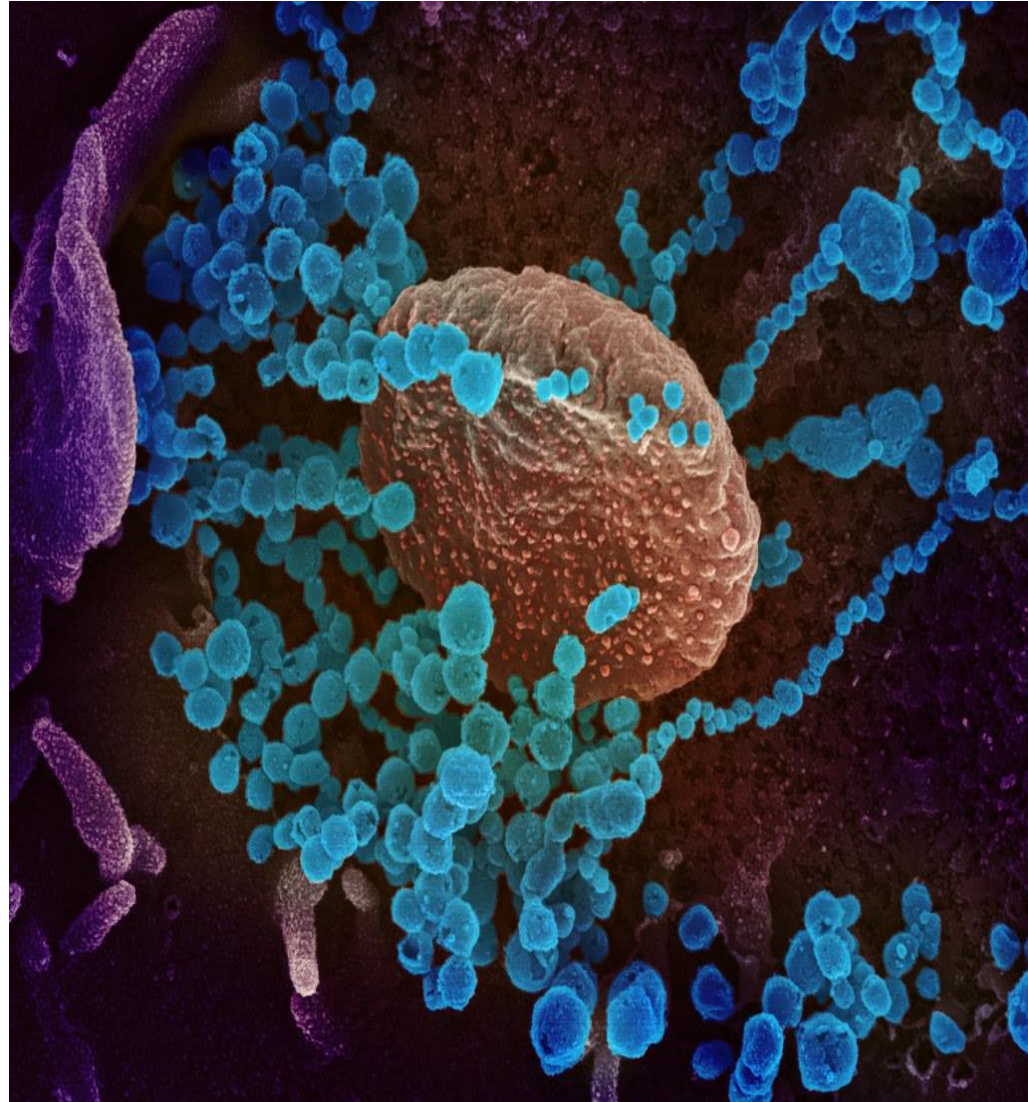


COVID-19 in NEPAL

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Current status

- **On 30th January 2020, WHO declared Corona virus (renamed as COVID 19) outbreak as a Public Health Emergency of world wide concern and now it is already declared a pandemic**
- **Most vulnerable age group old persons 60+ suffering from lungs disease, High blood pressure, diabetes, heart diseases, smokers, alcoholics**

