

Intensifying Urbanities in Karachi

A South Asian City in the Time of COVID-19

ADAM ABDULLAH, SOHA MACKTOOM, NAUSHEEN H ANWAR, NOMAN AHMED

Millennial Karachi is an “intense city” with compounding precarities of varying scales. The COVID-19 pandemic has added yet another layer of uncertainty. Through an engagement with the concept of the intense city, the pandemic’s regulation and hopeful prospects in the state’s new welfare policies are considered.

In the end, I would say the current government’s order is this: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, Corona will be on leave and people will do the business. On Friday, Saturday and Sunday, people will be on leave and Corona will do its business. If you are not standing with the truth, then history will not be concerned whether people were in a mosque or in evil’s brothel.

— Interview, male daily wager, Orangi Town, Karachi, August 2020.

Since February 2020, the Sindh provincial government has implemented a variety of regulations and policies to contain the COVID-19 pandemic in Karachi: from aggressive testing and strict lockdowns to quarantining, social distancing, and rapid roll-out of large vaccination centres. In doing so, it has been applauded for a decisive leadership and for providing lessons to the federal government and other provinces (*Dawn* 2020). These measures have been complemented by a range of countrywide relief policies, such as a \$900-million economic relief package for 12 million poor families that were provided PKR 12,000 (\$73) to cover their necessities for four months. This scheme was part of the federal government’s Ehsaas Emergency Cash programme to mitigate an economic and public health disaster in the broader context of the International Monetary Fund-backed austerity. Ehsaas is a large-scale, multisectoral programme initiated in 2019 by the Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division, Government of Pakistan, consisting over 130 policies and programmes, including cash disbursement, ration distribution, among others.¹ Despite these measures, the picture on ground in Karachi reveals a landscape shot through with vulnerabilities, socio-spatial inequalities heightened by the impacts of climatological instability, and brutal state actions for urban flooding risk mitigation that have left the poor, working class, and marginalised people without protection of shelter and livelihoods.

Despite the rush for vaccinations, Karachi’s unequal landscape of health access has resulted in highly variegated vaccination rates across districts: District South—a mostly upscale area—reports a 91% coverage, whereas District Central—the city’s core, high-density area containing extensive working-class neighbourhoods and informal settlements—reports a vaccination rate of only 31%.² As of December 2021, Karachi comprises seven administrative districts: Central, Malir, Korangi, South, West, East, and Keamari. A district is divided into subdivisions that are further divided into multiple union councils. Presently, provincial administration is under the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP)-led Sindh provincial government, including essential urban functions, such as town planning, waste disposal, and building control. The Pakistan

Adam Abdullah (adam8juneabdullah@gmail.com) is with the Middle East Technical University, Turkey/Karachi Urban Lab, IBA. Soha Macktoom (sohamacktoom@gmail.com) and Nausheen H Anwar (nhanwar@iba.edu.pk) are with the Karachi Urban Lab, IBA. Noman Ahmed (nomaniconn@gmail.com) is with the NED University of Engineering and Technology, Karachi.

Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-led federal government has limited powers of intervention in provincial affairs, including decisions to impose lockdown days and timings.

In conceptualising the “intense city,” we are inspired by the work of Doreen Massey (1999) and Abdou Maliq Simone (2020a, 2020b): the city is intense not only due to the spatial intensities of social relations but also due to the shifting, intense affective specificities of disparate experiences, multiplicity of forces, and different temporalities that are hard to disaggregate. The COVID-19 pandemic is an intensity or force that has produced new contingencies for Karachi’s residents who are already caught up in the intensifying economic difficulties that coalesce with cycles of land displacement to chronic and somewhat predictable infrastructural breakdowns and erratic climate-induced events such as urban floods and heatwaves that produce multiscale impacts on bodies, families, and households. Notably, we situate the “intense city” as a specific socio-spatial instantiation of the South Asian city in the context of Pakistan. In the intense city, colonial/postcolonial legacies of centralised governance and state violence are juxtaposed with long-standing tensions of the democratically elected federal, provincial, and local political governments, which themselves draw discursive and populist power from feudal, religious, and/or ethnically driven political ideologies. This convoluted nature of the state, in all its manifestations crude and subtle, defines the baseline of what we characterise as the intense city in a South Asian context, where multiple arms of the state remain at loggerheads and operate with their own logics.

