

[Clean drinking water not available to majority of people in Pakistan, says PMA report](#)

[Faiza Ilyas](#) 01 Jan 2021

KARACHI: It is neither terrorism nor natural disasters but the unavailability of safe drinking water which leads to the highest number of deaths in Pakistan. The discharge of untreated industrial waste, poor sewerage system, agriculture run-off and unplanned urbanisation have downgraded water quality in Pakistan, depriving almost two-thirds of over 200 million Pakistanis of potable water, says a Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) report released on Thursday.

The report sheds light on the health challenges the country faced in the year 2020 and highlights flaws in the government strategy.

It begins with the Covid-19 pandemic, its impact on the whole world and how people in Pakistan responded to it.

“Unfortunately, despite our regular warnings regarding coronavirus nobody acted upon our advice. Even the public has never followed the preventive measures seriously and the government also seems to be failing in implementing SOPs.

“Now the second wave is proving to be more lethal and deadlier as the virus has mutated itself and has become more transmissible and more infectious. It has been observed that people are not getting fully recovered even after being declared negative,” it says.

Safe water remains a dream

One of the most pressing and fundamental health challenges the country faces, the report states, is the non-availability of clean, safe drinking water.

‘Hepatitis B and C are several times more lethal viral diseases than the coronavirus infection and resulting in around 300 to 325 deaths daily’

“It is estimated that, in Pakistan, 30 per cent of all diseases and 40 per cent of all deaths are due to poor water quality. Diarrhoea, a waterborne disease, is reported as the leading cause of death in infants and children in Pakistan while every fifth citizen suffers from illness and disease caused by the polluted water,” the report says.

On the country’s failure to address the issue of poor water quality, it cites the outbreak of XDR-typhoid, which affected people, particularly children, in thousands in Sindh.

“It is a serious water-borne infection caused by the bacterium Salmonella Typhi that spreads through contaminated food and water. The germ has developed resistance to common treatment mainly due to the extensive, unnecessary use of antibiotics.”

The association regrets that polio remains endemic to Pakistan despite over 100 rounds of vaccination carried out in the past decade. “Our anti-polio programme has deteriorated; in 2018 polio programme seemed to be on the brink of eradicating wild poliovirus transmission but unfortunately during the year 2019 as many as 117 cases were reported and in 2020 the tally of polio cases reached 83.

“This shows that we have not improved much. This is very unfortunate that the International Monitoring Board (IMB) observed that there is a lack of political unity behind polio resurgence in the country.”

About government performance vis-à-vis hepatitis, it says an estimated 15 million people are infected with hepatitis B and C while thousands of new patients are being added every year due to lack of prevention, testing and treatment resources as well as poorly screened blood transfusions, improperly sterilised invasive medical devices and unsafe injections.

“Hepatitis B and C are several times more lethal viral diseases than the coronavirus infection and resulting in around 300 to 325 deaths daily in Pakistan, while Covid-19 is causing far fewer casualties than viral hepatitis. PMA believes the main reason for the rising number of hepatitis C cases in Pakistan is the presence of a large number of quacks.”

The association also raises alarm over the growing number of HIV/AIDS patients in the country, which currently stands at 183,000.

“The ratio of spread of HIV/AIDS cases in Pakistan is 57 per cent, similar to the Philippines, which is very alarming. Out of the big number of estimated positive cases, only 25,000 cases are registered. This shows our poor performance. There is a dire need to increase testing capacity to check HIV/AIDS patients.

“The HIV and hepatitis B and hepatitis C are mostly spread through reuse of injection syringes, unsafe blood transfusion and mishandling of hospital waste.”

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<https://www.dawn.com/news/1598924/clean-drinking-water-not-available-to-majority-of-people-in-pakistan-says-pma-report>



[Covid vaccine administration cells planned across country](#)

[Ikram Junaidi](#) Updated 01 Jan 2021

ISLAMABAD: While the federal government on Thursday decided to establish Covid-19 vaccine administration cells across the country, pharmaceutical companies suggested that licences should be issued for local manufacturing of the vaccine as it may take years to import jabs for the entire population of Pakistan.

