Available online at www.medicinescience.org

SHORT COMMUNICATION

Medicine Science International Medical Journal

Medicine Science 2020;9(2):522-3

Adoption of a holistic community-centered approach for the containment of the COVID-19 pandemic in the South-East Asia Region

Saurabh RamBihariLal Shrivastava[1], Prateek Saurabh Shrivastava[2]

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

Received 19 April 2020; Accepted 11 May 2020
Available online 16.05.2020 with doi: 10.5455/medscience.2020.09.9236

Abstract

The Corona Virus Disease-2019 (COVID-19) outbreak has impacted all the sections of the society and thus it won't be wrong to state that we will be requiring a whole-society approach for the effective containment and mitigation of the novel viral infection. In the South-East Asia Region (SEAR), 10 nations of the region have reported cases, of which 8 have shown evidence of local transmission. The need of the hour is to formulate a stronger approach, involving the active engagement of the complete society under the dedicated leadership of the policy makers. Further, there is an immense need for active involvement of the community, it will be ideal to adopt a holistic approach with communities being at the center of the response plan. In conclusion, in the ongoing battle against the COVID-19 pandemic in the South-East Asia Region, each and every member of the community has to work together with an aim to not only minimize socioeconomic impacts of the disease, but to also avoid the loss of human lives and scarce resources.

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic, South East Asia Region, World Health Organization

Introduction

The Corona Virus Disease-2019 (COVID-19) outbreak has impacted all the sections of the society and thus it won't be wrong to state that we will be requiring a whole-society approach for the effective containment and mitigation of the novel viral infection. The global estimates depict that 2160207 cases and 146088 people have lost their lives due to the infection and the number is rising at an alarming pace [1]. The European region and the American region together account for the 86.6% of the global caseload and 91% of the reported deaths worldwide [1]. In the South-East Asia Region (SEAR), till date, a total of 25291 cases and 1134 deaths have been reported, amounting to a case fatality rate of 4.5%. 10 nations of the region have reported cases, with India accounting for maximum cases (56.8%) and Indonesia for the maximum proportion of deaths (45.8%) [1].

***Corresponding Author:** Saurabh RamBihariLal Shrivastava, Department of Community Medicine, Shri Sathya Sai Medical College & Research Institute, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth (SBV) – Deemed to be University, Tiruporur - Guduvancherry Main Road, Ammapettai, Nellikuppam, Chengalpet District, Tamil Nadu - 603108, India, E-mail: drshrishri2008@gmail.com

In comparison to the other regions, the COVID-19 outbreak in the region is just starting to rise, but ominous signs are there for the disease to rise, as evidenced by the sudden rise in the number of reported cases in nations like India. The need of the hour is to formulate a stronger approach, involving the active engagement of the complete society under the dedicated leadership of the policy makers and public health authorities [2]. As it has already been envisaged that there is an immense need for active involvement of the community (in activities like contact tracing, interrupting the chain of transmission through maintaining social distancing or adherence to infection prevention & control measures or by staying indoors or not promoting stigmatization towards the affected people), it will be ideal to adopt a holistic approach with communities being at the center of the response plan [2-4].

However, in order to ensure that community is actively engaged, we have to empower them with the information, which is clear, timely, and is passed on to them through a reliable risk communication mechanism [5]. The encouraging sign is that the political leaders have taken tough calls regarding imposing a complete lockdown in 6 of the nations, because of which close to 1.5 billion people are experiencing restrictions in their mobility [2]. Nevertheless, it is important to note that if the members of

the community support the vision of their national leaders, we will be experiencing a significant flattening in the epidemic curve of the disease in the region. At the same time, such lockdowns have given scope to the health sector to improve their outbreak readiness and response plan [3].

All the regions should enhance their preparedness in such a way that they should be ready to respond to the onset of large-scale community transmission [2]. This will essentially require that each and every case or cluster has to be identified and aggressively tackled to interrupt the chain of transmission. At the same time, the basic measures need to be strengthened, including active surveillance, performing laboratory tests for all the suspected cases, isolating & offering appropriate treatment of the confirmed cases, adoption of infection prevention measures by all the sections of society, contact tracing & subjecting the contacts to quarantine for at least a period of 2 weeks [5]. In addition, the measures need to be significantly improved in various points of entries, and steps have to be taken to ensure timely availability of logistics and other infrastructure support [4]. Further, all these activities should be coordinated well at both regional and national level and it is important to believe that with the adoption of these strategies, the containment of the infection can be accomplished [2-5].

Conclusion

In conclusion, in the ongoing battle against the COVID-19 pandemic in the South-East Asia Region, each and every member of the community has to work together with an aim to not only minimize socioeconomic impacts of the disease, but to also avoid the loss of human lives and scarce resources.

Conflict of interest
The authors declare that they have no competing interest.

Financial Disclosure
All authors declare no financial support.

Ethical approval
No ethic approvall is needed to this research.

References

1. World Health Organization. Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) Situation Report – 77; 2020. Available from: https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200418-sitrep-89-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=3643dd38_2 Last accessed date 2020.04.19.

2. World Health Organization - SEAR. COVID19: WHO calls for stronger whole of society approach in South-East Asia Region; 2020. Available from: https://www.who.int/southeastasia/news/detail/03-04-2020-covid19-who-calls-for-stronger-whole-of-society-approach-in-south-east-asia-region Last accessed date 2020.04.19.

3. Pulla P. Covid-19: India imposes lockdown for 21 days and cases rise. BMJ. 2020;368:m1251.

4. Shrivastava SR, Shrivastava PS. Minimizing the risk of international spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak by targeting travelers. J Acute Dis. 2020;9:47-8.

5. World Health Organization. 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV): Strategic preparedness and response plan. Geneva: WHO press; 2020. p: 1-20.