Set against the backdrop of the “intense city,” we consider the governance of the COVID-19 pandemic in Karachi as a force that forges ahead and recedes in moments and spatial contexts. We place the pandemic’s forging ahead and retraction in relation to the roll-out and roll-back of regulation in neo-liberal regimes (Peck and Tickell 2002).³ In Karachi, the regulatory logic of the pandemic has oscillated between strict bans on social gatherings of any kind and periodically rolling back the bans, as cases were seen to decline. The roll-back has been particularly evident for certain sectors of the economy, such as the construction industry that was provided considerable relief by the federal government to stay afloat and active (KPMG 2020). The roll-back was also evident for religious gatherings during the months of Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Adha, Ramzan, and Muharram, when processions and mass gatherings continued unabated. In fact, people speculated that the arbitrary imposition of regulations was motivated by sectarian sensibilities. The regulatory roll-backs and roll-outs reflect politically mediated, conflicting, and often failing federal and provincial government responses in the steering and management of COVID-19.

Karachi is Pakistan’s largest city—official population 16 million and unofficial 25 million—and contributes approximately 25% to Pakistan’s gross domestic product and 54% of federal government tax revenue. Approximately 62% of the population resides in informal settlements (Hasan and Arif 2018), although this figure is likely to be higher today. Further, an unknown

number of people live in makeshift housing such as *jhuggies*, and many are homeless (Ahmed 2016). A substantial number of low-wage workers are implicated in informal employment: daily wage jobs or in precarious contractual arrangements devoid of labour welfare policies and services through the state or employers (Hasan et al 2017). Under such uncertain arrangements of employment, housing tenure, and social safety, particular urban populations become further vulnerable to sudden shocks such as climatic events or unprecedented regulations like pandemic containment measures.

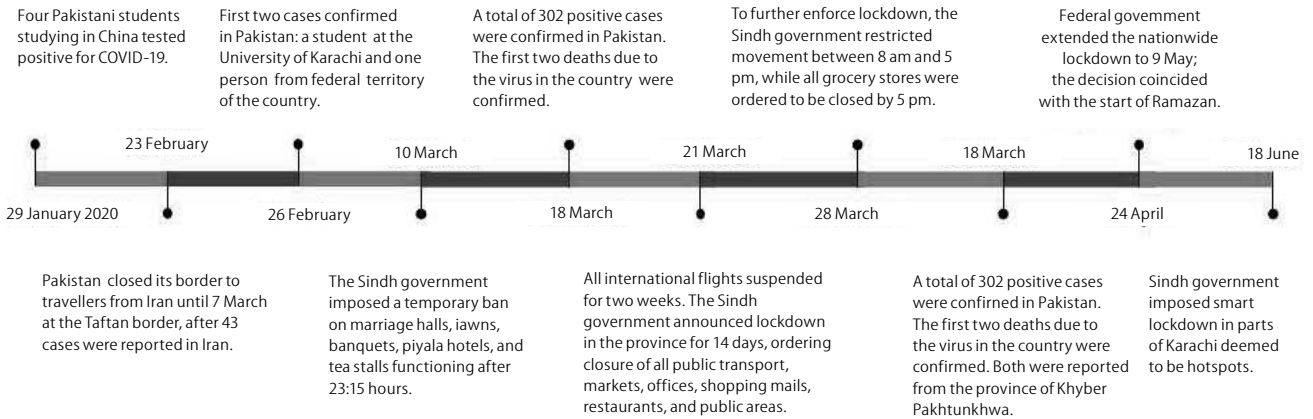
We first summarise the timeline of the pandemic in Karachi and the governance measures undertaken. Next, we discuss the on-ground responses of daily wage labourers located in the central and peri-urban areas of the city to religious clerics and the “problem of mass gatherings,” as well as welfare agencies that took charge of food distribution. Our methodology comprised a review of secondary material, including newspaper articles, press releases, lockdown notifications, and guidelines as well as primary data such as cell phone interviews with interlocutors located in specific affected neighbourhoods. This remote access was possible due to the long-standing relationships built with these individuals over the years, given that in-person conversations were not possible during lockdown. Finally, we conclude by asking if there is a silver lining to this intense moment in terms of the state’s new welfare policies for alleviating hardships. Do the new interventions and policies mitigate the spatial unevenness of suffering? Or do the COVID-19 regulatory roll-outs and roll-backs juxtaposed with ongoing events, such as land displacements and intensifying economic hardships, suggest the perpetual reanimation and reinforcement of instability for residents who are at the front lines of poverty, surveillance, and state violence?

