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CORONAVIRUS IN PAKISTAN

CONFIRMED CASES
3,09,581

REPORTED DEATH
6,451

SINDH	PUNJAB
135,488	98,941
ISLAMABAD	BALOCHISTAN
16,367	14,932
KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA	GB/AJK
37,588	3,635 / 2,630

RECOVERED CASES
295,333

*Stats as of 26 September, 2020 - 08:39am, Provided by
Ministry of National Health Services Regulations &
Coordination, Government of Pakistan

PMC BACK IN ACTION!

PMDC employees stopped from working, building sealed

MN Report
ISLAMABAD - A team of the Ministry of National Health Services (NHS) recently sealed the building of the Pakistan Medical Commission (PMC), formerly known as Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC), stopped employees from working and took the record in its custody. According to a letter of the NHS Ministry, in consequence of approval of the PMC bill in a joint session of parliament, the competent authority (NHS secretary) is pleased to issue a "cease and desist order" for PMDC with immediate effect. Earlier, the PMC bill, was passed at a joint session of the



parliament last week, has been signed by President Alvi into law. It was accepted on the promise of granting institutions increased autonomy to make decisions without the limitations imposed by the PMDC. However, many see this not only as a threat to the quality of students produced but also claim that without an

oversight body that standardised fee structure, going to medical school becomes unattainable by many. Later the Islamabad High Court declared the presidential ordinance null and void, but the government challenged the verdict in the Supreme Court. On April 17 the Supreme Court ordered reconstitution of the PMDC. The Council decided to bring back the former registrar, retired Brigadier Hafizuddin Siddiqui, and he started efforts to clear the backlog soon after he took over as registrar. The government tabled the PMC bill in a joint session of parliament and passed it.

Educational institutes closed as more than 750 COVID-19 cases reported

MN Report
ISLAMABAD - As the country recorded more than 750 COVID-19 positive cases after a gap of one month, the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) recently said that 13 educational institutions were closed down during the last 24 hours for flouting health guidelines and standards operating procedures (SOPs).



"In last 24 hours, 13 educational institutions have been closed across Pakistan due to non-compliance of health guidelines and protocols and disease prevalence. Ten educational institutions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and three in Sindh have been closed," said a brief statement issued by the NCOC. After a gap of six months, the educational institutions were reopened on Sept 15 in phases, with the opening of universities, colleges and high schools (9th and 10th classes) in the first phase. after a decision taken by the federal and provincial education ministers. They had decided that from Sept 23, classes from six to eight will be allowed to resume, but the decision faced a setback on Recently when Sindh Education Minister Saeed Ghani announced that resumption of school classes in the second phase would be delayed by a week in the province after schools were found flouting the health guidelines and SOPs.

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PAMI on board with PMC, fully supports NLE

MN Report
KARACHI - General Secretary Pakistan Association of Private Medical and Dental Institutions (PAMI) Dr Riaz Janjua told that the recent promulgation of Pakistan Medical Commission (PMC) has been a better change for the medical and dental community, alleviating the standards of education. In an exclusive talk with Medical News, Dr Riaz Janjua said, "PAMI has always been a supporter of raising the standards of medical and dental education. Though we are still analysing, overall PAMI is glad that private institutes have been given representation in the regulatory body." Dr Riaz said that the doctors were suffering badly due to issues in getting licence and registration. He said, "Everyone

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Medical body upsets over motorway incident in Lahore

MN Report

KARACHI - The Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) is in rage and despair over the atrocity that took place at the motorway in Lahore's outskirts.



Secretary-General, Pakistan Medical Association (Centre), Dr S M Qaisar Sajjad, in his statement, said that the incident shocked the whole society; the woman was molested in front of her children. People are furious and questioning the performance of the state institutions responsible for protecting the citizens of Pakistan. He said that the irresponsible comments of the CCPO Lahore have fueled the situation and caused outrage for blaming the victim. This statement reflects the police's attitude towards the victims of sexual violence, who are accused and often treated as criminals. The PMA believes that it is the police's responsibility to provide security to the people during all hours of the day. They cannot refuse to provide security at night.

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NICVD fails to reopen OPDs completely

MN Report

KARACHI - The routine out-patient departments of the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) Karachi have remained closed despite the opening of the OPDs of other hospitals across the Sindh province.



The closure of the cardio OPDs is posing a major threat to the life of heart patients. Cardiac patients in Karachi are facing hardships as they are unable to get their routine checkups done from the NICVD for the past five months.

Presently, only 180 OPD tokens are being given to cardiac patients each day for routine checkups, while the majority of such patients are unable to get their routine checkups. Although emergency services are operational in this major cardiac institute, the routine OPDs have been closed since March 20 to stop the assembly of people so as to contain the spread of the coronavirus.

The suspension of OPD services is creating a grave inconvenience for patients living with

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Seminar discusses findings from Pakistan's first-ever study into brain tumors

MN Report

KARACHI - Brain tumors have one of the lowest survival rates of all types of cancer in Pakistan, yet there is little research into the prevalence of the disease, the success of different treatment options, and ways to improve patient outcomes, said speakers at the inaugural symposium of the Pakistan Society of Neuro-oncology, PASNO, at the Aga Khan University. Members of PASNO - a multidisciplinary platform spanning researchers, surgeons, oncologists, allied health professionals, and basic scientists in the field of neuro-oncology - discussed preliminary findings of a nationwide study that will gather data from close to 50 collaborating centers and will eventually include the treatment history of up to 10,000 patients.

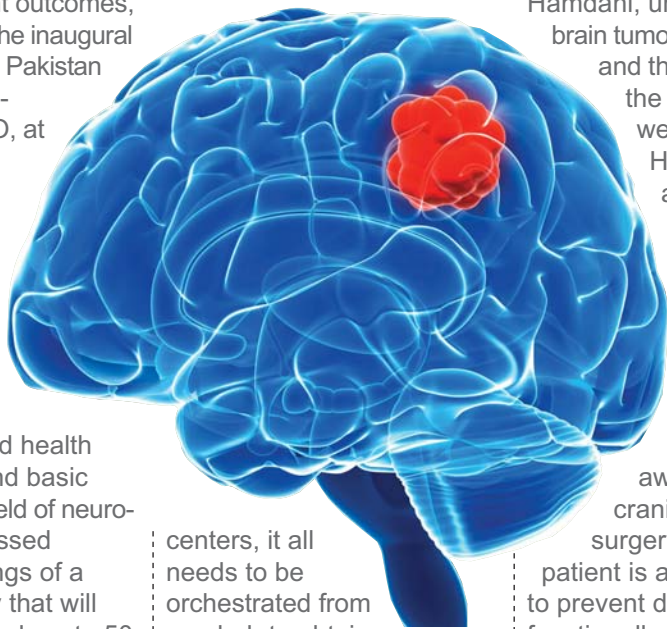
Preliminary findings from the study suggest that Pakistan does not have as many high-grade tumors as the developed world. However, patients of brain cancer tend to be of a younger age than in the West.

