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PRESS RELEASE

Pakistan Medical Association is very much concerned about the worsening smog situation in Punjab and KPK particularly in Lahore. The city ranks among the worst cities in the world for air pollution. A mixture of low-grade diesel fumes, smoke from seasonal crop burn-off, and colder winter temperatures combine into stagnant clouds.

Lahore had an air quality level of 348 on Wednesday, well above the hazardous level of 300, according to the Swiss technology company that operates the Air Visual monitoring platform. Lahore is not the only city of Pakistan having higher level of air pollution but Karachi and other big cities have almost the same situation.

Lahore and Karachi have been ranked third and fourth respectively on a list of the world's most polluted cities. This shows the poor environmental condition of our country which is deteriorating day by day. **This report is very alarming** and has raised serious questions over the performance of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Environmental Protection Department (EPD), which seemed to fail in implementing the standard operating procedures to counter Air Pollution. The emission of carbon from vehicles, factories, generators and burning of garbage is polluting our environment and making our cities unlivable.

In Pakistan, one in 10 deaths in children under the age of five is caused by air pollution. Due to the air pollution Ear, Nose, Throat and Respiratory Chest diseases are increasing geometrically including Nasal Allergy, Sour Throat, Sinusitis, Rhinopharyngitis, Laryngeal Cancer, Nasal Obstruction, Bronchitis and Lungs Cancer.

PMA strongly believes that government should control all the causes of air pollution in the country and immediately put ban on:

- Burning of any type of crop residue
- Vehicles emitting visible smoke.
- Industries working without emission control systems.
- All stone crushers operating without wet scrubbers.
- Burning of garbage and all types of solid waste, tyres, rubber, and plastics.
- Sale and use of all types of sub-standard fuels.
- Uncovered and open dumping/storage of construction material on sight and road sides.

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