Twitter Thread by Anant Bhan

Anant Bhan
@AnantBhan

Many of us who have been health activists have been crying hoarse for years about the need to strengthen our health system, focus on public health
Last summer brought policy and public focus to this dire need. One thought lessons were learnt.
Clearly not.

There is INCREDIBLE stress on the health system right now in many parts of the country. Health professionals over worked, burning out, turning positive with families in droves. And sometimes cannot find beds for themselves or their family in the hospitals they are working in.

I have never seen this kind of a situation before. Lots of people reaching out for help. To provide care, advice, help patients and those in medical need is what health providers are trained for. It is what this is unique about health as a profession.

Imagine not being able to help because there is no capacity, no bed, because there are multiple claimants for that one bed all with medical need. Where the only way a bed might be available is a patient discharge or sadly, a patient death

Ambulances lined up outside hospitals waiting to be able to transfer the patient to the facility, and at times to ferry out those who could not make it.

Where morgues in some hospitals are in a state which one only expects in a disaster setting
Bodies lined up

Where every phone call with friends, colleagues and family revolves around the pandemic impact. On the people who make up the data we see represented on the TV screens.
The 'cases', the 'deaths'.
Individuals, not a statistic.

And what is going to be hidden from view for a while is the impact on non Covid care. Which had not yet recovered from last year's extended focus on COVID-19
When entire referral hospitals become Covid care only, where does it leave those patients.

As one drives in the city, the only shops often open are medical stores. Often in close proximity to each other. And yet, there are many waiting their turn to buy medicines.
Medicines which sometimes are in short supply. So people beg and plead and wait resigned for stocks

Thr uncertainty of how long this current upswing in cases will go on for.
On what more than a year in confinement means for our young and the elderly.

On whether if a loved one does fall sick and is hospitalized, there will be an opportunity to see them, to tell them how loved and valued they are. To be able to say a proper goodbye if one were to loose them.

This is now personal for many of us, the privileged in this country. Hardly any of you would have been untouched
Investment in, nurturing, strengthening social sectors like health, education is not a choice. It is a requirement. Short term steps will not cut it.

So do not buy excuses, do not settle for a system with faults. Think about how even the well off among you had to run around in this time of crisis for access to care.
Remember that is how it is often even in non pandemic times for those who might be less resourced than you.

Is that the country you wish for your self, your children, your family, your communities, your nation.
The reform has to be us. Please, please demand and ensure that we build a learning, resilient health system