Addressing the Pandemic

The first COVID-19 case was reported in Pakistan on 26 February 2020: a student returning to Karachi from a religious pilgrimage in Iran.⁴ As the number of infections multiplied in subsequent weeks (Ali et al 2020; Geo 2020), Sindh was the first province to announce a strict lockdown. In March 2020, the Tablighi Jamaat—a global Deobandi preaching organisation—announced its annual congregation in Raiwind, Punjab. Although the duration of the annual congregation was reduced from six to three days, more than 80,000 people attended, including 3,000 foreigners. This event further triggered the spread; as participants left for their respective hometowns, reports of increasing infections started pouring in (Chaudhry 2020).

With inter- and intra-city transport suspended, large-scale outmigration followed largely out of fear that the lockdown would be more stringent in big cities like Karachi as compared to smaller cities or towns. This was mostly through private transporters operating overcrowded and overcharged buses due to formal bans on out-of-city public transport services. In late March 2020, the Prime Minister approved a multimillion-dollar economic relief package—Ehsaas Emergency Cash programme—aimed particularly at the poor. In April 2020, the National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) was

Figure 1: Summary of the First COVID-19 Wave and Ensuing Lockdowns



Source: News articles.

constituted at the federal level to collect, coordinate, and analyse data on the pandemic. In early May 2020, lockdowns were eased to revive the economy; but cases surged and in mid-June, a “smart lockdown” was imposed in various parts of Karachi. The federal government justified smart lockdowns as opposed to the all-encompassing country- or city-wide lockdowns based on the assertion that the country and especially populations engaged in daily wage and precarious employment could not bear the economic consequences of a national shutdown. Under smart lockdowns, the government has selectively cordoned off zones where a high incidence of cases is reported.

However, smart lockdowns were criticised publicly for being too restrictive in that their coverage extended to a radius larger than the spaces showing high positivity rates. This led to the idea of imposing “micro-smart lockdowns” based on more accurate data and disaggregated at a higher resolution: specific streets rather than whole neighbourhoods or union councils were cordoned off. Thus, as COVID-19 forged ahead, the smart lockdown regulation was made “smarter” through the introduction of micro-smart lockdowns. Figure 1 provides a timeline of the first detected case of COVID-19 in Pakistan and the ensuing lockdowns in different parts of the country, particularly in the province of Sindh.

Apart from the umbrella policies and measures, the pandemic’s regulation was mired in politics and hindered by the opacity of data. The Sindh provincial government struggled with the lack of data on health facilities at the provincial and local levels (Khalid and Ali 2020); the absence of clarity on union council jurisdictions (Azam 2020); and the lack of high-resolution spatial and demographic data for imposing smart lockdowns. Moreover, the federal government was criticised for its slow response to halt the spread of the virus and for downplaying its severity despite warnings from medical experts (Crisis Group 2020). As the Sindh provincial government imposed strict pandemic regulations: from roadblocks and snap checking to the complete closure of commercial activities, the federal government’s regulatory measures receded under public statements for safeguarding the livelihoods of daily waged labour. Hence, during the first few months that

characterised the opaque knowledge landscape among health professionals, government institutions, and mixed reactions ranging from panic to disbelief among the public, the regulatory logic of the pandemic oscillated between strict bans on social gatherings of any kind and periodically rolling back the bans as cases appeared to be declining. The challenge of data opacity not only led to inaccurate representation of information and guidelines for citizens but also further aggravated uncertainties and anxieties that were particularly evident in parts of the city where evictions have intensified.