"Neuro-oncology has been largely ignored as a specialty in Pakistan," said Prof Syed Ather Enam, a neurosurgeon who chairs the department of surgery at the AKU and is the founding president of PASNO.

"As a result, not only do our patients continue to receive delayed or suboptimal care, but the skills of our teams remain deficient. Although the data being collected is only a fraction of what will be achieved in the next several months, besides several interesting demographic features, it is becoming obvious that a large number of brain tumor patients are receiving fragmented care in Pakistan. This study will help us understand the true burden of brain cancer in

Pakistan," said Professor Enam.

Prof Enam stressed that a large number of brain tumor patients require a combination of surgery, radiotherapy, and chemotherapy. While these different treatment modalities can be carried out at different



centers, it all needs to be orchestrated from one hub to obtain the best results, he added. PASNO is the first venture of its kind in Pakistan. It aims to bring all specialists involved in the management of neuro-oncology to a common platform to improve not just the care of patients, but also improve education, training, and research in the field.

Such societies are now common in developed countries where they have been shown to improve the overall care of patients. New developments in the field were also discussed at the meeting, including precision medicine, molecular diagnosis, state of the art operative techniques and technologies, and the potential of artificial intelligence to improve the diagnosis of brain tumors. At present, neuro-oncologists have to conduct a series of tests and processes in addition to interpreting MRIs, or scans of the brain, to decide on whether to operate on a patient.

Artificial intelligence could uncover hidden information in MRI scans, which are often missed by professionals, and help determine which patients

really need surgery, speakers added.

Participants in the inaugural session of the seminar had the unique opportunity of hearing the perspective of brain tumor patients and caregivers.

One such patient, Yasser Latif Hamdani, underwent awake brain tumor surgery in 2017 and then in 2020. After the first surgery, he went on to study at Harvard University and to publish a biography on Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Mr Hamdani's wife, Ms Aisha Sarwari, described how he had faced two

awake craniotomies, a surgery in which the patient is awake and alert to prevent damage to functionally important parts of the brain, and how he is dealing with the disease now. A caregiver, Ms Komal Syed, shared how she lost her husband, Taha Rafi, to a malignant brain tumor a few years ago. She highlighted the problems the family and caregivers of patients with a brain tumor have to deal with. Speakers noted that platforms like PASNO are coming up in other parts of the world and play a key role in bringing together experts from various cancer specialties to ensure the patient receives comprehensive and optimum care. During the inaugural ceremony, PASNO received endorsements from many neuro-oncology societies across the world, including the Society of Neuro-oncology from North America, the European Association of Neuro-oncology, the Asian Society of Neuro-oncology, the World Federation of Neuro-oncology, and the International Stereotactic Radiosurgery Society. Over 50 speakers from 13 countries participated in the three-day virtual symposium.

‘Appropriate mitigation measures for COVID-19 should be ensured in schools’

MN Report

KARACHI - Infectious diseases experts recently noted that the coronavirus posed a low risk to school-aged children; therefore, the Sindh government can open educational institutions by adopting preventive measures all over the province. These views were shared by President, Medical Microbiology & Infectious Diseases Society of Pakistan (MMIDSP), Prof Dr Bushra Jamil while addressing a press conference held at the Karachi Press Club. Dr Summiya Nizamuddin, Dr Azizullah Khan Dhillon, and others were also present on occasion. Prof Bushra Jamil said that, like other countries of the world, Pakistan is gradually moving towards restoring the normalcy of pre-COVID times. At this juncture, it is important that decisions, especially those pertaining to our children's health and safety, are based on observations and scientific data that is being compiled and reported from all over the world and not on



unfounded fear. She explained that studies specifically looking at children and adolescents younger than 18 years of age suggest that COVID-19 transmission among children in schools may be low. She said most children, if infected, have milder disease patterns and show less severity because of reduced susceptibility to SARS-CoV2 infection compared to adults. She said that children account for 1 to 7 % of COVID-19 cases, far less need for hospitalization, and have 0.1 percent (0.1% in China,

0.69% in Europe with children between 2-10 years of age at lowest risk) of COVID-19-related deaths. Dr Azizullah Khan said in-person schooling is in the best interest of students for normal development, including physical and mental health. He suggested that appropriate mitigation measures similar to those implemented at other essential workplaces have to be implemented for the safety of the students. He said that the best available evidence from countries that have

opened schools indicates that COVID-19 poses low risks to school-aged children, at least in areas with low community transmission, and suggests that children are unlikely to be major drivers of the spread of the virus. "Ensuring hand hygiene, physical distancing for all, and use of masks in children over 12 years of age (as currently recommended by the WHO) and for all teachers and staff, good ventilation, and early diagnosis of affected staff and students through simple screening measures can help keep our educational institutions open and functional," he added. He said that the engagement of teachers, parents, and health authorities is important in devising innovative ways of ensuring the safety of students, staff, and their families. Local adaptation and reliable implementation of recommended measures and SOPs should be ensured in the coming months. Preventive measures and strategies will have to be reviewed and revised periodically, as new data becomes available.

Court wants SHCC to list steps taken to curb malpractice



MN Report

KARACHI - The Sindh High Court directed the Sindh Health Care Commission (SHCC) to file a fresh report identifying the actions being taken against the healthcare establishments violating the law till Oct 13. The petition was filed last year seeking action against unlicensed and unqualified healthcare establishments in the province. The petitioners had contended that several patients, including nine-month-old girl Nishwa, had died due to alleged medical negligence on the part of private healthcare institutions and these medical practitioners continued

risking many more lives as there was no proper system of check and balance. When the petition came up for hearing before the two-judge bench headed by Justice Mohammad Ali Mazhar, an additional advocate general informed the bench that two progress reports have already been filed by SHCC. The bench directed the lawyer for the petitioners to go through both reports and identify such areas in which further attention was required for the implementation of the law. The acting chief executive officer of SHCC Farhana Memon contended that they were receiving complaints against the healthcare establishments on a daily basis and investigating the same and fines were being imposed. She further maintained that licenses were being issued and action against quacks was also under way. The bench directed the acting CEO to submit a fresh progress report on the next hearing identifying the actions being taken by SHCC against different healthcare establishments violating the law. The petitioners had also contended that despite the lapse of several years the SHCC was not working properly and had the commission's powers been put to use, society would not have experienced such incidents of medical malpractice.

Peak season of malaria and dengue viral fever starts in Karachi

MN Report

KARACHI - The Sindh Health Department and Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) have failed to inaugurate the anti-dengue and malaria fumigation drive in Karachi even though the peak season of malaria and



dengue fever has already started after the recent heavy rains in the city. The anti-dengue and malaria fumigation drive could not start despite the lapse of eight months, putting citizens' lives at stake in Karachi. The dengue larva breeding has rapidly increased due to the poor sanitation condition in the city, but no concrete step has been taken to control the prevalence of dengue, malaria, and other vector-borne diseases. Sources at the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) told that the KMC has been unable to launch the city's anti-dengue fumigation campaign due to a lack of funds. Although the Prevention and Control Program

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The death of lady doctor should be investigated properly: Dr Mirza

MN Report

KARACHI - The Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) Sindh recently expressed concern over the mysterious death of a lady doctor in Karachi and demanded a partial inquiry into the case. These views were shared by President, PMA Sindh, Dr Mirza Ali Azhar, and General Secretary, PMA Karachi, Dr Abdul Ghafoor Shoro, in a press conference held at the PMA House. Dr Jabbar Khattak and Dr Humayun Bashir were also present on occasion.



