skies again after numerous decades, contamination levels dropped, and various creatures arranged a rebound. We should attempt to guarantee that these positive improvements are continued. A portion of the issues featured above need critical consideration since they have medium to long haul suggestions on India's food framework. As we construct the "new normal", we should be inventive in our reasoning, and guarantee that our endeavors to modify are delicate to the necessities and conditions of smallholder ranchers. Thus, we can secure and bolster the versatility of the food security, while additionally finding a way to guarantee future can be dealt rapidly and viably. The subsequent exercise is that India needs a drastic re-calibration of its development plans which includes allocation of at least 3% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) each to well-being and education. In emergencies (like pandemic) idea of globalization, remains that universal coordinated effort is primary. The advancements received have absolutely changed our method of working and made us mindful of how resilient we are to deal with such outrageous circumstances. The corona virus has shown us the advantages of solitude and silence with the goal that we can investigate ourselves and explore the more profound consciousness, this will uplift society. We are figuring out how to appreciate life. The significance of nature, mother earth and the valuable services have been clearly understood by people during this pandemic. The world will have to confront many long and short terms impacts of COVID-19 in near future.

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