

Pakistan among six nations with upward virus trends

WASHINGTON: America's most reliable source of data on the spread of coronavirus on Wednesday placed Pakistan among those six countries where the disease continues to show an upward trend.

Although the US is on a list of countries where coronavirus cases are going down, by Wednesday it had registered a total of 1,982,264 cases.

Also, on Wednesday Arizona reactivated hospital emergency plans as almost half of the 50 US states reported spikes in coronavirus cases.

The Coronavirus Resource Center of Johns Hopkins University of Medicine noted that the first case of Covid-19 in Pakistan was reported 104 days ago on Feb 25 and since then, the country has reported 113,702 cases, and 2,255 deaths.

The center has also placed India on this list, noting that the first case of Covid-19 in India was reported 131 days ago on Jan 29 and since then, the country has reported 276,146 cases, and 7,750 deaths.

Top on the upward trajectory list is Brazil where the first case was reported 104 days ago on Feb. 25, the same day as in Pakistan. Since then, the country has reported 739,503 cases, and 38,406 deaths.

Mexico is second on the list and India is third. The first Covid-19 case in Mexico was reported 102 days ago on Feb 27 since then, the country has reported 124,301 cases, and 14,649 deaths.

Russia, where the first case was reported 130 days ago on Jan 30 is fourth on the list. Since then, the country has reported 484,630 cases, and 6,134 deaths.

Chile, fifth on the list, reported its first case 98 days ago on March 2. Since then, the country has reported 142,759 cases, and 2,283 deaths. Pakistan is sixth.

On June 6, Arizona Department of Health Services Director Cara Christ sent a letter to area hospitals, urging them to "fully reactivate" emergency plans to deal with a rise in Covid-19 cases.

Hospital had relaxed their emergency drills after May 15 when the state officially ended almost four months of lockdown.

On Wednesday, the US media reported that Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah each posted rises of 40 percent or higher in new cases for the week ending June 7, compared with the prior seven days.

Speaking on FOX 10, the former director of Arizona's Department of Health Will Humble said that "community spread" and "not increase testing" caused this rise in infections. And he attributed this "increased community spread" to "pre-pandemic behavior" that came around May 15 when the state withdrew its stay-at-home order.

Although some experts have also blamed widespread anti-racism protests for the spike in coronavirus cases, no large gatherings were held in Arizona. In other states, however, some experts have linked the rise to the protests that followed the May 25 death in police custody of an African American man in Minneapolis.

"It's a simple biological fact. This virus will thrive in environments where people are in contact with each other," Dr Amesh Adalja, an infectious disease physician at Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, told Fox News.

He also said that mass gatherings were unlikely to create herd immunity anytime soon. "We need to probably have about 60 percent of the population infected to cross that immunity threshold [for the coronavirus]," Dr. Adalja said. "And that is going to come at a cost. And that cost will be many deaths."

Herd Immunity is defined as a stage when so many people get infected with a disease that they develop antibodies to protect the population against it. This is achieved either by natural infection or vaccines.