State Violence

Even as the pandemic and its containment has forged ahead in Karachi, there has been a rampant resurgence of evictions within the poor, working class, and informal settlements, with barely any state interventions for protection. In fact, as the Delta variant hit Karachi in the mid-2021 and the positivity rate surged to 23% (Khan 2021), where cases in Karachi represented 76% of the total cases reported in Sindh (Bhatti 2021); the demolitions of the working class and informal settlements along the city’s drainage channels or *nullahs* also intensified. These events have compounded vulnerabilities in the aftermath of job losses wrought on by the demolition of informal livelihoods. The evictions to securitise urban floods are part of the new federal and provincial government or state logics of infrastructure upgradation and disaster risk mitigation, displacing 50,000 people since March 2021 with no recourse for protection (Hasan 2021). As the COVID-19 regulatory measures rolled out, state representatives intervened harshly to prevent anti-eviction protests or rallies—a moment when pandemic regulations became a means for the state to impose its authority and power against those who raised voices for social justice. Thus, for a significant number of residents, Karachi does not register as the epicentre of the pandemic; more pertinent to them is the continued intensity of state violence supported by a regulatory logic that has exacerbated socio-spatial inequalities and temporal uncertainties.

In Quaid-e-Azam Colony—a low-income neighbourhood in District Central facing brutal evictions to clear the way for a major infrastructure project—a male resident claimed: “For

us, COVID came last year (2019) when our entire neighbourhood was demolished” (Anwar et al 2021). Even as the containment measures have been minimising one risk, the evictions have been increasing other risks, such as the loss of homes, livelihoods, and health. Nearly 40% of households in places like Quaid-e-Azam Colony have at least one family member who requires special medical and social care, and about 70% of the people who need care can be categorised as persons with chronic illnesses who face a heightened risk of contracting COVID-19 (Anwar et al 2021). Such health-related risks were further compounded when several heatwaves hit Karachi in 2020 and 2021,⁵ making such displaced, shelter-less individuals more likely to suffer chronic heat exposure with long-lasting health consequences (Oppermann et al 2021a).

The pandemic’s regulatory logic compounded with the loss in incomes had very visible, quantifiable impacts on vulnerable people in Karachi. The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS 2021a) estimates that 49% of Pakistan’s population has been affected by the pandemic containment measures in terms of either losing jobs or substantial decreases in incomes. In a Geo poll survey carried out during summer 2020 on the effects of containment within low-income neighbourhoods in Karachi, over 69% of the respondents reported that their incomes had decreased during the pandemic (Oppermann et al 2021b; Cross et al 2021). Especially pronounced were school dropouts as out-of-work parents were unable to pay fees (GEO 2021).

The lack of protection and the criminalisation of people displaced during the pandemic was further exacerbated by the stigma surrounding the perceived spread of COVID-19 in high-density informal neighbourhoods. This was reinforced in the statements by senior government officials; the chief minister Sindh, Murad Ali Shah in April 2020 stated that

I was afraid of the day when the virus will start spreading in slum areas as people in these settlements live in small houses with large families ... (my) fear had come true. (*Express Tribune* 2020)

Through conversations with our interlocutors, we learnt that even though such areas were labelled “hot spots,” the Sindh provincial government had taken little if any direct measures to provide relief to residents who were facing food shortages. The reason for this (in)action was clear: the Sindh provincial government did not possess the resources or the contacts at the ground level to undertake relief efforts on an immense scale. Hence, it outsourced ration distribution to welfare organisations known for their outreach in the city’s underprivileged areas. This was viewed as an attempt by the state to evade its responsibility for providing relief (Ali 2020).

The welfare organisations, local charities, and community-led initiatives were focused on the distribution of ration bags and medical assistance in poor neighbourhoods (PCP 2020). As underscored by the head of community services of the well-established Islamic welfare agency Al-Khidmat,

The advantage we, and other big charity organizations have is that we have been involved in the relief activities for decades. We know where and when rations need to be distributed. (Latif 2020)

The welfare measures have played an important role in the moments when federal government interventions have

failed to reach poor households. In instances where information about the Ehsaas programme has reached poor households and individuals, there have been reports of problems with biometric fingerprinting and related anxieties especially for women. A widow, who lost her job in a factory, explained as she reflected on the impact of COVID-19 in her community in Orangi Town:

After waiting in line for a whole day for 12,000 rupees from Ehsaas center, they say that my fingerprints don’t match, and I should go to NADRA.⁶ This way women suffer daily while fasting. I don’t know the population of the Chinese city of Wuhan, but I think it’s not like Orangi. In Orangi, the corona hasn’t spread that much. Another thing: everyone is saying don’t go to government hospitals for treatment. Our sources of information have increased rapidly because everyone has mobile phones, and people are advising each other that in government hospitals, doctors are forcefully admitting patients saying they have corona, and they die there. So, people aren’t visiting government hospitals even for normal illnesses. (interview, August 2020)

