



डॉ हर्ष वर्धन Dr Harsh Vardhan

स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण, विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी
व पृथ्वी विज्ञान मंत्री, भारत सरकार
Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare,
Science & Technology and Earth Sciences
Government of India

सबका साथ, सबका विकास, सबका विश्वास
Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas

Dated, the 19th of April, 2021

Respected Dr. Manmohan Singhji,

Greetings! Hope my letter finds you in good health!

I read your letter to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji, written in the spirit of constructive cooperation.

The emphasis you have laid on vaccination as an important tool to fight COVID-19 is well taken, which is exactly why India launched the world's biggest vaccination drive and also became the fastest in the world to reach the milestones of 10, 11 and 12 crore administered doses.

Your advice to not get tempted to go by absolute numbers, but to go by percentage of population covered, is not incorrect. However, I am sure that you will agree with me that this is a practice that must be followed uniformly and junior members of your party too must follow your advice. Quite obviously, it cannot be that the discussion on total cases, active cases or mortality is based on absolute numbers, which the Congress party often tries to do, but the vaccination numbers continue to be touted as a percentage of the population covered.

It is saddening, Dr Singh, that while you very well understand the importance of vaccination as an important method of fighting the COVID-19 battle, people in responsible positions in your party as well as in the state governments formed by your party do not seem to share your view.

Shouldn't it be a matter of pride that India is perhaps the only developing country to have 2 vaccines?

It is shocking that senior members of the Congress party are yet to utter a single word of gratitude towards our scientist community and vaccine manufacturers for innovating under trying circumstances and empowering the world with vaccines.

Page 1 of 3

कार्यालय: 348, ए-रकंघ, निर्माण भवन, नई दिल्ली - 110011 • Office: 348, A-Wing, Nirman Bhawan, New Delhi - 110011
Tele.: (O): +91-11-23061661, 23063513 • Telefax : 23062358 • E-mail : hfminister@gov.in, hfm@gov.in
निवास: 8, तीस जनवरी मार्ग, नई दिल्ली - 110011 • Residence: 8, Tees January Marg, New Delhi - 110011
Tele.: (R): +91-11-23794649 • Telefax : 23794640



Let alone thanking our scientists, many Congress members and Congress-ruled state governments have taken extraordinary interest in spreading falsehoods regarding the efficacy of these vaccines, thereby fuelling vaccine hesitancy, and playing with the lives of our countrymen. A sitting Chief Minister of your party created a dubious world record of sorts by being the only head of government directly inciting people against an indigenously developed vaccine !

Some Congress leaders even shamed the vaccines in public but took their doses in private, quietly. A word of advice from you to them - even if it had been done in private by you - may have ensured better cooperation from these people. Knowing your penchant for constructive cooperation, which you have said you always believed in, I would assume that you did advise them and yet, quite clearly, your advice has been in vain.

The irresponsible public pronouncements made by some of your leaders have resulted in a below national average vaccination coverage of senior citizens and even front-line workers in some of the Congress-ruled states. Please do note that it is these very same states that have also become the big contributors in the second wave of COVID-19 infection. The test positivity ratio in these states during the second wave is alarmingly high and they too could benefit from your counsel and wisdom.

With due respect, and irrespective of the negativity that your party spreads, we take your suggestions at face value and with the belief that they are made keeping national interest in mind.

However, it does seem that those who drafted your letter or advised you, have done a great disservice to your standing by misleading you regarding material that is already in public domain. For example, take the point that you have mentioned about allowing import of vaccines that have already been approved by credible foreign authorities. You made this suggestion on April 18, 2021, but a decision on this had already been taken a week ahead of your suggestion, on April 11, 2021. The same is the case with your suggestion regarding providing funds and other concessions to augment vaccine manufacturing. This decision had also been taken many days before receipt of your letter and multiple vaccine manufacturing entities have been funded by the government to immediately enhance production.



Anyway, despite such factual inaccuracies, we understand your deep concern for the country and also assure you that we share the same.

We request your continued cooperation in the battle against the pandemic and welcome more such illuminating suggestions. However, as a senior leader, we expect that you shall offer the same advice and wisdom to your own party leaders as well.

I hope and pray for the good health and well-being of you and your family.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Harsh', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

(Dr. Harsh Vardhan)

Dr. Manmohan Singh
Former Prime Minister of India
3, Motilal Nehru Place,
New Delhi-110011