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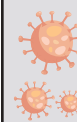
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CORONAVIRUS IN PAKISTAN



CONFIRMED CASES

488,529

REPORTED DEATH

10,350

SINDH

218,597

PUNJAB

140,714

ISLAMABAD

38,263

BALOCHISTAN

18,247

KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

59,484

AJK/GB

8,357 / 4,867

RECOVERED CASES

442,457

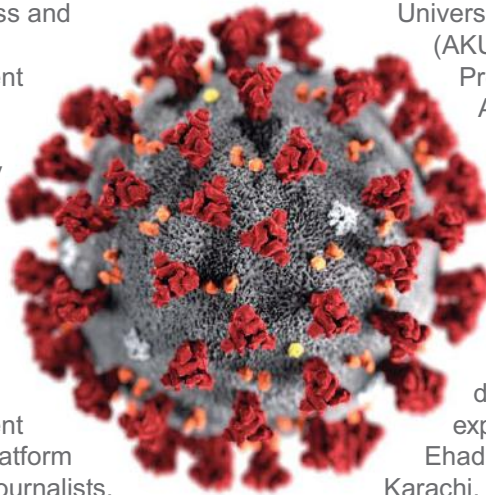
*Stats as of 04 January, 2021 - 08:21am, Provided by Ministry of National Health Services Regulations & Coordination, Government of Pakistan

No evidence of UK's new coronavirus strain reached Pakistan: Dr Faisal Sultam

MN Report

KARACHI - Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Health, Dr Faisal Sultan, recently said that no evidence is available to them if a new strain of the SARS-CoV-2 or the coronavirus that has emerged in the United Kingdom has reached Pakistan but added that investigations and research to detect the new strain, dubbed as B117, is underway in 'relevant population where it could possibly be present,' in Pakistan. "We don't have any scientific evidence available to us if the new strain from the United Kingdom has reached Pakistan. I have learned about this claim made by Dr Atta-ur-Rehman through media, but he has not presented any scientific evidence in this regard. However, we are trying to find out if any new strain of the coronavirus from the UK or any other place has managed to reach here," Dr Faisal Sultan told an online seminar organized by the Pakistan Society

for Awareness and Community Empowerment (PACE). webinar was organized by the newly-established Pakistan Society for Awareness and Community Empowerment (PACE), a platform comprising journalists, health experts, environmentalists, and concerned citizens to promote awareness about science, public health, environmental, and social issues in Pakistan. The webinar was moderated by senior health journalist Muhammad Waqar Bhatti, convener PACE, while other panelists included Dr Faisal Mahmood, an infectious diseases expert from the Aga Khan



University Hospital (AKUH), Karachi, Prof Sohail Akhtar, a pulmonologist from the Indus Hospital Karachi, and Dr Babar Saeed Khan, public and digital health expert and CEO of Ehad Healthcare Karachi.

Dr Faisal Sultan maintained that instead of calling it a new strain emerged in the UK, it should be considered as a variant of the coronavirus as minor mutations had been observed in the virus and added that it was still not clear whether it had become more contagious and infectious after mutations as it is being reported. "Even British authorities don't have any strong evidence if the virus

has become more infectious," he added. Responding to a query regarding the availability of anti-COVID-19



vaccine in Pakistan, Dr Faisal Sultan said the first deployment of the vaccine would start in the first quarter of the next year, saying efforts were underway to start vaccinating half a million frontline workers by the end of February to March 2021. "We have three to four options available regarding vaccines, but we are trying to acquire more than one vaccine for our people," he added. He maintained the COVID-19 vaccine for the general population of Pakistan, between the age group of 18-60 years, would likely be available in the second or third quarter of 2021, adding that the vaccine's deployment would start in the timeframe of April to June next year. **Continued on Page 08**

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Medical bodies demand dissolution of PMC

MN Report

HYDERABAD - Office-bearers of the Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) Sindh and Hyderabad chapters have recently demanded the dissolution of the Pakistan Medical Commission (PMC) and cancellation of results of the tests conducted by the PMC.

They said 70 percent of candidates for the Sindh medical colleges had not been able to perform better in the tests because they were required to answer the questions prepared from the syllabus of the federal board of education. Speaking at a joint news conference at the local press club here, PMA Sindh general secretary Dr Rafiq Khokhar, PMA Hyderabad chapter president Dr Agha Taj and treasurer Dr Nisar Memon said the PMC must be dissolved and the

Continued on Page 08



PMA centre announces office-bearer's names for 2020-22

MN Report

KARACHI - The Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) had its biennial central council meeting and biennial general assembly meeting at the PMA House Karachi. It was attended by a good

number of delegates across the country, both physically and virtually. The constitutional agenda was followed in these meetings. Different

reports based on the association's two-year activities were presented by the 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 PMA Central's national office bearers for the term 2020-2022 was first done at the Central Council and then in a general body meeting, after which the office bearers were elected unopposed and declared successful.

The names of office-bearers of PMA Centre include President Dr Salma Aslam Kundi (from KPK), Hon President-Elect Dr Hameed Ullah Khan (from

Balochistan), Hon Secretary-General Dr S M Qaisar Sajjad (from Sindh), Hon Treasurer Dr Qazi M Wasiq (from Sindh), Hon Joint Secretary-I Dr Amir Saleem (from Punjab), Hon Joint Secretary-II Dr Akbar

the pandemic. They demanded to increase the testing capacity and the strict implementation of SOPs.

The meeting also requested the public to follow SOPs strictly, including wearing a

mask whenever you go out, maintaining social distancing, and washing or sanitizing your hands after regular intervals.

The meeting also took

notice of the chaos at the Pakistan Medical Commission (PMC) and the deteriorating standard of medical education in the country. It is very disappointing that the Vice President of the PMC, a lawyer by profession, is running the affairs of the PMC single-handedly; thus, it is a one-man show, which is unacceptable.

The PMC could not conduct the MDCAT exam for the last six months and thus wasted the students' precious time. After six months, they conducted a very disorganized exam that was full of flaws. In many cases, names against roll numbers were written wrong, and many students who appeared in the exam

Continued on Page 08



Ali Soomro (from Sindh) and Hon Chairman Dr Sarwar Jamil Siddiqui (from, Sindh). Other than the official business at meetings, the PMA also lauded and remembered the services of doctors who died fighting bravely in the war against the coronavirus.

