

BUDDHIST WORLD-VIEW DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

The COVID -19 pandemic set the world health emergency hastily, and has created a crisis of globalization that never happened in human history before, hence there is no hyperbole calling it the biggest health crisis in human history. It has already gained the ignominy as the world's fastest and longest disease outbreak that turned into a callous killer pandemic. Today, this world has become a living hell due to this COVID-19 pandemic. It's now more than a year running into the pandemic. Still, there is no sign of relief and respite in getting control over propping up new variants. The entire world is fighting together to eliminate the pandemic.

The paper delves upon political ideologies to economic growth and planning to extract natural resources in their entirety, global trade and polity have severely impacted human existence. In addition, some valuable Buddhist views and perspectives on the pandemic and how Buddhist countries handle the situation with more prudence and caution are also discussed. This paper will analyze and provide an overview of all the aspects mentioned above and arguments in the proper framework to understand this pandemic's consequences better while framing issues regarding some similar pre-historical pandemic occurrences. This article also considers India's alarming situation and concern in the wake of flaring up new cases, making India a country of global crisis.

Keywords: Buddhist views, COVID-19, Coronavirus, global pandemic, lockdown, quarantine, social distancing.

INTRODUCTION

The silent killer novel Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)¹ originated in bats. It has changed the notion of everything fundamentally, like what we do and what we don't in our social life. In a way, our customary and routine practice of activities has been abruptly brought to a standstill; thus, everyone is facing unprecedented challenges and difficulties, including fear, psychosis, anxiety, and panic. It has affected the normal course of human activity and behaviour. The positive side of this pandemic is that people have become cautious and guarded in improving their body immune systems and mental health activities with yoga to stay healthy and sound.

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At the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020, various human cases of novel Coronavirus infection were reported from the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market (South China Seafood City Food Market) in Wuhan, China. On 7 January, 2020, the virus was identified as a novel Coronavirus and officially named by the WHO as SARS-CoV-2.² As per the findings of the US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP), the new corona virus that infects humans, originated in animals. The USA biological research suggests that COVID-19 and a high proportion of emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases are zoonotic derived from wildlife³. Similarly, there is enormous capable wildlife (animals) that can transmit the viral infection to humans; but bats are at the forefront. The reason is that bats, in many respects; represent the perfect reservoir for emerging zoonotic pathogens because they harbor more zoonotic viruses per species than any other animal such as rodents⁴. In other words, we, as human beings, should know how to handle animals and control our own destructive behavioral human actions. We should altogether avoid or limit, if possible, hunting wild animals for consumption, etc. This also cause destruction of biodiversity and ecology.

We are facing a crisis that humanity or humankind never faced at such a mega scale and rampage under any pandemics in history; thus, it's a testing time for everyone to contemplate and review. Humans made superfluous and redundant activities that have directly affected nature's fragile environment, where all living sentient beings coexist. However, on the other hand, this ongoing global pandemic is rapidly sprouting into a worldwide political and economic crisis. It has forced the breakdown of basic human activities, including political and economic mobilization; borders sealed in panic, and it is not less than a war in itself.

GENEALOGY OF CURRENT PANDEMIC

COVID-19 is unprecedented pandemic; hence, today, we hang in the balance between life and death situations. This unwanted consequence is the most significant human crisis ever happened when lockdown at such a scale has been resorted to in the entire human history. Initially, the lockdown was to justify identifying the hotspots, bringing up the medical infrastructure to facilitate the protocols to live with Corona. In contrast, the imposition of subsequent lockdowns was according to the flaring up situation. During this extended lockdown period, people have suffered like anything, particularly the poor who survive on day-to-day earnings. Unorganized sector laborers⁵ faced irreparable damage, and so has the economy. For that reason, the most extended period of lockdown is not the ultimate solution for flaring up or dipping down the corona cases after some length of the period. As of now, no credible answer to the virus except vaccination has been found.

