

Attitude of Media towards Doctor in Public Health Emergencies**Harivansh Chopra**

Professor, Department of Community Medicine, LLRM Medical College, Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, India

Correspondence : Dr. Harivansh Chopra, Email: harichop@gmail.com

Public health emergencies are medical emergencies in which a large number of people suffer from a disease as well as disease have high mortality. This scenario of having public health emergencies in India is an iceberg phenomenon as majority of times the hidden portion of iceberg is not appreciated by anyone except public health professionals. Media has developed a habit of making a hue and cry whenever there are multiple mortalities due to a single disease confined to a region. In this scenario, doctors are the softest target for media as they don't have any control over infrastructure, material and man power. In a country like India where the health care delivery system comes under state responsibility, it is no wonder that the system is crippling in these kind of scenarios and the Government doctors who always work under resource starved conditions becomes easy prey to media as well as to public. On the one end the media portrays doctors as the person responsible for all ills in the system and the public becomes violent and start battering the doctors. This has happened every now and then in all states of our country. The question which comes to the mind is "who is responsible?" for this mess. The answer is both simple and complex. Primarily responsibility lies with the National and State Government as they are responsible for providing all resources required for providing healthcare to people. Public health professionals, planners, members of planning commission/NITI AYOGE are also equally responsible for this. For example to provide effective healthcare to its people WHO has recommended that 5% of GDP must be spent on health but the stark reality is that at present India spent only 1.25 % of GDP on health. Secondly, none of the government either in past or present has made any sincere efforts towards controlling population of our country which is going to become largest populated country in world in future. So we are living in situation where there is only one purse and numerous mouths to feed which is impossible for any country/system. Thirdly if you

look at the best indicator of health for developing countries like India, it is Infant Mortality Rate. In India 8,02,000 infants died in 2017 which is roughly equal to 2197 infant deaths in a day about which nobody is talking because of fear of severe backlash from media as well as people. This kind of statistics must be brought in forefront by professional bodies like IAPSM, IPHA, IMA, IAP, FOGSI etc . Only than the perception of media and public might change towards Doctors in India. Last but not the least the biggest ill facing the healthcare delivery system of our country is an absolute incoordination between Department of health, Department of Medical Education and MCI(NMC). If the right hand does not know what left hand is doing one can very well imagine condition of the body. So in my personal opinion a following measures are required urgently to improve the health care delivery system in India :-

- Department of Health and Medical education must be merged into one.
- There should be formation of All India Medical Cadre.
- Health should be brought from state to central responsibility
- GDP must be increased to minimum of 5% .
- Professionals and professional bodies must be given the responsibility of planning and implementation of all National Health Programs and missions.
- Futuristic planning must be done so that burden of increasing population can be efficiently met.
- There should be stringent law for control of population throughout the country.

A lot more would be required for which like-minded people, politicians, and professionals must come together to work in unison and solve the ills facing health and health care delivery system of our country. This will result in changing the attitude of media as well as public towards Doctors, still a noblest profession in the world.