



Review Article

Coronavirus Combating Facilities in Pakistan and its Comparison With WorldIrfan Ali Khan¹, Ahmad Rizwan², Sarah Arif³, Sikandar Ali Khan⁴, Summeira Jabeen Shah⁵, Karishama Ali⁶, Zarghuna Zeb⁷, Pashmina Afridi¹, Azhar Aslam⁸ and Irfan Ullah^{1*}¹Department of Allied Health Sciences, Iqra National University, Peshawar, Pakistan²Department of Pathology, Khyber Medical University, Peshawar, Pakistan³Department of Pathology, Gomal Medical College, Medical Teaching Institute, Dera Ismail Khan, Pakistan⁴Department of Hematology, Khyber Medical University, Peshawar, Pakistan⁵Department of Biochemistry, Khyber Medical University, Peshawar, Pakistan⁶Department of Oral Pathology, Peshawar Medical and Dental College, Peshawar, Pakistan⁷Khyber College of Dentistry, Peshawar, Pakistan⁸Department of Microbiology, Faculty of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan**Keywords:** COVID-19, pandemic, quarantine, Pakistan**How to Cite:**Khan, I. A., Rizwan, A., Arif, S., Khan, S. A., Shah, S. J., Ali, K., Zeb, Z., Afridi, P., Aslam, A., & Ullah, I. (2021). Coronavirus combating facilities in Pakistan and its comparison with world. *MARKHOR (The Journal of Zoology)*, 2(2). <https://doi.org/10.54393/mjz.v2i2.23>**Corresponding author:**

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irfan_btn@hotmail.com**Article History**Received: 08th September 2021Accepted: 11th October 2021Published: 31st December 2021**ABSTRACT**

Severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) became a pandemic by the start of 2020. Mortalities went on rise due to lack of understanding of disease as the symptoms varied from population to population and even within the same population. Furthermore, there were lack of facilities in hospitals to accommodate the patients as well as to treat them. Pakistan is no exception and the situation here was also worsened. Government of Pakistan started to take emergency steps and devised new policies to provide facilities to patients regarding quarantine and treatment. In this review, there is an overview of Province-wise situation in Pakistan regarding the hospitals and facilities for COVID-19 patients. Flaws in the system and a comparison with world are also discussed.

INTRODUCTION:

Coronavirus disease is a pandemic of recent times; it was termed as COVID-10 by WHO on Feb 11, 2020 [1]. Elderly people and people with comorbidities such as cardiac complications, hypertension and diabetes were at high risk [2, 3]. It has high infection spreading rate and transmit from person to person by coughing, sneezing [4]. In Pakistan, first COVID-19 patient was diagnosed in March, 2020. Government of Pakistan devised new policies to combat this health emergency and established quarantine centers all over the Pakistan and other facilities as well [5-7]. Here in this review, situation in Pakistan is discussed according to different regions and provinces as follows:

Regional Response• **Punjab:**

To accommodate the pilgrims returning from Iran, quarantine center was established in the Dera Ghazi Khan district. Several other centers had been established at different locations. The largest quarantine center of Pakistan was established in Multan, city of Punjab province. Punjab Chief Minister advised people to not come out of houses unnecessarily, avoid social gatherings and unnecessary travelling [8, 9]. Five hospitals were designated throughout the province for treatment of corona virus patients. A hospital of 1000 beds was established at Expo Center, Lahore in just 9 days. The local authorities were assigned to start disinfecting the areas. The students of universities are playing pivotal role in this state of emergency. Corona virus protection kits, hand sanitizers and disinfectants have been made by Punjab University and provided to public [8, 9]. The Chief Minister announced a relief package of Rs.10 billion for daily wages laborer. An



additional pay was given to all the medical workers to encourage them. The CM declared that daily 3200 people would be tested by the laboratories all over the province. Almost 10,000 new doctors and paramedic staff were recruited in Punjab [8, 9].

Sindh

The Chief Minister of Sindh ordered the shutting down of all educational institutions till 31st May, 2020 and also imposed a temporary ban on shopping malls, marriage halls shrines etc. On 21 March, 14 days lock down was announced by the Government of Sindh and ordered the closure of all public transport, markets, offices hotels etc. [10]. A 1000 bed hospital was been setup at Expo center Karachi with military assistance. On request of Sindh Government, the Pakistan Cricket Board has allowed the conversion of Hanif Mohammad High Performance Centre into a transitory living wage for paramedic staff who is working at newly established hospital at Expo center. Facilities have been provided to collect samples from homes. A hospital of capacity of 2000 beds is formed at Labor colony flats in Sukkur. The local government has also launched a mobile service to provide rations to the needy people across the province. All the workers have been given paid leave [11]. To make the lockdown further better, the Sindh Govt. ordered the closure of grocery shops by 5pm, release of about 4000 prisoners from jails to prevent the spread of COVID-19. A mobile application “Sindh Relief Initiative” was launched for efficient coordination between welfare organizations and provincial government for ration distribution [8].

