

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, The Accountability Lab Pakistan (ALP), with the financial support from the European Union and technical support from The Asia Foundation (TAF) Pakistan, has officially launched the Coronavirus CivActs Campaign (CCC). This campaign debunks rumours, conducts regular fact-checking, synthesizes data, and convenes virtual forums to produce informative bulletins each week. These bulletins 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 (including ethnic minorities, religious minorities, returning migrants, trafficking victims, prisoners, women, internally displaced persons, transgender persons, persons with disabilities, victims of torture, and other marginalized communities), with a focus on the marginalized communities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh. These bulletins are translated into Urdu and Sindhi, with audio transcriptions in Pashto. They are shared with stakeholders, local government leaders, media, legal aid centers, community radios, learning centers, CSOs, and humanitarian networks via online and offline means. They are also disseminated through a web-page, shared widely on social media, and are aired on a wide network of radio stations in local languages.

### Current Situation of COVID-19 in Pakistan

**Total Confirmed Cases**  
645,356

**Total Active Cases**  
40,120

**Total Deaths**  
14,091

**Total Recoveries**  
591,145

Provinces	Active Cases	Confirmed Cases	Deaths	Recoveries
Punjab	20,272	207,765	6,142	181,351
Islamabad	7,314	54,347	555	46,478
KPK	6,936	82,677	2,260	73,481
Sindh	4,177	264,062	4,486	255,399
AJK	1,180	12,095	340	10,575
Balochistan	219	19,427	205	19,003
GB	22	4,983	103	4,858

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



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# Fact

# Myth



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



**You gain full immunity after the first dose of vaccination**

**MYTH**



The current vaccines administered to people are in two-doses, namely, you need to get two doses of the vaccine before you can develop a good immune response. When the immune system first encounters the vaccine, it activates two important types of white blood cells. First are the plasma B cells, which primarily focus on making antibodies. However, this cell type is short-lived, so although your body may develop a lot of antibodies within a few weeks, without the second shot this is often followed by a rapid decline in these antibodies. Second are the T cells, each of which is specifically designed to identify a particular pathogen (like a virus) and kill it. Some of these, memory T cells, are able to linger in the body for decades until they stumble upon their target – meaning immunity from vaccines or infections can sometimes last a lifetime. But you usually won't have many of this cell type until the second dose of the vaccine. The booster dose (second dose) is a way of re-exposing the body to the antigens – the molecules on pathogens that trigger the immune system – to initiate part two of the response. On second exposure to the same vaccine or pathogen, the plasma B cells that remain from before are able to rapidly increase, leading to a boost in the amount of antibodies formed in the body.



**FACT**

**New Pakistan study shows that Covid-19 vaccines are less effective against the UK variant**



As Pakistan continues its vaccination drive against Covid-19 amid the threat of different variations of the deadly contagion looming, local research confirmed that the current vaccines have some efficacy against the UK variant – considered more transmissible than the original Wuhan variant – but do not provide complete immunity, cautioning masses to continue adhering to standard operating procedures (SOPs). A team of scholars from Dow University of Health Sciences (DUHS), closely inspected the strains of both the UK variant with the Chinese origin variant and found that both these strains of viruses bind with human cells with the same intensity through their spike protein. However, there are subtle differences in the spike proteins of both these strains of SARS-CoV-2 that can make the UK variant escape from antibodies generated against the original strain. They added that any patient infected with the Wuhan strain of SARS-CoV-2 and made antibodies against it, he or she is still vulnerable to the new UK variety of the virus. Therefore, the current drive of vaccination must continue rather more aggressively but the vaccinated individuals should be made aware of the facts of the existing threat of prevailing viral strain and advised to continue following the SOPs.

Source: BBC, The Express Tribune



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## CURRENTLY ELIGIBLE POPULATION GROUPS FOR VACCINATION IN PAKISTAN

NCOC is currently conducting vaccination for the following groups:

**Senior Citizens (Age : 70+)** - Send your CNIC no (13 digits without spaces and dashes) to 1166 to get registered and receive PIN code. Walk in to the nearest vaccination centre and get yourself vaccinated.

**Senior Citizens (Age : 60-69)** - For registration, SMS your CNIC no (13 digits without spaces and dashes) to 1166 from any mobile no or visit [nims.nadra.gov.pk](http://nims.nadra.gov.pk). Vaccine Centre and date will be communicated through SMS.

**Registered Health Care Workers** - Just walk in to any vaccination centre and get yourself vaccinated.

The Punjab Relief Commissioner Babar Hayat Tarar also announced on March 19 that Covid-19 vaccination of the people **50 and above** would start after **four to five weeks** (Dawn).

(Source: NCOC)

**If you think you or someone you know is infected with COVID-19, you can call the following government helplines by province:**

**WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I SUSPECT I OR SOMEONE IN MY FAMILY HAS CORONAVIRUS?**

**DON'T PANIC**

There are government helplines you can call for help

FEDERAL	1166
KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA	1700
PUNJAB	0800 99 000
SINDH	021-99203443   021-99204405
BALUCHISTAN	081-9241133-22   0334-9241133

whatsapp

MINISTRY OF NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES REGULATIONS AND COORDINATION  
GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN  
[www.nhsrhc.gov.pk](http://www.nhsrhc.gov.pk)

**COVID 19**  
CORONAVIRUS DISEASE

Source: Ministry of National Health Services Regulations and Coordination (NHSRC)



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## STRICT SOP ENFORCEMENT ORDERED AMID CORONAVIRUS SURGE IN KP

With the coronavirus positivity rate reaching more than 10% in the Peshawar district, provincial chief secretary Dr Kazim Niaz has issued directives for the strict implementation of the Covid-19 standard operating procedures in the province. Dr Kazim has asked the authorities to fine the SOP violators and put non-pharmaceutical arrangements in place to protect the population during the ongoing third virus wave, which he said, is more dangerous than the previous ones.