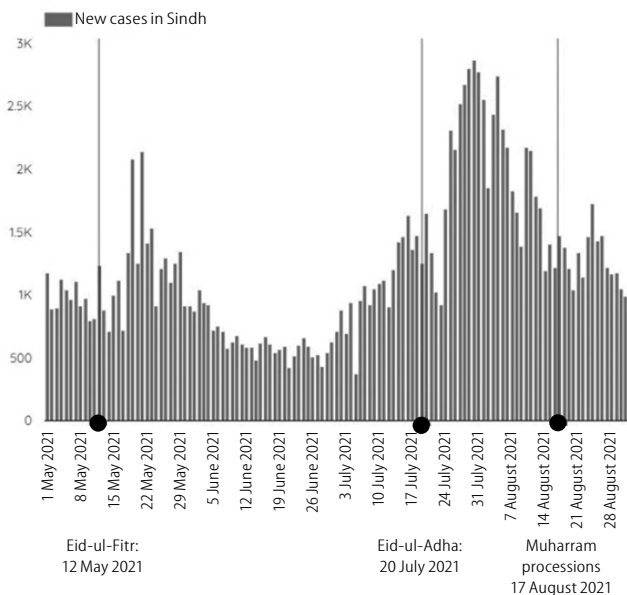
Aside from the intensifying uncertainties and challenges of accessing relief in already precarious locations, the COVID-19 regulations were rolled back in certain moments as religious events punctured the lunar cycle within the duration of the lockdown. These events are predictable, expected occurrences, and any attempt to postpone them was considered sacrilege, if not downright blasphemous.

Mass Gatherings and Receding Regulations

As COVID-19 forged ahead, the periods of lockdown coincided with Ramzan—the religious month of collective worship. The World Health Organization (WHO 2020a) issued guidelines for social distancing during Ramzan 2020 with updated guidelines for 2021 (WHO 2021). However, the guidelines were rarely ever followed; religious leaders and regulatory authorities often had conflicting opinions about congregations. The “problem” of mass gathering had surfaced first with the Tablighi Jamaat’s congregation in March 2020 in Punjab. With increasing speculation on mass gatherings and the spread of the virus, the Sindh provincial government rolled out a complete ban on congregational Friday prayers in a bid to limit people from assembling at mosques. However, this strategy triggered clashes between police, *imams*,⁷ and worshippers, for instance at the Memon Masjid, one of the largest mosques in the Old Town area of Karachi in District South; in mosques in Liaquatabad Town, District Central; and in Orangi Town, District West, where stones were pelted at policemen, slogans raised, and several people arrested (Qureshi 2020). Religious leaders unanimously emphasised “the current pandemic demanded mass prayer.” Prominent clerics like Mufti Taqi Usmani⁸ stressed the need to beg Allah for forgiveness to get rid of corona (Tanzeem 2020). The public was divided between those concerned about the potential deadly impacts of COVID-19 and those who believed it was a “Western conspiracy,” thus refusing to abide by the standard operating procedures (SOPs). For them, not attending the mosque was a sin.

The 20-point SOPs issued for Ramzan 2020 included instructions for congregational prayers, such as praying barefoot

Figure 2: Trends in Daily Reported Cases in Sindh, 1 May–31 August 2021



Source: NCOC website.

without carpets/mats and conducting *aitekaaf*⁹ at home. Even though the imams were aware of the directives,¹⁰ few took steps to enforce them; mosques rarely installed disinfection gates or temperature checks due in part to inadequate resources. Physicians across Pakistan voiced concerns that by permitting congregations, COVID-19 would spread further. Social media was bombarded with comments targeting religious clerics for deliberately causing COVID-19 deaths.

