

A News Report on the COVID-19 Pandemic

Rishan Singh*

Author's Affiliation:

World Health Organisation,
UNESCO, Geneva, Switzerland &
Discipline of Biological Sciences,
University of KwaZulu-Natal,
Durban, 4001, South Africa &
Department of Biotechnology and
Food Technology, Durban University
of Technology, Steve Biko Campus,
Durban, 4001, South Africa & The
Republic of South Africa

***Corresponding Author:**

Rishan Singh,

Department of Biotechnology and
Food Technology, Durban University
of Technology, Steve Biko Campus,
Durban, 4001, South Africa & The
Republic of South Africa

E-mail:

rshnsingh@webmail.co.za,

rshnsingh1@yahoo.com

ORCID: 0000-0002-6185-235X

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ABSTRACT

A pandemic such as COVID-19, like any other, is characterised beyond demographic range because it is a worldwide phenomenon. This means that people of any creed are vulnerable to coronavirus, and that each of us needs to take our roles seriously in the fight against the virus. More to this, this means that the management of the virus has complexity, as shown by recent scientific advances with the discovery of the new variant. This implies that with the testing of new vaccines, with categories approved by the World Health Organisation, one needs to be mindful of their interaction with susceptible patients, and that in order to succumb to this pandemic, we must be aware of hygienic practices, and their importance henceforth. This paper is a news report on the 2019 coronavirus pandemic.

KEYWORDS: Surfaces, Virus, Airborne, Social Distancing, Pandemic, Wuhan, China, Beijing, Lockdown, Madagascar, Covid-19 Vaccine, Implementation, Marginalised, US President, US Vice-President, Lung Capacity, Communities.

Covid-19 has taken the world by storm (Singh, 2021). Millions of people from all walks of life have lost their lives due to the Covid-19 virus, namely SARS-nCov2 (Anderson, 2019). The current situations in all countries have worsened due to non-compliance of people to the rules and regulations pertaining to Covid-19. These regulations are the proper use of masks and the sanitisation of hands for at least 20 seconds with the use of soap and water (Cirrincione, 2020).

Alternatively, one should also use a 70% alcohol hand sanitiser to rid any bacteria or germs that one may encounter if they touch contaminated surfaces (Cirrincione, 2020).

One should also raise their elbow when sneezing or laughing, since it is believed that

the bacteria can travel in respiratory droplets from one person to another. Also, used tissues should be discarded immediately so that cross contamination does not occur among the people not having the virus (Cirrincione, 2020; Anderson, 2019).

Perhaps a startling feature of the Covid-19 virus is that it can colonise the respiratory pathways of those who present absent of the symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19, 2019a, 2019b; Cirrincione, 2020; Anderson, 2019). This means that one cannot escape from the virus, not only because the virus is airborne, but, more so, because it's almost impossible to maintain social distancing at all times (Anderson, 2019; Singh, 2021). This is because arrival day to day activities need to still

continue, in spite of the prevailing pandemic (Singh, 2021).

In different regions of the world, different lockdown regulations have been imposed. In India, initially at the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020 there were level 5 restrictions, which were later relaxed to level 1. That decision was made so that a sensible regime could be made amongst the citizens to generate income, and thus regenerate the economy while doing so (Singh, 2021).

However, due to rapid resurgence of infections amongst the vulnerable and ordinary citizens, the country reverted back to level 5 regulations (Singh, 2021). In South Africa, like in many other countries, there were a mixture of lockdown levels, initially beginning with level 5 lockdown levels, the strictest and most stringent among the poor and weak (Singh, 2021).

The virus, like all bacteria that affect humans, are said to be prone to affecting susceptible hosts. In particular, those who have weakened immune systems, or immune systems that have been immunocompromised due to TB and HIV/AIDS infection, stand a greater chance of contracting coronavirus (Singh, 2021; UNAIDS, 2020).

Like the HIV pandemic, Covid-19 was a scarier pandemic due to basic flu symptoms underlying the start of coronavirus infection [Cirrincione, 2020; Anderson, 2019]. This highlights the possibility that anyone who has a standard flu may test positive for Covid-19, however treatment varies depending on the underlying conditions experienced by different patients, such as diabetes (Anderson, 2019).

While the initial outbreak occurred around December 2019 in Wuhan, China, it is believed that corona virus was first detected in a patient in Beijing in 2002 (Singh, 2021). There have been numerous weird and mysterious theories on Covid-19, one being that the virus can survive in fruits and vegetables, and another that meat can also harbour the virus. Perhaps this derived deduction is because of a major breakthrough of the virus in 2002. A report has shown mucus secretions and vapour droplets invading the lung tissues and alveolar bundles in the lungs of the infected patients,

highlighting that Covid-19 is a scientific problem, and that the solution led in bringing a social understanding of the science to the public. Furthermore, it also meant that corona virus affects the respiratory system of an individual (Singh, 2021).

