**[Coronavirus and National Expertise](https://nation.com.pk/13-Feb-2020/coronavirus-and-national-expertise%22%20%5Ct%20%22_new)**

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The Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus Tweet “I wish to express my deepest condolences to the family of Dr. Li Wenliang on this terrible loss, which has also touched people everywhere. My mind and heart is with all #healthworkers in China working tirelessly to save lives and protect everyone from #2019nCoV” will always keep haunting the Chinese government. Dr. Li, a Chinese doctor, working in Wuhan Central Hospital, sent a message to all fellow workers advising wearing protective masks while observing patients on 30th December 2019. Unfortunately, the said clinician was interrogated by the Chinese Public Security Bureau for spreading rumors and disturbing social order though an apology was submitted later. This brave professional/clinical expert got coronavirus infection while treating patients and met with the severe outcome ‘a heroic death.’ The WHO senior official above Twitter message very well recognizes the value of experts’ advice as well as the challenges for the social, print, and electronic media in the dissemination of accurate information. This should also be a fundamental consideration by law enforcement organizations and paying careful heed to scholars, scientists, and people exhibiting skills and illustrious caliber in their respective scientific, social, cultural, and other fields.

Coming back to the corona story, and dissemination of accurate information, widespread outbreak of any infectious disease causes more panic, stress than its morbidity and mortality. Mainly social, print, and electronic media sometimes give scary narration to attract the public, ultimately leading to overreaction and global depression. Coronavirus is one such example that has created more fear than its spread. The primary issue with coronavirus panic is due to other flu viruses having commonalities in symptoms. For example, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the United States of America deals with 15 million flu cases having disease symptoms like coronavirus. Among these, 140,000 are hospitalized, with 82,00 deaths. The trend is the same for other developed and underdeveloped nations. Wuhan’s coronavirus is no doubt a global public health emergency, and none of the country on this Earth can tackle such type of infectious diseases where quarantine and isolated treatment centers are required like for respiratory viruses that spread through touch, water droplets in the air and coughing, sneezing and so on.

A careful evaluation of the sad corona saga has a high level of optimism as far as the further spread of infection is concerned. The Chinese healthcare system should be applauded for strict quarantine, and so is the very positive role of the WHO under the skillful leadership of the Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. Efficient quarantine in China has given ample time for the global organizations and countries individually to disseminate appropriate knowledge about the coronavirus. Most important is the virus transmissibility, morbidity, and mortality trends. Fortunately, in a couple of dozen countries reporting corona patients and their efficient and highly active management reveal the possibility to curtail the spread of infection. Hopes are very high that coronavirus will soon be a history like other health challenges. However, every country must learn lessons that viral infection can challenge any healthcare system on this Earth irrespective of geographical boundaries. The world should be prepared to face such global challenges, and preparedness should be the top priority.

According to an article published on February 7, 2020 issue of Science – a highly respected journal by the American Association for the Advancement of Science two possibilities are being envisioned as far as further spread of the coronavirus is concerned. This article entitled “Will novel virus go pandemic or be contained?” forecast two models pending availability of additional data. Model 1 describes a scenario in which 2019-nCoV stays confined in China, and there is no sustained transmission to other countries where coronavirus cases have been observed. Within China, the cases of the viral infection start diminishing gradually with ultimate control. It is exactly like the scenario in severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) in 2003, also due to a coronavirus. The second model talks about a pandemic situation, and based on the existing data is more likely. Current trends suggest sustained viral transmission with exportation to other countries. This situation might ensure travel bans and an urgent need for vaccines and antivirals. Importantly, existing data suggest the severity of the viral infections among almost 20% sufferer, although the mortality rate stays ~2%. Effective and highly reliable forecasting of the viral spread is dependent on data retrieved in the coming days. This article appreciates data sharing with a concluding paragraph “The silver lining of the epidemic is that scientists have collected and shared information at record speed. “Every day that goes by, we know more, and every day that goes by, we can do better modeling,” Vespignani says. “Unfortunately, this best is moving very fast.”

As a virologist having >30 years’ experience of teaching basic and medical virology courses in different parts of the world, I believe there is a need to prepare people around the globe for facing challenges of coronaviruses and others including bacterial, fungal and parasitic infections through global public health education strategies. Of course, respiratory viruses should be on top of the agenda. The World Health Organization and other global healthcare agencies and national systems of countries should always keep in mind that a respiratory infection that we remember as ‘Spanish flu’ in the previous century killed >50 million people with significant morbidity. I can presume that the intensity of panic and depression may not be the same in 1918 ‘Spanish flu’ pandemic as we are facing in current times due to real-time transmission of information. God forbid, if coronavirus turns nasty, stress and fear will be the significant challenge to face than its mortality ~ two percent. However, hopes are high, and soon we will have a vaccine or effective public health measures in place to counter this threat of very high intensity in China and high across the world, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).