Apart from activities such as the *taraweeh*¹¹ prayers offered by Sunni Muslims, the 21st Ramzan was observed as the day of Martyrdom of Ali by Shia Muslims, calling for processions in key areas of Karachi. Although the federal government negotiated with the Shia leadership to postpone the processions, these were still conducted in the inner lanes of neighbourhoods and videos circulated on social media. The SOPs were once again flouted during Eid-ul-Adha in July 2020 as people thronged to large-scale livestock markets along the main highways. In Sindh, COVID-19 cases closely followed such religious events as the spikes occurred precisely after religious and social motivations brought together crowds at Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Adha, and Muharram (Figure 2). People speculated that the arbitrary imposition of regulations was motivated by

sectarian sensibilities, given that key regulatory decision-makers in Sindh belonged to the Shia sect. Personal correspondences revealed a feeling of unequal governance: “If taraweeh can be held indoors, so can a majlis¹² ... if a juloos¹³ can pass through the city, so can a milad¹⁴ procession. Why are the rules different for us, if not for them?”

Despite the strict pandemic regulations enforced through the late 2020 and the early 2021, political and religious events continued unabated in Karachi, and the Sindh provincial government took no regulatory action against the crowds. Instead, a local court in Karachi banned the police from issuing first information reports against the alleged SOP-violators to reduce the “earning” prospects of local policemen (Sahoutara 2021).

In Conclusion

The COVID-19 has further unsettled the “intense city” (Massey 1999; Simone 2020a, 2020b) by reworking temporalities and reinforcing spatial inequalities through uneven relief measures and regulatory roll-outs and roll-backs. The declaration of a state of emergency has not been felt evenly in Karachi; the pandemic’s regulatory logic has laid bare not only the capacities but also the sensibilities of the state and its willingness to engage with different sociopolitical groups in unequal ways. However, COVID-19 has also revealed hopeful moments of support and solidarity towards vulnerable communities where welfare organisations, activists, and volunteers have played crucial roles. At a national level, the federal government’s ambitious and unprecedented Ehsaas Emergency Cash programme is recalibrating debates about social equity and poverty alleviation. But the cash disbursement programme also received criticism for lacking sustainability as one-time cash outflows were insufficient for most low-income families to survive on for the duration of the unending pandemic. Going forward, a future where the Ehsaas programmes are linked to data that is representative of the existing social vulnerabilities can be one way of upscaling operations and ensuring that “relief” reaches those living under the most uncertain and precarious conditions. Beyond cash and food distributions, more far-reaching conversations on housing tenure, infrastructure inequities, and climatological instability are needed to scrape the surface of the “intensities,” which have a compounding effect on the ability of vulnerable people to cope with the uncertainties of everyday life, especially in the pandemic.

NOTES

- 1 Other important social security measures include the Benazir Income Support Programme. See www.bisp.gov.pk.
- 2 Personal correspondence with district commissioners and assistant commissioners Karachi.
- 3 We are grateful to a reviewer for suggesting this reference.
- 4 At this time, Iran had a high incidence of COVID-19.
- 5 Karachi’s deadliest heatwave was in 2015 when 1,200 people died.
- 6 National Database and Registration Authority.
- 7 It is an Islamic leadership for the person who acts as a community leader.

- 8 Taqi Usmani is a prominent Islamic scholar, former judge, and Hadith professor at the Darul Uloom Karachi.
- 9 Aitekaaf is an act of worship performed during the last 10 days of the month of Ramzan.
- 10 Interviews in May 2020 with two imams of mosques in Ghaziabad Sector, Orangi Town.
- 11 These are optional prayers performed in congregation after the last daily night prayer (*isha*) during Ramzan.
- 12 In this context, the term refers to a special religious gathering for Shia Muslims.
- 13 A public rally or religious procession.
- 14 A festival celebrated on the 12th day of Rabi al Awwal to commemorate the birth of the Prophet Muhammad.

REFERENCES

Ahmed, N (2016): “Where the Poor Live,” *Dawn*, 20 October, viewed on 13 September 2021, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1291017>.

Ahmed, T (2020): “Sindh CM Orders 1000-bed Quarantine Centre at PAF Museum in Karachi,” *Express Tribune*, 2 May, viewed on 14 September 2021, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2212811/sindh-cm-orders-1000-bed-quarantine-centre-paf-museum-karachi>.

Ali, I (2020): “IGP Sindh Directs Tableeghi Jamaat Members to Stay in Marakiz, Consider Them as Quarantine Centres,” *Dawn*, 31 March, viewed on 14 September 2021, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1545268>.

