The New World (Dis)order
Building a better and greener world in the post-pandemic era
Viruses, Variants and Vaccines
The Race for Inclusive Governance
Pandemic update

Global situation
• 228,394,572 confirmed cases
• 4,690,186 deaths

Global vaccination: 5.5 billion adult population to be vaccinated
• 5,776,127,976 vaccine doses administered.
• 43.3% of the world population has received at least one dose
Why is this of concern?

Inequity in populations vaccinated

• High income countries: 66.6%
• Upper middle income countries: 62.4%
• Lower middle income countries: 28.6%
• Low income countries: 1.9%
Cumulative confirmed COVID-19 cases per million people

Source: https://ourworldindata.org; September 21
COVID-19 vaccine doses administered per 100 people

Source: https://ourworldindata.org; September 21
System failure

This is despite the fact that

• Speed of vaccine development has been exemplary
• Vaccines approved for use by regulatory authority of at least one country: 24
• Approved by WHO: 6 (2 from AstraZeneca) Pfizer; AstraZeneca; Sinopharm; Sinovac; Moderna; Janssen
• Number of vaccines in clinical development: 117
• Systems set for equitable distribution via COVAX
Covax

• Multilateral initiative established in April 2020. Coordinated by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance; CEPI; WHO and UNICEF
• 180 participating countries. Rich countries pay for the vaccines, the 92 low- and middle-income countries are subsidised
• Deliver 2 billion doses in 2021. Ensure that at least 20% of the population in each country is vaccinated

Concerns
• 19.3 billion doses secured across the world but only 5.09 billion of these to be distributed via COVAX. Only 301.9 million doses have been actually delivered
• Big pharma calling the shots. Not interested in providing cheap vaccine
• Deals with industry not transparent
• Vaccinating 20% of population is not sufficient for herd immunity
• Distributes vaccines on basis of population and not requirement
• Vaccine delivery after initial 20% not clear. Countries are being bullied by industry when they try to procure directly
India at risk

Indian situation
• 33,504,534 confirmed cases
• 445,385 deaths

Indian vaccination: One billion adult population to be vaccinated
• 818,513,827 vaccine doses administered
• 45.7% population received at least 1 dose
• 15.7% fully vaccinated
Why non-availability of vaccine in India?

- Vaccine shortage despite robust pharma industry
- Indigenously developed vaccine licensed to only one manufacturer
- Decision to involve PSUs taken as an afterthought. PSUs being upgraded and still to deliver
- Vaccination policy created confusion
- Supreme Court had to address issue Suo Moto
- More vaccines would be needed if a decision is taken to vaccinated people below 18 years of age
The virus and its variants

- Variants can extend the pandemic: more transmissible, escape the immunity produced by a vaccine
- Four variants of concern: Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta. Many variants of interest are also being monitored constantly
- Delta variant linked to India’s second wave. Isolated in India in October 2020
- So far, studies suggest that the vaccines are effective against the variants but this could change with just one mutation
Timeline of variants in Kerala

Source: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LLwmuA7iiEuFZIf4CQ4Wo1nV7doLzrL/view
Kerala paradox: many unknown

- The state has high number of cases despite vaccination
- Has low case fatality rate despite high number of elderly and people living with NCDs
- Good health care system and contact tracing mechanism but has poor contact tracing ratio
- More testing done but more reliance on antigen test could have resulted in many false negative. However, state has always had high test positivity rates
- Despite strict lockdown which ruined economy, the disease spread widely
District-wise test positivity rates (September 10-16, 2021)

- More than 10%
- Between 5% and 10%
- Less than 5%

0  % population with antibodies (June-July 2021)

Sources: Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Indian Council of Medical Research
Thank you

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