



WHO CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19) SITUATION REPORT-112

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

Total (new) cases in
last 24 hours

Globally

4 006 257 cases (88 891)

278 892 deaths (4531)

Western Pacific Region

160 910 cases (1248)

6493 deaths (23)

European Region

1 731 606 cases (23 660)

156 603 deaths (1051)

South-East Asia Region

100 881 cases (5567)

3481 deaths (125)

Eastern Mediterranean Region

265 164 cases (9436)

9013 deaths (135)

Region of the Americas

1 702 451 cases (47 073)

101 874 deaths (3151)

African Region

44 533 cases (1907)

1415 deaths (46)



Traffic jam seen on Bank Road in Rawalpindi's Saddar area after the market reopened on Monday—

Photo by Mohammad Asim

Global News

- Wuhan to test entire population after new virus cluster: state media.
- There's a lot that doctors don't know about coronavirus.
- Indian trains steadily resume operations even as virus cases surge.
- UK's Covid-19 death toll tops 38,000, worst in Europe.
- Coronavirus lockdowns could spark rise in HIV infections, experts warn.
- US says Chinese hacking vaccine research: reports.

Global Response

- India's services sector plunges after virus lockdown in big blow to GDP.
- Dr Fauci to warn US Senate of 'needless suffering and death'.
- WHO hails 'global progress' on coronavirus but warns of second wave.
- China says it is not yet the time to relax coronavirus measures.
- All mosques in Iran to reopen temporarily today.
- Elon Musk defies order to stay closed, says Tesla will resume operations.