- Ali, I, A S Shah and N Siddiqui (2020): "Pakistan Confirms First Two Cases of Coronavirus, Govt Says 'No Need to Panic,'" *Dawn*, 27 February, viewed on 14 September 2021, <https://www.dawn.com/news/amp/1536792>.
- Anwar, N, G Anjum, A Abdullah, M Toheed, S Macktoom, K Rizvi, F Qureshi, M Arif and A Saleem (2021): "Land, Governance, and the Gendered Politics of Displacement in Urban Pakistan," OSFHOME, <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/YSM28>.
- Azam, O (2020): "Disconnect between Authorities on Sealing Off UCs Stokes up Confusion," *News*, 14 April, viewed on 15 September 2021, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/643908-disconnect-between-authorities-on-sealing-off-ucs-stokes-up-confusion>.
- Bhatti, M W (2021): "COVID-19 Positivity Rate in Karachi Still Above 23 Percent," *The News*, 4 August, viewed on 15 September 2021, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/872865-covid-19-positivity-rate-in-karachi-still-above-23-per-cent>.
- Chaudhry, Asif (2020): "Tableeghi Jamaat in Hot Water in Pakistan Too for COVID-19 Spread," *Dawn*, 8 April, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1547354>.
- Crisis Group (2020): "Pakistan's COVID-19 Crisis," International Crisis Group, 6 August viewed on 6 September 2021, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia/pakistan/b162-pakistans-covid-19-crisis>.
- Cross et al (2021): "Extreme Heat and COVID-19: The Impact on the Urban Poor in Asia and Africa," *Red Cross Climate Centre Technical Report*, Under review.
- Dawn* (2020): "Sindh Leads the Way," 28 March, viewed on 15 September 2021, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1544318>.
- (2021): "Thoughtless Eviction," 15 June, viewed on 13 September 2021, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1629429/thoughtless-eviction>.
- Express Tribune* (2020): "Sindh Govt Orders Mobile Testing for Coronavirus in Slum Areas," 12 April, viewed on 14 September 2021, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2196559/1-sindh-govt-orders-mobile-testing-coronavirus-slum-areas>.
- Garett, T A (2007): *Economic Impacts of the 1918 Influenza Pandemic—Implications for a Modern-Day Pandemic*, Federal Reserve Bank, St Louis.
- GEO (2020): "Pakistan Latest Victim of Coronavirus," 27 February, viewed on 14 September 2021, <https://www.geo.tv/latest/274482-pakistan-confirms-first>.
- (2021): "Coronavirus: Around 500 Low-fee Private Schools in Sindh May Not Be Able to Reopen," 11 January, viewed on 1 December 2021, <https://www.geo.tv/latest/329331-around-500-low-fee-private-schools-across-the-sindh-will-not-be-able-to-reopen-report?>
- Hasan, A and H Arif (2018): *Pakistan: Urban Housing Issues*, prepared for the Asian Coalition of Housing Rights as Part of a Larger Development and Planning Unit, University College London.
- Hasan, A, A Pervaiz and M Raza (2017): "Drivers of Climate Change Vulnerability at Different Scales in Karachi," International Institute for Environment and Development, London.
- Hasan, S (2021): "Downed by the Drains of Karachi," *Dawn*, 27 June, viewed on 14 September 2021, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1631609>.
- Honey-Roses, J et al (2020): "The Impact of COVID-19 on Public Space: A Review of Emerging Questions," mimeo.
- Khalid, A and S Ali (2020): "COVID-19 and Its Challenges for the Healthcare System in Pakistan," *Asian Bioethics Review*, Vol 12, No 4, pp 551–64.
- Khan, T (2021): "Migration and Mobility during COVID-19: A Pakistan Perspective," *Routed Magazine*, 20 June, viewed on 13 September 2021, <https://www.routedmagazine.com/covid-pakistan-perspective>.
- KPMG (2020): "Pakistan: Government and Institution Measures in Response to COVID-19," KPMG International Limited, 24 June, viewed on 6 September 2021, <https://home.kpmg/xx/en/home/insights/2020/04/pakistan-government-and-institution-measures-in-response-to-covid.html>.
- Latif, A (2020): "Pakistan's Charities Assist in Fight against Coronavirus," Anadolu Agency, viewed on 15 September 2021, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/pakistans-charities-assist-in-fight-against-coronavirus/1780046>.
