

WHO CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19) SITUATION REPORT-69

(Data as reported by national
authorities AT 10:00 CET 29
March 2020)

SITUATION IN NUMBERS total (new) cases in last 24 hours

Globally

634 835 confirmed (63 159)

29 957 deaths (3464)

Western Pacific Region

102 803 confirmed (1343)

3626 deaths (34)

European Region

361 031 confirmed (36 688)

21 493 deaths (2753)

South-East Asia Region

3709 confirmed (624)

139 deaths (25)

Eastern Mediterranean Region

42 777 confirmed (3846)

2668 deaths (160)

Region of the Americas

120 798 confirmed (20 484)

1973 deaths (488)

African Region

3005 confirmed (174)

51 deaths (04)



A vendor selling facemasks waits for customers during a government-imposed nationwide lockdown as a preventive measure against the spread of the Covid-19 coronavirus, in Islamabad. *DAWN/AFP*

Global News

- Global coronavirus cases exceed 684,000: Johns Hopkins University.
- US virus deaths could reach 200,000, top medical expert warns as medical supplies run short
- Singapore reports 42 new coronavirus cases, taking tally to 844.
- From facial-recognition to phone tracking, Russia is using the coronavirus pandemic to test authoritarian tech.
- UK should be prepared for significant period of coronavirus lockdown.
- Trump says social distancing guidelines will stay through April.

Global Response

- Pakistan calls for lifting lockdown in occupied Kashmir following reports of virus cases.
- German minister commits suicide after 'virus crisis worries'.
- NGO in Costa Rica turns van into handwashing station.
- President Xi Jinping inspects work resumption in Zhejiang.
- Spain tightens its lockdown after new one-day death-toll high of 838.
- China's circulation enterprises steadily resumes operation, retail prices fall.
- Boxer Amir Khan to donate Rs40m to Pakistan for coronavirus relief.
- Nigeria's fashion designers take on coronavirus with glitter and rhinestones.
- China's Xi seen in public for first time during outbreak without face mask.

Local News

- 27 members staying at Raiwind Tableeghi Markaz test positive.
- KP government takes back inquiry against doctor who wore plastic bag over head.
- Testing to increase when kits arrive, says Balochistan CM.
- Lockdown to continue for another week or more, says CM Jam Kamal.
- All people dying from respiratory diseases are not Covid-19 positive, clarifies Faisal Edhi.
- NDMA asked to provide PPE to media personnel who report from quarantine, emergency centres.
- Chinese strain of coronavirus has more potent chromosomes than Pakistani one: Dr Atta.

