



IS INDIA READY? : COVID-19 VACCINE HESITANCY, A HINDRANCE TO THE WORLD'S LARGEST VACCINATION DRIVE.

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ABSTRACT The 1st case of COVID-19 in India was first detected in the end of January, 2020. Since then the country is still fighting against the pandemic. Scientists have invented the primary prevention in the form of immunization but is the mass of India ready for it? Vaccinating only the healthcare workers and front liners are not enough. Provided with the facts of AEFI people are getting afraid and also for the fact that it has been launched in hurries. These issues may bring hindrance to the world's largest COVID-19 vaccination drive.

KEYWORDS : Vaccine hesitancy, COVISHIELD, COVID-19 vaccine, COVID-19

After fighting for several months since March, 2020 finally India has rolled out the Covishield vaccination drive from 16th January, 2021 but only among the healthcare workers and frontliners [1]. Though the war is still continuing as the vaccine is planned to be provided to Indian citizens in phased manner.

As the ChAdOx1 nCoV- 19 Corona Virus Vaccine (Recombinant) (Covishield) has flouted the trust issues among public due to its awaited result on immune-compromised individuals, interaction with other medicinal product, effect on fertility, pregnancy, breast-feeding and effect on previously COVID-19 infected person with variation along with time passed after the infection. There are other so many unanswered questions arising among the common mass of India, some are baseless but few are logical [2].

Citizens are raising voice regarding rush approval of the vaccine thinking of its incomplete trial. Indian Health Ministry revealed a total of 600 Adverse Effect Following Immunization (AEFI). But only 10 individuals were hospitalized so far. Common AEFIs included pain and tenderness at the vaccination site, headache, nausea, fatigue. Shortness of breath and chest pain were the AEFIs that caused hospitalization of the beneficiary [3]. As of 27th January, 2021 India has vaccinated more than 20 million healthcare workers with Covishield [4].

As per Mr. Harsh Vardhan (Union Health Minister, India), the vaccine is safe and effective and tried to clarify so many misconceptions about it [5].

A total number of 9 deaths has occurred following Covishield vaccination till 27th Jan. Death incidents has been reported from the states like Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telengana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gurugram and Odisha [6].

The incidence of vaccine hesitancy is a prevailing global health threat from years. Immunization: the wonderful act of preventive medicine has to be communicated strongly and so well in the manner that the primary health care principles are maintained.

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