During the meeting, doctors were requested to take care of themselves and not examine patients without wearing PPEs. The life of a doctor is very important for the nation during this difficult time. They should avoid shaking hands and avoid going into any functions. The meeting participants also showed their concern over the rapid increase of COVID-19 patients throughout the country during the second wave of

Former Professor of DUHS succumbs to COVID-19

KARACHI - A former Professor of the Surgery Department, Dr Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital Karachi (CHK), embraced martyrdom due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) in Karachi. Prof Dr Muhammad Sarwar Arain was tested



positive for the coronavirus a few days ago, and he was admitted to the hospital where he was on ventilator support.

Dr Sarwar was a former Professor of the Dow University of Health Sciences (DUHS) and presently working as Head of Examination Liaquat College of Medicine & Dentistry (LCMD).

The Publisher, Editor and the staff of Medical News Pakistan expressed their heartfelt condolences on the sad demise of Prof. Dr Muhammad Sarwar Arain and pray that God gives his soul eternal peace and enough courage to the family members to bear this irreplaceable loss, Amen!



COVID-19 takes lives of 181 healthcare professionals in Pakistan

MN Report

KARACHI - At least 181 healthcare professionals have died due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) across Pakistan, including 154 doctors and 27 nurses and paramedical staff. As per statistics issued by the Pakistan Medical Association (PMA-Centre), COVID-19 has claimed 65 doctors lives

Continued on Page 08

Punjab students top National MDCAT 2020

MN Report

KARACHI - The Pakistan Medical Commission recently conducted the MDCAT test for 2020. The results of the test were announced on December 16th, 2020.

The results highlighted the national and provincial gold medalists of this year's session. On the national level, Punjab bagged the top spot earning three gold medals.

Hannan Saeed, Amal Arif, and Hafiz M Ahsan Arshad scored 197 out of 200 marks on the test (98.5%), earning the national gold medalist spots.

On the provincial level, the highest score recorded was 195 out of 200 (97.5%) by Syeda Samar Hamdani from AJK.

Muhammad Tayyab Latif from Gilgit-Baltistan scored 194 out of 200 marks (97%).

Nida Ahmed earned the gold medalist from



KPK with 193 out of 200 marks (96.5%). Mujtaba Bashir Memon and Amna Shafi earned the gold medals from Sindh by scoring 190 out of 200 marks (95%) on the test.

Soheera Shehzad topped in Balochistan with 188 out of 200 marks (94%).

As for the federal gold medalist, Mehak Asim scored the highest marks in the category with 194 out of 200 marks (97%). The announced results were subject to severe criticism by both the authorities as well as the students and parents.

NICH staff continues protest against mob attack on doctors

MN Report

KARACHI - The doctors, nurses, and paramedical staff of the National Institute of Child Health (NICH) continued their protest demonstration and boycott of OPDs against the mob attack on healthcare professionals a couple of days ago.

The protest was held under the banner of the Grand Health Alliance (GHA). Addressing the protesters, Central Leader of GHA, Dr Mehboob Ali Nonari, said that the attack and harassment of doctors and other staff have become common in hospitals. He said that the hospital's administration has failed to protect the staff, and the security guards cannot provide security to employees.

The Grand Health Alliance has demanded the withdrawal of the agreement with the security company. They vowed to continue their protest demonstration till the acceptance of their demands. The closure of OPDs has badly affected pediatric care in the city's largest children's hospital.



Diabetes is neglected in times of COVID-19 pandemic: Experts

MN Report

KARACHI - The COVID-19 pandemic led to the neglect of many Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), especially diabetes in the world, and in the first wave, people with diabetes suffered a lot as complications of their disease worsened as many could not visit hospitals and healthcare facilities due to restrictions and fear of contracting the infectious disease, said President of International Diabetes Federation (IDF), Prof Andrew Boulton.

"Diabetes is equally dangerous as cancer or the heart disease so many of diabetics who don't take it seriously end up losing one or both of their legs as well as eyesight due to complications of the disease, especially diabetic foot ulcers," Prof Andrew Boulton said addressing the closing ceremony of 8th Nadep Foot Con 2020 through video link here in Karachi.

The two-day international foot conference, organized by the National Association of Diabetes Educators of Pakistan (NADEP) in collaboration with the Baqai Institute of Diabetology and Endocrinology (BIDE), Karachi is being held for the last several years at various cities of Pakistan, and it is addressed by leading diabetologists and endocrinologists who share their experiences in managing and treatment of diabetic foot ulcers and prevention of lower-limb amputations.

The IDF President maintained that due to COVID-19, there is a huge backlog of non-COVID treatments, which was evident from the fact that one-third of the COVID-19 deaths in the United Kingdom had diabetes and added



that there is a need to focus on all types of diabetes and the lifestyle disease should be given the attention it deserves.

"There have been threats to diabetes care during the first wave of a pandemic where all routine out-patient clinics were canceled, all routine investigations including X-ray and other scans were suspended, the supply of medicines was affected, non-emergency surgeries were canceled, and even the transplant surgeries were canceled or postponed indefinitely," Prof Boulton added. Prof Andrew Boulton maintained COVID-19 posed many threats for the diabetics, which include quality of their diet deteriorated, many of them abandoned exercise, their blood sugar controls worsened, they had psychological impacts, and in addition to that they developed a fear of going to hospitals due to pandemic. "But this pandemic also resulted in some good opportunities in diabetes care which including expansion in telemedicine medicines, digital education, and improvement of in-patient diabetes care services," he said, adding that now people with mild to moderate

complications, especially those having diabetic foot ulcers can be treated at home under the supervision of diabetologists and experts through telemedicine.

Addressing the concluding session of the conference, Secretary-General of the Pakistan Diabetic Association Prof Dr Abdul Basit said that it is the right time that efforts are made to prevent diabetic foot ulcers in addition to training doctors, nurses, and technicians in treating patients to reduce the rate of amputations across Pakistan.

"Our research and data have shown that the amputation rate can be brought down drastically with education, training, modern interventions, and the use of the latest medications. At our center, we have managed to bring down amputation rate from 27 to three percent while at 150-foot clinics established by us across Pakistan, amputations were reduced up to 50 percent," Prof Abdul Basit added.

Organizing secretary of the NADEP Foot Con 2020, Dr Zahid Miyan spoke on the threats posed by the multi-drug resistant bacteria and pathogens in treatment of diabetic foot ulcers and added that the best strategy is to prevent the occurrence of the diabetic foot ulcers in the patient with diabetes as prevention is the best strategy in poor countries like Pakistan. "Infections with multi-drug resistant bacteria and diabetic foot ulcers can be a very lethal combination, and this can jeopardize the lives of diabetics even after amputations. So, the best strategy should be to focus on prevention from diabetic foot ulcers," he added.