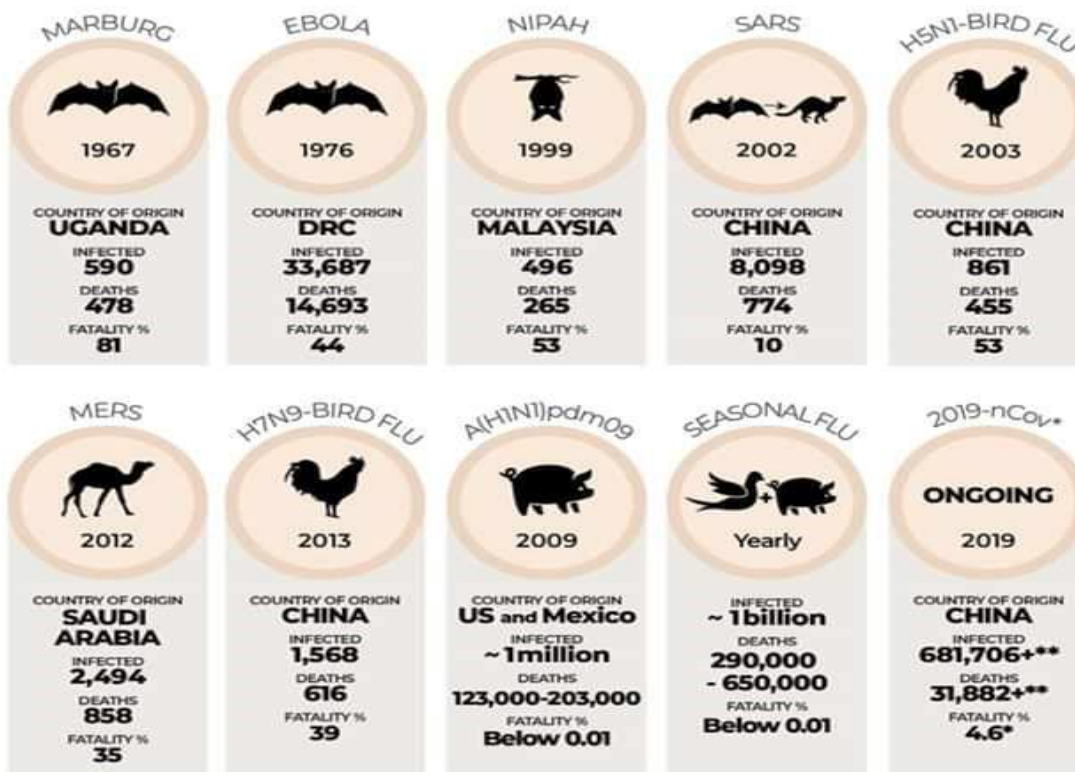


An elderly man plays cricket on a road in Islamabad. *DAWN/AFP*

Local Response

- Punjab govt. relief package not for BISP beneficiaries: Awan
- KP govt. quarantines 3 close contacts of man killed by coronavirus in Abbottabad.
- The indigenously designed diagnostic kit would cost a fraction of internationally purchased kits.
- Intiaz Store in Korangi sealed after commissioner reviews measures taken by stores in Karachi.
- Doctors and paramedics in Punjab to be given one month's extra salary as bonus.
- Petrol pumps to remain open from 8am-5pm in Sindh
- Fake news on coronavirus: Punjab stops un-authorized officials from talking to press.

GLOBAL OUTBREAKS Worst epidemics in recent history



*Origins yet to be determined

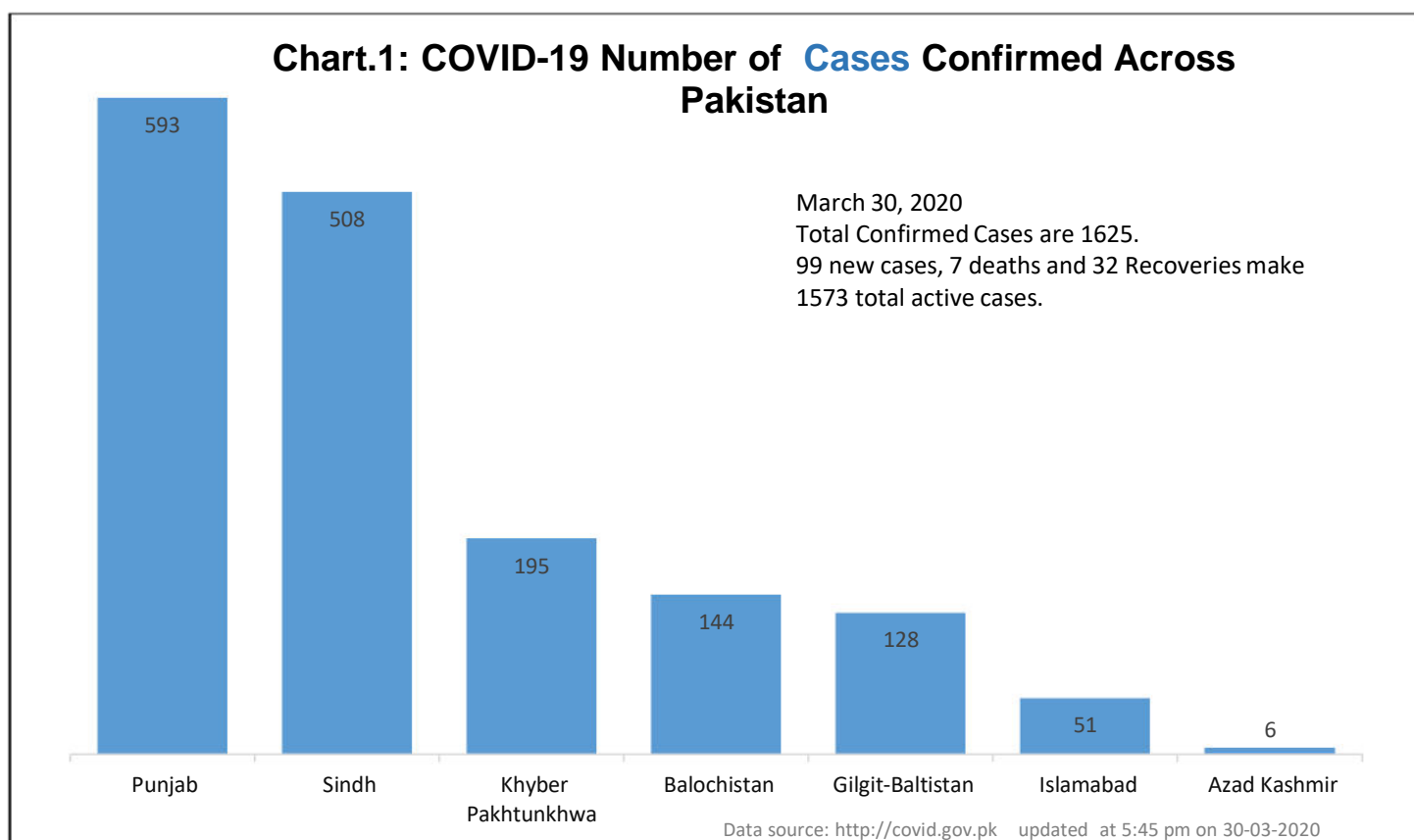
**Approximate figures as of March 29, 2020

