

WHO rejects the use of Covid passports to reopen travel

A Monitor Report

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Geneva : Reiterating their previously stated position, the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Emergency Committee has staunchly rejected the use of Covid passports to reopen travel, over concerns that vaccinations alone will not prevent the transmission of the virus.

At a meeting on April 19, the World Health Organisation said it opposed the use of proof of vaccination documents as a condition of international travel due to the lack of evidence over the impact of vaccination on the transmission of coronavirus.

The WHO's declaration comes amid alarm from the group over "the persistent inequity in global vaccine distribution", with the international health body stating that Covid passports would only further promote unequal freedom of movement.

Instead, the WHO has recommended that countries impose quarantine measures for international travellers and introduce "coordinated, time-limited, risk-based and evidence-based approaches for health measures".

Concerns about the inequality that would be caused by the use of Covid passports have been sparked by wealthier nations snapping up vaccines, while poorer countries have been left without enough doses to effectively vaccinate their population.

The WHO has described this growing divide between national vaccine rollouts as a

"moral outrage" and "catastrophic moral failure", demanding world leaders support a more equitable distribution of vaccines.

Despite these concerns, the WHO praised the progress of its international COVAX scheme, which plans to deliver 2 billion doses of the Covid vaccine globally by the end of 2021, on top of the domestic rollouts run by state governments. The project is particularly aimed at supporting lower-income states who would otherwise struggle to secure doses of the inoculations.