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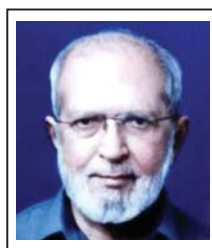
SIUT pays tributes to Prof Noor Ahmed Baloch

MN Report

KARACHI - Rich tributes were paid to Professor Noor Ahmed Baloch, former Principal of the Chandka Medical College Larkana, at a memorial meeting recently organized by the Sindh Institute of Urology and Transplantation (SIUT). Prof Baloch passed away in Toronto recently. The memorial meeting was presided by Prof Adib Rizvi, Director, SIUT, while speakers who paid tributes and recalled the services included the faculty members of the Institute.

Paying tributes to the deceased, Prof Adib Rizvi said, "Baloch Sahib, as he was fondly addressed, left an unparalleled legacy of serving patients and teaching both to students and residents. Baloch Sahib accomplished the challenging task of setting up a specialty of Urology in the Chandka Medical College, which was the first of its kind in Larkana, Sindh." He said another contribution of Prof Baloch was setting up a Centre of Urology in Larkana equipped with lithotripters, which

again happened to be the first such facility in the upper part of the province. Prof Rizvi said that the services of late Prof Baloch would be remembered for all times to come not only as an outstanding surgeon but also in the field of medical education and hospital administration. Prof Baloch served at Chandka Medical College as its Principal from 1983 to 1984 and Medical Superintendent from 1989 to 1990 and as a Professor of Urology in subsequent years till his retirement in 2001.



Late Prof Baloch also has the distinction of serving the SIUT as the Chief Controller Examinations and later as a trustee till passing away.

The memorial meeting was telecasted on the Zoom app and also attended in Canada by the family members of the late Prof Baloch. Other speakers who addressed the meeting included Dr Anwar Naqvi, Dr Zafar Husain, Dr Altaf Hashmi, Dr Murli Lal, and Dr Buksh Ali.

CEO SHCC attends NCOC meeting

MN Report

KARACHI - Chief Executive Officer, Sindh Healthcare Commission (SHCC), Syed Baqar Raza Rizvi, attended a video conference meeting of the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC). This meeting was attended by officials of the Healthcare Commission, DG Health, and other officials from all provinces. The NCOC asked the Sindh Healthcare Commission to share the data of private hospital healthcare workers (HCWs) for the COVID-19 vaccine trial in which healthcare workers will be given preference.

The CEO SHCC directed the Directorate of Licensing and Accreditation to send the updated data of healthcare workers of private hospitals in Sindh to the NCOC and

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NICVD shuts down operation theater for disinfection

MN Report

KARACHI - The National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) has suspended elective surgeries for four days to disinfect the operation theater (OT).



Spokesperson, NICVD, informed that all scheduled elective surgeries had been suspended for four days, and no procedure will be done from 24th to 28th December 2020. He further informed that surgeries had been postponed due to disinfection of the operation theater. He said that teams would also conduct the disinfection of the recovery and intensive care units.

He, however, said that all emergency and urgent procedures would be performed as per schedule.

Home department instructs closure of Madrassas

MN Report

KARACHI - The Sindh Home Department has directed the closure of all educational activities in Madrassas across the Sindh province after the spike in coronavirus (COVID-19) cases.



According to an order, in the exercise of powers under section 3(1) of the Sindh Epidemic Diseases Act 2020 (Act VIII of 2015), the Government of Sindh has directed the closure of all educational activities in Madrassas across the province.

The Secretary, Aqaf and Religious Affairs Department, Sindh, and the respective commissioners of divisions and deputy commissioners in Sindh are empowered under section 3(1) of the above said act to issue further orders, directions, and notices to put this order into effect in letter and spirit to clarify further for implementation purpose.

The deputy commissioners, assistant commissioners, concerned as well as personnel of law enforcement agencies not below the rank of inspector police for the equivalent rank of other law

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Pakistan's first Haemophilia Center opens in Karachi

MN Report

KARACHI - The Haemophilia Welfare Society Karachi (HWSK) has established Pakistan's first Haemophilia Center in Karachi.

Chief Executive Officer, Indus Hospital Karachi, Dr Abdul Bari Khan, Director, Sindh Blood Transfusion Authority, Dr Dur-e-Naz, President, HWSK, Raheel Ahmed, a patient himself, and other guests inaugurated the center. Indus Hospital Haematologist, Dr Saba Jamal, Hussaini Blood Bank Chief Executive Officer, Asad Ali, Dr Munira Burhani, Dr Sarfraz Jafri, Fatimid Foundation, Medical Director, Haematologist Dr Shabneez Hossain, General Secretary, HWSK, Fakhar Alam Zaidi, Treasurer, Shahid Dawood, Anisur Rehman, Atiq-ur-Rehman and people from different walks of life and patients along with a large number of parents were present at the occasion. The Haemophilia Welfare Society is the only organization that has been

formed by persons afflicted with the disease and their parents and has been serving patients for the past 20 years. Talking to the media, the CEO of the Indus Hospital, Dr Abdul Bari Khan, said that the Hemophilia Center's management deserved appreciation for setting up this center to save the lives of patients suffering from this deadly disease. "Although there is no government-run institution for haemophilia patients in Pakistan, the center, set up by the Haemophilia Welfare Society Karachi, will provide free treatment to patients suffering from the disease not only in Karachi but also from across the province." Dr Bari also assured his all-out support from the hospital.

Founding member and President of the Haemophilia Welfare Society, Raheel Ahmed, said that the number of registered haemophilia patients in Pakistan is about 22,000, but no government hospital has been set up in

Pakistan for the treatment of the disease. The center has registered 735 patients from Sindh for free treatment so far.

He said that hemophilia treatment is very expensive, and the injections (dry factors) used in this disease are not manufactured in Pakistan. He urged the government to provide treatment for haemophilia patients at the government level, like other diseases.

He said that the cost of treating a patient suffering from this disease is more than 0.2 million rupees a month, which is borne by the institution. There are 6,000 patients in Sindh alone. Director, Sindh Blood Transfusion Authority, Dr Dur-e-Naz, said that the Sindh Health Department worked on a project to provide facilities to haemophilia patients. Certificates of appreciation and shields were also distributed to the guests and the best-performing team members on occasion.