The duality of respiratory infection combined with Covid-19, has intensified the search for vaccines and other modalities (Singh, 2021). Initially, in Madagascar, there was an intense search for a herbal tonic that could reduce the risk of contracting Covid-19, but this has dissolved with the release of Covid-19 vaccines, 9 months later (Singh, 2021).

Many health practitioners have regretted not searching for a vaccine earlier, but continue to understand the virus properly so that they could prevent the spread without preventative measures being put in place. It is for this reason, the noncompliance of the public, and those who fail to adhere to the lockdown regulation, that the rise in infections continue to bother the vulnerable and ordinary citizens out there [Geranaro, 2020; NICD, 2020].

Although health care workers deserve a pat in their back for risking their lives in the treatment of the ill during the last 9 months, there were cases where hospitals utilised unqualified staff in certain wards to treat Covid-19 patients, and vacancies were being advertised during the pandemic, which, in itself, is unacceptable (Singh, 2021).

Due to the fact that Covid-19 causes respiratory problems, the SA government of my country, on my account, has implemented the longest lockdown globally (Singh, 2021). Also, on recommendation by the national command council, several ministers have implemented a ban on alcohol and cigarette sales during the pandemic. The ban of alcohol was to prevent gender-based violence and to curb the rise in general violence in the country during the pandemic (UNAIDS, 2020).

However, it is obvious that crime decreased during this period, but the plight of the hungry and poor to survive was alleviated, in spite of the distress grant and uif offered by the state, as many qualified and marginalised applicants didn't receive them (Singh, 2021; UNAIDS, 2020). This had created a rift and competition among, and between, political

parties, since many didn't agree with lockdown levels 3 and 4, and it has been declared as being invalid by the high court. This led to a revision on lockdown policies, as well as the implementation of eased lockdown levels. Although alcohol and cigarettes were banned at the start of the pandemic, illegal trading in different continents still occurred, and much profit were obtained by seizing that opportunity. Sport viz. running, cycling, etc. were also banned during this period, and the current, since it's believed that the virus is airborne (Singh, 2021; COVID-19, 2019c; NICD, 2020).

Much blame has shifted to countries outside Wuhan, China, contributing at the start to the resurgence of the virus in China; however, the situation is now under control. The virus also contributed to Donald Trump's leadership being questioned in the US, due to the highest recorded number of Covid-19 infection and deaths in the world. This recently led to the victory of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris being elected as President and Vice-President, respectively.

The lockdown restriction to stop to stop smoking during the pandemic didn't come to fruition due to illegal usage of tobacco in spite of governments efforts to save lives, and as much as this was true, we ought to remember the constitutional rights of our people, as well as, our freedom of expression, within certain boundaries (Anderson, 2019). It has been iterated that the ban and stopping of smoking has no effect on the increases in lung capacity in smokers and that this was only achievable in an estimate of 9 years or more without tobacco and nicotine intake by daily smokers, including chain smokers. The use of permits during the lockdown also caused an increase in recession, and once again, the suffering of the poor must be emphasised (Anderson, 2019).

Currently, the rise in infections in SA has prompted a revision of the current lockdown, however, this is said to be attainable only once a peak in the pandemic had been established. We all still are, and will remain vulnerable as long as the virus persists in communities, however, fairs and elsewhere, and even in the light of a vaccine, there's much certainty that some will suffer (Singh, 2021; UNAIDS, 2020).

Currently the vaccine ivermectin has been dispatched and manufactured. The pandemic has enabled China to become more democratic than it has been, and it has shown the importance of essential workers to the daily lives. Perhaps, when we look back and reflect once all this is over, we would be able to understand who we are much better, and that unity and diversity is imperative if we are to prosper as one nation of different ethnicities. At the centre of the pandemic were political battles among people of all walks of life, but the virus has taught us one important lesson, and fame has no glory in the epicentre of a pandemic, and that strengthening ties among the people was essential to restructure a democratic nation.

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Rishan Singh is a biologist based in the province of KwaZulu-Natal in Durban, South Africa. He has published widely in the plant sciences. During the early phases of his career, his research focussed on the physiology of plants. He has had several career transitions as a biologist. At the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the Durban University of Technology, he has had some teaching responsibility in addition to laboratory exposure with students. He has enjoyed scholarships from the South African National Research Foundation and a private institution in South Africa. His science contributions have varied over the years, and have encompassed many disciplines. He has also published English literature.

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