President, PMA Sindh, Dr Mirza Ali Azhar, said a very tragic incident happened in Karachi, and it shook the whole medical fraternity with anger and insecurity. He informed that Dr Amtullah Sheikh, a very senior and dedicated lady surgeon of the city, was found dead in her apartment in very mysterious circumstances. He said the initial post mortem report reveals marks of torture on her body. Dr Amtullah was a graduate of SMC, batch of 1986. She acquired her training from Pakistan as well as abroad. Dr Mirza said that the PMA Sindh, PMA Karachi, as well as family and friends of the deceased doctor are very concerned about the investigation into this case.

"It is an unfortunate reality that most criminal cases are not properly investigated in our country, and justice is not provided to the victims. Very recently, a case of suicide/murder of Dr Maha was brought into question," he added. He further informed that the body of Dr Maha was exhumed a few days ago to ascertain the

Continued on Page 08

'Indus Hospital caters up to 400 safe deliveries every month'

KARACHI - Indus Hospital's campus is playing a pivotal role in changing the maternal health indicators within the lower income area that it operates in. In a recent meeting, Dr Farah Bari Khan, Head of the Indus Hospital, Shaikh Saeed Memorial Campus, Korangi, said that in order to

for the women.

"Anemia is a major issue being faced by women. It is also a prominent cause of maternal and child mortality across the world. Most of Pakistani women belonging to deprived communities are facing many financial challenges. These women belong to poor households

part of this process," she maintained.

Briefing about the training, Dr Farah said that the establishment of an excellent training institute is also part of the plan. "All staffers in the Maternal and Child Health Centre involved in the expansion of Indus Hospital will be females. Women are



cater to more women in dire need of maternal health services, campus has been expanded to 100 beds and it has also been equipped with a state-of-the-art Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) which has the capacity of handling 20 neonates at one time. Every month, up to 400 safe deliveries are conducted at the hospital and approx 350 women come in for consultation visits every day. "Normal deliveries, and caesarean sections are the highlighted services of our campus whereas treatment of infertility, laparoscopy and different gynae surgeries are also conducted here at the facility," Farah confidently added.

In response to a question regarding the health of mothers and children, Dr Farah said that pregnant women, especially in the deprived communities, do not prefer to go to the hospitals for their properly required checkups. It leaves negative impacts on their and babies' health. Antenatal checkups are most essential

and face a higher risk of being malnourished and underweight," she added.

"The Global Nutrition Index suggests that about 52% mothers of reproductive age in Pakistan are anemic."

Talking about Maternal and Child Health (MCH) services under the umbrella of Indus Hospital, Dr Farah said:

"Through the Public-Private Partnership, we have 5 MCH Centres in Lahore and one in Badin, Sindh."

Talking about the health of mothers and children, their centres, future strategies and the work to be done, Dr Farah Bari Khan said Indus hospital is on its way to liaison the government and the role of Lady Health Workers (LHWs) has utmost importance regarding to improve the health of mothers and children in their home. "The visit of these workers to the homes of the people and providing them services regarding their health is exemplary. In this regard, complete and quality training of LHWs will bring further improvement. So we are fully prepared to be a

also advised to take the technician courses. There is an acute shortage of female technicians in operation theaters."

Dr Farah Bari Khan has served as Administrator Gynae Emergency Department at Civil Hospital, Karachi from 2004 to 2015. Dr Farah performed her duties under Safe Motherhood Project (DOW 77 Badge). Project was working at Civil hospital as a result of Public-Private Partnership. Dr Farah, in her tenure, faced several challenges; however, she tried her best to set aright the relevant departments and matters related to it. It is result of sincere hard work, passion and curiosity of Dr Farah and her team that Female Emergency Department was established, availability of doctors round-the-clock was ensured, provision of free medicines started, cleanliness arrangements improved and professional dispensation of matters was carried out through a concerted strategy. **-PR**

Sindh faces an acute shortage of psychiatrists

MN Report

KARACHI - Chairman, Sindh Mental Health Authority (SMHA), Karim Ahmed Khawaja, has said that there is an acute shortage of

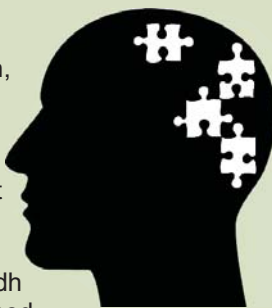
psychiatrists in the Sindh province. The concerned authorities should hire psychiatrists through the Sindh Public Services Commission (SPSC) to fill the vacant posts.

Dr Karim Khawaja informed that only 40 psychiatrists are available in the public and private sector hospitals Sindh while no psychologist is available at any government level health facility.

He explained that there were no psychiatrists available in 20 districts of the province out of 30 districts. He said that people suffering from mental problems are facing hardships in seeking treatment in nearby hospitals due to the shortage of psychiatrists in the province.

He demanded the Sindh government to recruit psychiatrists and psychologists through the Sindh Public Services Commission (SPSC) on

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Week-long anti-polio drive begins

MN Report

KARACHI - The Minister for Health Sindh, Dr Azra Fazal Pechuho, Secretary Health, Dr Kazim Jatui, Coordinator, Emergency Operation Centre for Polio in Sindh (EOC) Sindh, Fayaz Abbasi, and EOC, Core Team Members, inaugurated the polio campaign at the EPI hall in Karachi.



The Health Minister and EOC Members gave polio drops to children and distributed gifts among them.

On occasion, the Minister for Health Sindh said. "The polio campaign will continue from 21st to 27th September all across Sindh and appealed to parents to vaccinate their children with two drops of the polio vaccine during every campaign."

The EOC will conduct a province-wide Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) campaign in Sindh from the 21 to 27 September 2020. The campaign will take place in all 29 districts of Sindh with a total target population of 9,148,355 children under five years of age, out of which more than 2.2 million children reside in Karachi. More than 50,000 polio workers have been deployed in the province for house-to-house vaccination, while 5000 personnel from law enforcement agencies will provide security cover for this important campaign.

