


COVID-19 Pandemic: How, When and Where?

Timeline

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Who would have thought on the sunset of 2019 what 2020 was bringing on! From the day COVID-19 originated it has sent shock waves across the globe irrespective of the religion, race, gender and power. From the outbreak in Wuhan, it has crossed all borders and has spread at varying speed across the globe. The preparations for it by all the countries have left a big question mark.

TIMELINE

A brief timeline of the events since the origin is as follows:[2, 3]

- 01 Dec 2020**  **Index patient** of coronavirus in China became symptomatic.[4]
- 31 Dec 2019**  **China** informed WHO of a pneumonia of unknown aetiology found in the city of Wuhan in the Hubei province.
- 01 Jan 2020**  Wuhan seafood market, thought to be the source of outbreak, closed.
- 03 Jan 2020**  **China** reported 44 patients with pneumonia of unknown aetiology.
- 05 Jan 2020**  **WHO** published its first risk assessment and advice: "Continue surveillance of influenza and severe acute respiratory illness, no specific measures for travelers".
- 07 Jan 2020**  A new type of virus, called **novel coronavirus** is identified by Chinese researchers.
- 10 Jan 2020**  WHO issued its first **guidance** on the novel coronavirus with reference to other coronaviruses such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS).
- 11 Jan 2020**  **China** reported its first death due to the novel coronavirus. Patient was 61 years old who passed away on 9th Jan 2020.
- 12 Jan 2020**  **China** shares the **genetic sequence** of the novel coronavirus.
- 13 Jan 2020**  First case of novel coronavirus reported outside China in **Thailand**.
- 15 Jan 2020**  **China** reports second **death**.
- 16 Jan 2020**  **Japan** reports its first coronavirus case.
- 18 Jan 2020**  **China** reports third death.
- 19 Jan 2020**  **First confirmed cases reported outside of Wuhan.**
- 20 Jan 2020**  First case in **South Korea** and **United States (U.S.)**. Human to human transmission of virus confirmed.
- 21 Jan 2020**  WHO makes **field visit** to Wuhan. **Taiwan** reported its first case of Coronavirus. Global cases reach 222.
- 22 Jan 2020**  **Hong Kong** and **Macau** report their first cases.
- 23 Jan 2020**  City of **Wuhan** goes into lock down. **Singapore** and **Vietnam** report their first Coronavirus cases.




























