

66pc of Pakistan's Covid-19 cases reported from Karachi in one day

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KARACHI: City's contribution to new cases of Covid-19 in the country rose to 66 per cent on Thursday as vaccine hesitancy, absence of Covid-19 related official restrictions and public indifference towards the disease fuelled a surge in coronavirus infection.

According to official figures released at the federal and provincial level, a total of 3,019 new positive Covid-19 cases were detected in the country over the last 24 hours. Of them, 2,009 cases were reported in Karachi alone.

The data released by the Chief Minister House in Sindh showed that a total of 2,289 new Covid-19 cases were reported in the province. Of them, 2,009 were detected in Karachi — nearly 88pc of the total cases of the province.

59 Omicron cases in two days

Expressing concern over the deteriorating public health situation in Karachi with a fragile health system, Dr Saeed Khan, a professor of molecular pathology heading the Sindh Public Health Lab at Dow University of Health Sciences (DUHS), said people were not taking the disease seriously and the city might see a more serious health crisis than last year.

Positive cases in city cross 2,000 mark

“The cases are increasing at a faster rate than expected and the hospitals' capacity for patient admission in the city may reach a saturation point by mid February,” he warned.

He added that the lab detected 59 cases of the Omicron variant over the past two days.

Dr Qaiser Sajjad of Pakistan Medical Association regretted absence of government actions to ensure public compliance towards Covid-19 related preventive measures.

“The government's silence is encouraging people to crowd. Apart from routine social gatherings, business and commercial activities that are being carried out without any regard to SOPs, two major festivals have been planned in the city in coming days that should have been postponed given the spike in Covid-19 cases,” he said.

District East hardest hit by Covid

According to health department officials, the Covid-19 vaccination target has not been met as planned and 90pc of the patients currently being treated in the Covid-19 wards are those who did not opt for vaccination.

More than 40pc of the city's population is unvaccinated. A significant number of this population, experts say, constitutes stay-at-home women.

Residents of district East were the most affected with 792 cases followed by district South (501), district Central (373), district Malir (115), district West (95) and district Korangi (133).

Hyderabad had 69 cases followed by Naushehro Feroze 24, Badin 21, Tando Muhammad Khan and Thatta 17 each, Matiari 12, Tando Allahyar and Jamshoro 11 each, Dadu and Sanghar eight each, Larkana and Tharparkar seven each, Umerkot and Shaheed Benazirabad six each, Khairpur four, Sukkur two and one case was reported from Ghotki.

Currently, 98 per cent of the total Covid-19 patients (15,375) in the province are in home isolation whereas 20 patients are being looked after at isolation centres and 179 at different hospitals.

"The condition of 172 patients is stated to be critical, including 14 shifted to ventilators. Two patients died of Covid-19 overnight, raising the death toll to 7,693 (since the start of the pandemic last year)," the statement said.

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