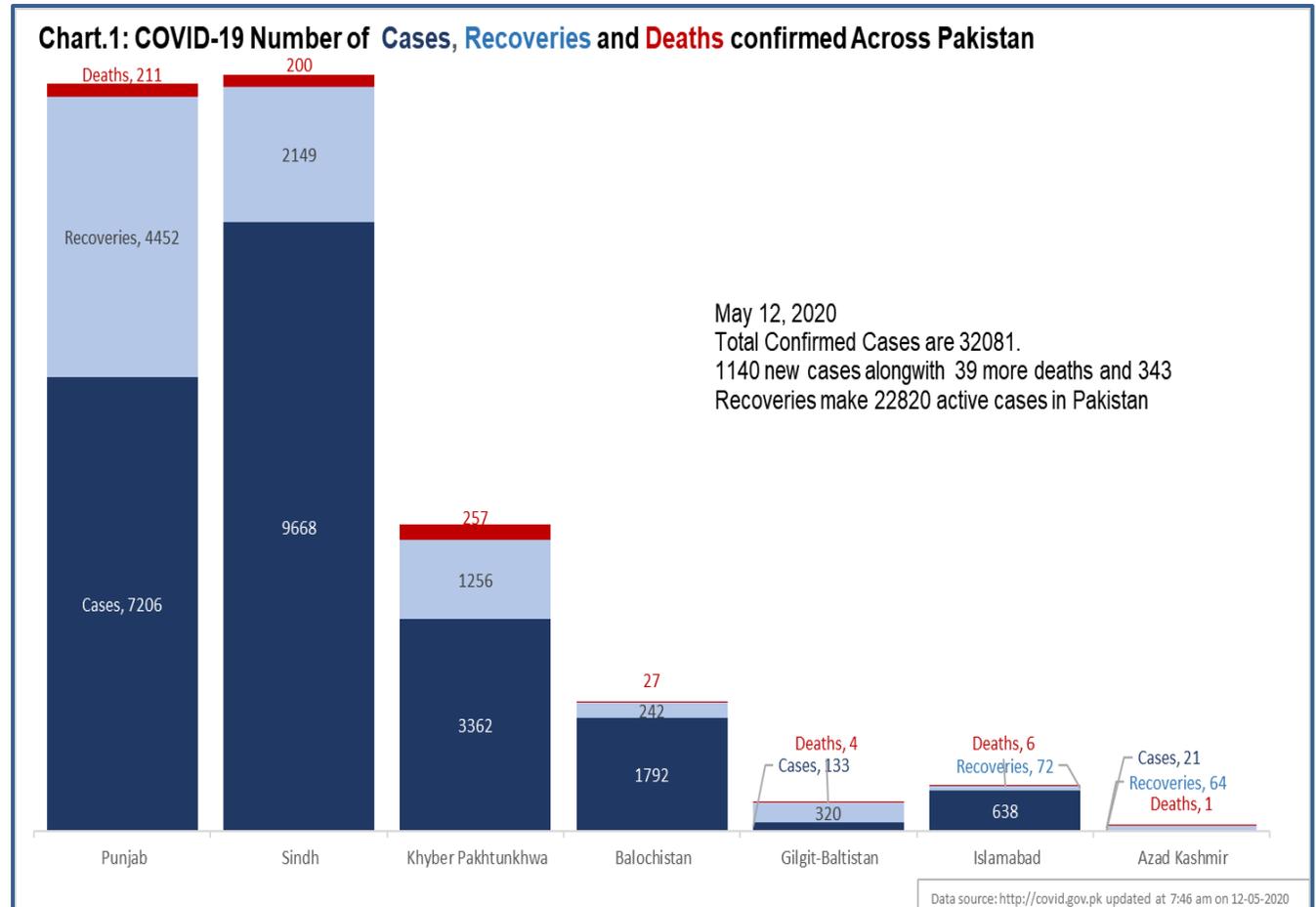
Local News

- Debt relief of \$2 bn: Pakistan receives draft MoU for signing from G20 countries.
- Opposition, govt discuss coronavirus situation during Senate session.
- Corona now aiming at journalists, media workers; 54 tested positive.
- Recession is coming,' warns FM Qureshi.
- 343 more people recover from coronavirus in Pakistan.

Local Response

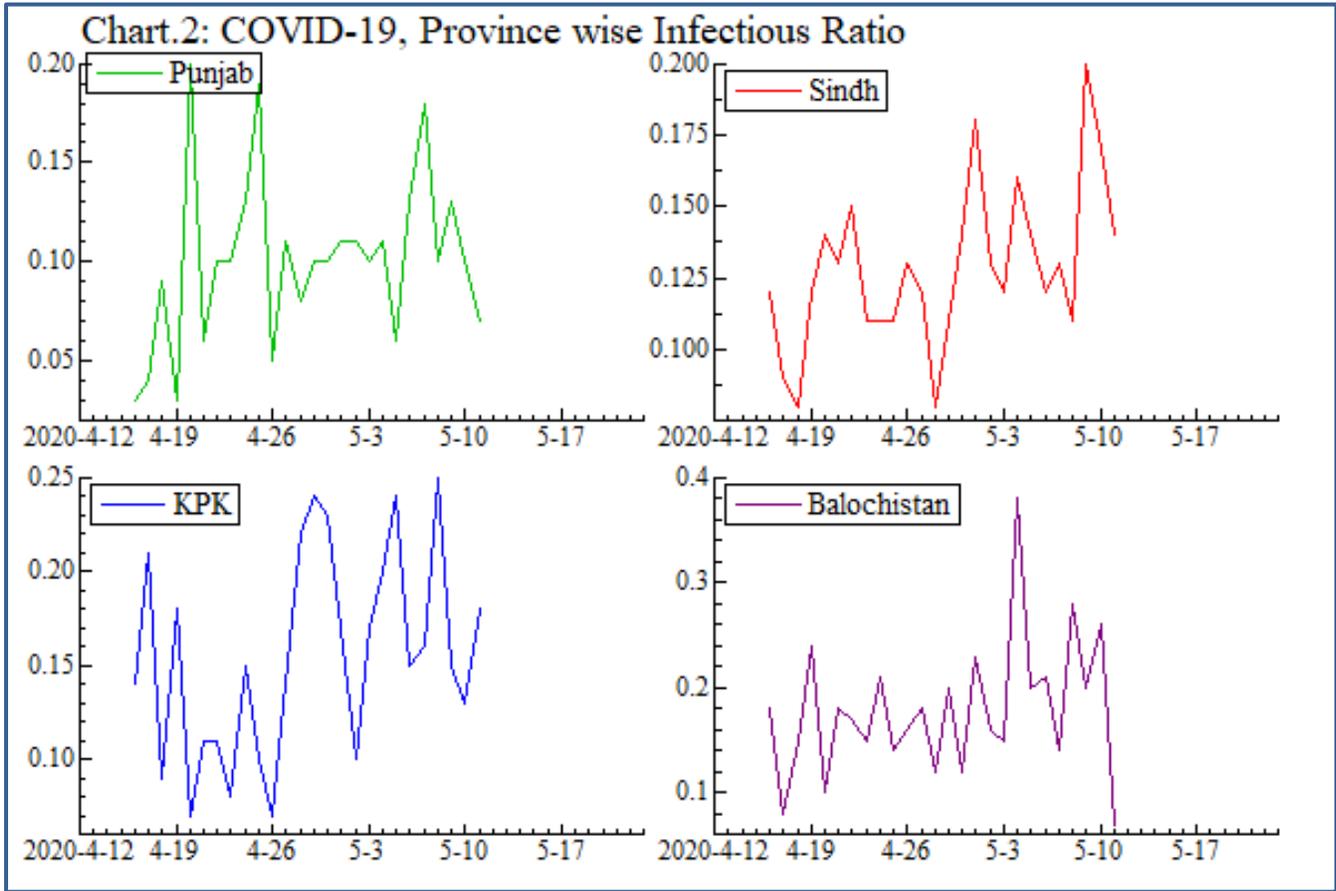
- Asad Umar chairs NCOC meeting to discuss virus situation, food security.
- Eidul Fitr to be celebrated with 'simplicity' in Balochistan this year.
- If raw material imports from India stopped: Drug manufacturers warn 30-35pc medicine shortages in Pakistan.
- Sindh to promote students of Grade 1-8, says Ghani
- Lockdown a temporary solution to Covid-19 crisis: PM
- Quarantine period for inbound air passengers to be cut.