Meanwhile, 2,475 new Covid-19 cases and eight deaths were reported in a single day as the total number of active cases reached 34,537 in the country.

According to a statement issued by the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC), a special session on vaccine availability and efficient administration was held on Thursday to mull over national vaccine strategy.

The meeting was attended by Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Health Dr Faisal Sultan, federal Minister for Economic Affairs Division Khusro Bakhtiyar, SAPM on Poverty Alleviation Dr Sania Nishtar, Chairman of National Disaster Management Authority Lt Gen Akhtar Nawaz Satti, Surgeon General of Pakistan Army Lt Gen Nigar Johar and Director General Military Operations (DGMO) Maj Gen Nauman Zakria. Adviser to the PM on Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood joined the session via video link.

National Coordinator of NCOC Gen Hamooduz Zaman Khan updated the forum on the national vaccine strategy.

NCOC Director General Maj Gen Asif Goraya said efforts would be made to facilitate the provinces for smooth vaccine administration.

The meeting was told that as per the strategy front line healthcare workers (FLHW) would be vaccinated in the first stage of inoculation process of Covid-19 followed by people above 65 years of age due to their higher vulnerability to the virus.

During the second stage of the immunisation process, all healthcare workers and people between 60 and 64 years of age would be administered the vaccine.

The forum was told that it was expected that at the end of first quarter of next year all FLHCWs would be vaccinated.

It was told that vaccine administration cells would be set up at all district and tehsil headquarters hospitals and regional health centers to ensure grass roots level approach of the vaccination process.

On the other hand, Executive Director of Pharma Bureau Ayesha Tammy Haq told *Dawn* that so far only four pharmaceutical companies had announced that their vaccines were effective.

“Pakistan is not a country having a population of 10 million people. So we need to go for the licences to start manufacturing of vaccine because otherwise it may take years to get the vaccine due to its unavailability and high demand. Pakistan is quite capable and skilled to manufacture vaccine within the country. We will just have to get the licence from a multinational pharmaceutical company to start manufacturing under its formula,” she said.

Ms Haq said India was going to produce 300m doses of vaccine and claimed that Pakistan could also do the same.

“I don’t think that vaccine will be easily available in international market. Pakistan should have booked vaccine long ago like other countries. Now we may get Chinese vaccine only and it may take a few years to get vaccine from other countries so we should go for licencing to start manufacturing,” she suggested.

Chairman of Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association Tauqeer Ul Haq said Chinese and Russian vaccines might become available by March.

“The private sector should be allowed to import vaccine as it will reduce the burden on the government. The government would be providing free of cost vaccine but the private sector will sell it,” he said.

Mr Tauqeer said the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan should grant approval on fast track as top 15 companies of Pakistan were capable of importing, storing and distributing the vaccine.

154 doctors die of virus

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Medical Association (PMA), in a statement, said increasing burden of Covid-19 on the medical community during the second wave of the pandemic was proving to be more fatal for doctors. “Till now 154 doctors have lost their lives due to Covid-19 in Pakistan. During the second wave which started from November, 45 doctors have lost their lives (16 in Punjab, 14 in Sindh, 13 in Khyber Paktunkhwa and two in Azad Jammu and Kashmir).

PMA Secretary General Dr Qaisar Sajjad said the government seemed to be very careless about the welfare of the families of the deceased doctors. It has announced Shuhada Package for these families but has not implemented it.

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[Our Correspondent](#)

January 1, 2021

2020 an unfortunate year: PMA

LAHORE: Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) considers 2020 as an unfortunate year not only for Pakistan but for the whole world due to pandemic of COVID-19. Pakistan went through so many political and economic problems along with increasing number of health issues which have raised the burden of diseases more.

“PMA has always offered recommendations and places a charter of demands for the government to implement to improve the healthcare system in Pakistan,” said Dr. S.M. Qaisar Sajjad, Secretary General Pakistan Medical Association (Centre), in a statement on Thursday. Since the end of 2019 Pakistan and the whole world has been facing the COVID–19 pandemic.

