

16TH DECEMBER, 2022

BULLETIN **25**

PAKISTAN CORONAVIRUS CIVACTS CAMPAIGN (CCC)

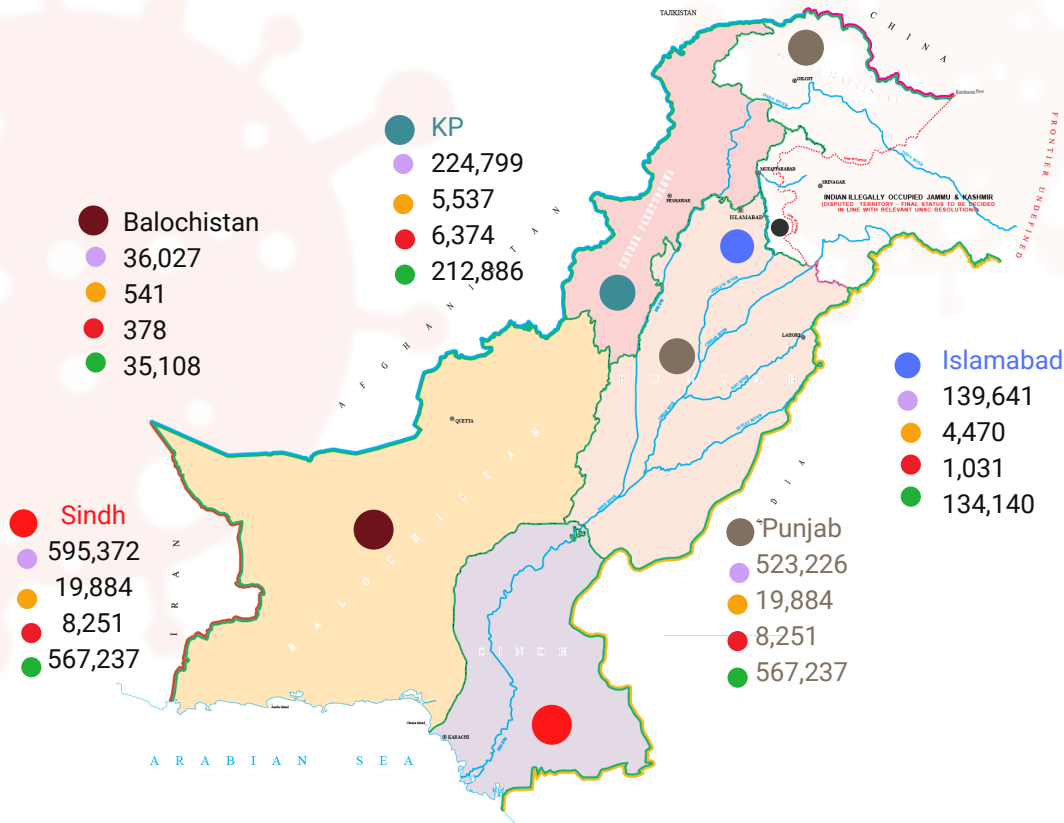
For over two years, Coronavirus CivActs Campaign (CCC) supported by the Open Society Foundation (OSF) debunked fake news, misinformation, and myths around COVID -19. The campaign now focuses on building healthy information ecosystems where we will lead and support efforts to stop the spread of fake news and misinformation in Pakistan in a broader manner. The focus of our work might not necessarily be around Covid 19, unless, of course, we face a new wave. We plan to tackle fake news around health emergencies (remember, polio is still a challenge in Pakistan and fake news is responsible for creating perennial vaccine hesitation), politics, sociocultural taboos, and other similar phenomena.



WHAT'S INSIDE

- COVID-19 & Vaccination Statistics in Pakistan
- You may have COVID rebound even without taking Paxloid.
- Pakistan Toughens Law on Fake News on Twitter, Facebook
- Are fake news laws the best way to tackle disinformation?

COVID-19 DASHBOARD (Pakistan)



Confirmed Cases critical cases Recoveries Deaths

Total Tests
31,034,892



LAST 24 HOURS: 7,221

Confirmed Cases
1,575,486



LAST 24 HOURS: 7

Critical Cases
661



LAST 24 HOURS: 0

Deaths
30,635



LAST 24 HOURS: 0

Recoveries
1,544,190



LAST 24 HOURS: 28

Vaccination Statistics

First Dose
139,625,531



LAST 24 HOURS: 3,852

Booster Doses
48,444,092



LAST 24 HOURS: 6,7255

Fully Vaccinated
132,271,095



LAST 24 HOURS: 7,514

Total Doses Administered
301,870,637



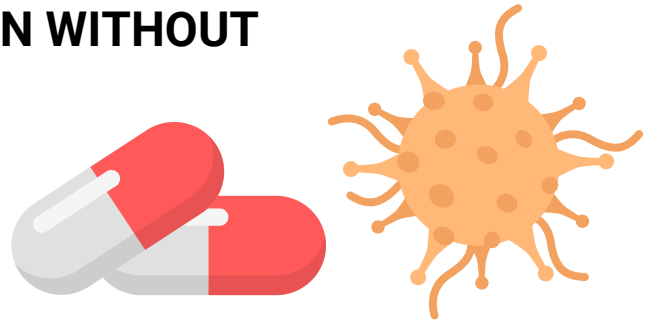
LAST 24 HOURS: 78,602

SOURCE : [Government of Pakistan](https://www.gov.pk)

YOU MAY HAVE COVID REBOUND EVEN WITHOUT TAKING PAXLOVID

Paxlovid, the antiviral drug used to treat COVID, isn't the only reason you could be experiencing rebound symptoms, a new study suggests. In the study, published in [JAMA Network](#) last month, over a third of those infected with COVID, who didn't take Paxlovid, still experienced a recurrence of their [symptoms](#) two days after their initial recovery.