After easing the lockdown, social distancing will be a very uphill task to follow and practice that too in a crowded country like India, a developing country with a dense population. And that may be witnessed soon after the lifting lockdown for various compulsion reasons, particularly the economy and other government business establishments, which are the lifeline of land and people that cannot be kept on hold for long. Hence, under all these circumstances, the only option left is to take self preventative measures while taking good hygienic food that develops the body's immunity system while following the government guidelines and measures. A healthy and sound environment is the best defence against such diseases. Even since the outbreak of this pandemic, there are over 47,000 scientific research papers dealing

with COVID-19 that have already appeared in various reputed international journals⁶.

In the past, there have been several pandemics, including plague, smallpox, cholera, dengue, Ebola, Spanish Flu of 1918, HIV&AIDS, SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), MERS 2015 (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome), tuberculosis, influenza, and West Nile disease. Now COVID-19 contagious diseases has threatened and disrupted human populations⁷. However, in the past, India has to deal with diseases such as smallpox, polio, and plague and not such pandemic like COVID-19. In principle, this problem is pandemic; hence such infectious disease has no alleviation unless the vaccine is distributed.

Coronavirus has surfaced at different intervals.⁸ The first case of Coronavirus was notified in the 1960s (229E), 1967(OC43) but never considered as a fatal disease. It was followed by the 'Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus' (SARS -CoV) in 2002. This was first reported from Guangdong province in China followed by cases from Vietnam, Canada, and Hong Kong. Next to follow were SARS-CoV-1 in year 2003⁹, NL63 in year 2004 and HKU1 in 2005. Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus' (MERS-CoV¹⁰) was first identified in 2012 and SARS-CoV-2 in 2020. The WHO declared 'state emergency' when the cases flared up excessively.

COVID-19 is similar to SARS, a new novel infectious disease and the most dangerous pandemic compared to the other epidemics. Many scientists and medical professionals worldwide worked dedicatedly on a vaccine but still unable to come with some tangible solutions. The SARS 2002-03 was caused by the excessive killing and eating of animals, particularly wild animals. The natural ecological balance was lost between sentient human beings and non-human beings or animals that provide fertile ground for such a scary disease. Hunan Seafood market is one of the world's largest markets where humans consume a large scale of wild animals and trade thousands of wild animals annually. Therefore, after COVID-19, the Chinese government has brought a law to ban hunting, transporting, trading, and eating wild animals. The Chinese government also banned import across the country to ensure public health and safety and avoid the transmission of novel severe infectious diseases¹¹.

Top medical scientists are unanimous in the view that vaccines alone are the safest and ultimate way forward to achieve herd immunity against the deadly virus. Hence, until and unless that happens, our only safest bet is to adopt the MHD prescription of social vaccines such as wearing a mask, hand wash and social distancing in our daily lives¹². It has already taken four million lives across the globe and has put the rest of the humans at stake. Tremendous sorrow and suffering grew as also psychological stigma and anxiety. Government and non-government establishments are in disarray, and everything brought to a halt.

The virus is transmitted from human to human via droplets coughed or exhaled by infected persons, touching droplet contaminated surfaces or objects, and touching the eyes, nose, or mouth (ECDP 2020). The most common symptoms reportedly found are fever, dry cough, dyspnoea, sore throat, headache, myalgia or arthralgia, and even diarrhea and vomiting.

BRAWL OF TWO GLOBAL POWERS

China and the US, the two major global powers, are playing the blame game instead of addressing the issue. Various conspiracy theories and political rumours scorn the media

globally, but it's still unknown how it developed and spread. However, primarily it was first identified in Wuhan, the capital of Hubei province, China, in December 2019 and was rapidly determined to be caused by a novel Coronavirus, namely Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus -2 (SARS-CoV-2)¹³. The outbreak began to spread worldwide, covering more than 200 countries¹⁴ that have infected millions of people, and millions have already lost their lives to the disease.

What policymakers and analysts are questioning now is why China concealed information on Covid-19 from the international community despite knowing its intensity and fatality. When US President Trump spoke to the journalists, the crisis took a geopolitical turn. He called the Covid virus the "China Virus." US President Trump, calculatingly with full consciousness, claimed to shift every blame on China since America is the most affected country globally, both in fatality and infected cases. The United States had succumbed to this virus severely as its health care sector could not control the pandemic and became the worst affected country in the world. As a result, the economy slowed down because of the pandemic.

