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Abstract: Introduction: Of late, a number of contemporary articles in prestigious scientific platforms have shown that COVID-19 has questioned the global health expertise of major developed countries like the USA, the UK, and other European nations and has also raised concerns over the international health agency, the World Health Organization (WHO). With the advent of this worldwide pandemic, the WHO has admitted that they faltered in managing the crisis efficiently. The objective of this article is to highlight the fact that as there was no specific vaccine or treatment at hand when the pandemic broke out, and that the portfolio available with these nations under the directions of the WHO to counter COVID-19 was indeed limited. There was no other alternative in this time of an unprecedented emergency on a global scale. As such, whatever immediate steps were disseminated by the WHO to contain the virus's spread were indeed justified.

Methods: Specifically employing secondary research and using the available literature on the internet and library sources, a survey of published articles in leading journals of the world was carried out to investigate and analyze the position of the WHO and its future strategies in dealing with the world's most unprecedented pandemic.

Results and Conclusion: The present research and findings suggest that a large-scale fund allocation from every member country’s defence budget in a fixed percentage contribution might help in an attempt to create an initiative, Health for All. Such an initiative will help in substantially replenishing the already depleting funding of the World Health Organization. This will enable effective control of the global pandemic crisis with significant international cooperation, allowing collaboration and sharing of the financial burden. The specially created fund can be used under international monitoring for such unprecedented calamities in the near future if any such pandemic arises again. More focus can thus be given to special training of manpower, advancements in the protective equipment, development of vaccines, critical care hospitals, and centers on a global basis. Healthcare must become the new frontier of international cooperation and governance.

Keywords: WHO, guidelines, special allocation funds, future strategies, COVID-19, global pandemic crisis, healthcare.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent times, numerous articles, as well as research papers in prestigious scientific platforms, have shown that COVID-19 has questioned the global health expertise of major developed countries like the USA, the UK, Europe, and so on, including the international health governing agency, World Health Organization, (WHO). It has come to light that WHO had admitted that they faltered in the face of the pandemic crisis, as many have raised criticisms over the policies and guidelines of the international health organization [1, 2]. WHO’s Director-General had declared quite early on Jan 30, 2020, that COVID-19 was a Public Health Emergency of International Concern [3], which allowed him to release subsequent recommendations to contain the spread of the same. With no vaccine or antivirals in sight, the portfolio of countermeasures against COVID-19 is still limited. Only a small set of evidence-based non-pharmaceutical interventions are available [4, 5]. There was no other alternative in this time of world’s most unprecedented emergency, and what was done by the WHO was quite justified. Although it met with some criticisms, most were unwarranted and unnecessary as no organization had evidence-based data on how to handle the situation [1, 2].

China, South Korea, and other Asian countries have fared much better in containing the COVID-19 onslaught as compared to their Western counterparts. Most of these latter countries in the West perhaps underestimated the coronavirus infection as a type of seasonal flu, miscalculating it, and ended up paying a very heavy price for the negligence [6, 7]. No country in the world has widespread testing available in an immediate capacity, as strongly recommended by the
WHO [8], alongside treatment and robust contact tracing. No country has been able to provide its frontline health workers with adequate access to personal protective equipment (PPE), nor are there nearly enough hospital beds to accommodate the onslaught of such patients of epidemic nature. The healthcare sector in every country has faced the heaviest blow in this pandemic as nobody was prepared.

Nevertheless, the control of the epidemic, with regard to less mortality and morbidity as found in some Asian countries, including China, South Korea and others, was perhaps accomplished by certain important factors including immediate response to the calamity under instructions of the WHO as well as its directions to the international community via strict social distancing, quarantines and global lockdowns. The principle of overreaction was preferred over under-reacting and in the case of the Indian subcontinent, such measures have fortunately shown positive results. This has resulted in saving millions from this unprecedented viral epidemic, as of now. Additionally, it is also to note that mask protection is already heavily practiced in Asian populations and could pose no issues in the sub-continent at this hour, which, on the other hand, is despised in Western cultures as it is seen to be a hindrance to personal freedom. This blessing in disguise also made the difference, though it has been criticized. China has determinedly shown that the recent experience of combining non-pharmaceutical interventions with pharmaceutical ones, to curb the outbreak trends seems rather convincing and has indeed yielded successful results.

