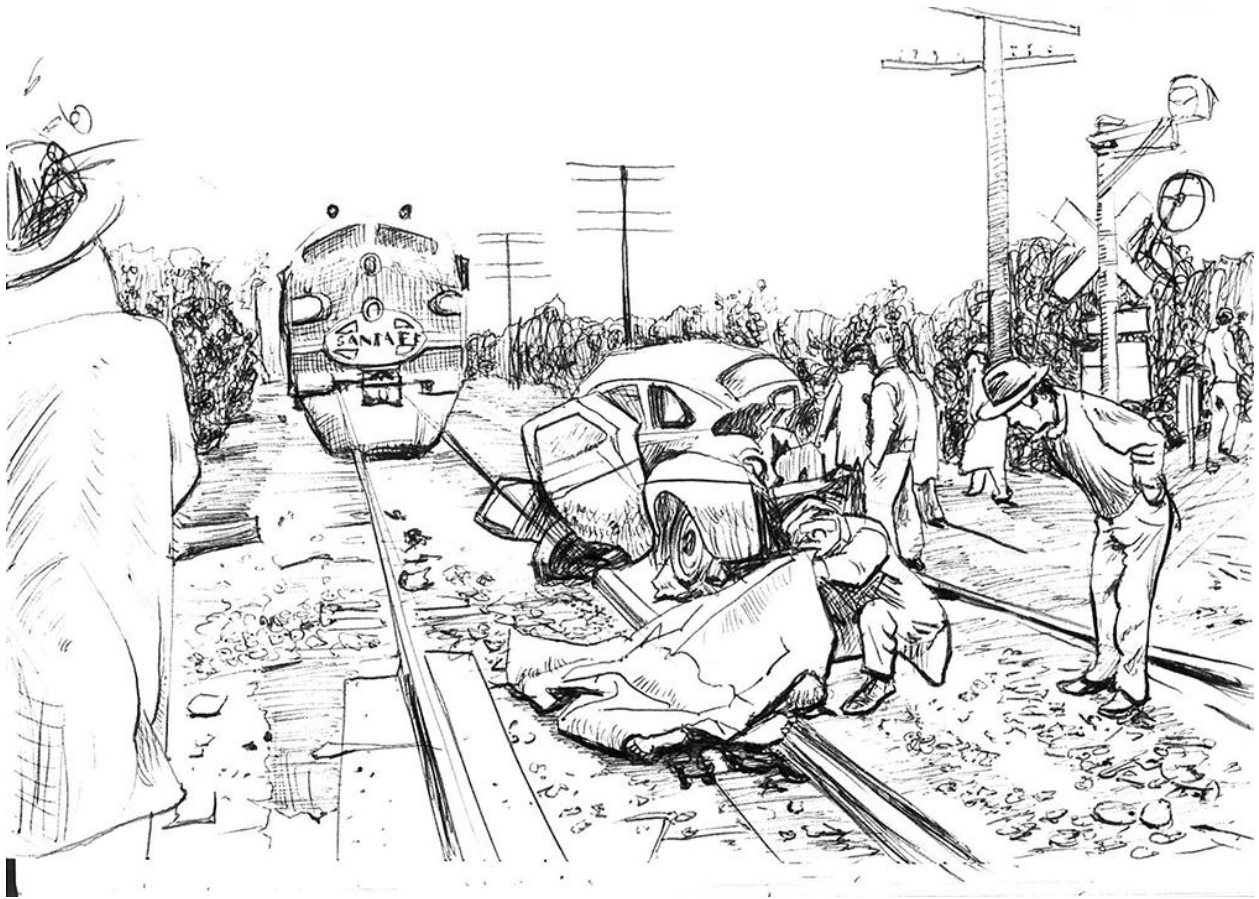


ACCIDENT



Three of a family die in accident on Northern Bypass

Three persons, including two women, were killed when a fast-moving coach hit their motorcycle on Northern Bypass on Wednesday morning.

Police and rescue officials said that the accident took place near Mowach Goth roundabout.