Source: WHO | JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY | Last updated: 11:30 GMT, March 21, 2020



INTERACTIVE: Global epidemics March 29, 2020 [Al Jazeera]

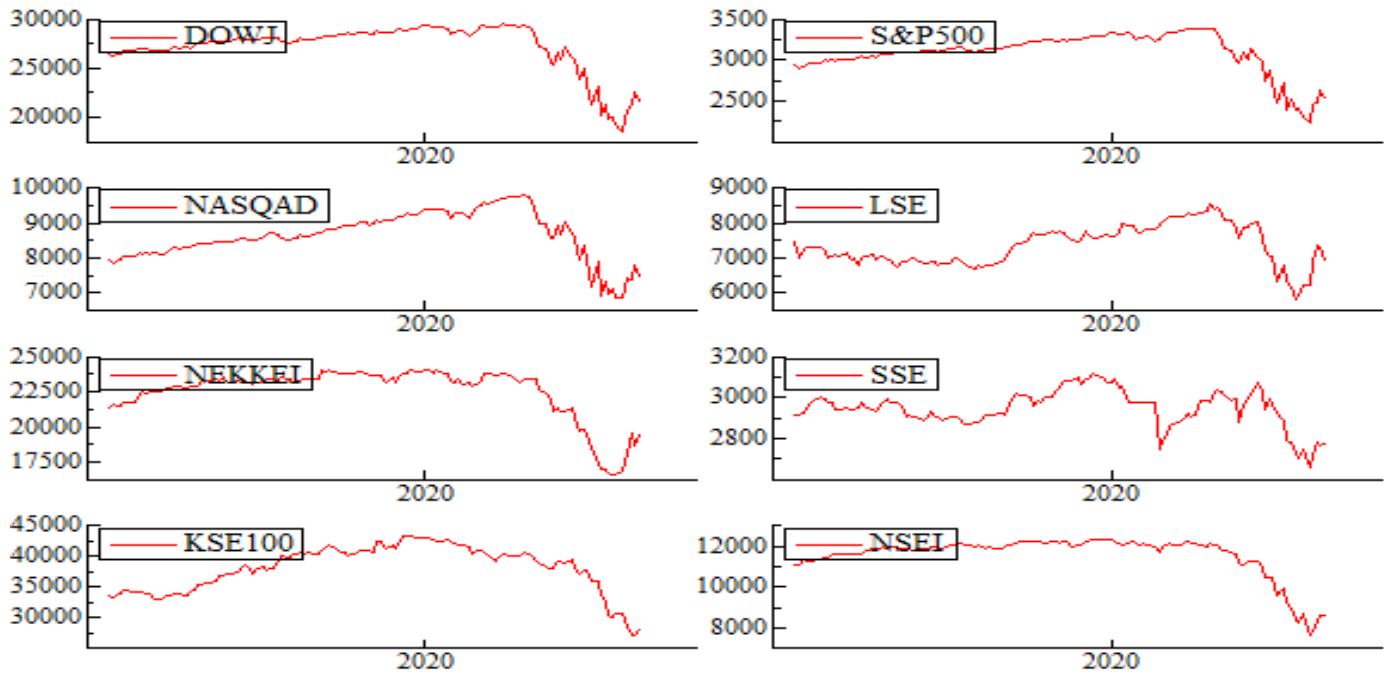
According to the official sources (NIH¹ daily report), during last 24 hours, 99 new cases are confirmed by different laboratories, bringing the national tally to 1,625. One death is reported in KP, one death is reported in Punjab and three deaths are reported in Sindh in last 24 hours. Total deaths due to COVID-19 are 18 across country while 32 recoveries are reported. Current impact of the disease in Pakistan is declared as **High** by NIH, Pakistan. see Chart.1.