A leading academician of the United States, Stephen Walt from Harvard University, has written an interesting piece of paper in *Foreign Policy* magazine titled "The Death of American Competence". He questions the US preparedness to combat the crisis. He emphasizes that "this epic policy failure will further tarnish the United States' reputation as a country that knows how to do things effectively."¹⁵

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a catastrophic impact on the entire global community, and none of the countries seems to have dodged the virus. However, the menace can be overcome only through cooperation among all the states and following international norms. The China-US rivalry amid this global crisis has negatively affected the general response to the fight against COVID -19. However, with all anticipation, China and the US will learn lessons from India about addressing the pandemic crisis humanely rather than confront each other to reclaim geopolitical space. At the same time, China will also have to adopt a transparent policy, especially on its biological weapon program, generating many apprehensions in the global community.

The global pandemic infected cases and fatalities numbers from the affected states as per official records such as WHO, CDE, ECDP websites are mindboggling and highly daunting. However, keep in mind that the actual numbers are much higher than the official numbers; hence the present corona cases of infected and death numbers are contentious in almost all countries for different reasons.

On January 30, 2020, WHO officially declared COVID-19 as an epidemic of public health emergency of international concern (WHO, 2020). By March 11, 2020, the virus spread swiftly across other countries, and WHO instantaneously called it a pandemic.¹⁶ In this regard, the World Health Organization also stated on its websites that "*The COVID-19 pandemic represents an unprecedented disruption to the global economy and world trade, as production and consumption are scaled back across the globe*". As per the updated report, 39.93 lakh people have died from this fatal disease, with 18.45 crore confirmed cases worldwide till July 4, 2021.¹⁷

Expert sources put India as one of the most susceptible to Corona, and it may become like the USA, UK, Italy, Spain, Brazil in terms of fatalities rate. However, the infection rate has already reached the second spot just after the USA. For a country like India, the stringent laws and guidelines are not followed sensibly and systematically while considering India's dilapidated medical infrastructure and huge unorganized sectors with inadequate facilities. In that case, there might be another alarming and disquieting situation for a country like India. And above all, most importantly, the 1.38 billion population¹⁸ the world's second-largest populated country after China is a problematic scenario. On September 6, 2020, India overtook Brazil to become the world's second worst-hit country¹⁹. The confirmed Coronavirus infections in India have surpassed twenty million, the second-highest after the United States. Thus, the only impeccable solution for a densely populated country like India is to have the vaccination drive at the earliest, creating a safer environment to live in, without fear and panic. It will also help develop herd immunity with minimal loss of lives as current death rates are confirmed. Under these circumstances, India cannot go for inclusive testing as slums and villages where the basic guidelines such as social distancing and wearing a face mask are not manageable.

India's population is significantly higher after China. On the other side, the lack of accessibility to hygienic and clean water and food to every citizen and the overall poor socio-economic situation has posed a significant challenge for India's fight against COVID-19. Then recklessness, sluggish government, and individual citizens, who hid travel history to escape quarantine, participation in forbidden religious social gatherings etc,²⁰ helped spread the pandemic that made India the next COVID-19 hotspot. Hence, the WHO stated that the "future of the pandemic would depend on how India handles it."²¹

Prime Minister Narendra Modi held discussions with SAARC countries and took the initiative to participate in the virtual G-20 Summit. While addressing the Summit, Modi called upon member countries to "strengthen and reform intergovernmental organizations like WHO and work together to reduce economic adversity and difficulties resulting from COVID-19, particularly for the economically weaker countries".²² So also, despite facing the COVID-19 crisis, New Delhi assisted the neighbouring countries. The recent UNCTAD report also appreciated the Indian economy when it stated that "Even so, the world economy will go into recession this year with a predicted loss of global income in the trillions of dollars. It will spell serious trouble for developing countries, with the likely exception of China and the possible exception of India."²³

It shows India's ongoing fight against the COVID-19 pandemic humanely without hostility, which won tremendous applause from many world organizations, including the WHO. On the contrary, the inside story and situation are different; hence the cases are increasing faster than any other country today in both infection and mortalities. Unfortunately, most Indian media never discussed COVID-19 seriously nor held the government responsible for the present difficult circumstances.

BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE AND APPROACH ON CORONAVIRUS

Let's look at the present ongoing Covid -19 pandemic. It's just an abysmal disease of cosmic flux that usually confronts or encounters once in a lifetime cycle. The Buddhist ethical

and governance system strictly inculcates freedom from destroying or non-injury to human lives, in fact, all living beings. All living beings, including plants and trees, are worthy because they live. Primarily, Buddhism and its philosophy are spiritual or metaphysical discourses. However, in a real sense, Buddha discovered a truth about life and the physical world's existence after so many years of his hard work-study and rigorous practices until he became enlightened. He determined the cause and effect of various problems of the materialistic world and to overcome these problems he showed the ways and means through some basic theoretical finding based on 'the enlightenment' or in literal term 'the Awakened one.'²⁴ His teachings Buddhism²⁵ has fundamental doctrinal formulas . 'Four Noble Truth'²⁶ that includes 'Noble Eightfold Path' 'Theory of Dependent Origination'²⁷ are some basic elementary fact in teaching and understanding of Buddhism and its philosophy that was propounded by Buddha more than 2500 years ago.

The Coronavirus pandemic reminds the true implications of dependent origination, a core principle of Buddhist psychology, philosophy and theology. The more we understand and realize the importance of giving health care and secure safety for people, the more we protect and remain safe. Similarly, more countries prioritize offering cooperation and compassionate policies for other's well-being; more will be their own well being and prosperity under any circumstances in this murkier world. We cannot exist without the earth, and we have to be mindful about how we treat this world because we can no longer live without it.²⁸

The term "samsara"²⁹ on the planet earth is an existential phenomenon that finds exposition in Buddhism as well as in the other Indian traditional schools of thought and system. All karmic actions have two side effects: positive or negative, based purely on one's deeds. According to this theory, the COVID-19 pandemic is also the cause-effect of karmic activity that caused and appeared as a novel and severe viral infectious disease. The karmic action identified as the cause of the epidemic is fourfold: globalization and subsequent increase in international travel; widespread urbanization of human society, environmental and ecological destruction which affect the bio-diversity and damage also following global change and climate change, and a neoliberal capitalist order driven by endless greed, desire, delusion in today's aggressive and competitive world. Thus, we need behavioural change and the materialistic or worldly change that cause climate change and spread virus diseases.

In traditional Buddhism, human actions can be divided into two categories based on the state of mind, body, and speech: wholesome action and unwholesome action. The unwholesome states of actions/activities are also called the ten Buddhist laws of non-precept/non-virtues.³⁰ These lead to grave sorrow and suffering, and it's performed under the force of the three evils or poisons, namely greed, hatred, and delusion. Therefore, the most significant discovery of Buddha's teaching is that the world is full of sorrow and suffering. Buddha proclaimed, "*Light arose in me about things not heard before.*"³¹

The actual cause and effect of the outbreak of COVID-19 arise from the damage to the planet earth caused by human misdeeds and mischievous activities out of ignorance through greed, hatred, and covetousness the three poisons in Buddhism. And it is the root cause of all sorrow and suffering of the mundane world. The existence of the planet is naturally based on natural mechanisms. If anything works against this natural process, it becomes a virus

that explodes in various epidemics and natural disasters. Human beings have gone extreme against nature with greed, lust, hatred, and nature cannot sustain such actions for a longer period. Here, the Buddhist concept of the 'Middle way' approach talks that about the middle path that accommodating both living and non-living beings as per their compatible survival endurance. Everything fits in the right place during such an outbreak as the sky appears out in its natural shape and colour. All the running water tributaries like streams, ponds, lakes and the ocean become clean. The level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has become the lowest in decades. And the wild animals in the jungles and oceans are less threatened and live a better, happier life. Hence the planet is healing itself when people are not indulging in unnatural activities such as going against nature. WHO, in its constitution, defines *health* as being «a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of illness or any infirmity deficiency.»³²

