

## [Detection of new coronavirus cases in country heightens concerns](#)

[Tahir Siddiqui](#) | [Faiza Ilyas](#) Updated March 15, 2020

KARACHI: The detection of two new cases of the coronavirus in Karachi on Saturday prompted the Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) to ask the National Database and Registration Authority (Nadra) to come up with a strategy to prevent transmission of the virus at its crowded centres and the Sindh government to order closure of all shrines, wedding and cinema halls across the province for three weeks.

Urging Nadra to help prevent possible spread of the virus through its centres, the PMA said the places were visited by hundreds of people daily.

“As the government has banned public gatherings across the country to contain the spread of the virus, Nadra should come up with a plan to avoid long queues at its centres,” said Dr Qaiser Sajjad representing the PMA.

The authority, as a precautionary measure, should also provide a facility to its visitors to wash their hands with soap or clean them with a sanitizer before and after registration via the biometric system, he added.

He also shared concerns over reports that private laboratories were conducting the test for the coronavirus and the government should intervene in this matter.

### I am sure people of this province will strengthen my hands in containing coronavirus: Murad

“It has come to our knowledge that some labs are privately doing the coronavirus test. Since it’s a sensitive test, the government shouldn’t allow any facility to do this test without getting a no-objection certificate from it,” he added.

The association suggested that the government strengthen its screening process put in place at the airports and border entry points of the country and that isolation and quarantine facilities should be improved and expanded.

“All isolation facilities should be equipped with ventilators. We already have an acute shortage of ventilators and it’s important given the fact that the infection can cause serious respiratory illness,” he said.

#### **The new cases**

Meanwhile, the Sindh Health Department has announced two new cases of coronavirus in Karachi, raising the total tally in the province to 17.

One of the two cases is a 38-year-old man who has arrived from Saudi Arabia a few days back. He was tested positive on Saturday.

“The other case is of a 20-year-old with no travel history. However, the patient’s father returned from the UK recently. The parents are now being tested for the virus.

“This brings the total number of cases to 17 in Sindh out of which two patients have recovered and sent home and 15 are under treatment,” said Meeran Yousuf, the media coordinator to the health minister.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah decided that educational process in madressahs and training institutions, marriage functions in clubs and public gatherings, including urs of saintly people would also remain suspended till April 5.

He directed the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) to take lead in developing taluka-wise data of the families so that in case of any emergency such as lockdown people could be reached for their food, medicines and other related supplies and help.

The chief minister issued these directives while presiding over the 17th meeting of the task force on the coronavirus and another meeting of the PDMA.

The chief minister said that since the novel coronavirus had become endemic, his government had no option but to take drastic measure to control the situation and save our people.

“It is high time to close the cinemas, marriage halls/lawns, shrines and urs programmes being observed there and even we can’t allow marriage function at clubs,” he said. “Yes, people can hold marriage functions at a limited level at their homes.”

Mr Shah directed the chief secretary to issue a notification for imposing a ban on such gatherings. “I am sure people of this province will strengthen my hands in containing coronavirus,” he said. “As and when situation is improved, we would reverse our decisions of banning social and religious gatherings.”

## **WB support**

The chief minister said that the World Bank had agreed to divert its \$10 million fund for its Sindh Resilience Project to Coronavirus Support Programme being launched by the Sindh government.

He directed the chief secretary to utilise the amount for purchase of ventilators, oxygen cylinders, beds and other gadgets. It was also pointed out that \$25m was being made available by the World Bank to contain the coronavirus in Sindh.

The chief minister was told that 26 samples were sent for test and their results were awaited. The Sindh health department has conducted 282 tests, out of them 267 have been declared as negative while 16 have been diagnosed as positive.

At present, 31 pilgrims have been put in quarantine at their homes, of them 11 would complete their isolation period on March 18, two on March 16, five in March 17 and 12 on March 12.

The health secretary said that 3,300 passengers landed at Jinnah Terminal till late evening of Friday. “Seven of them were deemed as suspects and they have been kept in quarantine”, he added.

## **PDMA meeting**

In another meeting of the Provincial Disaster Management Authority, the chief minister directed them to develop a taluka-wise data of families so that in case of any emergency or lockdown people could be helped and taken care of.

The chief minister directed the authorities to develop 35 field hospitals equipped with all the required gadgets and doctors and paramedical staff so that they could be sent at the place of need.

He also urged the PDMA to make arrangements for food, water and other items for quarantine centres.

The chief minister also decided to establish a quarantine centre in every district headquarters in the hospital buildings recently constructed but yet to be made functional.

He also directed the labour minister to hand over the labour apartments recently constructed in Kotri, Nooriabad, Hyderabad, Shaheed Benazirabad for setting up isolation centres.

The CM flew to a hospital located on the outskirts of the city where he visited a newly-established quarantine centre.

Prof Dr Bari of the Indus Hospital briefed the CM on the arrangements and the medical and paramedical staff posted there.

## **Video conference**

The chief minister through video link participated in a meeting of Prime Minister's Special Assistant Dr Zafar Mirza held on Saturday at 4pm.

The chief minister told the PM's special aide that the provincial government had generated funds from its own resources to cope with the situation, while the World Bank had also pledged financial assistance.

However, he said, the PDMA might need some equipment for which a list would be sent to National Disaster Management Authority.

## **Travel ban**

The chief minister also imposed a ban on travelling of government officers. He directed the chief secretary to inform the federal government that the officers of Sindh be taken on video conference instead of inviting them to Islamabad.