The officials said more coronavirus patients were reported in Peshawar, Mardan, Nowshera, Charsadda, Malakand, Kohat and Swabi districts compared with southern districts, which were rather safe from the virus. They also said that Peshawar was the worst hit by the third coronavirus wave as the virus positivity rate had reached 10.17%.

Meanwhile, the officials said the bed occupancy in the province's hospitals has increased by 100% during the last one week, especially in Peshawar, which is receiving most of the patients. They said a steep increase in Covid-19 cases and deaths was recorded in the capital city but it came down due to the effective imposition of lockdowns

source: Dawn News

### Mild Symptoms include:



### Severe Symptoms include:



If you have COVID-19 symptoms contact your doctor or the coronavirus helpline at



**1166**



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## DRAP notifies formula for sale of Covid-19 vaccine



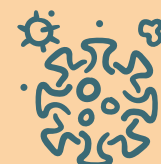
The Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) has notified a formula for maximum retail prices of Covid-19 vaccine. According to the notification, two formulas have been approved for sale of vaccine with 40% mark-up for companies and additional 15% for retailers/hospitals. The notification, which will be published in the extraordinary Gazette of Pakistan, Part-II, states that in exercise of powers conferred by Section 12 of the Drugs Act 1976, the federal government is to provide a mechanism for fixing the maximum retail price of vaccines for Covid-19.

***"The vaccines shall be registered or approved for emergency use authorisation by the Registration Board of Drap; the vaccines shall not be sold or distributed in the market; and the vaccines shall be administered in private sector hospitals and institutions,"*** it adds.

A summary submitted to the federal cabinet has suggested the price of Russian vaccine Sputnik V at Rs 8,449 per pack (two injections) and that of CanSino [a single dose vaccine of a Chinese company] at Rs 4,225. However, the vaccine will not be sold or distributed in the market and will only be administered in private hospitals and institutions

Source: Dawn News

## Engagement with community leaders can help mitigate the Covid-19 crisis



[A study conducted by the Center for Economic Research](#) in Pakistan before Eid-ul-Adha in 2020, measured the impact of one-on-one engagement with local religious leadership on the compliance of protocols at their mosques on Covid-19 prevention measures. This exercise yielded great results for compliance at a community level, and has been suggested as an effective way of curbing the Covid-19 crisis at the community level. The religious leaders were given scripts containing directives issued by the government for the prevention of Covid-19 at mosques and an appeal to religious authority using a combination of ahadees and fatwas from renowned religious scholars and measures taken by other Muslim countries.

Through this messaging approach, policymakers can mobilise communal leaders (religious or non-religious) on two fronts: containment and prevention. On the containment front, authorities can seek their support to increase dissemination of health advice and, through the leaders' influence over their community, also help increase compliance with those measures. Similarly, these leaders can also facilitate outreach of public health campaigns, such as the ongoing nationwide Covid-19 vaccination drive. If vaccine uptake remains low, the threat of Covid-19 may linger for a while. Given the recent rise in infections, widespread misinformation and scepticism about the pandemic, mass indifference towards health guidelines, and the fact that those who have been vaccinated may still be carriers of the disease, the virus is likely to remain a threat for an even longer period than anticipated.

Therefore, the Covid-19 vaccination drive needs to happen hand in hand with social distancing measures. As the government rolls out its mass inoculation program, it should also consider formulating an effective communication strategy in order to make the public aware of the importance of remaining cautious. This is where partnering with communal leaders could be particularly beneficial for the dissemination of health authorities' messaging. Communal leaders can act as intermediaries for the purpose of conveying to members of their community the importance of getting vaccinated and following Covid-19 protocols for at least as long the pandemic lasts.

Source: Dawn News



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## Where can I get tested?

<b>Islamabad</b>	<b>National Institute of Health</b> Park Road, Chak Shahzad, Islamabad
<b>Karachi</b>	<b>Agha Khan University Hospital,</b> Stadium Road, Karachi, Sindh
<b>Hyderabad</b>	<b>Liaquat University of Medical and Health Sciences (LUMHS),</b> Liberty Market Roundabout, Liaquat University Hospital, Hyderabad
<b>Khairpur</b>	<b>Gambat Institute of Medical Sciences,</b> Gambat, Khairpur, Sindh
<b>Peshawar</b>	<b>Hayatabad Medical Complex</b> Phase-4 Phase 4 Hayatabad, Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
<b>Mardan</b>	<b>Chughtai Lab</b> Mardan point, near Allied Bank, Shamsi Road, Mardan, KP
<b>Haripur</b>	<b>Excel Labs,</b> TMA Plaza Shop No. 6, Near Girls Degree College Circular Road Haripur, KP
<b>Lahore</b>	<b>Shaukat Khanum Memorial Hospital,</b> 7A Block R-3 M.A. Johar Town, Lahore, Punjab
<b>Multan</b>	<b>Nishtar Hospital</b> Nishtar Road, Justice Hamid Colony, Multan
<b>Rawalpindi</b>	<b>Armed Forces Institute of Pathology,</b> Range Road, CMH Complex, Rawalpindi, Punjab
<b>Quetta</b>	<b>Fatima Jinnah Hospital</b> Bahadurabad, Wahdat Colony, Quetta
<b>Muzaffarabad</b>	<b>Abbas Institute of Medical Sciences (AIMS),</b> Ambore, Muzaffarabad, Azad Kashmir
<b>Gilgit</b>	<b>District Headquarters Hospital,</b> Hospital Road, Gilgit, GB

For more cities visit the [COVID-19 Health Advisory Platform](#)



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