During the last 24 hours, 1140 new cases have been confirmed by different laboratories, bringing the national tally to 32081. Fourteen deaths from Punjab, twelve from KP, eleven from Sindh and one from Balochistan and Azad Kashmir each have been reported in the last 24 hours. There are a total 706 deaths and 8555 recoveries across the country, see Chart.1.



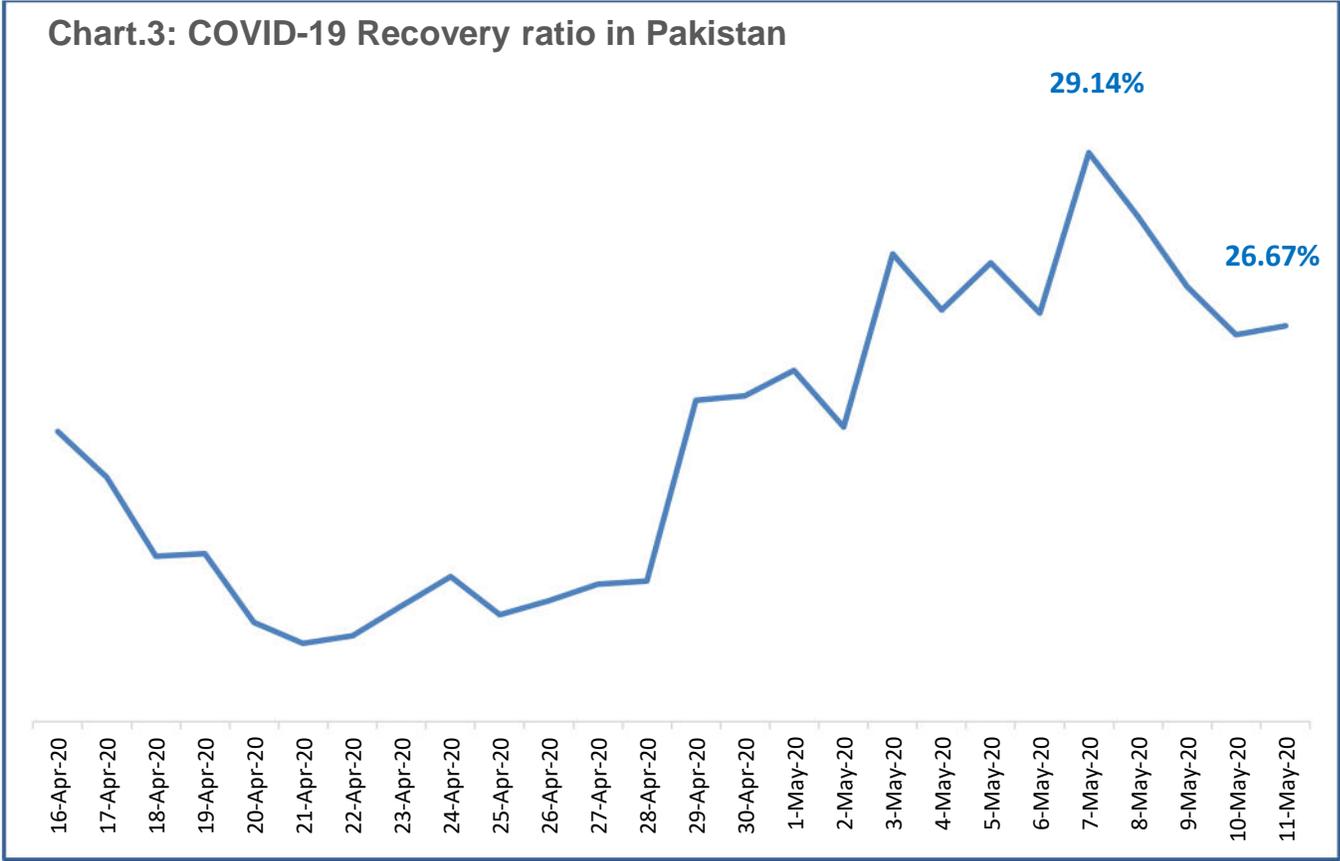
Number of infected cases is unable to explain actual spread of COVID-19 pandemic, as it is dependent on testing labs' operational capacity. However ratio of infected to tested (Infectious Ratio) is the right statistics that may be used to explain the pandemic spread. Province wise analysis shows that since the mid April 2020 when lockdown was eased in Pakistan the daily ratio of confirmed cases to tested cases is fluctuating around its average value. April 16, 2020 to May 11, 2020; Balochistan has highest average infectious ratio of all four provinces that is 18% and Punjab remained lowest of 10% amongst all four provinces while during the study period Sindh and KPK remained 13% and 16%, see Chart.2. It is observed that throughout area under study Balochistan once hit the highest infectious ratio of 38%,