The 'Four Noble Truth' of Buddhism represents a definite procedure as a system of thought which is equally followed even today in other branches of knowledge. These 'Four Noble Truth'³³ are nothing but four cardinal articles of medical science applied to the spiritual healing of human beings.³⁴ Hence, medical science is closely related to the 'Four Noble Truth.' In a way, Buddha, the Omniscient was a physician who knew the causes of disease and at the same time also understood how to cure the illness, including vicious disease. Like in medical science, suffering corresponds to the element of diagnosis of the diseases with stages of check-up, such as examining the causes of disease; the truth of the cessation of disease corresponds to the achievement of a cure and finally treatment or medicine for healing from the diseases is the path that corresponds to the course of treatment of a disease.³⁵ Buddha discovered the Noble Eightfold path that leads to the ending or extinction of sorrow and sufferings.³⁶ Everything in the world is conditioned under a law of all phenomenal human existence, which is in Buddhist term is called '*Pratitya-samutpada*'³⁷ (dependent origination). It shows life is nothing but a cycle of rebirths and death; hence death exists because of birth. Everything in the phenomenal world is interconnected and interdependent. No one can escape from this law once we are born in this world. In the present context of COVID-19, people are scared to die and seeing dead bodies become fearful, but living bodies are no less dangerous than dead bodies. Human existence, conditioned by suffering, ageing, sickness, and has death as an inevitable phenomenon. Buddhism is more scientific, practical, and logical with rational and scientific approaches and methods.

Some important Buddhist texts like *Bodhischaryavatra*, *Mahayana Sutralankara*, *Mahaprajnaparamita Sastra*, *Dhammapada*, *Lalitavistara Sutra*, *Saddarmapundarika Sutra*, *Vimalakirti Sutra* etc., ultimately explain the meaning of kindness and compassion that brings happiness to all sentient beings while liberating all human sentient beings from sorrow and suffering. In addition, even reciting sutras and mantras from the above-mentioned texts or just offering prayer for relief of grief and suffering from Covid-19 syndrome while reciting the famous and powerful Buddhist mantras "*Om Mani Padme hum*"³⁸ help one ameliorate the mental fear and suffering.

However, Buddhist activities such as prayer and meditation have not been able to end the pandemic entirely and instantaneously, but it has helped extensively at an individual and

community level. Nonetheless, its charitable and compassionate contributions extended by Buddhists worldwide have been a significant boon for Covid infected people. They have also helped mitigate anxieties and various other mental health problems that came along while confronting the Covid-19 crisis worldwide.

BUDDHIST WORLD AND PANDEMIC

Since the Covid-19 pandemic has changed many aspects of life and works over more than one year and the situation is still not under control; in fact, it is ravaging all over the world like a never-ending pandemic. In an effort to control the spread of the virus, Buddhist organizations all over the globe, particularly in respect of their countries, have been proactive in planning and executing their skill and experiences based on practical Buddhist teaching and preaching and its functional role during and after the epidemic. Countries like Taiwan, South Korea, Mongolia, Myanmar, Cambodia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bhutan etc, had taken preventive measures before and at the initial stage of the Covid-19 outbreak; hence, relatively meagre infection rates and few fatality rates occurred. These countries did not undergo widespread business establishment closures or put 'lockdowns' but only following simple and easy norms such as social distancing, wearing masks, and other virus protection guidelines issued by their respective countries. They called the Korean approach, Taiwanese approach, Mongolian approach, Bhutanese approach, etc. For this approach, they have earned commendations and applause from the World Health Organization (WHO) and many other agencies around the globe.

After the outbreak of Covid -19, people there were restricted from going out; thus, the situation is under control. Because of all these reasons, people in South East Asian countries have suffered considerably fewer damages in terms of human lives and income.