Baluchistan

In late January a 14-member committee was established by Baluchistan Government to fight the coronavirus pandemic. Educational institutions have been closed till 31st May 2020 and exams have been postponed. A complete lockdown has been imposed on 24th March in the province. The lockdown implies to all except for medical officials, medical stores, hospitals, laboratories and grocery shops. The media teams were also allowed to move freely [12]. On 24th March, a state of emergency was announced in those districts which bordered attached to Iran. Baluchistan is at a higher risk due to its land connection with Iran where the cases of Corona virus has increased exponentially. The jails have been fumigated and disinfectants have been distributed throughout province. The Government of Baluchistan has given the relief of Rs. 500 million for establishing quarantine centers to accommodate people returning from Iran [13].

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province is also under lockdown, most of the institutes are closed and transport is banned. Screening teams are present at the entry and exit of all towns and cities and are screening the people for COVID-19. About 1330 doctors have been recruited to help the province to overcome the pandemic. 500 new diagnostics kits have been purchased by the provincial government. About 750 liters of sanitizers and 500 protective kits have been given to health department [8].

Gilgit-Baltistan:

In this region of Pakistan, medical emergency has already been declared as more cases have been reported and lockdown is observed at present. The military forces have been giving the task to enforce the lockdown. China, the friendliest neighbor of Pakistan has sent medical equipment's and 10 tons of goods to Gilgit Baltistan to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. The WHO has provided aid in form of data management at districts level [8].

Azad Kashmir

The health emergency is declared in this region on 14th March. All institutes are closed, and exams have been postponed. Screening systems have been present at all entry points of the region. Movement of people is restricted to greater extent and only media officials and medical officials having the special passes are allowed [8].

Islamabad

In Islamabad, the Bhara Kahu region is sealed after several cases were reported from this region. The OPDs of hospitals have been closed to avoid the spread of disease. The lockdown in Islamabad is till 14th April, 2020 [8].

Common Factors of All Regions

To enforce the lockdown efficiently, the police and military help is extended to all regions. Forces are trying their best to keep people in homes. The military forces are at front line. People not following rules are punished. The quarantine centers are guarded so that people can't escape from there.

1. Flaws in Pakistan System against Corona virus

Pakistan is a developing country, so it is economically weak. Moreover, the literacy rate of country is also very low so there are a lot of hurdles in combating the present pandemic. Pakistan can't go for a complete lockdown because in such a situation, the people may be saved from COVID-19 but they will die of hunger and poverty because a large portion of our population are daily wages laborer and are living below line of poverty. This increases the risk of spread of disease [14]. People of Pakistan have been warned again and again to take the precautionary measures and awareness campaigns have been run by media and government. However, these efforts seem to be fruitless as public is not following the government instructions [14]. The quarantine facilities also have a lot of flaws. The cleanliness is not properly maintained, and medical facilities are also deficient. The major quarantine center established at Taftan city of Baluchistan is lacking the basic facilities like there is shortage of medical equipment. People with obvious symptoms of COVID-19 couldn't be tested. The security of these centers is also not strictly managed. People continued to escape from there and wander in local areas and markets and put the lives of healthy people in danger [16].

2. Comparison of Pakistan with World

The major difference between countries in their response to Corona virus pandemic is due to difference in their economic conditions. The people of less developed countries are at a higher risk to COVID-19 because of lack of facilities and infrastructure [17]. As a response to COVID-19 most countries are going for lockdown. This lockdown will have drastic effects on low economy countries like Pakistan. The developed countries should extend their help to less developed countries [17]. Almost all the countries have found the lockdown as the only solution at present for controlling the pandemic. USA, UK, Spain, Italy, China and many other first world countries has taken strict measures regarding lockdown and their citizens are civilized enough to play their role in this need of hour [18]. On the other hand, in Pakistan the government has to fight Corona virus on one side and ignorance and illiteracy on other side. The people are creating hurdles for authorities by not following the rules. Most of the countries including our neighbor India has taken measures for the safe return of their citizens from places where COVID-19 has higher rate but Pakistan has not taken any measures in this regard. Thousands of our citizens are still present in severely affected areas [18]. The International Economic organizations like IMF and World Bank are extending their help to emerging business community which has faced the greatest loss as a result of corona virus pandemic. They are giving loans and have made their loan obligations quite flexible. World Bank is providing billions of funds to developing countries in order to make them able to respond to pandemic effectively [18].

The international community has become united like never before to work on vaccine for corona virus. Many laboratories of Germany, China and USA are working for this purpose. Although the developing countries lack the infrastructure for fighting the COVID-19 but they can take lessons from the developed countries response and apply it to own community [18]. COVID-19 has becomes a major challenge especially in underdeveloped countries and becomes a major pandemic challenge for healthcare professional, as well as the limited financial availability in the country make this a big problem [19]. Due to its present economic condition, health care resources, and the event of preceding outbreaks, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) had already issued a level 3 warning for worldwide travelers to Pakistan [20, 21].

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