



Mr. Marc Baréty
Ambassador of France to Pakistan
Islamabad

July 27, 2021

His Excellency,

We, the People's Vaccine Alliance Asia and its aligned **108** organizations and networks in Pakistan write to draw your urgent attention to the catastrophic new wave of COVID-19 infections in our region. Newer COVID19 variants are evolving and spreading fast in many countries in Asia, but the majority of the population are yet to receive a single dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. Most of us Asians remain unprotected.

In places like Indonesia's capital Jakarta, 90 percent of hospital beds are occupied and oxygen tanks already in short supply. Just a couple of weeks back, we saw India struggling for want of oxygen with COVID19 death toll crossing more than 0.4 million. Now, Malaysia is battling its worst wave yet with total deaths tripling over the past month to a total of 5400 people. In Bangladesh, 15229 people have already lost their lives to the coronavirus and with 9,964 daily infections during this wave, more deaths are feared.

Today, more than one million people are COVID-19 positive in Pakistan whereas around 2677 are in critical condition and 23,048 are died. Avergely 32 people are dying everyday and the current rate of positive cases is 6.32%. Pakistan have 173 testing labs than can test only 78300 cases per day whereas the avergely less than 50000 people are being tested per day. During the 4th wave of COVID-19 in the country delta variant is found in some of the cases and 50% capacity of hospital beds with ventilators and oxygen cylinders are occupied already. More than 100 million population is above the age of 18 and the same is eligible for timely availability of vaccine. Only 5.2 million people are fully vaccinated and 20 million are partially vaccinated. This shows that a huge number of eligible population is still in need of timely provision of vaccine.

While fast-moving vaccination drives are allowing developed economies like US and UK to ease restrictions, most Asian countries only managed to vaccinate less than 10% of their population – even as low as 3% in Bangladesh and 2.36% in Pakistan!

Now, more than ever, the mass-manufacturing of COVID-19 vaccines around the world is very much needed.

A temporary waiver on intellectual property rules at the WTO or a TRIPS waiver can allow manufacturers worldwide to produce COVID-19 vaccines (and diagnostics and therapeutics) and prevent the deaths of millions across the world. Manufacturers in Bangladesh, Canada, Denmark, and India have already announced that they have the capability to do so.

The demand for a TRIPS waiver (as proposed by India and South Africa) is now backed by many countries including the United States. However, as long as your government blocks this proposal, the lifesaving waiver on intellectual property rules will not be approved at the WTO.

We, the People's Vaccine Alliance Asia and it's aligned organizations/ networks in Pakistan , requests your support in urging your government to support the TRIPS waiver and prioritize the lives of



millions Asians over the profits of pharmaceutical companies. Therefore we urge you to act now to save lives.

In addition to this European region has restricted travels for those who have benefited from non-EMA (European Medicines Agency) approved vaccines inspite of approvals by WHO. Most of the Pakistanis are beneficiaries of WHO approved vaccines therefore their travel plans to Europe are being jeopardized if WHO approved vaccines are not approved by EMA in timely fashion. For example France is hosting World Conservation Congress (WCC2021) in September 2021 and most of representatives and members of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) from Pakistan and other countries are unable to attend this important meeting due to discrimination on the basis of vaccine brands and delays of approvals by EMA. WCC2021 and other such global conferences are meaningless unless they include voices from global south.

Initiators, Signatories and Endorsers

- Peoples' Vaccine Alliance-Asia <https://peoplesvaccine.org/>
- Global Call to Action against Poverty & Inequality <https://gcap.global/>
- AwazCDS-Pakistan- www.awazcbs.org.pk
- Pakistan Development Alliance www.pda.net.pk
- Umang Champions
- Ujala-Network <https://ujalapk.net/>



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