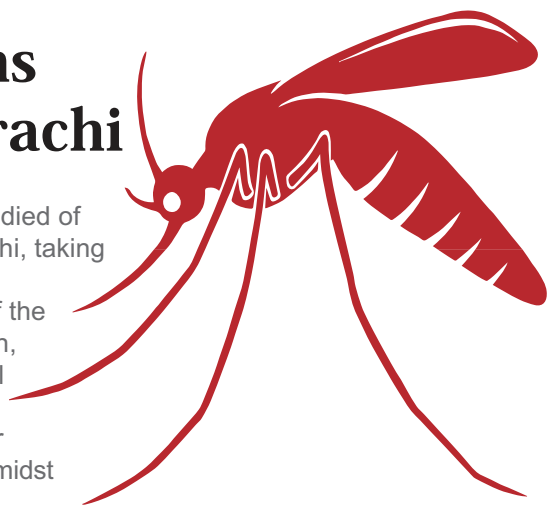
Dengue claims another life in Karachi

MN Report

KARACHI - A twelve-year-old girl recently died of dengue fever at a private hospital in Karachi, taking the death toll to 2 this year so far.

The Vector-Borne Diseases Department of the Directorate General Health Services, Sindh, has confirmed the death of a 12-year-old girl in the Malir area of Karachi due to dengue fever. She was admitted to a private sector hospital for several days, where she died amidst treatment.

Earlier, a 35-year-old woman died of dengue fever in a private hospital in Karachi in February 2020. A total of two people, both females, have passed away due to dengue fever in the city.



MN Report

KARACHI - Vice Chancellor, Dow University of Health Society (DUHS), Prof Dr Muhammad Saeed Quraishy, said that a century after the global outbreak of the Spanish flu, the COVID 19 pandemic has struck the world and created chaos. The whole world is going through a difficult time after a century. This pandemic has not only disrupted educational activities, but also, we have to treat an unknown entity with an entirely different pathology, which was previously known as viral infection. He said this in front of the Anatomy Department of the Dow Medical College in his short address to the Diamond Jubilee Ceremony of the Dow Medical College. The former Principals of the Dow Medical College, Prof M A Almani, Prof Salah Uddin Afsar, Prof Tipu Sultan, Prof Sher Shah, Professor Ghaffar Billo, Professor Iqbal Memon, Professor Zaki Uddin Dr Zafar, Prof Shaista Effendi, Prof D S Akram, Prof Khalid Mehmood, Prof Saad Khalid Niaz, Dr Khalid Paracha, Dr Raffat, current Principal of Dow, Prof Amjad Siraj Memon, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of DUHS, Prof Zarnaz Wahid, Prof

COVID-19 created unrest in the whole world after Spanish flu: Prof Saeed Quraishy



Kartar Dawani, Registrar, Dr Ashar Afaq, Prof Zubair, Prof Sajida Qureshi, Prof Syed Mukkaram Ali, Prof Saba Sohail, Prof Naila, Prof Shuja Farrukh, other senior faculty members, and others attended this simple yet colorful ceremony. On this occasion, Prof Muhammad Saeed Quraishy said that in the current health crisis

that rose in Pakistan and the world, the DUHS is among the top institutions to play its due role on the front line. He praised DUHS's faculty and staff and said that it is a pleasure for us that we are observing the diamond jubilee of the Dow Medical College. Dow Medical College is now internationally recognized.

He said that the DUHS is not only a medical college but a healthcare system with the affiliated institutes of Dow Medical College having more than 8000 students. Prof M A Almani said that the Dow Medical College had become a great institute. Prof Ghaffar Billo, while recalling his memories, said that when I took admission in Dow Medical College in 1954, it was a child, but today it has become a grandfather. Dr Tipu Sultan said that today's gathering of all the seniors seems like a beautiful dream. We have served people in the health sector, and we will always do it. Prof Iqbal Memon said that the Dow Medical College had gained a name in the field of research. Prof Zaki Uddin Oonwala said that DUHS students had set a good example by serving the public through the PWA. The ceremony started with a recitation of the Holy Quran, after which the participants of the ceremony stood in respect of the national anthem. At the end of this ceremony, 75 pigeons were released in the air, while 75 balloons with the DUHS logo were also released. Flowers were showered on the participants; gifts and sweets were also distributed.

NFEH holds 10th fire safety convention

MN Report

KARACHI - The National Forum for Environment & Health (NFEH), in collaboration with the Fire Protection Association of Pakistan (FPAP), is organizing the 10th Fire Safety Convention & Awards on December 17, 2020. Sindh Minister



for Local Government, Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, will be the chief guest on occasion. Engr Nadeem Ashraf, project head of the event, while briefing newsmen about the objectives of the convention, said that the convention is aimed at the promotion of fire safety and security awareness among all industries, corporate sectors, builders, owners of a commercial building, NGOs, fire safety, and security professionals. Around 40 companies will be given awards on occasion through a stringent evaluation criterion devised purely on a professional basis. The objective of fire safety awards is to recognize companies for their best efforts, investment, training, awareness, and use of modern technology to control fire accidents and save human lives in such incidents, he added. Ashraf informed newsmen that the relevant experts and professionals from industries would address the convention.

Health activists demand imposition of national-level emergency to tackle marine pollution

MN Report

KARACHI - The National Forum for Environment and Health (NFEH) has demanded that a national-level emergency should be declared to tackle the problem of marine pollution as the recent sighting of coral bleaching near Charna Island shows that the serious environmental issue is getting worse with every passing day. In a recent press statement, NFEH President, Muhammad Naeem Qureshi, said that the federal, Sindh, and Balochistan governments should collectively tackle the menacing issue of marine pollution. He said that any further delay in tackling this emergency could cause irreversible damage to the marine environment and ecosystem connected to Pakistan's coastline. He said that marine pollution had already caused much

damage to the major portion of Karachi's coastline near the dense human population. He said that constant discharge of industrial and municipal waste and sewage had already caused much harm to the entire Clifton's shoreline that was otherwise a popular destination for



recreation by the public. "The coral bleaching at the far-off location of Charna Island off Balochistan's coast indicates that the issue of marine pollution has widened that directly threatens our sea resources," he said. Qureshi, who is also the convener of the FPCCI's Standing Committee on Environment, said that Sindh and Balochistan's provincial governments could not effectively tackle this problem.

He said that there were several federally controlled agencies whose operations and activities spread across the Pakistani coastline, so the federal government's involvement in tackling this problem was very much necessary. He said that the Environment Department of Sindh, Balochistan governments, environmental protection agencies of the two provinces, and the Ministry of Climate Change of Federal Government should collectively find a way out to resolve this problem. He said that already unplanned developmental activities across the Pakistani shoreline had threatened much the marine ecosystem. "Issue like marine pollution should not be politicized as a very objective, honest, and straightforward approach is required to handle this issue for our coming generations," said NFEH President.

113 specialists graduated from AKU's 25th Postgraduate Medical Education ceremony

MN Report

KARACHI - A total of 113 residents and fellows - many of whom have played a key role in treating COVID-19 patients during the pandemic - graduated at Aga Khan University's 25th Postgraduate Medical Education, PGME, ceremony recently.