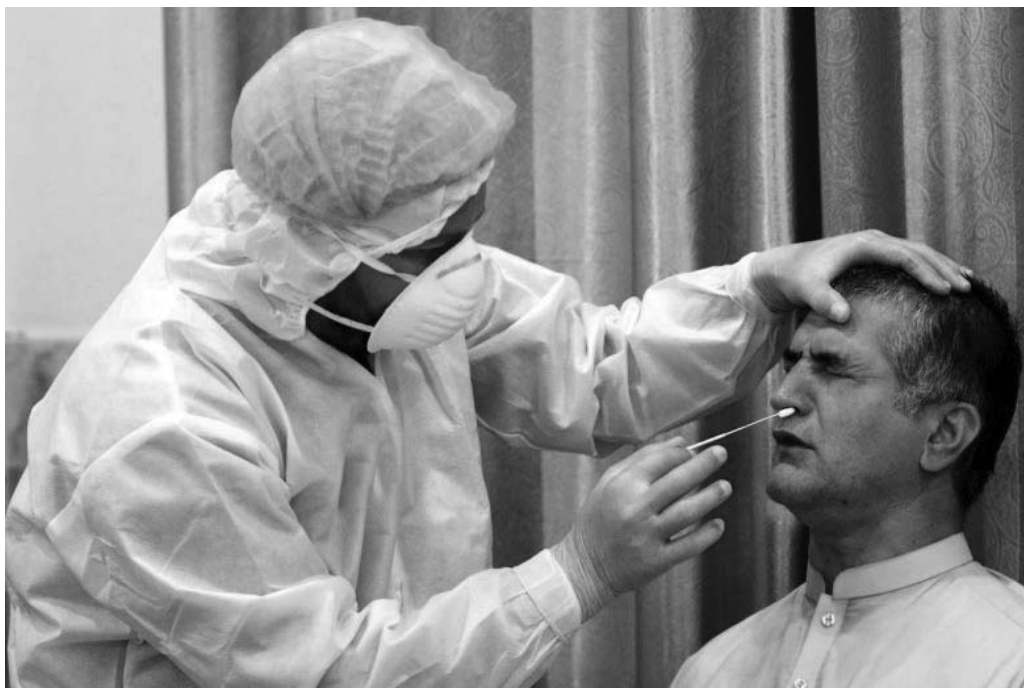
These polio campaigns are of the utmost importance as we must give children the oral polio vaccine to save them from polio and ensure a healthy future for them. Pakistan is one of the two polio-endemic countries in the world along with Afghanistan and has so far reported a total of 72 cases of polio, out of which 22 cases are from Sindh.

It is absolutely necessary that children receive these life-saving vaccines and also complete their routine immunization.

It may be mentioned that Sindh had back to back successful campaigns from December 2019 to March 2020, which had gone a long way to put the polio program on track. However, since the outbreak of COVID-19, no campaigns could be conducted while routine immunization was also severely affected, leaving an immunity gap that must immediately be addressed as children are more susceptible to the virus than before. Since the start of the pandemic in March, this is the second province-wide campaign, with the first one last month in August.

According to the EOC Sindh spokesperson, "While we are dealing with the pandemic, we must also ensure immunization to prevent

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95% of those with COVID-19 report no symptoms: New study

MN Report

KARACHI - More than 9 out of 10 people infected with the coronavirus experience no symptoms of the disease, according to a new study by the Aga Khan University researchers.

Karachi has the most COVID-19 cases in Pakistan, and the study saw AKU's faculty investigate COVID-19's prevalence in parts of the city with high and low rates of transmission in the community in April and June 2020.

They found that 95 percent of those who tested positive for COVID-19 through blood tests, which register the presence of antibodies to fight the disease, reported feeling no symptoms of the illness such as a cough, fever, or sore throat. In other words, they were asymptomatic.

The proportion of asymptomatic cases in Pakistan is much higher than in the developed world. Since asymptomatic people do not seek hospital treatment, this may help explain why Pakistan's hospitals have not been under the same strain as in

Spain and the UK, according to researchers.

Results also indicate that children and adolescents are just as likely to catch the disease as adults. Men and women face the same risk of being infected.

The study also confirmed a sharp rise in COVID-19 cases between April and June this year from 0.2 percent to 8.7 percent in low community transmission areas such as Ibrahim Hyderi, and from 0.4 percent to 15.1 percent in high community transmission sites like Safoora Goth, Faisal Cantonment, Pehlwan Goth and Dalmia/Shanti Nagar.

These results are in line with the federal government's national seroprevalence study, where antibody testing found that overall, 11 percent of Pakistanis had contracted the disease.

"The sharp increase in antibody levels in an area with low reported cases indicates that the virus continues to spread unchecked in populations where testing rates are sub-optimal," said Dr Imran Nisar, an assistant professor at the AKU and co-

investigator on the study.

Over 2,000 participants participated in the first two phases of the study.

Researchers are currently undertaking a third serosurvey and plan to do a fourth in September 2020. These surveys will show the impact of easing lockdowns around Eid-ul-Adha and the impact of the Muharram processions on the coronavirus transmission rate in communities.

"Antibody testing or seroprevalence provides a true picture of the burden of COVID-19 as they capture asymptomatic cases which represent silent carriers of the disease," said Dr Fyezah Jehan, an associate professor at the AKU and co-investigator on the study. "Understanding how, when, and in what types of settings, COVID-19 spreads is critical to developing effective public health and infection prevention measures to break transmission chains." AKU's Dr Nadia Ansari and Dr Mashal Amin, as well as US-based international collaborators Dr Bailey Fosdick and Dr Daniel Barremore, also contributed to the study.

Ziauddin University observes World Physiotherapy Day

MN Report

KARACHI - "The worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 has put some serious implications, especially on the medical side like physical therapy. At the initial stage of the pandemic, physiotherapists were not required at the hospitals, but when patients started coming with the issues of neurological disorders due to COVID-19,

during the critical time of COVID-19. While talking about the challenges faced by physiotherapists during COVID-19, she said, "There were so many challenges like communication, physical interaction, anxiety, technology challenges, and time management during the COVID era. This era was a

to train our physiotherapists with essential skills. While talking about physiotherapy in rehabilitation and COVID-19, Dabeer Ahmed Khan, Special Secretary Health, Representative Government of Sindh in National Command Operation Center (NCOC) on COVID-19 Monitoring, said, "There was limited use of



the role of physical therapy became more and more clear to the healthcare community," said Dr Sumaira Imran Farooqui, Principal, Ziauddin College of Rehabilitation Sciences, Ziauddin University. She expressed her views during the panel discussion of an informative virtual seminar "Road to Recovery: Physiotherapy in Rehabilitation and COVID-19" to mark World Physiotherapy Day and recognize and appreciate the work of the physiotherapists

period of learning for all physiotherapists." In response to a question on growth and progress in the field of physical therapy, she exclaimed that this profession has grown over a short period of time globally, as well as in Pakistan. Clinical services of physical therapy are to open further doors for emergency care and intensive care to involve physiotherapists and open new areas for health care development. International therapists are visiting Pakistan

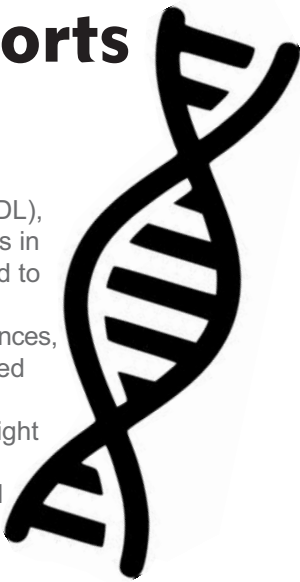
telemedicine before COVID, but since this pandemic arrived, all OPDs were shut down. Since then, telemedicine took off. It was challenging to introduce telemedicine in rural areas because people are not very well aware of recent technologies." In response to a question regarding the COVID-19 situation in Pakistan, he said, "Since the WHO declared the coronavirus to be a global