- Massey, D (1999): "Interpreting Identities: Doreen Massey on Politics, Gender and Space-time," *Power-Geometries and the Politics of Space-Time*, Heidelberg: University of Heidelberg, pp 47–49.
- Oppermann, E, T Kjellstrom, B Lemke, M Otto and J K W Lee (2021a): "Establishing Intensifying Chronic Exposure to Extreme Heat as a Slow Onset Event with Implications for Health, Well-being, Productivity, Society, and Economy," *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, Vol 50, pp 225–35.
- Oppermann, E, A Nastiti, A Abdullah, S Amir, Y H Nandatama and N H Anwar (2021b): "Heat in a Time of Corona: An Analysis of the Nexus of Thermal Practices and Virus Transmission Management in Three Cities," Heat in Urban Asia: Past, Present, and Future, Conference presentation, April, Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore.
- Peck, J and A Tickell (2002): "Neoliberalizing Space," *Antipode*, Vol 34, No 3, pp 380–404.
- PCP E-Letter (2020): "PCP Network Doing Good in Covid Times," Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy, May, viewed on 15 September 2021, <https://pcp.org.pk/E-Letter/E-Letter-May2020-2/index.htm>.
- PBS (2021): "District Wise Census 2017 Results," Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Statistics Division, Government of Pakistan, Islamabad, viewed on 2 August 2021, <https://www.pbs.gov.pk/node/3331>.
- (2021a): "Special Survey on Evaluating the Impact of COVID-19," Ministry of Planning Development and Special Initiatives, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Government of Pakistan, Islamabad, <https://www.pbs.gov.pk/content/special-survey-evaluating-impact-covid-19>.
- PIDE (2020): "PIDE COVID-19 E Book," Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Islamabad.
- Qureshi, Z (2020): "COVID-19: Pakistan Provinces Restrict Friday Prayers to 5 People," *Gulf News*, 3 April, viewed on 11 September 2021, <https://gulfnews.com/world/asia/pakistan/covid-19-pakistan-provinces-restrict-friday-prayers-to-5-people-1.70789924>.
- Sahoutara, Naeem (2021): "Karachi Court Bars Police from Lodging FIRs against COVID SOPs Violators," 2 August, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1638379>.
- Siddika, A and M Islam (2020): "COVID-19 and Bangladesh: A Study of the Public Perception on the Measures Taken by the Government," mimeo.
- Simone, A (2020a): "To Extend: Temporariness in a World of Itineraries," *Urban Studies*, Vol 57, No 6, pp 1127–42.
- (2020b): "Securing 'Standby' and Urban Space Making in Jakarta: Intensities in Search of Forms," *Futuresproof*, Duke University Press, pp 225–44.
- Tanzeem, A (2020): "Pakistani Clerics Insist on Keeping Mosques Open," *Voice of America (VOA)*, 25 March, viewed on 12 September 2021, <https://www.voanews.com/science-health/coronavirus-outbreak/pakistani-clerics-insist-keeping-mosques-open>.
- WHO (2020): "COVID-19 Situation Report," 30 April, World Health Organization, Geneva.
- (2020a): "Safe Ramadan in the Context of COVID-19 Practices," 15 April, World Health Organization, Geneva.
- (2021): "Safe Ramadan Practices in the Context of COVID-19, Interim Guidance," 7 April, World Health Organization, Geneva.

EPWRF India Time Series

(www.epwrfits.in)

Agricultural Wages in India

The **EPW Research Foundation** has added a module on Agricultural Wages in India to its online database, EPWRF India Time Series (EPWRFITs).

This module provides month-wise data on Agricultural wages for:

- Agriculture Operations
 - Ploughing
 - Sowing
 - Weeding
 - Reaping
 - Harvesting
- Rural Skilled Labour:
 - Carpenter
- ❖ Contains data for 21 major states for men and women
- ❖ Presents quarterly and annual series (calendar year, financial year and agricultural year), derived as averages of the monthly data

With this addition, the EPWRFITs has 24 modules covering a wide range of macroeconomic, financial and social sector indicators of the Indian economy.

For subscription details, visit www.epwrfits.in or write to us at its@epwrf.in

EPWRF India Time Series is an e-ShodhSindhu consortium approved online database.