

# PAKISTAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION



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**Hon. President Elect**  
Dr. Hameedullah Khan

**Hon. Immediate Past President**  
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**Hon. Joint Secretaries**  
Dr. Amir Saleem

Dr. Akbar Ali Soomro

**Hon. Chairman E.B. JPMA**  
Dr. Sarwar Jamil Siddiqui

**Hon. Editor The Medical Gazette**  
Dr. Muhammad Nasir Sulaiman

December 28, 2020

## PRESS CONFERENCE

I welcome all of you, I am also thankful to you for your presence here to cover this important Press Conference.

As all of you know that Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) being a big stakeholder is always vocal on health related issues and has always given recommendations to present and previous governments to improve the health delivery system and medical education. In Pakistan we have lot of problems in health sector but today we will highlight the current most important issue i-e how dangerous is the second wave of Covid-19 and more than that is the third variety of Covid-19 which was initially detected in South Africa and has reached fifteen counties of the world. The second issue we are going to talk about is the poor performance of Pakistan Medical Commission (PMC) but before coming to these issues I would like to introduce you the newly elected office bearers of PMA Centre.

Pakistan Medical Association had its Biennial Central Council Meeting and Biennial General Assembly Meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at PMA House Karachi. It was both physically and virtually attended by good number of delegates across the country. The constitutional Agenda was followed in these meetings. Different reports based on two years activities of the association were presented by Secretary General PMA Dr. S M Qaisar Sajjad and were unanimously adopted by the Central Council Meeting. The scrutiny process of nomination papers for elections of the National Office Bearers of Central PMA, for the term 2020–2022, was done at the Central Council then in General Body Meeting following Office Bearers were elected unopposed and declared Successful.

1. President	Dr. Salma Aslam Kundi (from KPK)
2. Hon. President-Elect	Dr. Hameed Ullah Khan (from Balochistan)
3. Hon. Secretary General	Dr. S.M.Qaisar Sajjad (from Sindh)
4. Hon. Treasurer	Dr. Qazi M. Wasiq (from Sindh)
5. Hon. Joint Secretary-I	Dr. Amir Saleem (from Punjab)
6. Hon. Joint Secretary-II	Dr. Akbar Ali Soomro (from Sindh)
7. Hon. Chairman	Dr. Sarwar Jamil Siddiqui (from, Sindh)
	Editorial Board –JPMA

## **Threats of 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave and the 3<sup>rd</sup> strain of Covid-19:**

Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) is very much concerned over the rapid increase of Covid-19 patients throughout the country during this second wave of pandemic. Unfortunately public has never followed the SOPs and the government has also been failed in implementing SOPs. PMA has been continuously issuing Health Alerts and suggestions for government and preventive measures for public since 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2020. At that time the number of deaths in China was just 06 and corona positive patients were 3000, the pandemic was then in initial stages.

Page:1of3



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Unfortunately nobody acted upon our advice. Now the virus has become lethal and third variety of Covid-19 is also proving very dangerous. Now the third variety is spreading rapidly from South Africa to UK and has reached almost 15 countries of the world. It is more fatal because it is also affecting the age group of below fifteen.

So far total number of infected cases has reached to 140,316 in second wave during last seven weeks and number of deaths has reached to 2863. Overall integrated tally of positive cases of both waves has reached to 473,309 and number of deaths has reached to 9929. Mortality and number of cases are increasing day by day.

This 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. This wave is expected to last longer as low temperature favors transmission. It is expected that large number of people might be infected during winter because people prefer to stay together in one room. They close windows due to which they lack ventilation and chances of infection increases and those who are already suffering from nose, throat, bronchus, lungs diseases, high-blood pressure, Diabetes mellitus and cancer are more at risk.

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 this second wave which started from November, 45 doctors have lost their lives (Punjab-16, Sindh-14, KPK-13, AJK-02). The situation is very alarming. Unfortunately doctors are not getting proper protection. Doctors are also not taking care of themselves and neglecting their own protection. They are facing shortage of PPEs. It is very unfortunate that announcement of Shuhda Package on request of PMA by the government for the families of shaheed doctors has not been implemented yet and the aggrieved families are going through a hard time with lots of economic problems. PMA demands from the government to protect doctors and implement Shuhda package immediately. PMA has observed that public is not following SOPs, so we request government to implement SOPs strictly. We believe that Federal Government should make a uniform policy with the consultation of all political parties and other stakeholders and make legislation for implementation of SOPs. In this crisis, Government and Opposition Parties should leave their political interests and prefer the safety of public from Coronavirus. Government should fine heavily or punish the people not following SOPs to keep deterrence as it happens in other countries of the world.



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## Concerns about Pakistan Medical Commission (PMC):

PMA has been demanding for the last many years to strengthen PMDC as a democratic, autonomous, independent and transparent body to regulate medical education in the country but unfortunately in contrast to our demand government passed PMC and Medical Tribunal Act, in haste, through joint session of the parliament on 16 September 2020. Even before passing these acts PMA had suggested the government to take all stakeholders on board and after proper discussion and consent of all the legislation should have taken place.

Now PMC seems to be at a mess and under bad governance. Instead of improving, the situation is continuously deteriorating and doctors and medical students are facing huge problems. Both the medical education and health delivery system is worsening.

After wasting precious time of six months of students PMC conducted MDCAT Exam on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2020, in a much unorganized way. It was full of flaws. In many cases names against roll numbers were written wrongly and many students who appeared in the exam were shown absent. Students and parents are protesting against this exam. The syllabus of the test was changed and instead of the previous syllabus the test was taken from the Federal Syllabus which created difficulties for the students of all provinces. Due to the faults MDCAT result was once removed from the website. It was uploaded again but unfortunately instead of improvement it had many more mistakes. This all shows immaturity and inexperience at PMC.

This is very disappointing that provincial governments are showing their reservations over the results of MDCAT Test. Due to this mess at PMC the Sindh Government has planned to form its own Sindh Medical Commission; hence Punjab will also form Punjab Medical Commission. If this happens it will be a big disaster for medical education in the country.

PMA believes that there should be one regulatory body in the country to regulate medical education and that should be PMDC. If there are some faults with PMDC that should be removed. We demand from the government to consult provincial governments and all other stakeholders to restore PMDC. If the government's attitude does not change then it will be a disaster and provinces will have their own bodies.

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|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Dr. S.M.Qaisar Sajjad,   | Secretary General PMA Centre  |
| 2. Dr. Qazi M. Wasiq,       | Treasurer PMA Centre          |
| 3. Dr. Mirza Ali Azhar,     | President PMA Sindh           |
| 4. Dr. Abdul Ghafoor Shoro, | General Secretary PMA Karachi |