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- 24 Jan 2020**  First case in **Nepal & France**.
China announces the total confirmed cases at 1287 with 41 deaths.
 - 25 Jan 2020**  First case in **Australia, Malaysia and Canada**.
China reports confirmed cases to 1975 with 56 deaths.
Liang Wudong, **first doctor** to die from Coronavirus (*Hospital acquired infection*).
 - 27 Jan 2020**  Global deaths surpass 100.
Cambodia, Germany and Sri Lanka report their first Coronavirus cases.
 - 28 Jan 2020**  Number of cases in China increase to 5974 with 132 deaths.
Confirmed cases globally over 6000.
 - 29 Jan 2020**  First case in **United Arab Emirates and Finland**.
Confirmed cases globally increase to 7816 with 170 deaths.
 - 30 Jan 2020**  WHO declared Public Health Emergency of International Concern.
7834 confirmed cases with 7736 in China and 98 cases in 18 other countries.
170 people dead due to this outbreak, all of them in China.
India, Italy and Philippines report their first Coronavirus cases.
 - 31 Jan 2020**  First case in **United Kingdom (UK), Russia, Spain and Sweden**.
U.S. bans foreign nationals from entering if they were in China within the prior two weeks.
 - 02 Feb 2020**  First death outside China is recorded in **Philippines**.
 - 04 Feb 2020**  **Belgium** reports its first Coronavirus case.
Global cases **24000** with 492 deaths.
 - 07 Feb 2020**  **Hong Kong** introduced prison sentences for anyone breaching quarantine rules.
 - 09 Feb 2020**  Global deaths due to COVID-19 increase to 811 surpassing the death toll of the SARS epidemic in 2002 and 2003 which killed 773 people.
 - 10 Feb 2020**  Global deaths count increase to 1000 surpassing that associated with MERS which claimed 858 lives.
 - 11 Feb 2020**  WHO names the novel coronavirus as **COVID-19**.
Death toll from the outbreak reaches over 1000.
 - 13 Feb 2020**  **Japan** announces first death related to coronavirus.
 - 14 Feb 2020**  First death in **France & Europe**.
First case reported in **Egypt**.
 - 16 Feb 2020**  **Taiwan** announces first death.
 - 17 Feb 2020**  WHO issues **guidance** on mass gathering and taking care of ill travelers.
 - 19 Feb 2020**  **Iran** reports its first case and first deaths.
The death toll from COVID-19 surpasses **2000**.
 - 20 Feb 2020**  **South Korea** reports its first COVID-19 death.
 - 21 Feb 2020**  **Italy** outbreak begins.
Israel and Lebanon report their first COVID-19 cases.
WHO warns that the window of opportunity is "narrowing".
 - 23 Feb 2020**  Italy closes **Venice Carnival** to limit spread of coronavirus.
 - 24 Feb 2020**  First case in **Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait and Oman**.
 - 25 Feb 2020**  First case in **Algeria, Austria, Brazil, Croatia, and Switzerland**.
Iran's deputy health minister confirms he has coronavirus.
 - 26 Feb 2020**  First case in **Georgia, Greece, North Macedonia, Norway, Pakistan and Romania**.
First time since the outbreak began, there are more reported cases outside China in a single day 459, than in China, 412.
 - 27 Feb 2020**  3474 cases of COVID-19 outside China in **44 countries**.
First case in **Denmark, Estonia, San Marino and Netherland**.
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- 28 Feb 2020**  WHO raises the global risk of spread of COVID-19 from “high” to “very high”.
First case in **Azerbaijan, Belarus, Iceland, Lithuania, Mexico, Monaco, New Zealand** and **Wales**.
 - 29 Feb 2020**  USA reports first **American death** on American soil.
First case in **Ecuador, Ireland, Luxembourg** and **Qatar**.
 - 01 Mar 2020**  First case in **Armenia, Czechia, Dominican Republic, Saint Barthélemy** and **Saint Martin**.
Global deaths surpass 3000.
 - 02 Mar 2020**  South Korea with 3736 and Italy with 1128 cases have the most cases outside China.
First case in **Andorra, Indonesia, Jordan, Latvia, Morocco, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Senegal** and **Tunisia**.
 - 03 Mar 2020**  First case in **Argentina, Chile, Gibraltar, Liechtenstein** and **Ukraine**.
 - 04 Mar 2020**  **Saudi Arabia suspended Umrah pilgrimage**.
First case in **Faroe Islands, Hungary, Poland** and **Slovenia**
 - 05 Mar 2020**  First case in **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Martinique, Palestine** and **South Africa**.
 - 06 Mar 2020**  WHO publishes draft **R & D blueprint** for COVID-19.
First case in **Bhutan, Cameroon, Colombia, Costa Rica, Peru, Serbia, Slovakia, Togo** and **Vatican City**.
 - 07 Mar 2020**  First case in **Maldives, Malta, Moldova** and **Paraguay**.
Global cases surpass 100,000.
 - 08 Mar 2020**  **Saudi** authorities lock down eastern Qatif.
COVID-19 in over 100 countries reported.
First case in **Albania, Bangladesh** and **Bulgaria**.
 - 09 Mar 2020**  **Italy** places all 60 million residents on lock down.
Global deaths surpass 4000.
First case in **Brunei, Cyprus, Guernsey** and **Panama**.
 - 10 Mar 2020**  **Lebanon** and **Morocco** report their first death.
First case in **Bolivia, Burkina Faso, DR Congo, Jamaica, Jersey, Mongolia, Northern Cyprus** and **Turkey**.
 - 11 Mar 2020**  “**WHO declares COVID-19 as a pandemic**“.
First case in **Cuba, French Polynesia, Honduras, Ivory Coast** and **Réunion**.
U.S. bans all travel from 26 European countries.