Nepal

- **Considered one of the countries with high risk for uncontrolled spread, so far one case reported positive and cured, over 460 tested none positive (official source KTV)**
- **No functional public health system with public health RRT and active surveillance capacity**
- **Limited surge capacity both for medical and public health services**
- **Poor infection prevention and control practices**
- **No option for public transportation, a few health desks at a few borders (41 nakas) but not effective, health workers not protected, self quarantine declared for Nepali and foreigners coming to Nepal**

Pressing Issues in Nepal

- **Poor level of awareness in the public, in health providers, among health care authorities and political leadership**
- **Open border with India, China closed its borders people smuggle to come back (Humla case)**
- **Minister said we are corona free in order to promote Visit Nepal year 2020 – a loose declaration**

Pressing Issues in Nepal

- **Case detection**
 - **Laboratory capacity**
 - **Testing criteria**
 - **Active case finding**
 - **Skilled medical and nursing team, isolation facilities**
- **Essential supplies**
 - **Personal protective equipment (PPE)**
 - **Essential medications**
 - **Oxygen and oxygen equipment, isolation facilities, ventilators, and others critical care measures**

Pressing issues in Nepal

- **Infection prevention and control in healthcare settings**
 - **Need of minimizing exposure and spread in the hospitals and health care providers**
 - **Healthcare workers' training**
- **Critical care capacity, ICU**
- **Contingency planning from public health authorities for different scale of outbreaks**
 - **Containment & mitigation measures**

Need to keep in mind

- How many cases of corona virus will there be in our area ?**
- What will happen when these cases materialize??**
- What should we do??**
- When will we do??**

The corona virus is coming to us

- **But it is coming and must be with us now.**
- **We do not know ?**
- **It's coming at an exponential speed: gradually, and then suddenly.**
- **It's a matter of days. Maybe a week or two.**
- **Once contacted, during incubation period (5 -14-20 days) may or not have symptoms and signs and once sick already late, high fever, dry cough, common cold like lungs impaired and kidney dysfunction**

What will be our situation?

- When it does in masse, our healthcare system will be overwhelmed**
- Our fellow citizens will be treated in corridors, every where and**
- Health workers are/not available – no leave notified except sutkeri and kriya bida.**
- Exhausted healthcare workers will break down. Some will die due to risk exposure with no PPE support.**

Health workers' dilemma

- **How to deal with this calamity and emergency situation?**
- **To prioritize which patient gets the oxygen and which one let go die.**
- **How to cope with low morale and protect own-self?**
- **How to balance work and life?**
- **Lesson from Wuhan outbreak?**

Public health actions

- *As a politician, government officials, civil societies, community leaders, service providers, business men - all of us have the responsibility to prevent, protect this evil and can do it by adopting protection and prevention steps*

The only way to prevent this is **social distancing** today. Not tomorrow, from today.

That means keeping as many people home as possible, starting now - **self quarantine**.

You may feel and hear comments while social distancing

- *I am afraid*
- *May think I am over reacting – self guilty*
- *people will laugh at me, Khub janne hunu parne*
- *they will be angry at me, outcast me*
- *I may look stupid*
- *I might be socially stigmatized and discriminated*

Social Distancing

- Do not worry in this matter
- *Social distancing is key to protect and prevent at first*
- when the few precious days of social distancing we observe, it will have saved lives, people won't criticize you anymore
- They will thank you for making the right decision
- *That is what China did lock down/shut down cities, provinces to start with Wuhan, Hubei and they contained it!!*

Social Distancing

- There is one very simple thing that we can do and that works
- *In Wuhan as soon as there was a lockdown, cases went down. That's because people didn't interact with each other, and the virus didn't spread.*
- *The current scientific consensus is that this virus can be spread within 2 meters (6 feet) if somebody coughs, sneezes. Otherwise, the droplets fall to the ground and would don't infect you if you are not in contact with that ground.*

Social distancing

- The worst infection then comes through surfaces: The virus survives for up to 9 days on different surfaces such as metal, ceramics and plastics.
- That means things like floors, doorknobs, tables, chairs or elevator buttons can be terrible infection vectors, that is why do not touch face and frequent and proper hand washing with soap is important.
- The only way to truly reduce Covid 19 is *self quarantine* : Keeping people home as much as possible, for as long as possible until this recedes.