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SFDL submits DNA reports of Marwa murder case

MN Report

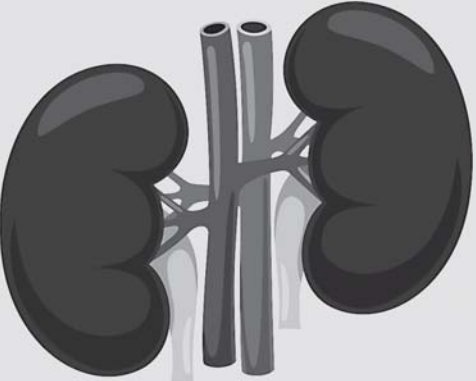
KARACHI - The Sindh Forensic DNA and Serology Laboratory (SFDL), University of Karachi, has denied media reports that the DNA reports in the Marwa sexual assault and murder case have not been submitted to the relevant authorities. Spokesman of the International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences, University of Karachi, stated that the DNA reports had been submitted within a few days due to the case's sensitivity. He clarified that samples in the Marwa case were received on the night of September 6, 2020. The police authorities were informed during the course of the analysis, and a comprehensive report was submitted on September 12, he said, adding that samples have already been returned to concerned authorities on their request as per the SOPs.



Country's ethical transplant law completes journey of a decade

MN Report

KARACHI - 2020 has marked the completion of ten years of promulgation of the country's ethical transplantation law, which was designed to serve as a deterrent in curbing the unlawful and unfair practice of organ trade. The law, which was bipartisan with the cooperation of all parliamentarians, was accented by the then President Asif Ali Zardari in a ceremony held at the



Presidency in Islamabad in 2010. This ceremony was followed by another ceremony held in Karachi, which was attended by the visiting representatives from the International Transplantation Society's Prof Francis Delmonico and Dr Noel of the WHO. While signing the legislation, President Zardari perhaps became the first head of state who supported organ donation and pledged his organs after death by signing his donor card. Tracing the history of illegal organ transplants in the country, it is found that before the law was promulgated, 1500 illegal unrelated donor transplants were taking place every year. Pakistan had gained notoriety as the world's largest "Kidney Bazar," greatly tarnishing its image. Poor kiln workers and farm helpers were the main victims as they were duped into selling their kidneys for a paltry sum of 100000 PKR while the hospitals and unscrupulous doctors made millions from foreigners paying up to 30,000 US dollars. The law significantly reduced illegal unrelated transplantation, particularly for foreigners. Moreover, law enforcement agencies became more vigilant and got involved in prosecuting offending doctors and technical staff who were put behind bars. The process of speedy justice helped in the control of illegal transplant activity. The Transplantation Society of Pakistan and the SIUT both played a pivotal role in highlighting the plight of poor kidney donors involving the media and society at large. Both organizations were also instrumental in providing advice and guidance on the law to legislators. SIUT being the largest transplant centre has performed 6201 renal transplants from family donors free and without hurting the dignity of donor and recipient.

Defending the present from aggressors

by Aiman Salam

Pakistan is a populous and multi-ethnic country that has always fought for its beliefs and rights. Though courageous and loyal in every aspect, the government has, unfortunately, failed in protecting and caring for its infants. The world infant mortality rate, as per the United Nations, is 49.4 and 34.1 according to the CIA World Factbook where Pakistan has the third-highest infant mortality rate in the world (57.2% approx).

An insight

New-born child mortality is the death of a baby before their first birthday, and infant mortality rate (IMR) alludes to the passing of babies before the age of 1, for every 1000 live births. The IMR is a health standard agent of a nation. Every year 65 out of 1000 babies bite the dust because of lacking clinical offices, sickness and unhealthiness of the mother or the kid. The initial 28 days of life - the 'neonatal period' - speak to the most crucial time for a youngster's endurance.

The 'norm' in Pakistan

Pakistan regardless of having gained critical ground in fusing infant care into public strategies and improvement in coverage of a few mediations pertinent to infant endurance during the most recent decade, the infant death rate has only reduced 13% per year which shows that the current pace of decay is inadequate for the nation to arrive at its kid endurance Millennium advancement objective (MDG). The Government of Pakistan has collaborated with UNICEF on multiple levels like Maternal New-born and Child Health (MNCH) and Routine Immunization to improve infant and maternal death rate. Perinatal, just as the neonatal mortality record in our nation, is one of the most elevated on the planet.

Many research and studies have taken place to detect the risk factors for neonatal death to help formulate strategies and program innovations to improve neonatal survival.

As per the Pakistan Medical Association (PMA), one of the reasons for high baby and maternal death rates in Pakistan is problematic delivery practices. Home deliveries all alone are not an awful practice. However, in rural areas where they are joined



with unpractised birthing assistants-dais and unhygienic practices, they can turn into a risk to the infant and the mother. Current examinations show that three preventable and treatable conditions bring about 75% of infant passing - pre-birth complications, delivery complexities, and contaminations, for example, sepsis, meningitis, and pneumonia. While a significant part of the obligation regarding this goes ahead the administration authorities liable for giving human services, it is additionally the severe absence of instruction that is subverting the endeavours. Practices like appropriate vaccines and childcare in the beginning phases can help spare a large number of kids. Sepsis and asphyxia (stifling on the birth line) are other driving reasons for death. Sepsis happens when microorganisms get access into the body of the baby and begin harming organs. The act of applying destructive substances on the umbilical line can additionally irritate the sepsis-Surma, dairy animals fertilizer, ghee, debris-all these are regularly involved in provincial territories on the umbilical string of the infant.

The real cause of infant mortality

Around 50 per cent of births are at-home births, and of these, 72 per cent are gone to by unskilled individuals or family members. Since they are not skilled and top paediatricians, they don't take measures to guarantee that the infant endures. Hurtful homecare practices incorporate lacking neonatal consideration, disposing of colostrum, inability to start breastfeeding and failure to keep the child warm.

From a Pakistani emergency clinic-based review research, a 68% pace of mortality because of low birth weight was induced. Out

of which 74% were preterm inferring high mortality among low birth preterm new-born children. Low weight preterm births are the most significant reason for baby passing in Pakistan. Helpless admittance to vaccines, inferior quality maternal and infant care administrations coerces these deaths.

