…..About Newsletter

In order to keep abreast of emerging issues at the National/International and local level, the SDPI brings out a Daily E-Newsletter on “COVID-19”. It carries reference information’s to the News items/Comments/Op-Eds appearing in leading National/International dailies.

Diseases

Govt decides to partially lift lockdown from tomorrow
Source: Staff Report, Daily Times , 2020-05-08

The government has decided to partially lift coronavirus lockdown from Saturday, Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Thursday, hours after the country announced its highest daily increase in new cases.”We’re deciding that we are ending this lockdown now,” Khan said in a televised address. “We know that we’re doing it at a time when our curve is going up … but it …..

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1,500 hidden virus cases traced in Punjab among contacts of those returning from abroad
Source: Asif Chaudhry, Dawn , 2020-05-08

LAHORE: The health department has traced 1,500 “hidden confirmed cases” of Covid-19 patients who were in close contact with the Pakistani citizens returning from abroad. Most of these cases were traced in the provincial capital, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Gujrat, Gujranwala, Multan, besides a few from Faisalabad. The teams working under the Central Contact Tracing (CCT) unit of the primary …..more >>

Educational institutions to stay closed till July 15; board exams cancelled
Source: Muhammad Faisal Kaleem, Daily Times , 2020-05-08

The government on Thursday decided to keep all educational institutions across country closed until July 15 as a precautionary measure to stop the spread of coronavirus.The decision was made in the National Coordination Committee (NCC) meeting held under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister Imran Khan. Following the meeting, Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Shafqat Mehmoo.....

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Sindh governor rejects govt’s coronavirus relief ordinance
Source: Agencies, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

Sindh Governor Imran Ismail on Thursday rejected the ‘Sindh Covid-19 Emergency Relief Ordinance’ approved by the provincial cabinet last week. “The provincial government has no authority to provide concession in electricity and gas. It is purely a federal subject,” Governor Ismail said. As the Sindh Assembly is not in session, the provincial government had drafted the ordinance.....

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Pakistan records highest single-day Covid-19 death toll as 46 lose lives
Source: Agencies, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

The nationwide tally of Covid-19 patients jumped to 24,892 on Thursday, with 9,195 cases reported in Punjab, 9,093 in Sindh, 3,956 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 1,663 in Balochistan, 388 in Gilgit Baltistan, 521 in Islamabad and 76 in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. The virus has claimed at least 591 lives while some 6,464 coronavirus patients have recovered so far. At least 244 new coronavirus cases were confirmed.....

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Covid-19 rate among pregnant women alarming
Source: Waseem Ashraf Butt, Dawn, 2020-05-08

GUJRAT: Local authorities have sealed two health facilities, including the Government Maternity Hospital (GMH), Gujrat, and the Basic Health Unit (BHU) of Fatehpur where all medical services have been suspended due to reported cases of Covid-19 among patients and staff. Swabs of around 300 expecting mothers were collected during random sampling in the district in the last few days. Of them 28 tes.....

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Here’s how you can get checked for coronavirus in Pakistan
Source: Dawn.com, Dawn, 2020-05-08

Since December last year, the coronavirus has spread nearly all over the world, causing hundreds of thousands of deaths as countries ramp up testing capacities to identify patients and bring the disease under control. Federal Minister Asad Umar has said that Pakistan at the moment can conduct 14,000 tests per day and aims to be conducting 20,000 tests daily. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is authorising priv.....

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Decision to ease lockdown made after collective consultations: CM
Source: News Desk, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar has said that the decision to ease lockdown in a phased manner has been taken with collective consultations and unanimous decisions have also been taken in order to bring ease and
US expands partnership to alleviate poverty during COVID-19 pandemic
Source: Staff Report, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

In a video message released today on US Mission Pakistan’s social media platforms, Ambassador Paul Jones discussed how the United States is expanding its partnership with Pakistan to alleviate poverty in the country. “I’d like to highlight how together we are protecting those most vulnerable to the economic fallout from coronavirus,” said US Ambassador Paul W Jones. The Ambas......

Tobacco industry targets vulnerable communities amidst pandemic
Source: Staff Report, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

The Tobacco industry is actively involved in promoting and spreading false information that nicotine patches — a product of tobacco — and smoking have turned out to be weapons that protect from COVID-19. This was said by Human Development Foundation (HDF) in a statement. The tobacco industry has not shunned this practice and is using the current pandemic to its benefits to increase sale.....

