

Covid: The Battle

December 2019 - The period when the world witnessed the first case of covid-19, in Wuhan, China. It was an unknown threat at that time, no one took it seriously enough to immediately render the situation. We all know how wrong we were when we let this thing pass on casually. On January 27, 2020, a 20-year-old female presented to the Emergency Department in General Hospital, Thrissur, Kerala, with a one-day history of dry cough and sore throat. There was no history of fever, rhinitis, or shortness of breath. That was the first case of COVID-19 India witnessed, and it was a turning point in the life of every inhabitant of the land. Soon, cases started to fall in like a storm, it spread like wildfire. Day in and day out there were thousands of new cases with similar symptoms and no way to find out whether or not a person is a carrier. It was not long before people realized what the situation had come down to - A Global Pandemic, about 102 years after the previous one. People could not rely on medicines doctors or any method of treatment. The ground reality was that people weren't aware of what they were supposed to do because no one had ever seen anything like this before. Slowly we learned about how staying in our houses and avoiding contact with one another is a measure of security. For that matter lockdowns were introduced where people were not allowed to step out of their houses. Even after initiating such precautions, the death rate was unbelievably high. Around the middle of April 2020, there were on average 8,500 deaths every day and about 3,76,000 new cases every day worldwide. This rose to around 15,400 in January 2020 and approximately 7,84,000 new cases every day. India was one of the most affected countries out of the many suffering ones. Many medically secure countries like the USA and Russia were able to compete with the pandemic much better than India could. Due to the population explosion and lack of sanitation and healthcare facilities, cases in India spread faster than in any other country in the world. Loss of life was one of the biggest but not the only concerns for the world. The world's economy broke like pieces of glass. While there is no way to tell exactly what the economic damage from the global COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic will be, there is widespread agreement among economists that it will have severe negative impacts on the global economy. Early estimates predicted that should the virus become a global pandemic, most major economies will lose at least 2.9 percent of their gross domestic product (GDP) over 2020. This forecast was already restated to a GDP loss of 3.4 percent. To put this number in perspective, global GDP was estimated at around 84.54 trillion U.S. dollars in 2020 - meaning that a 4.5 percent drop in economic growth results in almost 2.96 trillion U.S. dollars of lost economic output. People went jobless, companies went bankrupt, and businesses were shut down within weeks. Everything was in shambles, there was turmoil all over the world. Countless people suffered from unemployment; there were no jobs and no money to run houses. The world was down on its knees and to date, the economic recovery seems like a

far-sighted dream. COVID-19 messed up not only the physical and economic condition of the people but also their mental and emotional ones. Around 28 crore cases and 54 lakh deaths were reported worldwide, out of which India alone was home to 3.48 crore cases and 4.8 lakh deaths. Unfortunately, none of the reported data is the final count because tons of cases and deaths went under the charts. Not everyone could afford treatment or a hospital bed, some people weren't even able to know whether or not they had COVID-19. It is hard to even imagine the state of mind of a person who has either lost a loved one to COVID-19 or is seeing one of their family members fight COVID-19. People are going through mental trauma and depression every day. India was reported as the most depressed country by WHO after the effects of COVID-19. Looking at people dying and suffering every day has left a deep impact on the minds of the people. Several interviews have shown that most people have completely lost hope of recovering financially and mentally from COVID-19. Families have been destroyed and dreams have been crushed. The last year and a half have been tough for the entire world and in times like these, people need to come together and help each other. Fighting off COVID with vaccinations and medicines is only half a part of the solution. We also need to stick together in this battle and support each other. Getting vaccinated is very important and as individuals, we should make sure we spread as much awareness about it as we possibly can. Being supportive and carrying a helpful attitude towards others is essential. This pandemic and the battle with Covid-19 is still not over and we have to stay precautious at all times and pray for the best.