New-born children whose moms had delivery complexities had a greater danger of neonatal passing. The delivery complexities included vaginal dying, nearness of fever or seizures, and these confusions should be overseen by a skilled professional. However, only 36% of deliveries were conducted by health professionals. Research has shown that deliveries in a health facility with a skilled birth provider reduce early neonatal deaths. The most unfortunate family riches list quintile was recognized as a hazard factor for neonatal mortality. Secondary research of Sudan DHS has likewise discovered a lower family unit riches record as a hazard factor for neonatal mortality. Punjab is the most populated area of Pakistan with the local and urban populace. In Punjab, there are around 2,800 health facilities (urban and rural areas) in the public segment serving the rural zones with skilled staff and vigorously subsidized drugs. Nevertheless, these facilities are distributed unevenly compared to the populace catchment zone. In 2011 an overview was led to assess the current status of basic wellbeing units in Punjab. Out of 850 chosen fundamental wellbeing units, 7.2% were shut, and 52.4% didn't have the necessary staff at the hour of review. Further, the observing arrangement of these offices was discovered to be frail, and non-accessibility of medications at

these offices were additionally viewed as a significant issue. Another research showed that female literacy and the parents' work schedule positively affect infant mortality. More the female literacy rate, lesser will be the chance of an infant's death as educated mothers will be well aware of maintaining a child's health. New-born children whose moms were not working and father was utilized had a lower danger of mortality in the neonatal period in the current investigation contrasted with both workings. Contribution of moms in work outside the home may antagonistically influence the consideration given to the infant. Breastfeeding is one of the most significant health practices known. It's ideal; typical, 100% healthfully adjusted and savvy. Breastfeeding has substantial advantages for new-born children that reach out past youth, various benefits for moms and the family. Quick and elite breastfeeding is necessary for the accomplishment of a large number of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Countries where breastfeeding is not common to bring about monetary misfortunes of about \$302 billion every year all around.

Conclusion

The World health organization (WHO) recommends strategies for the life-guaranteeing environment for infants and mothers. It is necessary to a lot of adequate home care and timely treatment for delivery complications. It is vital to specify antenatal care, teach pregnant ladies particularly first time mothers and retraining of social insurance suppliers to oversee delivery complexities and antenatal consideration projects, for example, IFA supplementation to diminish the danger of having littler than birth size children. The effect of these practices ought to be tried through network-based preliminaries in different settings of Pakistan. An upgraded financial plan for wellbeing, nourishment intercessions, coordinated projects for moms and infants, an arrangement of protected and clean drinking water, gifted birth offices and access to skilled maternity specialists to distant regions are compulsory in this regard. It's high time that the people and the government come together and protect the future of this nation.

Educational institute ...

Continued from front page

Addressing a press conference in Karachi, Mr Ghani said the Sindh government realised the academic losses suffered by students due to closure of educational institutions, but stressed that their health could not be compromised to compensate for the loss of learning. He said the provincial government was delaying the second phase of resuming grade 6-8 classes, added that it would now be postponed to Sept 28. In response to the Sindh government’s announcement, federal Education Minister Shafqat Mahmood, who headed the Inter Provincial Education Ministers Conference (IPEMC) on Sept 8, which had decided to reopen the educational institutions in phases, from Sept 15 (universities, colleges and high schools), from Sep 23 (class six to eight) and from Sept 30 (primary schools), said in a tweet, "There is no change regarding the time table announced earlier after Inter provincial meeting of education ministers. We will meet in the NCOC on 22nd [September] to decide finally but if the current trend remains, no reason to postpone 6 to 8 [classes] opening on 23rd September."

PAMI on board with PMC ...

Continued from front page

knows how much it was difficult to undergo through the tiring and never-ending procedures of getting registered as medical or dental practitioners. It is high time that we need proper facilities and regulation which can only be done through reforms, and I can see that PMC has the ability to deliver that." The major issue in Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) was the lack of representation of private institutes' stakeholders. "We were not asked or included in any of the regulatory meetings. It's ironic that private medical and dental institutes generate big numbers, but still, we were considered not worthy enough to share our perspective." Speaking about National Licence Examination (NLE) introduced by PMC, Dr Riaz said, "I don't really understand what the fuss is all about. NLE is happening in the USA but not in the UK. NLE is not the issue. The issue is fixing the eligibility of exam. Many students are free to give NBDE even after completing their second year, they are not bound to appear only after graduation. That is the point we really want to raise." Referring to the autonomy given to private medical and dental institutes in the moderation of tuition fees, Dr Riaz said, "All over the world, private institutes control tuition fees and moderate

it. The tuition fees will be charged as per the amount spent on students. We [Private Medical and Dental Institutes] don't get funds, the way public sectors get. If we are bound by fees cap, then how can we alleviate the standard of education? Putting fees cap will restrict the facilities that a private medical and dental college want to deliver to its students." Dr Riaz said that charging high tuition fees surely means a great level of education standard. "People don't complain about paying huge tuition fees of Agha Khan University because they know that the level of education they are getting in return is better than any institution of Pakistan." Dr Riaz concluded that the support of PAMI has always been towards better change and reforms, which can be expected from PMC.

PMA upset over motorway ...

Continued from page 02

Dr Qaisar Sajjad said that it seems our society is ethically deteriorating; our norms regarding the respect and protection of women are weakening. As a society, we will have to think about the situation to make our spaces completely safe for women. He said this lawlessness in the society is unacceptable. We demand the government to make Pakistan safe for everyone, women, and children in particular. We also demand that criminals involved in this heinous crime are arrested and brought to justice immediately.

NICVD fails to reopen OPDs ...

Continued from page 02

A senior official at the NICVD noted that the OPD of the hospital would be made 80 percent operational by the end of this month. Chief Operating Officer, NICVD, Azra Maqsood, was not available for comments.

The death of lady doctor ...

Continued from page 03

for Dengue in Sindh (PCPD) is conducting spraying in selective areas of Karachi, the concerned authorities of the KMC have failed to devise a strategy to control the prevalence of mosquito-borne diseases in the city. Major dengue breeding sites include nurseries, graveyards, lakes, ponds, swimming pools, tire shops, water pumping stations/hydrants, construction cities, and waste and dump areas.

Peak season of malaria ...

Continued from page 04

exact cause of her death. This shows that the

initial process of investigation was not perfect. General Secretary, PMA Karachi, Dr Abdul Ghafoor Shoro, said that the PMA Sindh, PMA Karachi, and family and friends of Dr Amtullah demand a thorough and professional investigation into this case, and the culprit should be brought to justice. He said that doctors are working under very unfavorable circumstances. They are under a lot of pressure and stress due to recent incidences of murder, harassment, humiliation, and misbehavior with them. The PMA demanded security and respect be provided for doctors sooner rather than later; otherwise, the responsibility of any unfavorable action from the doctors' fraternity will be on the government.

Sindh faces an acute shortage ...

Continued from page 04

an urgent basis to fill vacant posts all over the province. Clinical Psychologist, Sidra Ehmer, said that the importance of psychologists was ignored in educational institutes, private and public sector hospitals, multinational companies, and other departments in the past. She said there is no shortage of quality psychologists in the Sindh province. The provincial government should hire such experts through the SPSC to minimize the burden of mental health problems in society.

Week-long anti-polio ...