Seven more Covid-19 patients in Attock, Taxila
Source: The Newspaper's Correspondent, Dawn, 2020-05-08

TAXILA: Attock and Taxila reported seven new cases of Covid-19 on Thursday, bringing their totals to 56 and 43, respectively. Attock district’s focal person on Covid-19, Dr Asif Arbab Niazi, said that a 69-year-old man from Jatail village near Kamra tested positive. He was already admitted to the Kamra Pakistan Aeronautical Complex Hospital. The second patient is a native of Hazro tehsil......

PM, Nigerian president discuss challenges to saving lives from COVID-19 pandemic
Source: News Desk, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday held a telephonic conversation with President Muhammadi Buhari of Nigeria, and highlighted exceptional challenge faced by developing countries to save lives from COVID-19 as well fighting poverty and hunger. In this context, the prime minister highlighted his call for “Global Initiative for Debt Relief” for developing countries. President Buhari exp.....
Three Sindh hospitals start trials of new Covid-19 treatment
Source: Staff Reporter, Dawn, 2020-05-08

KARACHI: Just a week after the Sindh government allowed three hospitals in the province to carry out clinical trials of passive immunisation process for the treatment of coronavirus-affected people, all three facilities in the province on Thursday started the process — the much-awaited treatment for Covid-19 patients. Consultant haematologist and transplant physician Dr Tahir Shamsi said al.....

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Govt extends suspension of domestic flights until May 10
Source: Agencies, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

The government on Thursday extended the suspension of domestic flight operation till May 10, 2020. Director Air Transport CAA has issued a NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) regarding extension in the suspension of domestic flight operations: “As per the decision of the Government of Pakistan, the suspension of Domestic flight operations as effected earlier has been extended up to Sunday, May 10, 2020.A.....

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‘COVID-19: we need not just healthcare professionals but experts’
Source: Abdul Khaliq Qureshi, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

The number of infected cases among healthcare professionals, including paramedics and doctors, has been increasing day by day due to the reason that they are not versed in handling pathogenic and infectious microorganisms like SARS-2 whereas the microbiologists, specially virologists, immunologists & molecular biology biotechnologists are the right professionals to deal with such outbreaks who.....

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Chinese assistance in fight against COVID-19 another manifestation of deep-rooted friendship: minister
Source: News Desk, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz on Wednesday said the continued Chinese assistance to Pakistan for combating the COVID-19 pandemic was another manifestation of the deep-rooted and time tested Pak China friendship. He said this during a meeting with Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing, who called on him here. The information minister said the government under the l.....

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Senior IHC official infected with coronavirus
Source: Malik Asad, Dawn, 2020-05-08

ISLAMABAD: A senior official of Islamabad High Court (IHC) tested positive for Covid-19 after which the IHC administration asked the health department for testing of judges and court staff. The official was found infected with the coronavirus by the National Institute of Health (NIH). Since an earlier test report from the NIH showing a lower division clerk of the IHC infected with Covid-19 was f.....
PA session today amidst strict COVID-19 SOPs
Source: Hassaan Ahmed, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

The session of Punjab Assembly that was convened on the requisition of the opposition will be held today (Friday) amid strict Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) introduced by the assembly secretariat to fight the COVID-19. As per the details, the 21st session of Punjab Assembly was called on the requisition submitted by the opposition benches last week. Both the government and opposition benches.....

Face masks make a political statement in era of coronavirus
Source: Agencies, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

The decision to wear a mask in public is becoming a political statement – a moment to pick sides in a brewing culture war over containing the coronavirus. While not yet as loaded as a “Make America Great Again” hat, the mask is increasingly a visual shorthand for the debate pitting those willing to follow health officials’ guidance and cover their faces against those who fee.....