Buddhist Sanghas and organization have also actively participated and conducted various Buddhist social and spiritual welfare activities, such as online Buddhist education teachings in the form of virtual meeting on meditation classes,³⁹ mantra chanting, and many other forms of Buddhist teaching, including rituals practices worldwide to everyone but particularly for Covid-19 patients and those who remained in quarantine or social isolation. Such initiative has increased public interest in Buddhist sustainable holistic approach that has helped promote mental stability and physical health. Most lay Buddhist people have accredited to faith and belief that strongly tend towards loving compassion and brotherhood for other poor and needy people and social cooperation for other's happiness. Therefore, it's understandably pretty natural for these people to work collectively for mutual and maximum benefit for the welfare of others while sacrificing one's comfort and happiness.

In this way, the cultivation of positive emotions among the many suffering from anxiety, social isolation, and financial difficulties during the pandemic and lay supporters engaging their services through various social media platforms as a collective approach with loving-kindness and wishing well of others helped overcome such a difficult time. These are some different but unique reasons for the low spread of Covid-19 in Buddhist countries. It is worth noticing how they mitigated the crisis sufficiently while following their distinct but practical holistic approaches. And it's helped them in all possible ways to alleviate the widespread

mental and emotional suffering of people and stress from the long-lasting financial difficulties for individuals, families, and the state itself during the epidemic.

The countries, especially those Asian Buddhist majority countries⁴⁰ were quick in their prompt action like Vietnam, Taiwan, South Korea, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, Sri-Lanka, Bhutan, Singapore, Mongolia, and many others Asian countries. Countries like Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Taiwan, South Korea, Mongolia, Japan, and even China have shown significant and remarkable action plan to curb and stop the deadly virus from spreading and affecting more people and lives. Today it is well under control because of their prompt and proactive measures and enforcement while keeping in mind the risk factor of transmission to the population, economic consequences, and many other menaces. The cultural aspects of wearing face mask even before the virus spread in many of these countries, is the reason behind fewer fatalities. Besides, they have also undertaken early public awareness through various education campaigns with a good task force team for public attention with proper guidelines and measures.

On the contrary, the USA and many other European countries failed miserably due to non-compliance with COVID-19 measures followed in the South-East Asian and Indo-Pacific countries.

Many experts have called it a Black Swan event for the global economy (Mahendra & Sengupta; 2020). Today the entire world is under unprecedented health and economic crisis because of the corona pandemic.

POST COVID-19 SCENARIO

The post-COVID-19 situation and complications will hit adversely though it seems the Coronavirus is never going away and may become endemic

The humanity is at present struggling with the COVID-19 virus for almost a year with enormous hazard to lives, which has brought normal human life to a halt. Moreover, economic crisis that all the countries face today is also affecting their socio-political stratum severely along with their mental health care systems.

CONCLUSION

Corona pandemic has taught us that the survival of the fittest is feasible only with nutrient rich food, positive vibrations, mindfulness of feelings, consciousness to gain freedom from all the sufferings. Coronavirus has emerged and stands like a shadow of death to everyone. The second wave reached a critical stage in some parts of Europe. France, Spain, Italy and UK have already put their country under the second comprehensive lockdown. With partial uplifting of closure, the sudden flaring up of corona cases occurred in India. Brazil, Mexico, and Russia are too flaring up very fast. Similar pattern has happened in Europe, the USA, and some parts of South and North American regions of Brazil, Colombia, Argentina, Peru and Mexico that largely because of relaxation restriction before taming the virus. A country may prevent the rapid number of infectious of fatality cases if it follows special measures taken in Buddhist majority countries like Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Cambodia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Laos, Thailand and Mongolia, including China the country where the COVID originated.

Looking at this persistent global crisis, one can ask these questions: who is responsible for getting this global mess? How is the international community responding to the catastrophe? Why China, the epicenter of the crisis failed to inform the international community early about the imminent virus? Last, to what extent does this virus contribute to the “geopolitical antagonism”, particularly between the two superpowers China and the US and its impact on the other countries. Such questions need to be discussed explicitly to get a clearer picture of the crisis at the earliest.