Certificates were awarded to 92 residents and 21 fellows in areas relevant to the treatment of COVID-19 such as anaesthesiology and intensive care, emergency medicine, pulmonary medicine, paediatric infectious diseases and adult infectious diseases.

"This year's batch of residents and fellows have been on the frontlines during a time of unprecedented need," said Dr Rizwan Khan, associate dean of PGME at AKU. "They have honed their skills and advanced their knowledge in the middle of a crisis and now have the experience to treat a range of complex diseases and disorders." Around the world and in Pakistan, scores of physicians-in-training

such as interns, residents and fellows have lost their lives while caring for and treating sick COVID-19 patients.

"Putting safety at the core of patient care, we learnt how new communicable diseases like COVID-19 are managed and what it is like to be at the forefront as a team," said Dr Waleed Bin Ghaffar, a graduating resident in anaesthesiology and intensive care.



The graduates were also part of various research studies and clinical trials at the University to generate new knowledge to improve the management of COVID-19 as well as other diseases.

The hybrid graduation ceremony saw all graduates attend in person, while observing physical distancing, as their relatives attended the event virtually. Ten Best Residents awards were given at the ceremony while the Excellence in Research award was also presented to a resident and fellow.

Since its inception in 1985, AKU's PGME programme has graduated 3,574 specialist doctors who have helped raise healthcare standards in Pakistan and abroad. Over 60 per cent of AKU PGME

graduates are working in Pakistan and more than a third of clinical faculty at AKU are graduates of its own PGME programme.

All of AKU's 34 residency programmes are recognised by the College of Physicians and Surgeons in Pakistan. The University also offers advanced training through 35 fellowship programmes to senior physicians.

‘SICK MAN OF EUROPE’

UK cut off over fears about new COVID strain

LONDON - The United Kingdom was recently shut off from the rest of Europe after its closest allies cut transport ties due to fears about a new coronavirus strain, sowing chaos for families and companies just days before it exits the European Union's orbit.

France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, Ireland, Belgium, Israel and Canada were among those that shut off travel ties after Prime Minister Boris Johnson warned that a highly infectious new strain of the virus was a danger to the country.

Johnson will chair an emergency response meeting on Monday to discuss international travel, in particular the flow of freight in and out of Britain. EU officials are due to hold a meeting at 1000 GMT on coordinating their response.

France shut its border to arrivals of people and trucks from the United Kingdom, closing off one of the most important trade arteries with mainland Europe, a step Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said was surprising. "We're doing everything we can to get that restarted," Shapps told Sky. "They've said to us they want to restart the hauliers as quickly as possible."

As families and truck drivers tried to navigate the travel bans to get back home in time for

Christmas, there were fears that fresh food supplies to and from Europe would be disrupted though supermarkets have enough to cope with festive demand for now. Shellfish producers in Scotland said they had tonnes of perishable product stranded on roads

UK gilts hit a record low.

‘Sick man of Europe’

Trucks are being stacked on the M20 motorway through Kent, heading towards the ports, which is closed to normal traffic. A nearby airport will also be used to hold freight.



"Sick Man of Europe", the Daily Mirror newspaper said on its front page beside a picture of Johnson while the Sun newspaper said "French show no merci".

The closure of the Channel Tunnel and ports for onward travel to France will affect the export of goods such as fish and shell fish from Scotland to Europe, and the import of food for British supermarkets if, as expected, European drivers refuse to travel. Trucks have been told to avoid Kent to prevent any further build up of trucks.

as the French border was closed. Disruption in Britain will also snarl supplies to Ireland. Hong Kong is also due to ban all flights arriving from the United Kingdom from midnight, becoming the first city in Asia to do so. Asian nations including Japan and South Korea said they were closely monitoring the new strain. The pound fell more than 2 cents to \$1.3279 and the FTSE 100 fell 2% at the open, with travel companies such as British Airways-owner IAG tumbling 15%. The yield on 2-year

"The closure of France to UK traffic, including accompanied freight poses difficulties for UK capacity to import and export key goods during the busy Christmas period," said Andrew Opie, director of food & sustainability at the British Retail Consortium.

"While goods can enter from France, few haulage firms will be willing to send trucks and drivers across to the UK without a guarantee they can return to the EU in a timely manner."

- Courtesy by Reuters



China and Pakistan to jointly set up gene and cell technology research center

MN Report

KARACHI - The Cloud Signing Ceremony of the Sino-Pakistan International Gene and Cell Technology Research & Transformation Center Project was held recently.

The business venture between China and Pakistan by the Biotech & Biomedicine (Shenyang) Group and Dynamic Engineering and Automation (DEA) Group Pakistan for the development of Gene & Cell Technology Research & Transformation Center has further added a new drive to the collaboration between both countries in health care. During his speech, Commercial Councilor of Pakistani Embassy in China Mr Badar uz Zaman mentioned, Shenyong Biotech is a strong company specializing in pathogen detection, biological reagent, and stem cell, etcetera, while Dynamic Engineering and Automation (DEA) is in the market for the last 20 years with a strong influence both with national and foreign counterparts. The setting up of the research center

and the university will facilitate Pakistani students in their research, and it will also contribute towards Pakistan's economy, he added.

Addressing during the ceremony, Li Junyuan, Deputy Director of Belt and Road Initiative Construction Promotion Center of National Development and Reform Commission, highlighted that this alliance is a vital step for us to continue our active support in Pakistan in responding to the epidemic and improving public health care, and to make new contributions to building a closer, more beneficial and higher-quality China-Pakistan community with a shared future.

Ms Fareena Mazhar, Secretary, Board of Investment (BOI), also mentioned during her speech that China has always been a strong business partner of Pakistan. She also mentioned that Prime Minister Imran Khan is always welcoming health initiatives in Pakistan. "This venture will definitely make a visible impact in the health sector of Pakistan,

and I will nominate an official from the BOI to become a focal person for this project," she added. Chairman, Biotech, Prof Yin Xiushan, highlighted that this venture could provide technical support for the research and development of various pathogen detection kits and rapid testing equipment and effectively enhance the ability of epidemic prevention and control in Pakistan, which is of great significance.

On the occasion, Owais Mir, CEO, Dynamic Engineering and Automation (DEA), mentioned that this venture should build a high-tech communication platform between Biotech and relevant government departments, universities, and institutes in Pakistan. He assures the Chinese partners of unequivocal support and relentless efforts by the DEA to make this grand project a great success.

The cloud conference and signing ceremony were attended by officials from both China and Pakistan, two enterprises, banks, and media.

