

Situations like the coronavirus pandemic can quickly become a catalyst for social conflict due to misinformation, rumours, and fake news, as observed in Pakistan during recent national catastrophes caused by dengue fever, floods, and earthquakes. The situation is no different with COVID-19 as stories emerge on how fake news is being used to manipulate response efforts, spread rumours and misinformation leading to behaviours that are undermining community cohesion, and causing citizens to be unaware of the role they can play in the pandemic response.

With that in mind, Accountability Lab Pakistan (ALP) with support from The Asia Foundation (TAF) Pakistan has officially launched the Coronavirus CivActs Campaign (CCC). This campaign aims to debunk rumours, conduct regular fact-checking, synthesize data, and convene virtual forums to produce informative bulletins each week. These bulletins will include important government decisions, visual materials, community feedback, debunked rumours with verified information, valid concerns, and other questions from the ground around health and other issues. The goal is to support enhanced awareness among the most vulnerable groups in Pakistan with a focus particularly on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh. These bulletins will be translated into Urdu and Sindhi and published on a weekly basis, with audio transcriptions in Pashto. They will be shared with stakeholders, local government leaders, media, CSOs, humanitarian organizations and others. They will also have a dedicated web-page, be shared widely on social media, and be aired on local community radio stations.

Current Situation of COVID-19 in Pakistan

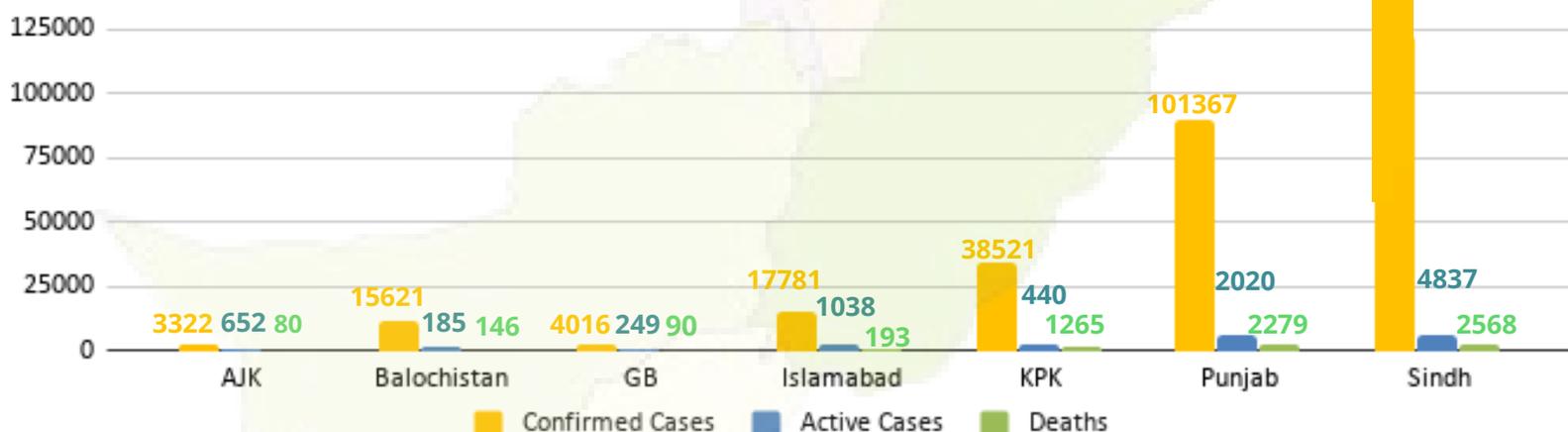
Total Confirmed Cases
321,877

Total Active Cases
9,421

Total Deaths
6,621

Total Recoveries
305,835

COVID-19 Cases status in provinces of Pakistan



Source: <http://covid.gov.pk/stats/pakistan>

FACT OR MYTH?

Common myths around Covid-19 that have been circulating at both the national and international level have come into focus in the past few months of the pandemic.

Water can transmit the virus: Myth

Water cannot directly transmit COVID-19. If you swim in a swimming pool or in a water body, you cannot get infected through water. However, being in close proximity to people in the pool, especially close proximity to an infected person can lead to transmission of COVID-19. Therefore it's essential to maintain physical distance in swimming pools as well.

Weather affects the transmission of COVID-19: Myth

Countries with both hot and cold climates have had outbreaks of COVID-19. Therefore, weather does not significantly affect COVID-19 transmission. However, there are specific circumstances that affect transmission. For example, being in a crowded, closed space with limited ventilation can lead to greater risk of infection. When it's cold outside, people tend to stay inside places which are poorly ventilated, and often crowded. These circumstances are more likely to cause COVID-19 transmission than the weather itself.

Herd immunity is the solution to fighting the coronavirus: Myth

The head of WHO ruled out herd immunity as a response to the pandemic. With herd immunity, it is assumed that most people in a population are protected from the virus as a result of widespread infection. However, if most of the population catches the disease, many thousands of people might die from it. WHO chief Tedros Ghebreyesus argued that taking a 'herd immunity' approach was "scientifically and ethically problematic". He said, "Never in the history of public health has herd immunity been used as a strategy for responding to an outbreak, let alone a pandemic."