The biker, his mother and wife sustained critical injuries and were shifted to the Dr Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital Karachi where doctors pronounced them dead on arrival.

The victims were identified as Abdul Hafeez, 34, his mother Zainab Hanif, 55, and wife Ulfat, 28.

A Mochko police officer said that they were on their way to Lyari from Hub to meet their relatives.

He said that the coach driver was overtaking a trailer and in the process hit the motorbike from the front.

The driver managed to escape from the scene, leaving behind the vehicle which was later impounded by the police.

Arambagh SHO sacked

Police authorities on Wednesday removed the SHO of the Arambagh police station for firing at a man who failed to stop his motorbike on main M.A. Jinnah Road on Tuesday night.

DIG South Sharjeel Kharal sacked SHO Rao Akmal and issued him a show-cause notice over the incident.

Police said the wounded man was identified as Sharafat and his condition was said to be stable.

The family did not want to lodge an FIR so internal departmental action was initiated against the SHO.

A police party on Tuesday night signalled Sharafat to stop and when he did not, the police shot him.

The police said that the SHO was leading the police party and he had taken the responsibility of the said action.

Meanwhile, DIG Kharal and SSP South Sheeraz Nazeer visited the Civil Hospital and inquired after Sharafat's health.
(By newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 15, 09/01/2020)

Two men drown as car falls into sea

Two men drowned in the sea on Sunday when a car apparently went out of the control of a youth learning driving and fell into seawater, Darakhshan police and hospital officials said.

They added that at around 2.15pm, an Alto [ARA-904] fell into the sea/creek in the Defence Housing Authority, Phase-VIII, near the Creek Club.

Two persons — Daniyal Aziz, 20, and Mohammad Iftikhar, 55 — were in the car.

A Darakhshan police official said that Daniyal was reportedly learning driving in the open ground adjacent to the creek when the car went out of his control and fell into the water.

The police and rescue teams reached there and tried to save them but both the persons were stuck inside the car and could not escape. The both died while being taken to hospital, said a senior police officer.

Dr Seemin Jamali, executive director of the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre, confirmed that the both men were brought dead to the hospital.

After fulfilling legal formalities, the bodies were handed over to their respective families.

The drowning victims were residents of Punjab Colony.
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 13, 20/01/2020)

Boy, man killed in DHA road accidents

A boy and a man were killed in separate road accidents in the Defence Housing Authority on Sunday, officials said.

A 12-year-old boy was killed while five other passengers were injured when an apparently speeding mini bus of route N-5 overturned at Seaview near Do Darya.

The wounded persons were taken to different hospitals, where the boy, Mustafa Khan, died during treatment, said an Edhi Foundation spokesperson.

A 50-year-old man died when an apparently speeding rickshaw overturned on Khayaban-i-Ittehad in the DHA. The deceased was identified as Shahid Rehman.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 14, 24/02/2020)

Man killed, two injured by speeding tanker

A man was killed and two others were injured when a speeding water tanker crashed into two vehicles, after which it rammed into a paint shop on University Road near Safoora Chowrangi, on Tuesday. The tanker collided with a school van, as well as a hi-roof van whilst speeding.

As a result, a retired Pakistan Air Force officer, identified as 50-year-old Noshad was killed. Meanwhile, the school van's driver, Muhammad Zeeshan, and the hi-roof's driver, Muhammad Ali, were injured. Zeeshan's condition is said to be unstable.

The truck hit Noshad, claiming his life, while he was seeing his children off to school as they were getting into their school van. Both the children, however, remained safe.

The paint shop owner is claiming that he has faced a huge loss due to the accident as the tanker shoved into the shop and had to be taken out with the help of crane. He has stated that the vehicle destroyed the shop's shutters, machines and the paint buckets kept inside.

According to Sachal Police, the police have arrested the tanker driver Noora and shifted the wrecked vehicles to the police station. They are, however, searching for the young man who was driving the tanker.