ABBREVIATIONS

COVID-19 = Coronavirus Disease 2019

SARS = Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome

WHO = World Health Organization

JHU = Johns Hopkins University

MHD = Ministry of Home Department

BP = Blood Pressure

CDCP = Centre for Disease Control and Prevention

SAARC = South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

UNCTAD = United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

OED = Oxford English Dictionary

ENDNOTES

1. This was provisionally called COVID-19, and first identified in China’s Wuhan province. Chinese sources said that some persons were exposed to seafood or the wet market; however, the virus/infection’s actual cause is still unknown. It’s a pandemic caused by a novel Coronavirus infection. Scientific research and study will determine the cause and effect of this infection on the human body and find a cure for the virus apart from the vaccine.
2. Readfearn, Graham (2020). “How did Coronavirus start, and where did it come from? Was it Wuhan’s animal market?” April 28. <https://pubs.rsna.org/doi/pdf/10.1148/radiol.2020200490>.,<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/28/howdid-the-coronavirus-see>: <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/330374/WHO-2019-nCoV-laboratory-2020.1-eng.pdf>
3. Jones K.E et al.(2008). Global trends in emerging infectious diseases, *Nature* **451**(7181) 990-993. See: <https://doi.org/10.1038/nature06536>
4. Luis AD & others (2013). A comparison of bats and rodents as reservoirs of zoonotic viruses: are unique bats? *Proceeding of the Royal Society B: Biobliological Sciences*, **280**(1756) 20122753, see: <https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2012.2753>
5. The worst impacted section of human society during the lockdown is the daily wagers or labourers.

6. <https://epaper.hindustantimes.com/Home/ArticleView> 22, September 2020. See Editorial by Dr. NK Mehra, ICMRES(AIIMS) New Delhi.
7. See: <https://www.nejm.org/doi/pdf/10.1056/NEJMp2003539?articleTools=true>
8. As many as five Coronavirus pandemics happened before the present Covid-19.
9. The syndrome was designated ‘severe acute respiratory syndrome’ (SARS) in March 2003
10. <https://www.who.int/emergencies/mers-cov/en/>
11. “National Ban Wild Animals Trade ” Xinhua Net, February 24, 2020, March 20, 2020, see http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2020-02/24/c_1125619946.htm.
12. See: <https://epaper.hindustantimes.com/Home/ArticleView> September 22, 2020
13. See: [https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/laninf/PIIS1473-3099\(20\)30120-1.pdf](https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/laninf/PIIS1473-3099(20)30120-1.pdf)
14. See: <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/s12671-020-01412-8.pdf>
15. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/03/23/death-american-competence-reputation-coronavirus/>
16. The outbreak of “Coronavirus disease” (COVID-19) World Health Organization (WHO’s website), accessed, April 3, 2020, see <https://www.who.int/westernpacific/emergencies/covid-19>
17. <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>
18. See: <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/india>
19. See: <http://www.hindustantimes.com> 07 .09. 2020
20. Chetterje, P. (2020). “Gaps in India’s preparedness COVID-19 control.” *Lancet Infect Dis.*;20:544. doi:10.1016/S1473- 3099(20)30300-5
21. WHO/COVID-19 virtual press conference. Published March 23, 2020. Accessed June 7, 2020. See: https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/transcripts/who-audio-emergencies-coronavirus-press-conference-full-23mar2020.pdf?sfvrsn=846ecb41_4
22. <https://www.narendramodi.in/the-prime-minister-narendra-modi-at-address-the-g20-virtual-summit-548983>
23. <https://unctad.org/news/un-calls-25-trillion-coronavirus-crisis-package-developing-countries>
24. Someone who has overcome the darkness of existential ignorance and awakened from illusion or delusion is called awakened, referring to Buddha, the enlightened one.
25. Buddhism is diverse as a religious practice.
26. The ‘core one taste’ of the Buddha’s teaching is the liberation from sorrow and suffering. The Buddhist idea of sorrow and suffering refers to *Dukha* in simple meaning, which is more or less synonymous with the general word of ‘suffering/sorrow’. To understand the *Dukha* or suffering, it’s explained with cause and condition. After knowing its source of origin; one has to look at how to stop it. Third, after knowing the cessation process, one

has to look at which view or path can be instrumental in ceasing this suffering which, for Buddhism, the noble eightfold path. Examining the pandemic from such Buddhist concept will help erase such pandemic like ending Dukha.