The pandemic reached Pakistan in February 2020 and the first case of COVID-19 was detected on 26th February 2020. Overall, 83,178,070 human beings have so far been affected worldwide and the death toll of COVID-19 has reached to 1,814,649 which is increasing day by day.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/767419-2020-an-unfortunate-year-pma>

[Our Correspondent](#)

January 1, 2021

PMA terms 2020 an unfortunate year

LAHORE: Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) considers 2020 as an unfortunate year not only for Pakistan but for the whole world due to pandemic of COVID-19.

Pakistan went through so many political and economic problems along with increasing number of health issues which have raised the burden of diseases more. “PMA has always offered recommendations and places a charter of demands for the government to implement to improve the healthcare system in Pakistan,” said Dr. S.M. Qaisar Sajjad, Secretary General Pakistan Medical Association (Centre), in a statement on Thursday. Since the end of 2019 Pakistan and the whole world has been facing the COVID–19 pandemic. The pandemic reached Pakistan in February 2020 and the first case of

COVID-19 was detected on 26th February 2020. Overall, 83,178,070 human beings have so far been affected worldwide and the death toll of COVID-19 has reached to 1,814,649 which is increasing day by day.

Now along with many other countries of the world Pakistan has been facing the second wave of COVID–19. Presently the Coronavirus has mutated into the 3rd variety which was initially detected in South Africa and has reached fifteen counties of the world so far. The 3rd Variety is 60% more contagious and 70% more transmissible. Now till today the tally of the total confirmed cases in Pakistan has reached to 479,715 and the death toll is 10,105.

PMA was the first to sniff out the difficulties Pakistan is going to face due to the spread of pandemic in coming days. PMA through a press release on 22-01-2020 asked the government to take up some urgent steps to avoid spread of coronavirus in Pakistan.

PMA also suggested installing scanners at all air ports, sea ports and at all border entries to check the suspected cases of coronavirus besides issuing preventive measures for public.

The increasing burden of disease of the second wave in the community is proving to be more fatal for doctors. Till now 154 doctors have lost their lives due to COVID–19 in Pakistan. During the second wave which started from Nov, 45 doctors have lost their lives (Punjab-16, Sindh-14, KPK-13, AJK-02). The situation is very alarming.

PMA demanded of the government to take effective measures including the deliverance of Shuhda Package for the welfare of families of the deceased doctors.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/767443-pma-terms-2020-an-unfortunate-year>

January 01, 2021

PMA unhappy over poor state of affairs of country's health delivery system

KARACHI: Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) said in a report on Thursday that considers 2020 as unfortunate year not only for Pakistan but also for the whole world due to pandemic of Covid-19. Pakistan went through so many political and economic problems along with increasing number of health issues which have raised the burden of diseases more.

Although, PMA has always offered recommendations and places a charter of demands for the government to implement to improve the healthcare system in Pakistan. Unfortunately state of affairs shows that, the voice of PMA always falls on deaf ears. Nothing has been changed in health sector during the year 2020. Instead of any improvement things have gone from bad to worse.

Since the end of 2019 Pakistan and the whole world has been facing the pandemic, COVID - 19. A novel coronavirus outbreak was first observed in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in December 2019. The pandemic reached Pakistan in February 2020 and the first case of Covid-19 was detected on 26th February 2020.

Now along with many other countries of the world we have been facing the second wave of Covid-19. Presently the Coronavirus has mutated into the 3rd Va-



riety which was initially detected in South Africa and has reached fifteen countries of the world. The 3rd Variety is 60% more contagious and 70% more transmissible. Now till today the tally of the total confirmed cases in Pakistan has reached to 479,715 and the death toll is 10,105.

PMA was the first to sniff out the difficulties Pakistan is going to face due to the spread of pandemic in coming days. From the very first day when Coronavirus erupted in China and the number of death toll then just rose to six, PMA through a press release on 22-01-2020 came out with the suggestion for the government to take up some urgent steps to avoid spread of coronavirus in Pakistan. We also suggested installing scanners at all air ports, sea ports and at all border entries to check the suspected cases of Coronavirus.