This is your wakeup call (*Phil Collins*): Since the COVID-19 outbreak economists are predicting recession followed by pandemic; because the world is on the verge of complete lockdown businesses have shrunk down and demands have become specific period. Though speculative stock markets are generally assumed to be indicator of economy, a gauge to measure boom in the economy. It is observed that world leading markets DOW JONES(USA), S&P500(USA), NASDAQ(USA), LSE(UK), NEKKEI (JAPAN), SSE(CHINA), NSEI(INDIA) and KSE100(PAKISTAN) nosedived after the COVID-19 hit, see Chart.2 (Daily data span 8th Oct 2019 to 27th March 2020).

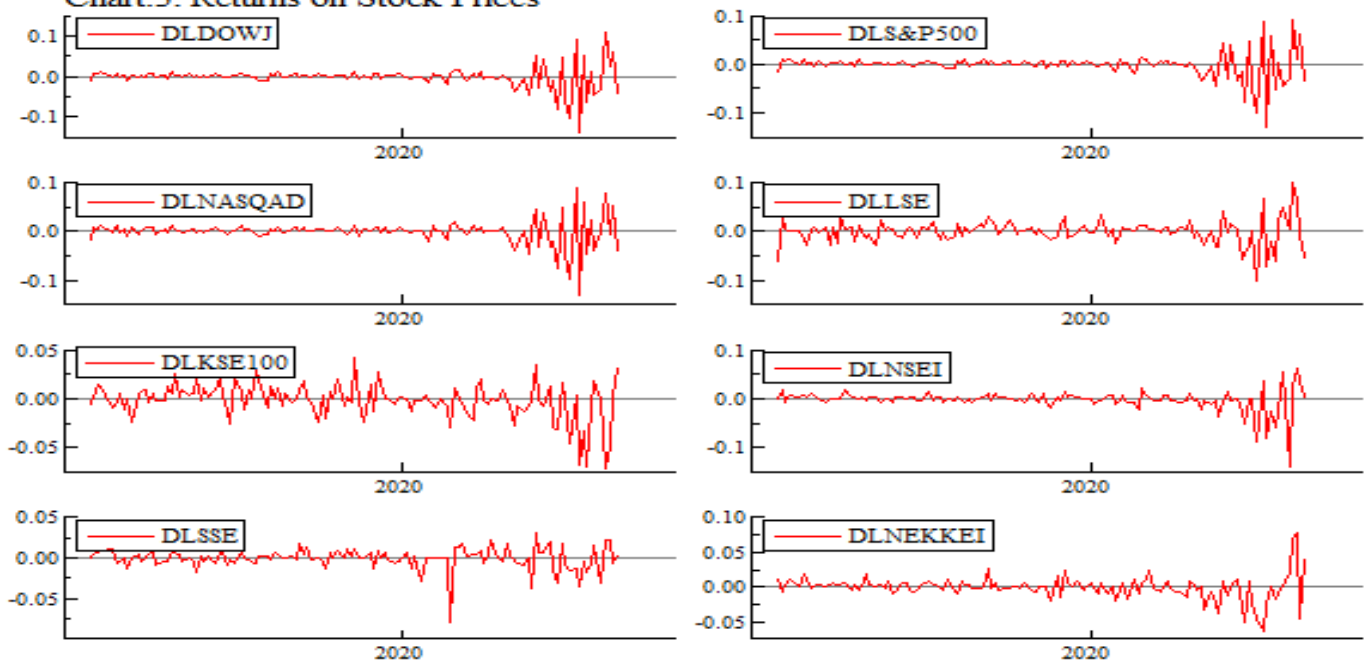
¹ National Institute of Health, Pakistan.