 - 12 Mar 2020**  First case in **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines** and **Trinidad and Tobago**.
 - 13 Mar 2020**  **WHO declares Europe as the epicentre of the pandemic**.
Global deaths surpass 5000.
A U.S. national emergency is declared over the outbreak.
First case in **Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Cayman Islands, Curacao, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guadeloupe, Guatemala, Guinea, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kosovo, Puerto Rico, Saint Lucia, Sudan, Suriname, US Virgin Islands, Uruguay** and **Venezuela**.
 - 14 Mar 2020**  Nationwide lock down started in **Spain**.
First case in **Central African Republic, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Mauritania, Mayotte, Namibia, Rwanda** and **Seychelles**.
 - 15 Mar 2020**  First case in **Akrotiri and Dhekelia, Bahamas, Guam** and **Uzbekistan**.
 - 16 Mar 2020**  First case in **Benin, Greenland, Liberia, Somalia** and **Tanzania**.
For the first time since the outbreak, infections and deaths outside China surpass those within China.
 - 17 Mar 2020**  First case in **Barbados, Gambia, Montenegro**, and **Sint Maarten**.
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- 18 Mar 2020** —  **Chile and Guatemala** shut down their borders.
First case in **Bermuda, Djibouti, El Salvador, Kyrgyzstan, Mauritius, Montserrat, New Caledonia, Nicaragua and Zambia.**
- 19 Mar 2020** —  Global cases surpass **200,000** with over 10'000 deaths.
It took nine weeks to reach 100,000 cases and just 12 days to reach 200,000.
For the first time since the outbreak began, Wuhan reported no new cases.
First case reported in **Angola, Chad, Fiji, Haiti, Isle of Man and Niger.**
- 20 Mar 2020** —  First case in **Cape Verde, East Timor, Madagascar, Papua New Guinea, Uganda and Zimbabwe.**
- 21 Mar 2020** —  First case in **Åland Islands, Eritrea and Transnistria.**
- 22 Mar 2020** —  **Germany** under partial lock down.
Global cases surpass 300,000.
It took nine weeks to reach 100,000 cases, 12 days to reach 200,000 and 3 days to reach 300,000.
First case in **Dominica, Grenada, Mozambique and Syria.**
- 23 Mar 2020** —  **Britain** under lock down.
Global deaths surpass 15,000.
First Case in **Belize, Myanmar and Turks and Caicos Islands.**
First Pakistani Doctor (Dr **Usama Riaz**) embraces martyrdom.
- 24 Mar 2020** —  Global cases surpass **400,000.**
It took nine weeks to reach 100,000 cases, 12 days to reach 200,000, 3 days to reach 300,000 and 2 days to reach 400,000.
First case in **Laos and Libya.**
- 25 Mar 2020** —  **New Zealand** under lock down.
Global deaths surpass 20,000.
First case in **British Virgin Islands, Guinea-Bissau, Mali and Saint Kitts and Nevis.**
- 26 Mar 2020** —  Global cases surpass 500,000.
Total confirmed cases in the U.S. reach 82,404 – the highest in the world – surpassing China's 81,782 and Italy's 80,589.
First case in **Anguilla.**
- 27 Mar 2020** —  Dr Usama Riaz (Pakistan) awarded **Nishan i Kashmir** post humously.
Global deaths surpass 25,000.
- 28 Mar 2020** —  Global cases surpass **600,000.**
It took 9 weeks to reach 100,000 and it increased 6 times in 3 weeks.
Spain (832) and Italy (889) hit new record for the number of deaths in one day.
- 29 Mar 2020** —  Global cases surpass **700,000.**
Global deaths surpass 30,000.
First case in **Northern Mariana Islands.**
- 30 Mar 2020** —  Global deaths surpass 35,000.
First case in **Botswana.**
- 31 Mar 2020** —  More than 1/3 of humanity under some form of lock down.
Global cases surpass 800,000.
Global deaths surpass 40,000.
First case in **Burundi, Sierra Leone, Sint Eustatius and Somaliland.**
- 01 Apr 2020** —  Global cases surpass 900,000.
Global deaths surpass 45,000.
- 02 Apr 2020** —  Global cases surpass **1 million.**
Global deaths surpass 50,000.
Malawi report first case.
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- 03 Apr 2020**  **Maximum number of cases reported in 24 hrs since the outbreak began = 101,556.**
Global cases surpass **1.1 million**.
Global deaths surpass **55,000**.
First case reported in **Falkland Islands**.
- 04 Apr 2020**  Global cases surpass **1.2 million**.
Global deaths reach **65,000**.
- 05 Apr 2020**  First case in **Saint Pierre and Miquelon** and **South Sudan**.
- 06 Apr 2020**  Global cases surpass **1.3 million**.
Global deaths surpass **70,000**.
Pakistan cases = **3700**
Pakistan deaths = **53**
First case reported in **São Tomé and Príncipe**.
- 07 Apr 2020**  **Singapore** under lock down.
First case in **Abkhazia** and **Artsakh**.
- 10 Apr 2020**  Global cases surpass **1.6 million**.
Global deaths surpass **100,000**.
Pakistan cases = **4600**.
Pakistan deaths = **66**.
First case reported in **Yemen**.
- 11 Apr 2020**  First case reported in **Saba**.
- 15 Apr 2020**  Global cases surpass **2 million**.
Global deaths surpass **138,000**.
Pakistan cases = **6300**.
Pakistan deaths = **111**.
- 16 Apr 2020**  First case reported in **Bonaire**.
- 20 Apr 2020**  Global cases surpass **2.4 million**.
Global deaths surpass **170,000**.
Pakistan cases = **8900**.
Pakistan deaths = **176**.
- 21 Apr 2020**  **Germany** cancels **Oktoberfest**.
- 25 Apr 2020**  Global cases surpass **2.9 million**.
Global deaths surpass **200,000**.
Pakistan cases = **12700**.
Pakistan deaths = **269**.
- 30 Apr 2020**  First case reported in **Comoros & Tajikistan**.