Looking at the severity of the sudden worldwide gripping of the global population by the novel coronavirus, the WHO has done its job quite well, in issuing the instructions for awareness [10]. The loss of several hundred thousand of people and the affliction of millions of people by the virus is heart-breaking. The pandemic outbreak has also destroyed the world economy, with businesses being affected and many even starving. The curves are not showing signs of flattening for now but will certainly disappear sooner or later, with a determined effort from all of us. In this hour of crisis, with several conspiracy theories floating and accusations been made at multiple fronts, the worst may be yet to be seen, and therefore, it would be wise to be pragmatic and start afresh where ever possible.

Hence a desperate attempt via this communication is made for a review of our global perspective of health for all, which has been raised for many years. Literature across the world in recent times suggests that the claim seems to have faltered with regard to the unmanageable COVID 19 and if healthcare is not focused on adequately, it may lead to mishandling any such onslaughts in the future if healthcare is not properly equipped right now. Presently, prevention is better than cure, which looks defeated. But still, lessons learned from the present debacle can make us ready to adopt some of the following:

A large-scale compulsory fund allocation in a fixed percentage from every member country’s excessive defense budget can be made to create a Health for All initiative. Such a measure can be made for substantially replenishing the already depleting funding of the specialized international health agency, the WHO [9], which has global respect and command for being a protector. Interestingly, the amount of money that the WHO receives as funding is a tiny fraction of the costs that are allocated to major cities in countries like America. The total annual budget of the WHO is less than $2.5 billion, which has been compared to the annual budget of one relatively large academic medical center in a major U.S. city. Indeed, due to the paucity of funds at the international level, desired achievements in health access and delivery do get hampered, and quality healthcare is undeniably compromised.

Under this proposal, all WHO member countries will strictly contribute monetarily or remain isolated for non-cooperation in the international political domain. This internationally collected amount by the WHO can be huge, if all countries come forward and contribute only from their defense budgets, not compromising the expenditure of any other sector of their economy. The proposed mandatory deduction based on a fixed percentage of every member country will vary from the smallest to the biggest, weakest to the strongest, leaving none, only varying in capacity. The separately created International fund under the WHO can be used under strict international monitoring for such unprecedented health-related calamities, like everyone is facing now. Worldwide special training of manpower, social distancing, buying of protective equipment, building critical care hospitals, isolation centers and related necessary items on a global basis will come out from this special healthcare initiative. In such a manner, the praxis of WHO guidelines will also be upheld in a true and efficient sense [3].

These special emergency funds can be used for vigorous international cooperative scientific research to develop vaccines and specific treatment regimens for such epidemics and forecasting the attacks of mutated organisms in the future, along with their pathophysiology and etiology. Member countries will monitor the development of such funds and their transparent distribution and management. Special attention can be given in relation to health and hygienic management on a global basis of such emerging viral epidemics particularly arising from human-animal interactions, which has not only brought about the COVID-19 pandemic but has also been the cause of previous pandemics like H1N1 flu and SARS. We will also have to strongly marshal the will and power to curb the international zoonotic transmission of diseases and the widespread repercussions of COVID 19 can teach us how to behave properly, at least now, leaving all differences of humanity and nationality. As rightly pointed out by Thorp, Science will rise to the challenge of coronavirus disease and is rightly doing so [10]. The hope of humanity now lies in the concentrated efforts of all of us, leading from the front, especially countries like the US, Canada, UK, China, Russia, Europe and India, which can make the difference in tackling this calamity.

CONCLUSION

The present perspective is that a large-scale fund allocation in a fixed percentage is created, namely Health for All, from every member country’s defense budget. This will substantially replenish the already depleting funding of the WHO, which is effectively controlling the global crisis with significant international cooperation. The special collected
fund can be better used under international monitoring for such unprecedented calamities. More focus can thus be given to special training of manpower, advancements in the protective equipment, development of new genomic vaccines, critical care hospitals, and centers on a global basis.

CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION
Not applicable.

FUNDING
None.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST
The author declares no conflict of interest, financial or otherwise.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
Declared none.

REFERENCES