EDITORIAL

The Sudanese/British doctors who offered their lives fighting coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

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KEYWORDS

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Starting the year 2020, the current issue of the Sudanese Journal of Paediatrics (SJP) includes articles from five countries. These cover the fields of infectious diseases and COVID-19, nutrition, breast feeding, nephrology, hepatology, endocrinology, metabolic disorders, dysmorphology and complementary and alternative medicine.

The Cover of this issue of SJP pays tribute to the two Sudanese/British consultants who gave their lives fighting coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in Britain. Dr. Adil El Tayar, Consultant Kidney and Pancreatic Transplant surgeon who previously helped establish a transplant program in Sudan and worked at Ibn Sina Hospital in Khartoum, had spent his final days volunteering in an Accident & Emergency department in UK. He was the first working National Health Service (NHS) surgeon who died from coronavirus [1–3]. Dr. Amged El-Hawrani, Sudanese/British ENT consultant, was the first confirmed hospital frontline worker in UK who died from COVID-19. He was known to be professional and compassionate, and also raised funds for hospitals, including climbing in

the Himalayas with a group of friends [3–5]. Both reflected the known professionalism and bravery of Sudanese doctors, which were vividly depicted during the outbreak of Ebola virus disease (EVD) in Maridi (currently in South Sudan) in 1976. A total of 41 deaths occurred among the staff of Maridi Hospital, including the late Dr. Abdeen Khairy (aged 28 years) who was the only doctor working in Maridi Hospital during the outbreak and kept fighting the disease, despite his illness [6–8]. Dr. Abdel Ghani Bakri (aged 27 years) took over from Dr. Abdeen Khairy and fought the EVD till its end in November 1976 [9]. Dr. Babiker Mohamed El Tahir, from the National Health Laboratory, Khartoum Sudan, arrived with a team during the service of Dr. Abdel Ghani Bakri and collected specimens for virological studies which paved the way for the discovery of Ebola virus [10,11]. Three young doctors joined the Hospital Staff in Maridi on 4 October 1976 and managed the patients till the end of the epidemic. These included two Medical Registrars at Khartoum Hospital (Dr. Mahgoub Osman Karrar and Dr. Awad Osman Mahdi) and Dr. Hyder Hamza who had just finished his internship. Dr. Mahgoub Osman Karrar (in association with Dr. Awad Osman Mahdi) compiled and presented

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to the Ministry of Health, Sudan the first clinical report on Ebola virus disease worldwide, titled 'MARIDI VIRUS DISEASE' [12].

The Late Adil El Tayar and Dr. Amged El-Hawrani who fought COVID-19, together with the Late Dr. Abdeen Khairy and the group of doctors who courageously managed EBV, and those who are currently fighting COVID-19 in Sudan, reflect a prime model of commitment to the well-being of humanity [13].

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