Chart.2. Distinct STOCK Markets



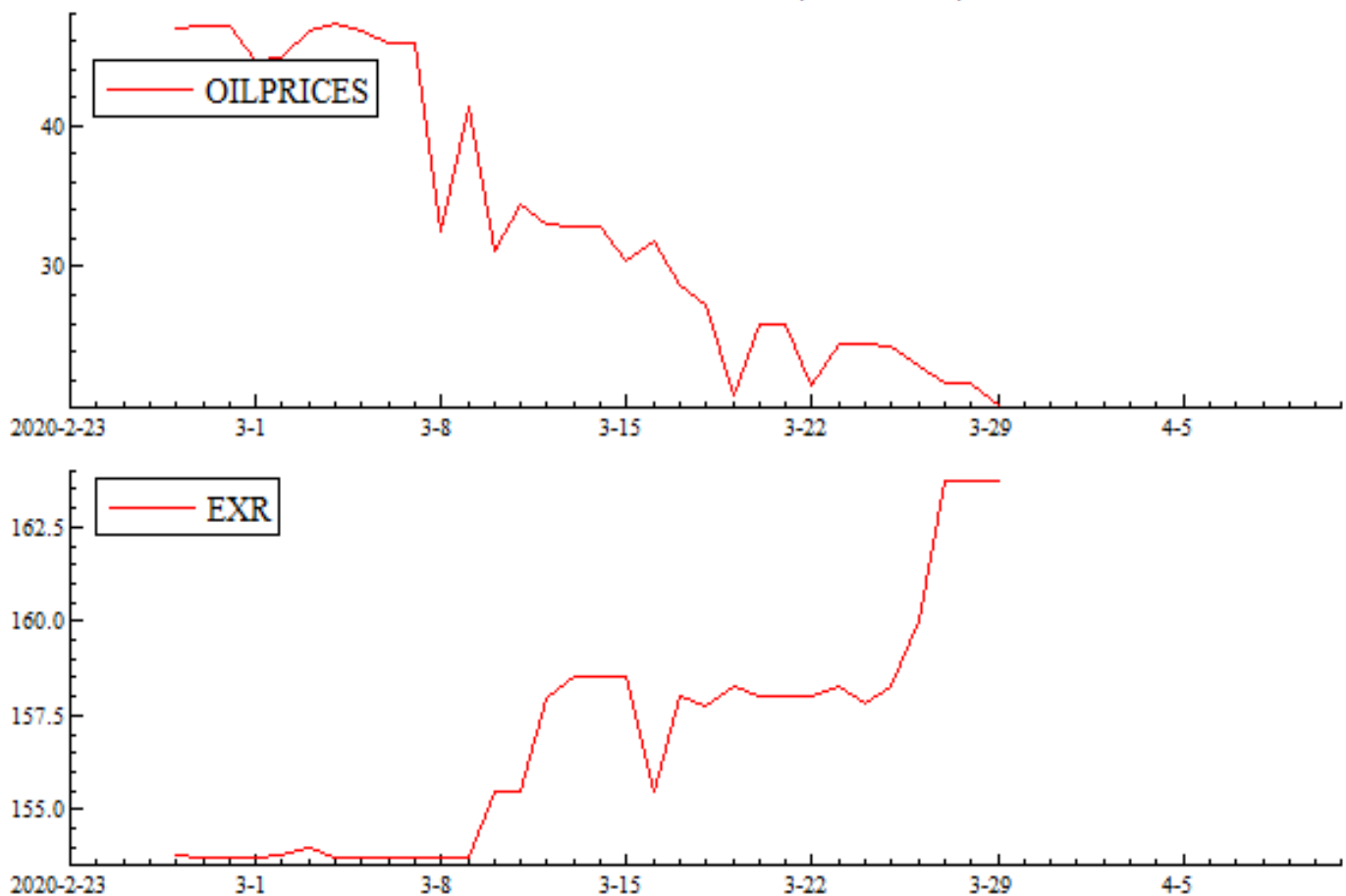
The returns seem highly volatile after the COVID-19 hit, especially more volatile during the month of March 2020, see Chart.3. These are not good signs, stock markets are sensitive to the prevailing information. A bad news causes more volatility than the good news of same magnitude. The way COVID-19 hit the world, there is a probable chance of recession.