the KPK had highest infectious ratio of 25%, while Punjab and Sindh touch 20% highest infectious ratio. During the period national average Infectious Ratio is 11% which is higher than last estimated national Infectious Ratio of 8.5% (ref: PIDE, NL Issue.27); with small and overlapping data set it is hard to conclude whether it is a random fluctuation or lockdown ease effect. With this currently prevailing average infectious ratio a rough guess of 24.2 million COVID-19 infected cases might be expected at maximum out of the total population of 220 million in Pakistan given all other factors constant. This rough estimate is a huge number which can cause serious economic and social consequences. In the absence of vaccination the only cure is prevention, with constrained social interaction COVID-19 outbreak can be contained.



The recovery ratio from COVID-19 has overall increasing trend in Pakistan. Currently it is 26.67%, once touched the highest value of 29.14% during 16 April 2020 to 11 May 2020 time period, see Chart.3. Though the national recovery ratio is lower than current global average recovery ratio of 36% but

it has overall increasing trend. Recovery from infection takes time, we have less than three months data for Pakistan since the first case reported, it is expected that recovery ratio in Pakistan will soon converge to the world average.



Slum Children Amid COVID-19

About one billion people or one eighth of the population across the worldwide live in informal settlements called slum. These informal settlements have inadequate housing facilities with scanty ventilations, poor drainage and sanitation systems and limited access to basic necessities of life. Slums are more vulnerable to pandemics and natural disasters than other segments of the society so their children as well. At least to date children are not as much effected and appears to be less physically harm by COVID-19 than the people with other age groups. But the socio-economic influence will have significant effects on the children living in poverty especially those living in slum areas. In 2019, 386 million children were in extreme poverty. Now according to new estimations 42-66 million children could fall into extreme poverty due to COVID-19 upheaval.

The protection of slum children needs special attention. Government has taken steps like tele-school in order to keep the children in touch with education but what about the children who are disadvantaged and have no digital access at all or we can say digital divide? Government planed schemes like cash programmes and food distribution to help the poor slums, but the measures are not enough. What about the children who are dependent on school feeding programmes? They are again suffering from malnutrition and increased level of food insecurities. What about those slum children who are living in unhealthy settings and cannot differentiate between the symptoms of malaria, influenza, diarrhea, respiratory diseases and COVID-19? As this virus has symptoms so comparable to all these diseases from which slums suffer in their regular livelihood. The vaccination rates in slums are low. Children play near the garbage dumps. The unequipped and understated health facilities make the slum more prone to catch virus. Health organizations advised to keep hygiene during pandemic to decrease the possibility of being infected by the virus. Social distancing and handwashing have become a part of daily lives during this hasty spread corona virus to mitigate its effects. But in densely populated informal settlements it is difficult to practice these measures. It is almost impossible to uphold the “two-meter separation rule” and there is lack of necessities like water and sanitation.

