

# Universal Health Organisation (UHO)

## Weekly Newsletter – 25 Aug 2023



*The weekly newsletters bring the updates on the science, battered and bruised during the pandemic, legal updates and impact of activism for a just society, across the world. These are small steps to promote Transparency, Empowerment and Accountability – the ethos of the UHO.*

### **On the block: Lab grown or cultured meat**

Taking lead from the USA there are attempts to kick start the [lab grown meat](#) (cultured meat) industry in India. The Food Standards and Safety Authority of India (FSSAI) may give approval for this in India. Cultured meat is produced by growing animal cells in controlled environment without need for maintaining livestock or slaughterhouses. While it is still a fledgling venture in India, it is claimed that this will address India's malnutrition burden. Reminiscent of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Queen of France Marie Antoinette's words who on seeing the starving masses allegedly said, "If they can't afford bread, let them eat cake!"

The initiative for lab grown meat also does not make sense given that India is ranked fifth in the world in meat production with the world's largest [population of livestock](#). Moreover, meat production augmentation by lab grown meat at a time when the [benefits](#) of a vegetarian diet and the increasing obesity crisis with sedentary lifestyles which is likely to aggravate with increased meat consumption are points should make one ask whether cultured meat should be a priority. Are we being influenced by market forces?

### **After selling their souls, will some celebrities sell their flesh under influence of market forces?**

Strange, but true, in an earlier era this would have qualified for Ripley's believe it or not collection! But in today's dystopian world anything sells – and now it is flesh of celebrities! An American company called Bite Labs is offering delicious salami prepared from [meat of famous people](#). The promotion pitch says that you could choose a celebrity whose flesh you want to taste provided from those who have deposited their stem cells for the experimental salami.

This signals total surrender to market forces facilitated by celebrities who are ready to sell their flesh in addition to their souls!

### **The SARS-Cov-2 dynasty continues to get Royal Treatment – Principal Secretary to PM chairs high level meeting**

In response to reports of new variants circulating in some parts of the globe, Dr P K Mishra, Principal Secretary to the PM, chaired a high level meeting to consider the implications. After detailed deliberations it was decided that States need to monitor the trends and continue adequate testing of Covid-19 and ramp up genomic surveillance.

UHO is concerned that the disproportionate focus on one disease will divert our resources from our other major public health problems. Besides, panic and paranoia will lead to opportunism and exploitation of the masses by various vested interests. A proper public health approach demands that Covid-19 which has very little impact on our population due to the demographic advantage we have compared to the Western countries should be considered in context with our other major public health problems. Wish the Principal Secretary had done that instead of giving Royal treatment to [King Corona](#) and its mutated descendents and not discussing our real public health problems, which seem

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to have become the commoners.

### **Causes of death among hospitalized Covid-19 patients**

A [study](#) published in Indian Journal of Medical Research, tried to identify the causes of death among Covid-19 patients who were hospitalized. Follow up post discharge data was collected from the National Clinical Registry for Covid-19 between September 2020 and February 2023 from 31 hospitals. Patients who died were compared with controls who had survived. The one year post discharge was found to be 9.5%. Moderate to severe disease, post covid afflictions and co-morbidities were identified as risk factors for death. Vaccination against covid offered some protection (60%) against people over 45 years but the protection by vaccine in the age bracket 18-45 years was inconclusive. The authors conclude, (conveniently overlooking this), that vaccination confers protection to post discharge mortality.

There are some limitations to the study. The data was collected telephonically (armchair and mouse-click epidemiology is replacing field epidemiology), only hospital cases were included in the study – so the results do not apply to the majority of patients who contracted Covid-19. Moreover many treatment protocols which were considered standard of care such as ventilators, remdesivir, etc, in hindsight were found to be ineffective if not downright harmful. Regrettably, the study did not include these factors.

UHO recommends that such studies should be done for all our locally endemic diseases and accidents which cause much higher morbidity and mortality than Covid-19 such as Tuberculosis 2000 deaths daily, Typhoid 1-3% mortality even after treatment, untreated mortality from typhoid 10-30% compared to <1% mortality from Covid-19), dengue fever 1% mortality with management but can be 20% if not properly managed, Japanese encephalitis with case fatality rate of 10-60% and so on. Road traffic accidents claim more that 400 mostly young lives and disable three times more daily.

High time we look at the commoners contributing to our public health problem and cease to give royalty status to the descendents of King Corona. Failing which it would be like [treating a wart in a patient with disease of the heart!](#)

### **Former AIIMS Director Dr Randeep Guleria says there is no link between Covid-19 vaccines and serious health issues like blood clots or heart attacks**

Dr Randeep Guleria, the former director of AIIMS, gave a rather strange [statement](#) that there is no link between Covid-19 vaccines and serious health issues or heart attacks. There was quick rebuttal to this irresponsible “misinformation” which has been published in [Counterview](#) and in [National Herald](#)

Dr Guleria has been issuing such blanket statements since the start of the vaccine rollout and continues to do so. There is a [petition](#) pending in the Mumbai High Court which states the Government AEFI committee on 02 Oct 2021 admitted that the death of Dr Snehal Lunawat was due to the effects of the Covishield vaccine.