Noora told *The Express Tribune* that he and the tanker owner's son was travelling to the Safoora water hydrant, and while he was asleep the tanker was being driven by the tanker owner's son Irfan. He added that upon waking up, he found Irfan absent from the driving seat and the tanker stuffed in the shop.

(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 04, 26/02/2020)

Accident after accident

For the Pakistan Railways, the year 2019 was a sinister year in terms of the number of accidents. According to the railway ministry, 74 accidents occurred between Aug 2018 and June 2019. In Oct 2019, 73 passengers travelling in Tezgam Express were burnt to death and many others injured when a gas cylinder being carried unlawfully inside the train caught fire. On the night between Friday and Saturday, a Lahore-bound Pakistan Express rammed into a passenger bus at an unmanned railway crossing between Khairpur and Rohri killing 20 and leaving a considerable number injured. The death toll is feared to rise as most of the injured are in a serious condition. Area residents say the sound of the collision was so loud that they thought it was bomb explosion.

All these serious accidents have happened when the ministry of railways is under the watch of Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, a seasoned politician but inept in handling the affairs of his ministry as the above-stated facts show. After the present accident, in order to shift the blame he claimed the unmanned railway crossing was the responsibility of the Sindh government. In 2019, some 20 accidents occurred at unmanned railway crossings. We don't know how the minister had tried to absolve himself from these 20 accidents. He says there are 2,470 unmanned railway crossings in the country and he has written several letters to the provincial governments.

Sheikh Rashid had accepted the responsibility for the October 2019 accident and apologised for it. In January, hearing a case relating to losses suffered by the railways, CJP Justice Gulzar Ahmed had expressed annoyance with the minister over his handling of the railways. He had said, "You should have submitted your resignation" in response to which the minister had said 75 officials had been dismissed after the Oct accident. Earlier, he had said two people had been fired. The top judge had chided the minister saying you fired mostly lower-level employees.

Accident after accident is occurring, but the high-ups remain firmly ensconced in their positions. The authorities seem to be selling negligence and the people continue to reap the terrible consequences of the horrible negligence.

(By Editorial The Express Tribune, 16, 01/03/2020)

Water tanker kills boy

An apparently overspeeding water tanker killed a 12-year-old boy in Manghopir area on Monday, according to police.

They added that Meherullah was passing through Umar Goth in Khairabad area when the tanker hit him. He died on the spot. The incident enraged area people who got hold of the driver and subjected him to a hiding before arrival of the police who took him and the tanker into custody, said area SHO Gul Mohammed Awan.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 15, 03/03/2020)

Defying DNA

IN picking a fight with the Sindh government, PTI may have committed a strategic mistake.



The genesis of this mistake is buried deep inside PTI's DNA. This DNA overrides the dictates of time and space and makes the party lurch involuntarily in a direction which may not be the preferred one at that particular moment.

This uni-dimensional approach towards its opponents had served PTI well in its days of political wilderness. The sharp focus, the simplicity of narrative, the un-nuanced approach to everything and everyone, the non-stop aggression against rivals and the inflexibility of the message — all these were strengths that helped the party survive complex situations and impossible odds. It was easy to demand explanations without the need to provide any.

Then power happened. And things got messy. Here's how PTI missed things:

It missed the issue: the coronavirus was one issue that could not possibly elicit partisan colours. A collective threat brings people together not because they have to, but because they want to. There is comfort in shared danger that cannot be blamed on each other. Leaders dream of such a situation when they can reach across the political and ideological divide and actually muster support. The virus provided an opportune time for the federal leadership to evolve out of its narrow political base and grow itself fully into the national space that had opened up. People were looking for leadership that appealed to the citizen in them and not just the party supporter; they were eager to embrace a message that was inclusive and not exclusive; that united them not divided them.

The virus provided an opportune time for the federal leadership to evolve out of its narrow political base.