The PMA also issued preventive measures for public. Unfortunately when we asked people to use mask and

sanitizer the prices of these items were increased and similarly when few medicines, oxygen cylinders and other medical devices were discussed in media for treatment their prices also reached many times higher. Then there was no proper guideline for public to reach hospitals. Many people died on their way to reach the Corona Designated hospitals. Even doctors died in the same way.

Unfortunately despite our regular warnings regarding Coronavirus nobody acted upon our advice. Even the public has never followed the preventive measures seriously and the government also seems to be failed in implementing SOPs.

Now the 2nd wave is proving to be more lethal and deadlier as the virus has mutated itself and has become more transmissible and more infectious. It has been observed that people are not getting fully recovered even after being declared negative. —RT/Agency

<http://regionaltimes.com/1Jan2021/7.jpg>

کورونا نے پاکستان کو بری طرح متاثر کیا، ڈاکٹر ایس ایم قیصر سجاد

Jan 01, 2021

کراچی (نیوز پورٹر) پاکستان میڈیکل ایسوسی ایشن کے سیکریٹری جنرل ڈاکٹر ایس ایم قیصر سجاد نے کہا ہے کہ کرونا وائرس جیسی خطرناک وباء کی وجہ سے 2020 کا سال نہ صرف پاکستان بلکہ پوری دنیا کیلئے بد قسمت ثابت ہوا۔ سیاسی اور معاشی مسائل کے ساتھ ساتھ پاکستان کو بڑھتے ہوئے صحت کے مسائل کا سامنا رہا جن کی بدولت پاکستان میں بیماریوں کا بوجھ پہلے سے زیادہ بڑھ گیا۔ پی ایم اے، گزشتہ کئی سالوں سے صحت کے مسائل کو اجاگر کرتی رہی ہے۔ پی ایم اے نے ہمیشہ اپنی تجاویز اور مطالبات حکومت کے سامنے منظوری کے لئے پیش کیے۔ لیکن بد قسمتی سے ہماری آواز سے کسی بھی حکومت کے کانوں پر جوں تک نہیں رہتی۔ اسی لئے 2020 میں صحت کے شعبے میں کوئی تبدیلی رونما نہیں ہوئی بلکہ بہتری کے بجائے صحت کی صورتحال ابتری کا شکار ہوئی ہے۔ پی ایم اے نے سال 2020ء کے دوران صحت کے حوالے سے جائزہ پیش کرتے ہوئے کہا کہ پاکستان میں آج تک کرونا وائرس سے متاثرہ افراد کی تعداد 479715 تک جا پہنچی ہے اور اس سے مرنے والوں کی تعداد 10105 ہے۔ اس وقت دنیا بھر کے ساتھ ساتھ پاکستان کو بھی کرونا وائرس کی دوسری لہر کا سامنا ہے بلکہ اس وقت کرونا وائرس اپنی شکل تبدیل کر کے تیسری قسم کی صورت میں سامنے آچکا ہے۔ کرونا وائرس کے پھیلاؤ کو پاکستان میں روکنے کیلئے حکومت کو چند تجاویز دیں ہم نے مشورہ دیا تھا کہ حکومت ملک کے تمام داخلی راستوں، ہوائی اڈوں اور بندرگاہوں پر اسکینر نصب کیے جائیں تاکہ کرونا میں مبتلا مریضوں پر چیک رکھا جائے۔ ہم نے عوام کیلئے احتیاطی تدابیر بھی جاری کیں ہم نے جب عوام سے ماسک اور سینیٹائزر استعمال کرنے کا کہا تو ان کی قیمتیں بڑھادی گئی اور اسی طرح جب بیماری کیلئے مختلف ادویات آکسیجن سلینڈر اور دوسرے طبی آلات کی بات کی گئی تو وہ بھی کئی گنا مہنگی ہو گئیں۔ اب دوسری لہر پہلے سے بھی زیادہ مہلک اور خطرناک ثابت ہو رہی ہے کیونکہ وائرس اپنی شکل تبدیل کرنے کے بعد پھیلنے کی زیادہ استطاعت رکھتا ہے۔

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/karachi/2021-01-01/page-2/detail-17>