WHO cautions against use of Madagascar anti-virus potion
Source: Agencies, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

The World Health Organization on Thursday advised governments to clinically test a herbal drink touted by Madagascar’s President Andry Rajoelina as a remedy against coronavirus. The Covid-Organics infusion is derived from artemisia — a plant with proven anti-malarial properties — and other indigenous herbs. Rajoelina hopes to distribute the infusion across West Africa and beyond, c.....more >>

Army to continue assisting institutions in fight against COVID-19 : COAS Bajwa
Source: News Desk, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

Pakistan Army shall continue assisting other institutions in fighting the pandemic, said Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Thursday. The army chief visited Kohat where he was provided a detailed briefing on the operational preparedness of the armed forces and the "prevailing security situation including border security measures" along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. He wa.....

Covid-19: Food trade restrictions
Source: BR Research, Business Recorder, Islamabad, 2020-05-08

The ongoing pandemic continues to wreak havoc across the world, with most, if not all, economies facing a looming contraction. Multilaterals such as World Bank and IMF expect Pakistan's economy to contract by 1.3-1.5 percent.
According to calculations made by Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), this is set to push at least 10 percent of the population below poverty line. ......

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**ST zero-rating facility for dairy sector; Hafeez agrees to look into matter of restoration**


ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue Dr Abdul Hafeez Shaikh has agreed to look into the policy matter of restoration of sales tax zero-rating facility for the dairy sector in the upcoming budget (2020-2021). Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue Dr Abdul Hafeez Shaikh chaired a meeting here at the Finance Division with the members of the Pakistan Dair......

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**Thalassemia in Pakistan**


Globally, thalassemia is the most prevalent yet preventable genetic blood disorder affecting populations in the Mediterranean area, Middle East, Transcaucasias, Central Asia, Indian subcontinent, and Southeast Asia. Over the last few decades, the progress we have made in preventing infectious diseases increases the relative significance of non-infectious diseases, including genetic disorders like ..... 

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**Worldwide death toll from Covid-19 crosses 268,000**


ISLAMABAD: At least 268,467 people have died of the novel coronavirus since the epidemic surfaced in China late last year, according to international media reports. There have been more than 3.88 million officially recorded cases spanning 195 countries and territories. The United States is the worst-hit country, with 76,011 deaths. Britain follows with 30,615, then Italy with 29,958 deaths.....

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**28 more fall victim to corona**


ISLAMABAD/LAHORE/PESHAWAR/KARACHI: The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Pakistan rose to 24,898 on Thursday with the addition of 14,30 new cases. Of the total 24,898 confirmed cases, Sindh reported 9,093 cases, Punjab 9,195, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 3,956, Balochistan 1,663, Islamabad Capital Territory 521, Gilgit-Baltistan 394, and AJK 76 as of 11:55pm. The death toll rose to 591 with Khyb......

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Sindh witnesses highest number of COVID-19 deaths in 24 hours as 14 more die


Between Wednesday and Thursday, Sindh witnessed the highest number of deaths due to coronavirus in 24 hours when 14 people, including two women, lost their lives due to the contagious viral disease. This was stated by Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah in a statement issued on Thursday. He said of the 14 new victims of the novel coronavirus, 12 died in Karachi and the other two passed.....

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Health governance

Phased opening

Source: News Desk, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

So Pakistan has decided to go ahead with opening up the economy, though in phases, even as both new cases and deaths are on the rise and the curve is far from flattening. Prime Minister Imran Khan, while explaining the decision, said somewhat strangely that “We know that we’re doing it at a time when our curve is going up… but it is not edging up as we expected.” But that a.....

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Tobacco industry targets vulnerable communities amidst pandemic

Source: Staff Report, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

The Tobacco industry is actively involved in promoting and spreading false information that nicotine patches – a product of tobacco – and smoking have turned out to be weapons that protect from COVID-19. This was said by Human Development Foundation (HDF) in a statement. The tobacco industry has not shunned this practice and is using the current pandemic to its benefits to increase sale.....

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Positive patients with mild symptoms to be isolated at home in Islamabad

Source: Aamir Yasin | Munawer Azeem, Dawn, 2020-05-08

ISLAMABAD: The capital administration has decided that Covid-19 patients who are asymptomatic or have mild symptoms will be isolated at home. In this regard, a standard operating procedure (SOP) has been issued to ensure safety of Covid-19 patients and healthcare staff and contain the spread of the coronavirus. The purpose of the SOP is to provide a framework for public and private hospitals, of.....

