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OPINION

Chinese Vaccine: Good Intentions, Bad Label



Chinese Ambassador to Cambodia Wang Wentian and Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Gen. Tea Banh attend the handover ceremony of Sinopharm Covid-19 vaccines at the Phnom Penh International Airport in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, March 31, 2021.

Seun Sam

In 2019, the People's Republic of China became the first country to fall victim to the Covid-19, which began in Wuhan province. According to the Worldometer, there are 4,636 deaths in China as of June 21, 2021. China is not only a victim of the Covid-19, but it has also faced serious discrimination from the Western media since it began developing vaccines to prevent the Covid-19.

When China began donating vaccines to developing countries that we're unable to produce vaccines on their own, Western media began to label the Chinese-made vaccines with warnings about the dangers that could occur for those who were injected with the Chinese vaccines. China is the first country to donate vaccines to developing countries without first considering its own national interests. Despite the fact that world-renowned vaccines are manufactured in China, many Chinese citizens do not have a good chance of being vaccinated. The main reason that Chinese citizens do not have good opportunities to be vaccinated is not because Chinese citizens do not believe in the quality of Chinese-made vaccines, but because the Chinese Government and Chinese citizens want their alliances that cannot produce vaccines to get the vaccine first.

The World Health Organization has approved two Chinese-made

vaccines, Sinopharm and Sinovac, indicating that they are both safe and effective in preventing the spread of Covid-19. Why doesn't the Chinese government allow their citizens to inject first if their vaccines are safe to use? Why does the Chinese government want their ASEAN and global alliances to get it first?

There are two opposing viewpoints between the Chinese government and the US government, as well as some governments in the EU that purchased more vaccines than their countries required and do not share those vaccines with developing countries in Africa or Asia.

There are countries that keep overabundant vaccines until they expire and can no longer be used to prevent the spread of the Covid-19. In addition, there are countries that are very selfish during the difficult Covid-19 period and try to inform other countries to be stingy as to what they are doing.

China is a rising star, and it has a deep understanding of the challenges that developing countries face when the Covid-19 virus outbreak started. When China was unable to officially produce vaccines in protest of the Covid-19, China donated facemasks to their alliances; at the same time, a country kidnapped facemasks from its alliance. During a difficult time, it appears that there are no friends and no morality. While China donated first aid to developing countries, some existing powerful countries kept their resources for

themselves and then tried to blame China for being a business-minded country during the outbreak.

Some countries have used the terms "Mask Diplomacy" and "Vaccine Diplomacy" to describe China's donation as tools for improving relations with developing countries. Everything from China appears to be harmful to them. Why can't those countries consider the real needs of developing countries? In addition, why didn't they ask the governments of the receiving countries how they felt when they received first aid to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in their country?

Due to political conflict, one ASEAN country initially refused to receive the Chinese-made vaccine but later agreed to officially use the China-made vaccine, namely Vietnam. Despite the fact that China and Vietnam have had historical conflicts due to the two countries' shared borders, China is still willing to assist Vietnam in preventing the spread of the Covid-19. Should we go over the benefits of the Chinese vaccines a little bit?

Because of the country's official name as a "Communist Country," China has made many countries fearful of its development. What is the distinction between a Communist and a Democratic Country? We can officially observe the differences through its practical activities, rather than through its slogans or messages. There is black lives matter and racial discrimination in the United States,

as well as anti-Asian sentiment and a crackdown on protesters who are dissatisfied with the country's social development or progress. Protesters are being persecuted in China and around the world.

When you are wealthy and powerful, you have the ability to label people as good or bad based on your own intentions. Some countries saw their crackdown on protesters as a way to protect their constitution and democracy, but they saw the same actions as a violation of human rights when they were carried out in other countries.

The Chinese government has made every effort to support their alliances and humanities, but these efforts have been labeled as bad strategies in order to attract more partners. It is difficult to understand when you claim to be a generous person but keep everything for yourself while loudly warning others to be careful not to eat the only food in front of their faces.

As an independent country or as individuals, we must understand the real situation and the real needs for our daily lives. Every decision made by every government in the world is always related to political economy and political security, and we need to fully understand our situation and what we have in order to meet our needs in an intelligent manner. ■

Dr. Seun Sam is a researcher at the Royal Academy of Cambodia. All views in this article are his own.