Source: World Health Organization

Resurgence of COVID-19 in Islamabad: Schools closed, mini-smart lockdowns reimposed

Due to the recent resurgence of COVID-19 cases in the federal capital, the National Health Ministry (NHS) has decided to reimpose mini-smart lockdowns in various areas of Islamabad. The Islamabad Deputy Commissioner reported that upon surveillance, the G-9, G-10 and I-8 sectors have emerged as new hotspots of coronavirus in the capital. It has been stated that the main cause of the resurgence is widespread failure to comply with the SOPs set forth by the health ministry and WHO. Since the curve was flattening, people are taking SOPs for granted and are not regularly following instructions. In addition, the return of students to educational institutions, daily wagers and other workers is also a contributing cause.

Five more localities including Bara Kahu and G-8 will also be sealed. Two more educational institutions were sealed on Monday following the emergence of COVID-19 cases, bringing the total number of school buildings sealed in Islamabad (since September 14) to 21.

The administrators of the schools have been told to advise both students and teachers to self-quarantine for 14 days. 173 business centres were inspected on Saturday, October 10th; out of which 32 restaurants and hotels, 47 shops and a workshop were also sealed for violating SOPs. Warnings were also issued to wedding halls that were ignoring SOPs, the Deputy Commissioner reported.

What SOPs should be followed in public gatherings?

While many countries have imposed a ban on large public gatherings, Pakistan continues to hold large events such as weddings, religious congregations, and other large public gatherings. While no ban has been issued on the occurrence of such gatherings, the NCOC has issued guidelines for large public gatherings, and has told the provinces and capital administration to formulate SOPs based on these guidelines.

These guidelines include limiting the number of people at gatherings to 300 (or 50 percent of available capacity), reducing the duration of the event to 3 hours, ensuring social distancing of 3 feet between attendees, ensuring attendees are seated, and holding organizers responsible for ensuring compliance of guidelines, particularly the wearing of masks, social distancing and provisioning of COVID-19 safety kits to the participants. These guidelines also instruct that children and the elderly be discouraged from attending, people suffering from respiratory diseases or COVID-19 not be allowed to participate, and meals and light refreshments not to be allowed in any type of gathering.



**Maximum Capacity of 300
(or 50 percent of
available capacity)**



**Maximum Event
Duration 3 hours**



**Social Distancing
of 3-feet**

COVID-19 can last up to 28 days on mobile screens, bank notes **(Australia National Science Agency report)**

According to a study done by Australia's national science agency, COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) has been found to survive on items such as currency notes and mobile screens for up to 28 days in cool, dark conditions. Researchers at the agency tested the longevity of SARS-CoV-2 in the dark at three different temperatures: at 20, 30, and 40 degrees Celsius. They found that at 20 degrees Celsius, SARS-CoV-2 was "extremely robust" and remained up to 28 days on smooth surfaces such as mobile screens, glass, steel and plastic banknotes. At 30 degrees, the survival rate dropped significantly to 7 days, and dropped to just 24 hours at 40 degrees Celsius. "It really reinforces the importance of washing hands and sanitizing where possible and certainly wiping down surfaces that may be in contact with the virus," said the study's lead researcher, Shane Riddell.

However, the finding does not mention what amount of the virus on these surfaces would be enough to cause infection. Additionally, it does not take into account exposure to UV light and increased humidity, which can rapidly degrade the virus. However, the survival rate of the virus on these surfaces in lowered temperatures can explain the resurgence of COVID-19 in places where the rate of infection in people is very low. This study also warns that people should not be careless about touching their face after coming into contact with such materials.

Coronavirus symptoms

Mild Symptoms include:

1. Fever or chills
2. Cough
3. Lost sense of smell or taste
4. Fatigue
5. Sputum production, congestion, and runny nose
6. Sore throat
7. Aches, pains, and headaches
8. Diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting

Source: Center for Disease Control

Severe Symptoms include:

1. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
2. Persistent pain or pressure in your chest
3. New confusion, or the inability to wake up or stay awake
4. Bluish lips or face

Source: Center for Disease Control

What should I do if I have COVID-19 Symptoms?

Contact your doctor or the
coronavirus helpline at



1166



Where can I get tested?

Karachi

Aga Khan University Hospital

Stadium Road, Karachi

Dow Medical Hospital

Ojha Campus

Suparco Road, Karachi

Indus Hospital

Opposite Darussalam Society, Korangi Crossing, Karachi

Multan

Nishtar Hospital

Nishtar Road,

Justice Hamid Colony, Multan

Rawalpindi

Armed Forces Institute of Pathology

Range Road

CMH Complex, Rawalpindi

Hyderabad

Liaquat University of Medical and Health Sciences (LUMHS)

Liberty Market Roundabout, Near Liaquat University Hospital
Hyderabad, Sindh.

Islamabad

National Institute of Health

Park Road

Chak Shahzad, Islamabad

Khairpur

Gambat Institute of Medical Sciences

Gambat, Khairpur, Sindh

Abbottabad

Public Health Lab Ayub Teaching Hospital

Mansehra Road. Abbottabad, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Shaheena Jameel Hospital

Abbottabad . N-35

Quetta

Fatima Jinnah Hospital

Bahadurabad, Wahdat Colony, Quetta

Peshawar

Khyber Medical University

Phase 5, Hayatabad, Peshawar, KP

Hayatabad Medical Complex

Phase-4 Phase 4 Hayatabad,

Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Lahore

Punjab AIDS Lab

PACP Complex 6 - Birdwood Road,
Lahore

Shaukat Khanum Memorial Hospital

7A Block R-3 M.A. Johar Town,
Lahore

For more cities visit the

[COVID-19 Health Advisory Platform](#)

Coronavirus CivActs Campaign is brought to you by
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To receive our
regular updates
through WhatsApp

1. Add our number **+27 60 080 6146** as a contact.
2. Send the word "**Pakistan**" as a message on WhatsApp.