Continued from page 05

childhood diseases. Children can be saved from childhood diseases like polio, measles, typhoid, and others through vaccination, and we seek the media's help to raise awareness regarding this" Following the halt in global polio campaigns from April to June due to COVID-19, Sindh conducted a small-scale campaign in District East and District West in Karachi during July that covered 260,700 children under five years of age. Following this, a province-wide campaign was conducted in August, which vaccinated approximately 9 million children. The polio drives were conducted while following all WHO recommended COVID-19 precautionary measures, and the same will be followed during the September polio drive. These safety measures mainly include all COVID-19 precautionary measures to be followed during the training of workers; all polio workers and supervisors will use a face mask and hand sanitizer during fieldwork to reduce the risk of contracting and spreading

COVID-19, and workers will not knock on doors with their hands but instead, use a ruler or pen. The government of Sindh is committed to providing these life-saving vaccines to the children of the province to decrease the immunity gap. The door-to-door campaigns will also be utilized to raise awareness on COVID 19 prevention as well as for referring mothers and children for other essential vaccinations and antenatal care services. The Pakistan Pediatric Association, Pakistan Islamic Medical Association, medical experts across the world, and major religious scholars across Pakistan and the region endorse the oral polio vaccine, which is the safest and most effective for not only preventing polio but also eradicating it from the environment. 10 billion doses of this vaccine have been given to 3 billion children across the world in the last decade as a result of which 10 million polio cases have been avoided.

Ziauddin University observes ...

Continued from page 06

pandemic, Pakistan took the right decision at the right time and achieved its goal by controlling its spread. I think we have fought successfully with COVID compared to other affected countries that are still struggling." Dr Abid Mehdi Kazmi, Clinical Head, Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, Ziauddin College of Rehabilitation Sciences, Ziauddin University, said that the pandemic affected physiotherapists just like any other profession. We had to reconsider the whole treatment protocol. It was physically and emotionally challenging to send our physiotherapists to the fields even after knowing the viral disease's seriousness. Still, I can proudly say that our therapists played their role with great courage and sacrificed their family time and resting hours to aid their patients during the COVID-19.

Two major departments of CHK ...

Continued from page 09

machines have increased with time. Therefore, the CHK's management has been unable to get these diagnostic machines repaired. He explained that the concerned company demanded 6 million PKR to maintain and repair the only CT scan machine in the hospital. Acting Medical Superintendent, CHK, Dr Noor Muhammad Soomro was not available to make any comments.

Children are less likely to ...

Continued from page 12

then open high school classes." Responding a query on the second wave of the pandemic, Dr Tahir assured 'that a second wave situation won't rise." He said that when herd immunity has been developed since around 60-70% population has formed antibodies, then the chances for the second wave becomes almost insignificant. "I will further elaborate this answer, that if 60-70 % population is working class, and if they have formed antibodies in their immune system, then why would we need the vaccine? The vaccine is given to those who are not exposed to a virus. But if more than half the population has been already exposed, then the need for a vaccine is very minimal." He further advised that it has been intimidated by the World Health Organisation's latest circular that children less than 12 years can opt not to wear the mask. "It's the children above age 12 that need to use masks for protection. Keep yourself clean and tidy which is part of our faith that we have forgotten as a society," he said.

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First open-heart surgery performed at NICVD



MN Report

KARACHI - The pediatric cardiothoracic surgery team at the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) Tando Muhammad Khan performed a successful open-heart surgery procedure on a 2-year-old baby named Abbas Ali.

Spokesperson, NICVD, said that a two-member team of surgeons led by Dr Shohail Khan Bangash (Head of pediatric cardiac surgery, NICVD) and Dr Saad Badar Zakai (pediatric cardiac surgeon, NICVD) along with pediatric cardiologist, Dr Abdul Sattar Shaikh, and anesthesiologist, Dr Amin Khuwaja, performed the first, free of charge open heart surgery on a baby.

The surgeons said that the baby from Badin, who was diagnosed with patent ductus arteriosus (PDA), is stable and recovering. They said that when the patient's parents were told that your child would be operated upon near his abode was overwhelmed with joy and added the people of Tando Muhammad Khan and adjoining areas are jubilant over the successful open-heart surgery on the baby in an area close by. They said that the baby would live a normal and healthy life no different from any other child his age.

Congratulating the NICVD's team of surgeons, Executive Director of the NICVD, Prof Nadeem Qamar, stated that this is a massive achievement of the NICVD to perform the first free of cost pediatric open-heart surgery at the NICVD, Tando Muhammad Khan, because this major cardiac surgery used to be done only in big cities of the country or abroad. With the initiation of this cardiac surgery facilities, we will be able to provide comprehensive cardiology care to pediatric patients.

The NICVD aims to bridge the gap of heart healthcare across the Sindh province and ensure that we provide specialized care at every needy patient's doorstep. He further added that the NICVD TMK, a 100-bed specialized facility, has performed more than 150 adult cardiac surgeries so far within a short span of time, while thousands of patients are also treated free of cost. The NICVD Tando Muhammad Khan follows international standards in terms of healthcare and provides all basic and major cardiac healthcare services, including cardiac emergency, consulting clinics, interventional cardiology, and critical care for the population of the TMK and its peripheries.

Ziauddin University reopens after six months of closure

MN Report

KARACHI - The Ziauddin University restarted its educational activities after a six-month-long hiatus due to the novel coronavirus outbreak. Management of the Ziauddin University ensured the proper

examination department played a vital role in organizing online examinations. Despite reopening the university, online classes are going on. Prof Dr Pirzada Qasim Raza Siddiqui, Vice-Chancellor of the Ziauddin University, while appreciating the



implementation of health guidelines such as wearing masks and gloves, social distancing, and the use of sanitizers to keep the coronavirus at bay. Students have also been divided into groups to ensure social distancing and follow SOPs.

During the closure of the university, online classes and examinations were conducted successfully. The

government's steps to reopen educational institutes, said, "It was necessary to take this decision so that we could move the education system forward. We are following all the SOPs set by the authorities, but it is also the responsibility of parents and students to ensure compliance with the SOPs to avoid the spread of the coronavirus."

Two major departments of CHK on the verge of closure



MN Report

KARACHI - Two major departments of the Dr Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital Karachi (CHK) are on the verge of closure as the important diagnostic equipment of these wards is lying out of order for one and a half year, sources at the CHK told recently. The important diagnostic machines of the Radiology Department like CT scan and MRI are not operational for the past one and a half years. The hospital's incumbent administration was

unable to get the equipment repaired despite the lapse of several months. Similarly, modern gamma camera devices and angiography machines are also not functioning at the Cardiology Department, CHK, for several months. The hospital's management has been unable to get the costly equipment repaired. The CHK is Sindh's largest teaching hospital, where many patients are brought every day from different areas of Karachi and Sindh. The

poor patients are being referred to other public and private sector hospitals due to the unavailability of diagnostic facilities. Private labs charge heavy fees for conducting diagnostics tests that are out of the reach of poor patients. An administrative official said that the Sindh government had allocated 25 million for the maintenance and repair of out of order equipment each year; however, the repairing charges of diagnostics

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Dr Panjwani Center conducts 80,000 coronavirus tests

