

# Press Release Detail

## Over 18 mln people to lose jobs amid lockdown in Pakistan

04 May, 2020

Asad Umar Minister for Planning, Development and Reforms Asad Umar on Sunday feared that around 18 million people could lose their jobs in the country due to ongoing lockdown imposed to prevent the spread of corona virus disease (COVID-19).

“According to calculations of Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), around 20 million 70 million population of the country could fall below the poverty line in the current perspective,” Asad Umar said in a televised press briefing here.

Asad Umar who also chairs National Command and Operation Center on corona virus, said keeping in view the growing number of deaths in the country, the people should adopt strict protective measures against COVID-19.

He said for last six days, 24 people were dying of the disease daily but still the number is far less when compared to the European countries and the United States.

He pointed out that in Pakistan, the disease had not proved to be as chronic as in Europe and the US.

Comparing death rate of various countries in 46 days after 100 deaths, the minister said in Spain 414 people out of one million populations died while in Italy the number was 405, 256 in France, 248 in UK and 116 in US while in Pakistan only two corona patients died out of one million populations.

On average, he said as compared to Pakistan, the US had 58 percent more deaths, Uk had 124 percent more deaths while Spain had 207 more deaths.

Umar said there could be certain reasons behind low death rate in this region, adding that no one could claim to completely eradicate this disease.

He said every country was trying to flatten the curve to control the disease to a certain level.

The minister said that the NCOC would share all these analysis about corona virus in the meeting of National Coordination Committee to be chaired by Prime Minister Imran Khan.

“We do not follow the West blindly and the future decisions would also be taken according to our own ground realities,” he remarked.

About the question why the government was not opening up everything if it thought that the disease was not so dangerous, the minister said “We are not opening up everything because we do not want to put burden on health system”.

The NCC meeting, he said would be held before May 09 – the deadline of lockdown, where the decision about the lockdown would be taken keeping in view the analysis presented by NCOC.

The minister said the government was facing huge economic loss due to the lockdown as only in April, it faced a loss of Rs 119 billion.

“We have to run the course of government, health, education and other systems and also to provide relief to the poor with the help of this tax money,” he added.

Further he informed that it was also feared that due to lockdown, over one million small businesses could be washed forever.

Referring to a survey conducted by GALLUP Pakistan, he said every one person out of four said that they had to reduce quantity of food in their daily routine.

With respect to the current situation of health system, the minister informed that at present there were 5000 Intensive Care Units (ICU) available in the country out of which 1500 had been fixed for the corona patients while only 132 patients were admitted in the ICUS.

Similarly he said the country had 1400 ventilator and by June this year, the number would rise to 2000.

He informed that at present 35 corona patients were on ventilators.