Some important actions must do

- *Frequent Hand washing with soap, use sanitizer*
- *Do not touch face, nose, eye with hands*
- *No meetings, no hanging out, no public events, parties, schools, colleges*
- *Take preventive measures in public transports*
- *Working from home alternatives - use phone,*
- *What to do in our filed offices for our client? – listen to their problems, fear, create awareness, give correct messages – this is more important now than the regular work*

Frequent Hand washing – namaste best practice

- *Frequent had washing correctly with soap and water, using sanitizer, keep it with you*
- **Do not touch face, mouth, nose, eyes with hands that we frequently do**
- ***Namaste the best , no hand shake and hugging and muah***
- **Drink plenty of water - warm water**
- **Not sure of besar, aduwa and bojho, lemon water if other kind of cold it does help**

Some simple alerts

- **Do visit hospital if high fever, cough and sneezing it comes with flu like signs and symptoms, keep warm, testing and isolation is important**
- **But more severe – isolation, ICU facility.**
- **Incubation period 5 – 14 days could be even without signs and symptoms - once diagnosed severity chance high.**
- **Fatality - 3.5-4% - Wuhan and Hubei – up to 4% , South Korea – 5% (in one community)**

Containment

- Can be done by political decisions and by Government - shut down, quarantine, identify, isolation, surveillance, national emergency declaration if required, *official figures and true figures might not be the same (10 = 100 or more true, china experience)*
- *Containment is making sure that all the cases are identified, controlled, and isolated.*
- That's what Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan and Taiwan are doing so well:
- *They very quickly limit people coming in, identify the sick, immediately isolate them, use heavy protective measures to protect their health workers, track all their contacts, and quarantine them*

- *This works extremely well when we are prepared and do it early, decision needs to be prompt and would not let grind economy to recede – example - current world economy receding .*
- **This is not what Western countries have done. And now it's too late.**
- **The recent US announcement that most travel from Europe was banned is a containment measure for a country that has, as of today, 3 times the cases that Hubei had when it shut down *now declared national emergency*.**

Mitigation

Once there are hundreds or thousands of cases growing in the population, preventing more from coming, tracking the existing ones and isolating their contacts isn't enough anymore.

The next level is mitigation.

- Mitigation **requires heavy social distancing.** People need to stop hanging out to drop the transmission rate
- It requires *closing companies, shops, mass transit, schools, enforcing lockdowns... The worse your situation, maximize social distancing law and order situation*

- **This is what Wuhan had to do.**
- **This is what Italy was forced to accept.**
- **Because when the virus is rampant, the only measure is to lock down all the infected areas to stop spreading it at once.**
- **South Korea is the worst example**

- **Some businesses, are working from home best by on line, which is fantastic.**
- **Some mass events are stopped.**
- **Some affected areas are quarantining themselves.**
- **Online schools, offices, colleges, universities**
- **Hotels and airlines are running in loss, stock market scaling down, economic set down has become worst of the century**

- **Once crisis situation with one day delay in shut down can be of tremendous no. of case and human loss**
- **In the theoretical model that resembles loosely Hubei, waiting one more day creates 40% more cases and could be 40% more death**

What can be done in Nepal

- *First, need to confirm it has already spread in Nepal = do not take it lightly one is too many*
 - *Expand testing criteria*
 - *Enhance laboratory capacity*
 - *Active surveillance*
- **Ensuring supply and stock of personal protective equipment**
- **Start / increase manufacturing e.g. Masks**
- **Ensuring supply and stock of essential meds, equipment and basic commodities**
- **Ensuring Healthcare worker safety and boosting morale**

What can be done in Nepal

- **Contingency planning** for scenarios with different numbers of cases
- **Case management**
 - **Less/ severe to** symptomatic patients
- ***Policies for social distancing*** – Namaste the best, world leaders are doing it now
 - Schools
 - Public events
 - Public transport / spaces,
- **Communication** – transparency, engendering trust, use communication channels for messaging e. g. Mobile messaging NTC, social media
- **Minimize disruption to public services, civic life, peace**

Dhanyabad and Namaste