PIMA recommends closure of shopping plazas and marriage halls

MN Report

KARACHI - The Pakistan Islamic Medical Association (PIMA) has recommended the closure of shopping plazas, marriage halls, and other public gathering places to control the rapid increase in coronavirus (COVID-19) cases in the Sindh province as COVID-19 entered a more severe phase during the second wave.

were expressed by Dr Sohail Akhtar, Dr Misbah ul Aziz, Dr Fayyaz Alam, and Dr Zishan Ansari in a joint press conference held at the Karachi Press Club (KPC).

Dr Sohail Akhtar said that the second wave of COVID-19 is here after three months of a low level of cases in August of October 2020. The positivity rates from below two percent have risen to eight percent at the national level. He informed that in a few big cities, the situation is very alarming, including Karachi, with a positivity rate above 18 percent, which is not far from the dreadful situation in May-June 2020.

In Pakistan, the damage was not as much after the first surge as feared. The resultant euphoria and false sense of security after the first wave have unfortunately made everyone complacent, be it the common man or the government.

He explained that there is evidence that this second wave has come with more rapid speed in many countries of the world. In Pakistan, the rapid rise in cases and an increasing number of deaths in the last month is a stark reminder. The number of cases started increasing to more than 2000 cases per day around 20th May 2020. Within three weeks, it reached a climax of about 7000 cases per day. As of today, we have reached a dangerous 3500 cases per day and a positivity rate of 8 percent. It means that the rapid rise has to be halted rapidly to avoid a catastrophe like earlier.

Dr Misbah ul Aziz lamented that the general public, the federal government, concerned provincial authorities, and local government seems non-serious in containing the coronavirus during the severe second wave as compared to the past. He observed that the situation would go from bad to worse if preventive measures are not taken on time as most public, and private sector hospitals have already been facing a shortage of beds to accommodate more patients. He stressed the need to implement standard operating procedures (SOPs) and ban all kinds of public gatherings across Pakistan, including Sindh, to control the further spread of the coronavirus.

Dr Fayyaz Alam urged the federal government to stop behaving like a stepmother to the people of Karachi and announced a health card for Karachities as well. He said that Karachi is the country's economic hub, and citizens and healthcare workers of the city should be given a health insurance card.



No evidence of UK’s new ...
Continued from front page

"We are looking at European, Chinese, and even Russian vaccine options, but it would be a mix and match for us, and we would acquire it from more than one source for our people," he disclosed.

Commenting on the re-opening of educational institutions in January 2021, he said he could understand Sindh's apprehensions regarding the opening of educational institutions as the ratio of positivity is very high at the moment, and there is no evidence available of the second wave of COVID-19 slowing down. He added that a final decision about opening educational intuitions from January 11 or not would be taken in the meeting of provincial and federal health ministers in the first week of January 2021.

Another infectious diseases expert from AKUH, Dr Faisal Mahmood, said almost all the doctors in Pakistan were now seeing repeat infections of the coronavirus, adding that he has personally seen 12 to 15 cases of re-infections at the AKUH, saying people with re-infections are coming with both mild and severe symptoms. He maintained that despite slight changes in the genetic code of the coronavirus as reported by scientists in the United Kingdom and other countries, the coronavirus had still not become more virulent and lethal as it was being perceived by people, adding that all the effective vaccines would remain potent and helpful in prevention despite minor changes in its genetic material.

"I would insist that it is the behavior of humans that is making the coronavirus more lethal, and not the virus itself. If we continue to take precautions, they will remain protected from the virus," Dr Faisal

Mahmood added.

Prof Sohail Akhtar deplored that all political parties of the country acted indifferently when the pandemic started, adding that people should not wait for the vaccine as it would take time to get the vaccine to reach Pakistan. "We should try to live with COVID-19. Precautions, preventive measures, and following SOPs should be our first priority," he added.

Medical bodies demand ...
Continued from front page

Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) should be restored immediately. They said that after the 18th Amendment, education and health departments had been devolved to the provinces by the federal government. The PMC, which was formed by the present government after winding up the PMDC, had decided to hold the pre-entry test under a uniform policy and that was why for the first time, the pre-entry tests were conducted by the federal government under the aegis of the commission. They said the students who had not studied the federal board’s syllabus in Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, and Balochistan did not get the required numbers in the pre-entry test while those who had studied the federal syllabus naturally performed better. The office-bearers said that 68pc to 70pc students of Sindh had been affected in terms of marking when compared with their Punjab counterparts. They said the students were neither provided even carbon copies of answer sheets nor keys of their answers. They said that some students were told that their results would be revised, but it would not make much difference. They conceded that the PMA should have moved

the court of law prior to the tests in order to get a stay order. They said that now unsuccessful students` seats would be offered to those qualified for them regardless of their provincial domiciles under the uniform policy. Questioning the PMC`s test, they said the exercise had undermined the future of thousands of students in Sindh and added that since it was a uniform policy, any student qualifying in the tests with required numbers would be able to get a seat in any medical college in any province regardless of his/her district domicile. Supporting the Sindh ministers` arguments on the issue, they said the pre-entry tests should be conducted by respective medical colleges and universities. Calling for cancellation of the tests, they said provincial colleges and universities should hold tests as had been practiced in the past. They said that it was not the federal government`s domain to hold a pre-entry test. Covid precautions They also expressed concern over the non-provision of safety tools to paramedics, doctors and nurses who were performing duties during the coronavirus situation in Sindh. They said that if they were not protected, the entire health system of Sindh would collapse. They said that those health workers could not be left alone. They condemned the attack on Khairpur hospital medical superintendent, Dr Kaleemullah Memon, by some extortionists. The suspects had demanded extortion from him failing which he was attacked, they added. They demanded the deployment of Rangers in all hospitals to provide protection to doctors and paramedics. They threatened to launch a protest if the attackers were not arrested.

PMA centre announces ...
Continued from page 02

were marked absent. Students and parents are protesting against the exam.

The meeting unanimously demanded the government to abolish the PMC and restore the PMDC. The PMA believes that the government should spend more on preventing diseases rather than the curative side.

COVID-19 takes lives of ...
Continued from page 02

in Punjab, 48 in Sindh, 32 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, five in Balochistan, three in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and one in Gilgit-Baltistan, respectively. In Sindh, a total of 54 healthcare workers died due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) so far, including 48 doctors and six other medical staff.

The statistics said nine paramedical staff members, nine nurses, three dispensers, one pharmacist, and five others died of COVID-19 so far in the country.

Diabetes is neglected in times ...
Continued from page 03

Another serious diabetologist Dr Muhammad Saif-ul-Haq and a young orthopedic surgeon Dr Shaheer Ali had a debate on what should be the best course of treatment for the people with diabetic foot ulcers as Dr Saif said 50 to 60 percent of the lower limbs of the patients could be saved with the help of antibiotics and other interventions.