27. Nothing exists independently in this human world. Everything is interrelated and interconnected. It exists in a multifaceted, complicated wave of life that is continually changing, which is full of suffering and nothing else from birth to death. According to Buddhism, it's found depicted on the canvas as 'Bhavacakra' called the 'wheel of samsaric existence' with twelve symbolic pictures of human circles.
28. Lee N and Chen, C(2020). "The Vulnerable and Buddhist Inspired Activism, published in Social issues in San Francisco: Perspectives from Global Buddhism," pp.49-59 <https://repository.usfca.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1003&context=thrs#page=49>
29. 'Samsara' (the wheel of rebirth) a Sanskrit term, which in Buddhism represents the cosmic existence of the human world under the wave of universal flux. It talks about the life and death of all sentient beings under the cycle of beginningless birth and death in the mundane world because of past, present, and future accumulated deeds. In proper Buddhist terms, karmic activities or 'Law of Karma' result from wilful intention or reaction. This is explained under the Buddhist theory of twelve chained cyclic dependent origination. This Buddhist Samsara doctrine asserts the endless cycles of birth and death through the transmigratory soul from one life to another because of past positive (right action) and negative (bad action) karmic activities. These countless births and deaths is called 'Samsara'.
30. The ten Buddhist unwholesome actions are done from three parts of our way of conducting actions. Killing, stealing, adultery are done through body; false, slanderous, harsh, idle are done through words, while covetousness, ill will, and wrong views are done mentally. These are rooted in three poisonous evil of greed, hatred, and delusion.
31. The sorrow and suffering represented through the four noble truths are the fundamental teachings of Buddhism. Buddha proclaimed that the origin of the world or to understand the reality of the suffering of this murkier world, the arising of suffering, cessation of suffering, and the path leading to the end of the suffering.
32. WHO,2006,1
33. And these truths to know the suffering, cause of suffering, end of suffering and finally the path eliminating the suffering; Enlightenment according to Buddhism.
34. Barua, DK(2007). "Applied Buddhism: Studies in the Gospel of Buddha from a Modern Perspective", International Buddhist brotherhood Association of India, Indosen Nipponji, Bodhgaya, pp.3-4
35. Santina, PD(1997). *The Tree of Enlightenment*, Chico Dharma Study Foundation, p.29
36. Satina, PT (1984). *Fundamentals of Buddhism*, The corporate of the Buddha Educational Foundation, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC Singapore,pp. 29-30
37. This is also called twelve links representing the process of mental condition shown

through the twelve elements of origin, which is dependent on one another. That's the critical doctrinal philosophy of Buddhism. These are ignorance, formation, consciousness, form, six sense faculties, contact, sensation, craving, grasping, becoming, rebirth and old age, and death. Ignorance is the absence of knowledge that causes suffering. Ignorance is the fundamental cause of all sorrow and grief, and because of ignorance, we all human beings would thrive for all worldly pleasure. Hence, the right understanding and right thought to give direction and orientation help eliminate the ignorance, greed, and anger.

38. This is called Buddhist meditative chanting, which is easy to recite yet quite powerful because it contains the essence of the entire teaching of Buddhism. These six syllables, "Om Mani Pad Me Hum", denote the practice of a path which is an inseparable merging force of method and wisdom. One can transform one's impure body, speech, and mind into the pure, noble body, speech, and mind of a Buddha. It also generates positive energies within the body, mind and speech through mystical vibrations and frequencies when chanted repeatedly and silently.
39. Meditation and its related power are well known in Buddhism as it helps promote physical health and calm down mental anxiety and stresses for resilience and well-being, etc. Hence, many Buddhist meditation centres provide resources, virtual and physically while following and maintaining the proper social distancing guidelines during this pandemic.
40. See: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html> sources Johns Hopkins University USA.

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