Chart.3: Returns on Stock Prices



PSX (Pakistan Stock Exchange) is one of the best performing stock markets in the region, it attracts FPI (Foreign Portfolio Investment). It remained attractive to foreign investments during the so called war-on-terror. Many times in past it has shown capacity to retrieve and recover the loss, it sustained the worst ever recession of 2009. There is good chance that market will survive the COVID-19 hit. A substantial portion of Pakistan imports comprises petroleum products which are essential for growth and development period. Recently the oil prices (USD/barrel) are at its minimum and show further downward trend, see Chart.4 (Daily data span 27th Feb 2020 to 29th March 2020). It can help Pakistan recover/survive possible recession amid COVID-19 outbreak. But during the period of pandemic the exchange rate (PKR/USD) is at its highest ever which can cause a negative effect and can lessen the benefit of low oil prices. There is a need to rationalize the Exchange Rate for the course correction to mitigate the effects of possible recession.

Chart.4: OIL PRICES AND EXCHANGE RATE (PKR/USD)



Experts' View

A recently issued bulletin by Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), has highlighted the large share (56 percent) of vulnerable employment in the total employment. It says 71 per cent of the women and 52 per cent of the men are in vulnerable employment. It can be safely presumed therefore that panic buying will affect more than 50 percent of our employed labour force...[T]he irrational public response to pandemics may cause significant harm to the poor who are already battling with multiple deprivations. According to the PIDE bulletin-1, the coronavirus is likely to add 20 million people to the current number of poor (55 million) if the impacts tend to be the low scenario and to 70 million people if the effects loom large. The lack of coordination between the public and private actors may exacerbate the adversities stemming from COVID-19. **(Lubna Naz, TNS)**

The federal government's response to the pandemic reflects the abysmal condition of our health system. It was far too slow to grasp the gravity of the problem and enforce necessary precautions. Its confusion regarding key measures such as imposition of a lockdown and suspension of congregational prayers displayed a frustrating absence of leadership. A silver lining through this has been the proactive response of the Sindh government. Although the public health sector in Sindh is historically neglected, the Sindh government's approach to the current crisis has been decisive, systematic and evidence-based. In addition to the enforcement of precautionary measures, provisions were made in Sindh to address the shortage of hospital beds, facilities and equipment. This has shown that if the Sindh government chooses to address a problem decisively, it possesses the capability to do so and to some extent, can even muster the resources to do so. **(Sara Malkani, DAWN)**

Beyond survival, work shapes our sense of self. The thought of being without it induces existential terror. **(Josh Cohen, The Guardian)**

Timely treatment is of utmost importance and can save the patient's life. If someone has a sore throat (and mild fever), the first line of defence is to gargle with warm water laced with salt and lemon juice. Preventative measures are frequent washing of hands with soap for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizers and stay away from other people, maintaining a distance of at least 1.5 meters if avoidance is not possible. Cover nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing and get rid of the tissue immediately. Stay at home if at all possible and don't receive guests. **(Dr. A.Q.Khan, The News)**