The pandemic risk is severe for this vulnerable population. The number of stressors increased amid COVID-19 ensuring amplified risk of emotional, sexual and physical abuse, neglect and exploitation. Lockdown put children at risk of witnessing and

suffering violence and abuse. It seems that the ratio of post-traumatic stress disorder could be higher in slum children than the children living in formal settlements. Slum children are exposed to fewer activities inside home than outside whereas in formal settlements children have other ways to accommodate inside the home. Slum and street children usually spend their childhood playing in open areas near their colonies or with in the streets. They cannot afford expensive digital games and branded toys. Urban planning activists like Professor Nausheen H. Anwar, believes that city slum dwellers in Pakistan and across developing countries may emerge as one of the most vulnerable populations to the disease. Poor slum children are less prepared and more vulnerable to the pandemic outbreak. This is a universal crisis but the harmful effects of COVID-19 are not equally distributed. Social protection programmes, child-centered activities (with specially focus on equity of access) and door to door awareness in slum settings related to pandemic and how to talk about this pandemic with children is the demand of the time to save the poor children. **(Written by Nadia Khan Sherani, an alumna of Department of Development Studies, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics)**

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Frequently Asked Questions

I am on medication for a chronic health condition. Should I change anything?

It is important to continue with any medication you may be using for chronic and other conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, HIV infection and TB, and attend recommended check-ups. Check with your health authorities and health provider if these check-ups should be done differently during the COVID-19 outbreak. Some services, such as counselling, may be available remotely. For treatment of clinically stable adolescents with HIV and adolescents with TB and/or other chronic conditions, your health provider should consider multi-month prescriptions and dispensing which will reduce the frequency of your visits to the clinic and ensure continuity of treatment, if movements are disrupted during the pandemic. Adherence to treatment is just as important during this period.

I am bored staying home. Since I am very unlikely to get severely ill even if I was to get COVID-19, why is it important that I follow the guidelines to prevent transmission such as keeping physical distance from other people?

Staying at home is difficult and can get boring, but it may help to do something you enjoy. This could be reading a book, playing games or listening to music. Try to stay connected with friends and family every day either by communicating with them by phone or internet if you can, or, if you live close to them and the local rules allow you to, by talking in-person while keeping your distance.

At the same time, it is still really important that you reduce your chances of being infected or spreading COVID-19 by washing your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub as often as possible, keeping at least 1 metre (3 feet) from other people, and avoiding crowded places. You might be one of the unlucky adolescents who do get severely ill if you catch COVID-19, or you could spread it to others and be responsible for them getting really ill or even dying. You have the power to make choices that could save lives and together young people can play an important part in fighting COVID-19.

Some of my friends are not sticking to the rules about physical distancing. What should I do?

Explain to your friends why it is important to protect themselves and others by washing their hands, avoiding touching their face, always coughing or sneezing into their elbow, sleeve, or a tissue, and cooperating with physical distancing measures and movement restrictions when called on to do so. Maybe you can share ideas for fun virtual activities that your friends can participate in, and you can encourage them to do them together with you or with other friends. This way you are giving them alternatives rather than just telling them to stay at home. But, remember that you do not have control over other peoples' actions so do not get into an argument or a fight to try to change their minds.

Source: World Health Organization



Workers inform people about the new measures and timetables following the easing of lockdown in Menorca, Spain. Photograph: David Arquimbau Sintes/EPA

COVID-19: Timeline of a Pandemic (March 16, 2020 — March 17, 2020)

March 18—Two Washington, D.C.-based employees of the World Bank Group have tested positive for COVID-19, World Bank President David Malpass has said in a memo obtained by Devex. In the memo, Malpass says it is likely that more cases will be diagnosed among the bank's employees in the coming days and weeks. World Bank Group staff members at the Washington headquarters were advised last week to work from home after an International Monetary Fund employee tested positive for the virus.

The Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations provides \$620,000 to The University of Hong Kong to support preclinical testing of another vaccine candidate against COVID-19. This is the seventh vaccine development project against COVID-19 CEPI has invested in since January.

WHO launches a study to compare untested treatments of COVID-19 against one another called the "solidarity trial." Countries currently included are Argentina, Bahrain, Canada, France, Iran, Norway, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, and Thailand.

The African Development Bank announces that staff will work through telecommuting and video conferencing, while visits to buildings will be suspended along with the cancelation of all travel, meetings, and conferences.

Kyrgyzstan, Djibouti, Zambia, El Salvador, and Nicaragua report first cases of COVID-19.

March 19—Cases of COVID-19 surpass 200,000 globally. It took over three months to reach the first 100,000 confirmed cases and just 12 days to reach the next 100,000.

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World Food Programme Executive Director David Beasley tests positive for COVID-19 after returning to the U.S. following a visit to Canada. The Rockefeller Foundation commits \$20 million to the COVID-19 response, with a particular focus in Bellagio, Italy; New York, NY; Washington, DC; Nairobi, Kenya; and Bangkok, Thailand.

"For the younger patients the bigger risk is developing pulmonary fibrosis after surviving the disease," says Dr. Frank Minja, associate professor of radiology and biomedical imaging at Yale University School of Medicine during a conference call hosted by the Africa CDC. "This may be something as radiologists we may be diagnosing for years to come as more and more patients are being exposed to this disease," Minja says.

Source: <https://www.devex.com/>

Experts' View

A wise course would be to consider every patient a potential carrier. Such patients interact not only with doctors but front desk clerks, nurses and other staff members as well. Many patients came to hospitals with heart, kidney, liver and other problems but also turned out to be corona carriers upon tests. Therefore, all staff at hospitals should be declared as front-line workers and be provided with PPEs. (**Abdul Sattar, THE NEWS**)

There has recently been widespread media coverage and circulation of WhatsApp messages summarising the findings of a small study from France that implied that the use of nicotine can help protect against the virus. The news led to nicotine patches selling out in France and just like other instances of hoarding, the rush on the stores was unwarranted. Firstly, nicotine is a very addictive substance and so the use of nicotine patches against Covid-19 is a dangerous option to pursue. It would be the equivalent of using strong, addictive painkillers to relieve a muscle injury even through precautions such as rest can be effective. (**Javaid Khan, DAWN**)

Experts' Opinion

The pandemic will have three primary impacts, the first two of which are well known and constantly compared to each other as a trade-off. The first is public health, as in a lot of people will die. The second is economic and financial, as in a lot of poor people will get poorer, and a lot of rich people will complain. But there is a third impact that is playing out everywhere, and it is this impact that will shape the post Covid-19 political economy, globally and locally. This is the impact of the pandemic on how we speak to each other about the issues that matter. (**Mosharraf Zaidi, THE NEWS**)

As we face empty grocery shelves, the fragility of our highly consolidated food system has become clear during the crisis of Covid-19. We see a market that lacks the resiliency to shift supply lines and fill those shelves, but also a food system that does not provide (and in most cases never has provided) fair wages or adequate safety protection to workers. (**Jim Goodman, THE NEWS**)

CORONAVIRUS COVID-19

Social Distancing

AVOID

- Group gatherings
- Visits to bars/restaurants
- Sleep overs
- Playdates
- Visiting the elderly with children
- Crowded retail stores
- Gyms
- Visitors to the home
- Non essential

USE CAUTION

- Visits to supermarkets
- Visit to pharmacy
- Visit to GP
- Traveling
- Check on friends and family safely
- Public transport

SAFE TO DO

- Go for a walk
- Jogging
- Working in the home
- DIY in and around the home
- Reading
- Going for a drive
- Video calls



Thousands of people flocked to Rawalpindi's markets on Monday, flouting social distancing and Covid-19 preventive measures—*Dawn*



A man is disinfecting the church in Italy – *Reuters*



People wait for their turn outside a shop at a market after the government eased a nationwide lockdown imposed as a preventive measure against the COVID-19 coronavirus, in Islamabad—*Getty Images*



Commuters make their way along a busy road after the government eased the nationwide lockdown in Karachi—*Getty Images*



A man carries firewood after the government eased the nationwide lockdown—*Getty Images*

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