*Published in Dawn, March 15th, 2020*

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1540915/detection-of-new-coronavirus-cases-in-country-heightens-concerns>

## PMA urges public to avoid crowded places

[PPI](#)

March 15, 2020

Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) has appreciated the federal government for taking the decision of putting ban on public gatherings throughout the country.

PMA release said they appreciate holding the PSL matches without spectators. We also appreciate closing of schools, cinemas and marriage halls, because the best strategy to fight against Coronavirus is to stop spreading it.

The Virus has reached more than 145 countries till now. The developing countries are facing more deaths due to the virus. Although it is a serious problem but people need not to panic because our government is taking right steps for prevention of coronavirus.

The Sindh Government has performed very well regarding taking steps to stop spread of coronavirus. They have already closed the educational institution till 31st May 2020; they are establishing quarantine and isolation facilities in Interior Sindh at every district.

PMA believes that life is important than all kind of celebrations or other gatherings. “Your safety is important than anything else, you can arrange and attend these gatherings in future. The people who have booked marriage halls should get their money back.”

PMA requests all the societies of different medical specialties to postpone their meetings, seminars and conferences.

We suggest government to strengthen the screening process at all the airports and other entry points of the country. The quarantined facility established at Taftan should be made vaster and other required facilities should also be improved. Government should increase the isolation facilities with increasing number of ventilators. We already have shortage of ventilators which should be increased to treat the serious patients of coronavirus, says PMA.

We have observed that some labs are privately doing coronavirus test, as it is sensitive test so these labs should get NOC from the government for conducting this test. Government should ban the test without NOC, it says.

Any person suffering from cold or flu should not himself go for test instead visit qualified doctor and act upon his advice. Do not pay attention to the confusing advises on social media, only follow the government’s advice through national press and media.

People are requested to play their due role to stop spreading the virus and this can be done by adopting preventive measure only, concludes the release.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/576501/pma-urges-public-to-avoid-crowded-places/>

# PMA praises govt steps against virus; calls for more ventilators

[Our Correspondent](#)

March 15, 2020

**LAHORE :** The Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) appreciates the federal government for taking the decision of putting ban on public gatherings throughout the country. Under the decision the PSL will be played without spectators in stadium, said PMA Central Secretary General Dr SM Qaisar Sajjad.

He said that PMA appreciated closing of schools, cinemas and marriage halls, because the best strategy to fight against coronavirus was to stop spreading it. The virus has reached more than 145 countries. The developing countries are seeing more deaths due to the virus. Although it is a serious problem, the people in the country need not to panic because Pakistani government is taking right steps for prevention of coronavirus, the PMA office-bearer said.

The Sindh government has performed very well regarding the steps taken to stop spread of coronavirus. It already closed the educational institution till May 31, 2020. It is establishing quarantine and isolation facilities in Interior Sindh in every district.

“PMA believes that life is important than all kind of celebrations or other gatherings. Your safety is important than anything else; you can arrange and attend gatherings in future.

The people who have booked marriage halls should get their money back,” he said.

The PMA requested all the societies of different medical specialties to postpone their meetings, seminars and conferences.

“We suggest government to strengthen the screening process at all the airports and other entry points of the country. The quarantine facility established at Taftan should be expanded and other required facilities should also be improved,” Dr SM Qaisar Sajjad said.

The government should increase the isolation facilities. “The number of ventilators should be increased as we already have shortage of ventilators,” he said.

It has been observed that some labs are privately doing coronavirus test. It is a sensitive test so the labs should get NOC from the government for conducting the test. Government should ban the test without NOC, he stated.

Any person suffering from cold or flu should not himself go for test instead visit qualified doctor and act upon his/her advice. He asked the people to not pay attention to the confusing advice on the social media; only follow the government's advice through the national press and the media. People are requested to play their due role in stopping spreading of the virus and this can be done by adopting preventive measure only, he added.

He appeal to all Pakistani to follow the following preventive measure to prevent spread of coronavirus: "Do not shake hand and hug nowadays; avoid crowds, large gatherings and get-together; People should wash their hands with soap properly after regular intervals; Try to avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth; Mask is not required for everyone; The persons having flu-like symptoms should stay at home and should wear mask to protect others; use tissue papers to clean your nose and dispose it of properly. You can also use your arm rather than hands for covering your cough and sneeze; avoid sneezing and coughing openly; do not share your paraphernalia like glass, plate, cup, towel, mobile, pen etc with others; healthy person should keep himself three feet (1meter) away from the person coughing or sneezing; People should not themselves insist for coronavirus test; get your advice and treatment only from qualified doctors if you feel respiratory distress; do not get into panic; antibiotic should not be used in any viral disease; and do not involve in self-medication practice."

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/629294-pma-praises-govt-steps-against-virus-calls-for-more-ventilators>

## پی ایم اے کا حکومت کی جانب سے اجتماعات پر پابندی لگانے کا خیر مقدم

کراچی (اسٹاف رپورٹر) پاکستان میڈیکل ایسوسی ایشن نے وفاقی حکومت کی جانب سے ملک بھر میں ہر قسم کے اجتماعات پر پابندی لگانے کے فیصلے کا خیر مقدم کیا ہے۔ پی ایم اے کے اعلامیے کے مطابق اسی فیصلے کی روشنی میں پی ایس ایل کے میچ اسٹیڈیم میں تماشائیوں کے بغیر کھیلے جائیں گے۔ ہم تعلیمی ادارے، سینما گھر اور شادی ہالوں کو بند کرنے کے فیصلے کو سراہتے ہیں کیونکہ کرونا وائرس کے خلاف بہترین حکمت عملی یہی ہے کہ احتیاطی تدابیر کے ذریعے اس کے پھیلاؤ کو روکا جائے۔