Experts' Opinion

This pandemic combines an unfortunate triple jeopardy: rapid loss of human lives, fast economic recession, and structural disruption in efforts to combat global warming. Never before had these three factors coincided to determine the gravity of a pandemic. This year was regarded as critical for international climate action, centered on COP-26 in Glasgow, but the pandemic has distracted world attention. Perhaps Covid-19 will forever change our globalized lifestyles — something climate change has so far not been able to do, despite its seriousness. **(Ali Tauqeer Sheikh, DAWN)**

It's understandable if you're feeling worried about the coronavirus. But fear and stigma make a difficult situation worse. For example there are reports emerging from around the world of individuals, particularly of Asian descent, being subject to verbal or even physical abuse. Public health emergencies are stressful times for everyone affected. It's important to stay informed and to be kind and supportive to each other. Words matter, and using language that perpetuates existing stereotypes can drive people away from getting tested and taking the actions they need to protect themselves and their communities. **(UNICEF)**

World Health Organization

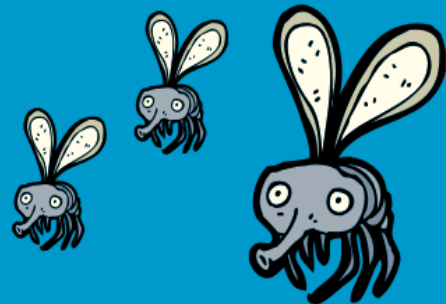
Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) advice for the public: Myth busters

To date there has been no information nor evidence to suggest that the new coronavirus could be transmitted by mosquitoes.

The new coronavirus is a respiratory virus which spreads primarily through droplets generated when an infected person coughs or sneezes, or through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose.

To protect yourself, clean your hands frequently with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water. Also, avoid close contact with anyone who is coughing and sneezing.

FACT:
The new coronavirus
CANNOT
be transmitted through
mosquito bites



#Coronavirus

#COVID19



A road in Bhara Kahu being disinfected with chlorine water.

Photo by: Muhammad Asim/ DAWN

COVID-19 READS

- 1. Young-The Inadvertent Agents for Spreading COVID-19**
<https://www.pide.org.pk/pdf/PIDE-Covid-Blog-8.pdf>
- 2. Coronavirus and the Plight of Laborer**
<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2186940/6-coronavirus-plight-labourer/?amp=1>
- 3. COVID-19 and the Question of Religious Sentiment**
<https://dailytimes.com.pk/writer/fahd-zulfiqar/>
- 4. Tackle climate crisis and poverty with zeal of Covid-19 fight, scientists urge**
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/28/coronavirus-tackle-climate-crisis-and-poverty-with-zeal-of-covid-19-fight-scientists-urge>
- 5. COVID-19: Social distancing may affect one's mental health, experts say**
<https://www.daytondailynews.com/news/local/covid-social-distancing-may-affect-one-mental-health-experts-say/n3mH08cl8FaoOFm5fMjJ9O/>

6. **Understanding the Economic Shock of Coronavirus**
<https://hbr.org/2020/03/understanding-the-economic-shock-of-coronavirus>
7. **COVID-19 Economic Stimulus: Get Money to People Faster with Digital Dollars**
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/lawrencewintermeyer/2020/03/30/covid-19-economic-stimulus-get-money-to-people-faster-with-digital-dollars/#3fbd618b31fc>
8. **Class and COVID: How the less affluent face double risks**
<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2020/03/27/class-and-covid-how-the-less-affluent-face-double-risks/>
9. **COVID-19 poses a dramatic threat to life in conflict zones**
<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/03/covid-19-poses-a-dramatic-threat-to-life-in-conflict-zones/>
10. **Rightwing think tanks use fear of Covid-19 to fight bans on plastic bags**
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/mar/27/rightwing-thinktanks-use-fear-of-covid-19-to-fight-bans-on-plastic-bags>
11. **The coronavirus could devastate poor countries**
<https://www.economist.com/leaders/2020/03/26/the-coronavirus-could-devastate-poor-countries>
12. **Conflict regions vulnerable to COVID-19 catastrophe**
<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/conflict-regions-vulnerable-to-covid-19-catastrophe/1782833>

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