The conference was also addressed by the Secretary-General of NADEP Erum Ghafoor, Dr Asher Fawwad, Dr Khalid Abdul Basit, Dr Riaz Memon, Dr Zafar Abbassi, Ms Barbara Eichorst, and several others.

CEO SHCC attends NCOC ...
Continued from page 03

the data to be shared with the NCOC.

The Directorate of Licensing and Accreditation, SHCC, completed the inspection of four healthcare facilities for conducting COVID-19 tests. Three healthcare facilities in Karachi, including the Mehdi A. Manji Laboratory, Al-Mustafa Medical Centre, and Medicare Cardiac and General Hospital, have given the approval for conducting COVID-19 testing.

Home department instructs ...
Continued from page 04

enforcement agencies are empowered under section 3(1) of the said acts to take action on any act contravention of this order or directions/notices issued there-under.

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CHK faces a shortage of critical care experts to cater to COVID-19 emergency patients

MN Report
KARACHI - Sindh's largest teaching hospital, known as the Dr Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital Karachi (CHK), has been facing an acute

grave trouble in dealing with COVID-19 emergency patients. More than 100 posts of doctors, 150 posts of staff nurses, 150 posts of exchange, etc. There is an urgent need to hire critical care experts, pulmonologists, respiratory therapists, nurses, and paramedics to minimize the



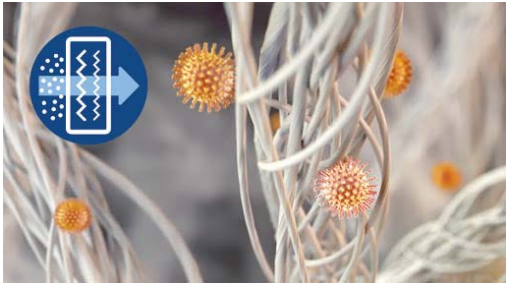
shortage of critical care experts and other support staff for the past several years, while the Sindh government has failed to fill vacant posts despite the spike in coronavirus (COVID-19) cases across the Sindh province. There are 3,000 sanctioned posts in the CHK, out of which 1000 posts are lying vacant, including doctors, nurses, paramedics, support staff, and administrative staff. The shortage of staff has badly affected this healthcare facility's performance and landed the administration in

paramedical staff, five posts of grade-15, 100 posts of sweepers, and other administrative seats have been lying vacant in this teaching hospital for the last several years. Similarly, about 450 posts of non-technical and support staff from grade-1 to grade-14 are lying vacant for several years in various sections including hospitality services, kitchen, transport, general store, laundry, workshop, electrical, mechanical, ward boy, wooden, security, ministerial staff, ancillary staff, telephone

deaths happening in hospitals due to the coronavirus. Many deaths due to the coronavirus are occurring because of lung failure. The hospital administration urgently needs critical care experts and intensive care specialists for the intensive care unit (ICU), and high dependency unit (HDU) established to cater to COVID-19 patients. Additional Medical Superintendent, CHK, Dr Ismail Memon, was not available to make any comments.

Philips steps up its innovation efforts in air purification for healthy living indoors

MN Report
KARACHI - Royal Philips, a global leader in health technology, is stepping up its innovation efforts in air purification towards helping more people make the change to living healthier lives indoors. more than 100 scientists, doctors, and engineers working in air purification, Philips has a long-standing heritage in health technology and has become a global leader in air purification. As part of this journey, Philips has launched its latest home care innovation in Pakistan: the new Philips Air Purifier 2000i Series to help improve clean air delivery that keeps pollutants, bacteria, and viruses at bay. Across the region, including in Pakistan, urban areas are frequently plagued by smog. Similar to last year, Lahore and Islamabad continue to



be shrouded by heavy smog in 2020, which has taken a toll on people's personal health. With more people staying indoors to protect themselves from the polluted outdoor air, it is important to ensure that consumers take steps to ensure that our indoor air is clean and healthy. "In Pakistan, people are increasingly prioritizing their health and those of their loved ones. At Philips, we believe that empowering people to take control of their own health is important, and these can be addressed with innovative technologies," said Nicholas Lee, Personal Health Leader, Philips ASEAN Pacific. "With the Philips Air Purifiers, we want to provide our customers with the latest intelligent, personalized solutions that can help them breathe easier by creating healthy indoor spaces."

Sindh cabinet members reject medical entry test results

MN Report
KARACHI - Sindh cabinet members Dr Azra Pechoho, Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, and Saeed Ghani have rejected the results of the MDCAT entry test for admissions in medical colleges conducted under the Pakistan Medical Commission (PMC) and said that the test was based on the curriculum of the federal education board which is sheer injustice with the students of the Sindh province.



The provincial ministers have demanded the federal government that the entry test's authority should be given to the provincial governments. Addressing a joint press conference at the Sindh Assembly Auditorium, Provincial Health Minister, Dr Azra Pechoho, Sindh Information Minister, Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, and Education Minister, Saeed Ghani, said that the federation had overstepped its authority on provincial matters. They said that the Sindh government had raised objections on the formation of the Pakistan Medical Commission (PMC), and now our position has been vindicated due to the poor arrangement of the MDCAT. Sindh Health Minister, Dr Azra Pechuho, added that the PMC was formed without taking the provinces into confidence, and its bill was passed in the joint sitting of the Parliament by bulldozing the opposition parties. Dr Azra Pechuho said that she had sent several letters to the federal government regarding the apprehension of the Sindh province on the PMC. Various universities had also filed petitions challenging the formation of the PMC in the courts and adding that the matter is still unresolved. Provincial Health Minister, Dr Azra Pechoho, said that it was the provinces' responsibility to conduct the entrance tests for admission into medical colleges, adding that the federation was violating the rights of the provinces. She said that the Pakistan Medical Commission's mandate was to regulate and maintain the quality of the health sector in the country and not interfere in the administrative affairs of the provincial health departments. The Provincial Health Minister was of the view that the MDCAT was taken under inappropriate arrangements. "No answer key was uploaded. The merit list was uploaded, and later it was removed. The merit list was uploaded a second time, but it was also full of errors," she said, adding that no answer key was uploaded. Sindh Health Minister said that the future of

Continued on Page 10

Pakistan Red Crescent facilitates repatriation of 25 Bangladeshi detainees

MN Report

KARACHI - The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) facilitated the voluntary repatriation of 25 Bangladeshis detained in Karachi jails, who were sent back to their home country. The detainees were charged under the Foreigners Act and had already completed their respective sentences. The PRCS, on the request of the Sindh Home Department via Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamabad, arranged the voluntary repatriation of these Bangladeshis to their home country under its Restoring