The study, conducted between August and November 2020, looked at over 150 people who did not take Paxlovid (they were given a placebo) after contracting the virus. After about a month, 68% recovered fully, and of that group, 44% reported they had at least one of 13 common COVID symptoms recurring after two days of reporting zero symptoms (like chills, cough, fatigue, headache, muscle or body pain, nausea and sore throat).



The overwhelming majority (85%) of people with recurring symptoms said they were mild, and most commonly reported cough, fatigue, or a headache. Fifteen percent of those with recurring symptoms reported at least one moderate symptom.

People have feared taking [Paxlovid](#), the antiviral treatment for COVID, because of the reported [rebound](#) effect, where people's symptoms come back after they recover from the illness. Researchers are still working to understand the rebound infection phenomenon, but many explain it as people's immune systems not being able to fully fight off the virus yet.

Source: [Fortunewell](#)

PAKISTAN TOUGHENS LAW ON FAKE NEWS ON TWITTER, FACEBOOK

Pakistan has toughened laws to curb so-called fake news by regulating posts on social media platforms like Twitter Inc. and Meta Platforms Inc.'s Facebook, a move seen as an attempt to crack down on journalists and opponents of the government.



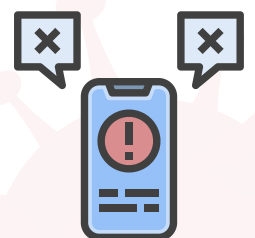
President Arif Alvi approved an ordinance to amend the country's Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) that allows anyone to file a complaint against a social media post. It also increased the jail term for the act from three to five years and made spreading fake news online a non-bailable offense, Ex-law minister Farogh Naseem said at a press conference Sunday.

Source: [Bloomberg](#)

ARE FAKE NEWS LAWS THE BEST WAY TO TACKLE DISINFORMATION?

Misinformation vs disinformation

Tackling disinformation is particularly challenging given how difficult the concept is to define. Sometimes described as "fake" or "false news", these misleading stories can come in many forms. The terms cover stories that are entirely fabricated, as well as others that leave out pertinent details or only present one viewpoint. Some stories may contain a core of truth, but omit key contextualizing information that makes them misleading. Sometimes 'disinformation' even includes parodies or satire, which can mislead readers to take their message at face value. The key distinction between 'misinformation' and 'disinformation' is its purpose.



'Misinformation' is typically inaccurate information that people write and spread advertently, whereas the very intention of 'disinformation' is to deceive. 'Disinformation' is weaponized and can be associated with foreign interference. False news legislation rarely makes any distinction, however, and this ambiguity leaves it open to abuse.



The Harm of Disinformation

In recent years, we have seen a worrying rise in disinformation. Facilitated by the internet and social media platforms, people are able to share fabricated stories easily and quickly. Sharing false information online can influence everything from stock shares to elections and social unrest.

This was particularly apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic when disinformation around the virus was rife. Described as the "infodemic", the rapid rise in inaccurate information undermined efforts by health authorities to combat the virus. This had serious, and sometimes fatal, consequences.

Legislating Disinformation

There is an ongoing debate about regulating false news and misinformation. Is legislation necessary to protect citizens from misleading information, or does it infringe on the right to freedom of expression?

In March 2017 the UN and regional human rights bodies published the Joint Declaration on Freedom of Expression and "Fake News", Disinformation and Propaganda. The Declaration found that criminalizing the sharing of information based on vague and ambiguous ideas, such as "false news", is incompatible with international standards for restrictions on freedom of expression.



Education not legislation



Effectively combating misinformation remains a pressing contemporary issue, with jurists, academics, and activists suggesting various remedies. Whatever approach we take, it is essential that we curb disinformation without violating freedom of expression.

We are also seeing a growing investment in fact-checking. Over the past decade, independent fact-checkers have emerged in more than 50 countries spanning every continent. According to the most reliable global count, 113 such known groups are active today.

The advent of the internet has facilitated the spread of false news – both more quickly and more widely than ever before. This misinformation can fuel political polarization, impact elections, and disrupt public health. Yet it is essential that we avoid far-reaching legislation that violates the right to freedom of expression.

Source: [Media Defense](#)

HOW TO STOP FAKE NEWS

CONSIDER THE SOURCE

click away from the story to investigate the site, its mission and its contact info.



READ BEYOND

Headlines can be outrageous in an effort to get clicks, What's the whole story?



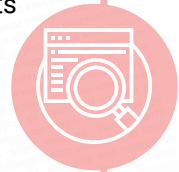
CHECK THE AUTHOR

DO a quick search on the author. Are they credible? Are they real?



SUPPORTING SOURCES?

Click on those links. Determine if the info given actually supports the story?



CHECK THE DATE

Reposting old news stories doesn't mean they're relevant to the current event.



IS IT A JOKE?

if it is too oldish, it might be satire. Research the site and author to be sure.



CHECK YOUR BIASES

Consider if you have your own beliefs could affect your judgement.



ASK THE EXPERTS

Ask a librarian, or consult a fact-checking site.