MN Report

KARACHI - The Dr Panjwani Center for Molecular Medicine and Drug Research (PCMD), University of Karachi, has proved its research excellence and capacity by performing more than 80,000 high-quality coronavirus PCR-based tests in the ongoing pandemic of COVID-19 in Sindh. Earlier, the Sindh Government provided generous financial support for the completion of the Biosafety Level-III (BSL-III) laboratory at the PCMD's National Institute of Virology (PCMD). The

Chief Minister Sindh and the Minister of Health visited the NIV in May to encourage the outstanding team. Prof Dr Iqbal Choudhary, Director of the International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), University of Karachi, and Coordinator General COMSTECH, expressed these views while speaking at the meeting of virology experts held at the National Institute of Virology. Prof Iqbal Choudhary pointed out that the Dr Panjwani Center showed its excellence and superiority by conducting

coronavirus tests in such great numbers during the limited time period of a few months. Currently, the center is conducting over 1000 tests every day, with only 18 hours reporting time. The researchers and staff of the center deserve appreciation and applause as they did this national service by carrying out massive diagnostic work in 24/7, he added. This very high-quality lab is equipped with state of the art technology, where well-trained, highly qualified staff engaged in research work, he said, adding that the laboratory also ensures the safety of



the staff by the regular periodic screening of all the staff. He also expressed thanks to CM Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah, and Sindh Provincial Minister for Health and Population Welfare, Dr Azra Fazal Pechuho, for their kind support and trust shown to the Dr Panjwani Center that comes under the ICCBS. The BSL-III facility is designed as per international standards set by the WHO (Guidelines on Establishment of Virology Laboratory in Developing Countries), he mentioned, adding that the diagnostic capacity of COVID-19 infection has immensely been widened in the province. The BSL-III facility owns the capability to conduct experiments involving live viruses, anti-viral screening activities of several

compounds, and testing vaccine candidates for their immune reactivity, he said, adding that the National Institute of Virology has various state of the art RT-PCR machines and trained personnel. The Dr Panjwani Center has set an excellent example of helping the national health care system at the time of national health emergency, he said. Vice-Chancellor University of Karachi, Prof Dr Khalid Mahmood Iraqi, Prof Attaur Rahman, ICCBS, Patron-in-Chief and Chairman of Prime Minister's Task Force on Science and Technology, Chairperson, Dr Panjwani Memorial Trust, Ms Nadira Panjwani, and Chairman, HEJ Foundation, Aziz Latif Jamal, congratulated Prof Iqbal Choudhary and his team in recognition of their efforts.

Diarrhoea Kills 1.6 million children under 5 every year more than AIDS or MALARIA



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Inquiry committee proposed to probe unethical activities at ASH

MN Report

KARACHI - Medical and Health Services, Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) has recently recommended for the constitution of a three-member inquiry committee to investigate the controversial interview of the Director, Abbasi Shaheed Hospital (ASH), aired by a private news channel a couple of days ago. Sources at the KMC told that a three-member inquiry committee comprised of Senior Director, Human Resource Management, KMC, Chairman, KMC, Director, Inspection and Enquires, KMC, Secretary, KMC, Member, KMC and Member of Sabah ul Islam has been recommended to probe the unethical activities. Sources said an interview of Dr Salama Kausar Ali, Director, ASH, KMC, was telecasted by a private news channel that went viral on social media in which she pointed out the matters about illegal/unethical activities in the ASH. Keeping in view the severity of matters pointed out by the Director, ASH, KMC, in her interview, it is recommended that an inquiry committee probe the matter and ensure the strict action against defaulters to save the institution from destruction and defamation.





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Pakistan may already have the best defence against COVID!

MN Report

USA - In a recent briefing CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) Director, Robert Redfield told that wearing a face mask could be more effective in preventing an individual coronavirus infection than getting a vaccine. He said that masks might prove to be better than the much-awaited vaccine. He further said, "I'm not gonna comment directly about the president, but I am going to comment as the CDC director that face masks, these face masks, are the most important powerful public health tool we have," Redfield replied. This cleared the recent controversy in Pakistan, where many experts mulled over the decrease in COVID-19 cases. Using the best defence against COVID-19, masks in public hence could be the reason for the decline in COVID-19 cases. The director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention predicted that



most of the American public would not have access to a vaccine against the novel coronavirus until late spring or summer of next year - prompting a public rebuke from President Trump, who declared the CDC chief was wrong. At a Senate hearing on the government's response to the pandemic, CDC Director Robert Redfield

adhered to Trump's oft-stated contention that a safe and effective vaccine will become available in November or December - perhaps just before the presidential election seven we But Trump at his briefing, continued to cast doubt on the value of masks, saying, "The mask is a mixed bag." Redfield's comments were the most detailed time

frame outlined so far by the leader of the government's primary public health agency. They are consistent with the perspective of Anthony S. Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, who said in a recent interview with CNN that relatively small amounts of the vaccine will be available at first.

"It won't be until we get into 2021 that you'll have hundreds of millions of doses, and just the logistics, constraints in vaccinating large numbers of people," Fauci said. "It's going to take months to get enough people vaccinated to have an umbrella of immunity over the community so that you don't have to worry about easy transmission."

MN Report

KARACHI - Renowned Consultant Haematologist and Transplant Physician, Dr Tahir Shamsi told that the data collected by researches

gave up critical thinking and adopted intellectual slavery. We are blindly following what the 'White Lord' has commanded and not for once think with our heads

'Children are less likely to get infected with the coronavirus'



Dr Tahir Shamsi

from all over the world shows that children of ages 12 and less are significantly less likely to contract COVID-19. When they do, they usually remain asymptomatic. In a recent talk show, Dr Tahir said that people need to educate themselves before they believe any myths regarding COVID-19. "The basic thing is that we don't have the ability to think and understand. We have surrendered ourselves and

about right and wrong," he said. Dr Tahir explained that the chances of children contracting virus are insignificant. "The data collected by international researchers from children age 12 and less shows that those receptors through which the coronavirus enters and attack the respiratory system, are not formed or are underdeveloped. As the age progresses, these receptors are developed and

fully formed by the age of 16." In the wake of Government's announcement to reopen schools, Dr Tahir said, "The decision made [by the Government authorities] to open high school classes first, which included classes of 8-10, doesn't make sense because this the population which are prone to COVID-19 the most. It is more reasonable to open schools of classes 6 and less, and

Continued on Page 08

WHO praises Pakistan's handling of COVID-19 pandemic

MN Report

ISLAMABAD - The World Health Organisation (WHO) recently said Pakistan was among countries from whom the international community should learn how to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus in a media briefing said Pakistan deployed the infrastructure built up over many years for polio to combat COVID-19. "Community health workers who have been trained to go door-to-door vaccinating children for polio have been utilised for surveillance, contact tracing and care," he said. "There are many other examples, including Cambodia, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Senegal, Spain and Vietnam. Many of these countries have done well because they learned lessons from previous outbreaks of SARS, MERS, measles, polio, Ebola, flu and other diseases. That's why it's vital that we all learn lessons this pandemic is teaching us," he said.

