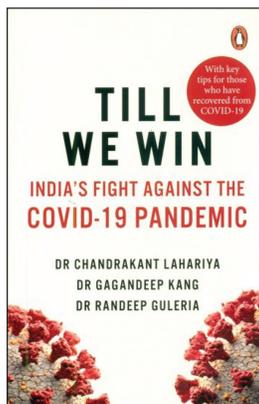


## Book Review

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**Till We Win. India's Fight against COVID-19 Pandemic.** Chandrakant Lahariya, Gagandeep Kang, Randeep Guleria (eds). Penguin Random House India, New Delhi, 2020. 308pp, ₹299. ISBN 978-0-143-45180-8.



The title of the book suggests human determination to combat all odds till coming out victorious in the end. The book is a collaborative mission by a leading public policy and health systems expert Dr Chandrakant Lahariya, famous vaccine researcher and virologist Professor Gagandeep Kang and Director of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, Professor Randeep Guleria.

This book, written during the Covid crisis, depicts a biography of SARS-CoV-2 and 'understanding and unity' of Indian citizens to fight in all walks of life despite socioeconomic, educational, cultural and linguistic diversity.

Till the end of March 2020, India had reported around a thousand (1071) confirmed cases, and a 'modelling-based study' projected India to have many millions of cases and some millions of deaths by July 2020. Several healthcare teams across the country continued their efforts against all odds such as apprehensions, discrimination and infodemic. This was supported by the country's production of personal protective equipment, virus testing kits, ventilators, and many more items to make 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', which translates to 'self-reliant India' or 'self-sufficient India'.

The book explores how we Indians learnt to strive with evolving uncertainty from the Covid-19 pandemic, by strengthening the Indian health system for a better tomorrow. Our learnings from the Covid pandemic can be used to strengthen the Indian health system for a better future.

The book projects how Indians stayed positive with hope and spirit in the face of great uncertainty. It also portrays how India has pulled together despite all adverse situations arising out of the crisis and made continuous efforts to tackle the pandemic.

This is a lifetime lesson for all of us to find the spirit of the book helpful in our day-to-day life. India has to win the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. Definitive treatment against

Covid-19 not being available, people protected themselves and their families with mask, mind power and social distancing as the 'new normal'. Answers to some pertinent questions such as 'How long will we have to go on wearing masks?', 'Will we need to wear a mask even after vaccination?' and 'How to save life without definitive treatment for Covid-19?' are addressed in the text. The chapter on 'Undaunted human spirit: Stories from the frontline' gives real stories of bravery of Covid-19 warriors, which are heart-rending. The chapter 'All heroes do not wear caps' expresses the emotion of most healthcare workers and the feelings lead up to real practice in our settings.

With the emergence of this new condition with its unique transmission dynamics, India was in the latter part of 2020 the highest contributor of daily cases for weeks together. However, it has shown the rest of the world about the nation's preparedness for the pandemic of such a scale which has threatened even the stronger health systems of several developed countries. Winston Churchill's quote 'Never let a good crisis go to waste', is a chapter included in this book. We have progressed, improved health infrastructure; there has been scientific advancement in vaccine production, and molecular laboratories are now present in every district of each state. Learnings from the Covid pandemic have been an opportunity to strengthen India's health system. The chapters on vaccines and many other queries are very useful to understand the present situation, especially in relation to vaccines.

The book is priced at ₹240 (online order for a hard copy) and has powerful notes for us. The book informed me about various aspects of knowledge pertaining to Covid. It is written lucidly in a simple way, provides information for everyone—from lay persons to leaders, policy-makers and healthcare staff, with the promise of delivering knowledge to transform public health of India. This authoritative book has the potential to transform perception, public trust and public health of India with a clear roadmap for the future. Everyone can read the book and find it helpful in this time of crisis. The fight will continue till we win, as we have been surviving in the most critical phase and are emerging stronger day by day.

PRASANTA R. MOHAPATRA

*Department of Pulmonary Medicine and Critical Care  
All India Institute of Medical Sciences*

*Bhubaneswar*

*Odisha*

*India*

*pulmed\_prasanta@aiimsbhubaneswar.edu.in*