

International News and Updates

'The War Has Changed' – U.S Report Highlights Threat from Delta Variant.

An [internal report](#) by the Centre for Disease Control has acknowledged that the delta variant appears to cause more severe illness than earlier variants and spreads as easily as chickenpox. Data reflects that vaccinated individuals infected with the delta variant may be able to transmit the virus as easily as those who are unvaccinated. It is likely that some restrictions will soon make a comeback in the USA.

New Variants May Lead to Current Vaccine Failure – UK Scientists.

[Research](#) published by the UK Government's scientific advisory group (SAGE) claims that it is ['almost certain'](#) that a new variant will eventually emerge which will render the current vaccines useless. Although not peer reviewed, the research argues that since eradication of the virus is unlikely, the virus will continue to mutate and will eventually evade the vaccine acquired immunity.

The Global Movement to Eradicate Polio May Be Coming to An End.

The [WHO has decided to transition](#) out of the global polio eradication initiative starting from January 2022. Ironically, polio hasn't yet been eradicated but the WHO has decided to shift its focus towards routine immunization of which polio will be one component. It remains to be seen what the post transition interventions will look like in Pakistan and Afghanistan, the only two countries where polio still exists.

Local News and Updates

Pakistan's First Public Sector Pediatric University Launched in Lahore.

The Punjab government has upgraded the Institute of Child Health to the [University of Child Health Sciences](#) which is the first of its kind in the country. Lahore's Children's Hospital along with multiple colleges will now fall under its umbrella. The move will help in training qualified human resource in the field of pediatrics.

Centre for Disease Control Established at NIH.

A new Centre with the aim to enhance the capacity of the public health system in disease detection and management has been [inaugurated at NIH](#) Islamabad. The CDC will serve as the future nerve center from where infectious disease outbreaks will be detected and prevented.

Counselling and Mental Health Services Face Strict Scrutiny.

In light of the gruesome murder that took place in Islamabad recently and the [role of a specialized counselling service](#) in the event, mental health services in Pakistan have come under strict scrutiny by regulators after a strong [outcry by the public](#) about the lack of oversight. IHRA has already [suspended](#) two psychiatric rehab centers in Islamabad with more likely to follow.

Pharmacists to be Integrated into Healthcare System.

The Federal Government has issued [directives](#) to provincial health departments to integrate pharmacists into the public sector healthcare system to ensure a rational use of prescription medication. Currently clinical pharmacists have no role in drug prescription in both the public and private sectors. The practical technicalities of how such a step will be implemented are still unclear.

Vaccine Updates:

- [Door to door](#) vaccination campaign begins in Punjab for Chinese vaccines only.
- NCOC mulls [vaccination of under 18s](#). Decision expected this week.
- Services sector has till [August 31st](#) to vaccinate employees.
- NCOC opens [Moderna vaccine for general public](#) after receiving 3 million more doses.