As we look back on the spread of this pandemic, countries that were proactive in taking strict social distancing like Singapore and South Korea, managed to control the pandemic appropriately while the countries which delayed in acting like US and Italy their figures of mortality are disastrous. While most of the countries now are in some sort of lockdown, these strict measures may well be in place over the coming several months or perhaps even a year. These social distancing measures have made people retreat in their homes, business to shut down, global economic crisis and exacerbation of the health of the vulnerable group of people. So, what's next?

FLATTENING THE CURVE

Health authorities around the globe are talking about "flattening the curve" meaning to reduce the rate at which new infection arise in order to avoid the overburden on the healthcare system and preventing it to collapse. That's the reason lock down and social distancing have been implemented.

IMMUNITY TO COVID-19

Lots of talk going around so called "herd immunity" which means that when enough of the global population becomes acquire the immune response to virus, further progression can be dampened. There are two possible pathways, neither of them is proven for COVID-19. First is the individual gets infected and acquires the immune response and second is by getting vaccinated without getting sick. A number of trials and attempts at vaccine

development are ongoing around the world.[3, 4]

MASS TESTING

Given the economic burden of the disease all countries do not have the resources to do mass testing. The theory behind it is that without knowing the actual burden of the disease (those that get infected whether symptomatic or asymptomatic) scientist cannot draw conclusions and identify population at risk.

CONCLUSION

COVID-19 pandemic is not a sprint rather it is a marathon with destination not visible at this particular moment and time. Collective efforts and resilience of millions of people is the need for the hour. Lockdowns and strict social distancing cannot be sustained forever but timing is the key to it, as letting up too soon may worsen the situation further.

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