Family Links (RFL) program. The International Organization of Migration (IOM), on the request of the PRCS, extended financial assistance by arranging air tickets and repatriation support, which includes \$250 in cash each, non-food item kits, COVID-19 tests, and transportation and accommodation support in Bangladesh for the 16 detainees out of 25. Later, the Deputy High Commissioner of Bangladesh in Karachi arranged air tickets for the remaining nine detainees. The PRCS organized a

farewell ceremony for the repatriation of Bangladeshi detainees at the District Jail, Malir. In his remarks on occasion, PRCS Chairman, Abrar ul Haq said the RFL is a key program under which the PRCS endeavors to restore contacts between family members on humanitarian grounds. He said the PRCS is in a unique position to undertake such initiatives due to its extensive reach and potential to assist people who are separated from their families, wherever they may be. In her remarks, Shahnaz S Hamid, Chairperson,



PRCS Sindh Branch, commended the officials of the RFL Department of PRCS-Sindh for exploring and highlighting this important issue. She thanked the Deputy High Commissioner of Bangladesh in Karachi for assisting in arranging visas and providing air tickets for repatriation to the nine detainees. She also lauded the PRCS National Headquarters Islamabad's important role in responding promptly and expediting the matter with other humanitarian partners. Chairperson, PRCS Sindh, appreciated the IOM's activities and thanked them for providing financial assistance in arranging air tickets for the repatriation of Bangladeshi nationals. Shahnaz Hamid uttered

that the PRCS gifted a travel kit to the 25 released persons as a token of friendship. In addition, 200 blankets have been handed over to Malir Jail for deserving prisoners. In her address, she added that during the first wave of COVID-19, the PRCS, with the support of the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC), had distributed a large number of coronavirus prevention items, including masks, sanitizers, hygiene kits, and more to more than 19,000 inmates at 29 jails in Sindh. The ceremony was also attended by Provincial Secretary, PRCS Sindh, Kanwar Waseem, SSP District Jail Malir, Muhammad Aslam Malik, and DSP District Jail Malir, Syed Arshad Hussain.

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



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Sindh cabinet members reject ...

Continued from page 09

thousands of students of the Sindh province had been placed at stake. Sindh Health Minister Dr Azra Pechoho said that the Sindh government had conducted systematic medical entrance tests at the divisional level in the past. In order to make the previous test transparent, the candidates were also provided with a carbon copy and answer key after the test.

The Sindh Provincial Health Minister said that there were significant irregularities in the test results while the candidates' names and results were different. She said that 14 questions were given in an unclear and ambiguous manner in the test. The provincial curriculum was also not taken into account, which made it difficult for Sindh's candidates.

Due to the results of candidates in rural areas, there will be many health services complications in the coming days, and Sindh, especially rural areas, in particular, will face a shortage of doctors.

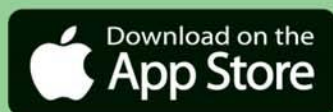
She said that the candidates and their parents have also challenged the result of the MDCAT in the courts. She demanded that the provinces be given their constitutional authority under the 18th amendment so that the future of the youth could be secured by conducting medical entry tests at the provincial level.



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Sindh becomes first province to devise strategy for COVID-19 vaccination

MN Report
KARACHI - The Sindh Government has finalized the administrative strategy to introduce the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine in the province and nominated all districts. Additional Deputy Commissioners (ADCs-I) as focal persons.

tertiary hospital/DHQs, will immediately start working on nominating focal persons at each hospital/health facility designated to administer COVID-19 vaccine under intimation to the undersigned. The facilities designated for vaccine administration must be fully equipped with the hospital/tertiary hospital), notify nurses/skilled vaccinators, who would be administering the COVID-19 vaccine with the AEFI management, identify and enlist healthcare workers (staff working in ICU, HDU, RRTs, etc.) to be vaccinated in the first phase to coordination with



It has been decided by the competent authority that the Additional Deputy Commissioners (ADC-I), being the focal persons of polio eradication, will also act as focal persons for the administration of the COVID-19 vaccine (as and when introduced). The ADC-1, in coordination with district health officers (DHOs) and medical superintendents of respective

necessary facilities to smoothly conduct the process. Private hospitals with proper vaccination storage systems may be identified for the vaccination purpose, and the focal person for each hospital may be nominated under intimation to the undersigned. The designated space for vaccination/adult vaccination center (AVC) at each health facility (i.e., DHQ

the Director General Health Services, Sindh. Ensure training of the human resource involved in vaccine administration, vaccination protocols/SOPs, AEFI, management, infection prevention and control (IPC), and use of recording and reporting tools on prescribed formats (entry on dashboard regarding vaccinated persons, i.e., name, age CNIC, and type of vaccine, etc.

Dr Asifa Akhtar chosen as recipient of Germany's Leibniz Prize

MN Report
KARACHI - Pakistan-born molecular biologist Asifa Akhtar has been recently chosen as one of the recipients of Germany's most important research



award, Leibniz Prize. Akhtar works for Germany's Max Planck Society. She was its first international female vice president for the biology and medicine section. She will get the award in 2021. The Max Planck Society is Germany's most successful research organisation. It was established in 1948 and has since had 18 Nobel laureates emerge from the ranks of its scientists. It is on par with the best and most prestigious research institutions worldwide. Dr Akhtar is being awarded for her groundbreaking cell-biological work on the mechanisms of epigenetic gene regulation. The award includes €2.5 million in prize money. She is among 10 scientists to have been selected for this important prize for 2021. "Congratulations, Dr Asifa! You make both Pakistan and Germany extremely proud with your outstanding contributions to science!" read a congratulatory note for Akhtar by the German Consulate General in Karachi.

'Thank you coronavirus helpers' becomes Google's Top 2020 search trend in Pakistan

MN Report
KARACHI - The coronavirus outbreak, Google Classroom and PSL 2020 were on the minds of Pakistani consumers this year, according to Google's list of the Pakistan top trending searches in 2020, released recently. These search trends don't reflect the most-searched for words and phrases across Google, but rather those that saw high spikes in traffic over a sustained period of time during the year, as compared with 2019. This paints a more accurate picture of consumers' changing interests during the year than Google's top searches would. The lists of top Global search



trends had a similar set of results. In the Pakistan, Pakistan vs England Cricket match was the No. 1 top trending search, followed by Coronavirus. In order, the top trending searches of 2020 were: Pakistan vs England, Thank you Coronavirus helpers, Marvi Sarmad, Coronavirus update, Coronavirus symptoms, Google Classroom and PSL 2020.