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SHC issues notices to health authorities, hospitals on petition seeking emergency treatment for all

Source: Ishfaq Tanoli, Dawn, 2020-05-08

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court on Thursday put the federal and provincial health authorities on notice on a petition against non-provision of treatment to general patients at the government and private health facilities. The two-judge
bench headed by Justice Mohammad Ali Mazhar issued notices to the ministry of national health services, provincial health secretary, three major government hospitals.....

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‘COVID-19: we need not just healthcare professionals but experts’
Source: Abdul Khaliq Qureshi, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

The number of infected cases among healthcare professionals, including paramedics and doctors, has been increasing day by day due to the reason that they are not versed in handling pathogenic and infectious microorganisms like SARS-2 whereas the microbiologists, specially virologists, immunologists & molecular biology biotechnologists are the right professionals to deal with such outbreaks who.....

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COVID-19 and health system’s strengths — part I
Source: Nousheen Akber Pradhan and Dr Rozina Mistry, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

The pandemic of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has created havoc globally. While the effects of the pandemic are being observed across the wide range of sectors, the disease in particular is testing the nerves of healthcare systems across the globe. COVID-19 has posed huge challenges to fragile states with an inadequate healthcare infrastructure and has also affected the health systems of well-d.....

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The house in disorder
Source: Sikandar Noorani, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

Observations raised by the Supreme Court over disappointing state of governance amid the pandemic have exposed the reality of fancy claims made by the federal and provincial governments. Those present in the court room were shocked once the honorable judge of the apex court revealed that hospitals in Lahore had taken bribe for placing the patients in quarantine and even for handing over of bodies .....
### Lockdown to be eased; virus cases rise
Source: Zaheer Abbasi, Business Recorder, Islamabad, 2020-05-08

ISLAMABAD: The government has decided to soften the lockdown further from Saturday in the second phase. However, closure of educational institutes has been extended by one and half months till July 15, and all board exams have been cancelled. Briefing on coronavirus after the National Coordination Committee meeting (NCC), Prime Minister Imran Khan stated that “we have decided to ..... more >>

### Covid-19 and ‘Green New Deal’ — II

The developing countries are not doing much different from the rest. There is no discussion to plan even reform and support packages that bail workers out on a large scale, and not the big businesses; a reform plan that revisits the economic model towards ensuring cleaner, sustainable and more equitable economic growth, similar to the ‘New Deal’, and more so the proposed ‘Green N..... more >>

### WHO issues fresh guidelines as countries ease lockdown

ISLAMABAD: As the coronavirus began to spread around the world, a global shortage of masks and other protective equipment emerged, especially for frontline medical staff. How those supplies are used is crucial, experts say. Based on current evidence, SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, is most frequently transmitted between people via droplets when an infected person breathes out, ..... more >>

### Perhaps PM doesn’t know!

ISLAMABAD: As Prime Minister Imran Khan is struggling hard to arrange finances to meet the challenge of feeding the poor and needy during on-going coronavirus pandemic, many influential in the bureaucracy at the Centre and in Punjab got for themselves state lands worth billions of rupees. Around a dozen top federal bureaucrats, including a few retired ones, have been allotted second residen..... more >>

### Corona testing priorities

Covid-19 has generated many urban myths. One very apt one is about the health minister of a certain third world country who was asked why his country didn’t have any coronavirus patients; he responded by saying: “because we have not conducted any coronavirus tests.” Covid-19 tests form the basis of the Corona policy response; be it isolation of patients, priority of hospi.....
WHO cautions against use of Madagascar anti-virus potion
Source: Agencies, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

The World Health Organization on Thursday advised governments to clinically test a herbal drink touted by Madagascar’s President Andry Rajoelina as a remedy against coronavirus. The Covid-Organics infusion is derived from artemisia — a plant with proven anti-malarial properties — and other indigenous herbs. Rajoelina hopes to distribute the infusion across West Africa and beyond, c..

Is COVID-19 going to change our lives forever?
Source: Mohammad Zaman, Daily Times, 2020-05-08

COVID-19 is increasingly unfolding as a health and human tragedy worldwide. The impact of this deadly health crisis clearly shows that it is just not a health emergency anymore; the economic, social and environmental dimensions of the heath crisis have brought the world to its knees. As I write this piece, there are 3.8 million reported cases in some 210 countries with 264,674 confirmed deaths glo.....

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