PTI missed the moment. It missed it because it allowed its DNA to overpower its political sense. The gut reaction within the party leadership was the expected one: if we reach out to the PPP government, we will undermine our politics that is based on the premise that PPP is corrupt and hence the enemy. This logic disallowed the PTI leadership to nuance its approach in the face of an evolving moment that was opening up a space that offered an opportunity for PTI to stamp its leadership far and beyond its narrow base. That window of opportunity has slammed shut.

PTI missed the message: It was a narrative begging to be weaved into the vulnerabilities of citizens. The narrative could have very easily painted the prime minister as the only leader in the country who genuinely and deeply cared for the people of Pakistan regardless of where they lived and who they supported. This narrative would have found traction in the prime minister visiting cities and towns inspecting preparations and motivating citizens and governments alike. Such a narrative would have come alive with the prime minister going into PPP's lair and bucking up Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah. This narrative would have combusted with accolades had the prime minister called an all-parties conference and displayed solidarity with everyone to build a united front against the Covid-19 threat. That message, sadly, never got crafted.

With the issue, moment and message missed, PTI went into default mode and attacked the Sindh government. This has provided PPP with an opportunity to achieve two objectives: first, draw a sharp comparison with the performance of the PTI governments thereby sculpting a new identity for itself as a doer government; second, by elevating its stature in the centre-province tussle it has placed itself as an equal in a seemingly unequal equation. If a prime minister competes with a chief minister, it is no surprise who stands to lose more. When PPP takes the fight back to the centre, it grows in stature. The party has cleverly ensured that it does not take on the PTI provincial governments — only the federal one. In a federal structure, the optics of a lone province outshining the combined performance of the centre and other provinces is a gift that will keep on giving for a while. Imagine the rich campaign possibilities for PPP hidden within the folds of this ensuing contest.

This political DNA is a cruel thing if it does not mutate into a more evolved state. Courtesy the limitations of this DNA, PPP now has enough ammunition to strengthen itself in the post-Covid-19 era. It has fully utilised the last eight weeks to burnish its credentials as a party that can perform with clarity and focus if need be. It has also utilised this time to own the lockdown narrative not just as a policy tool but as a political initiative that has successfully set the agenda for all other governments. This success has combined in itself two clear strands: one, clarity of policy; two, clarity and effectiveness of messaging. Combined, they set the agenda regardless of the final outcome of the policy.

Now very cleverly, the Sindh government has reluctantly subsumed its policy into the national narrative via the NCC. PTI through its mistakes has allowed PPP to get the best of both worlds: if the easing of the lockdown fails, PTI gets the blame; if it holds fine, PPP has already agreed to it and can say the situation is holding because of the dividends paid by the initial weeks of lockdown which were the Sindh government's policy. By becoming hostage to its own DNA, PTI has allowed PPP to run rings around it.

The corona crisis is far from over and there is yet plenty of time for PTI to make amends. The easing of the lockdown that begins today provides a fresh opportunity for the PTI leadership to liberate itself from the cruel confines of its DNA and adopt a more nimble and flexible approach to the challenge. The next two weeks are crucial. If the infections spark sharply and the situation unravels alarmingly, PTI should have the courage and foresight to reverse policy without making it an ego issue. A fluid state of affairs offers a fluid array of options which can be utilised for important political gains.

(By Fahd Husain Dawn, 06, 09/05/2020)

Mourning processions

MOST experts are of the firm view that social distancing and avoiding large crowds is the best way to keep the coronavirus at bay. However, this sage advice has fallen on deaf ears in some countries, Pakistan included. Despite fervent appeals by medical experts, people have failed to practise social distancing and are treating Covid-19 as just another illness. This has had an obvious impact with cases crossing the 28,000 mark, and more than 600 deaths in the country. Unfortunately, many clerical elements in Pakistan have also reacted emotionally, and instead of counselling their flock to pray at home have insisted that congregational prayers at mosques continue. While doctors and health experts had advised against allowing large communal prayers, the state caved in to the clerics and gave the green light for congregational prayers, including taraweeh during Ramadan. Now the majority of Shia clergymen in the country insist that the mourning processions to mark Yaum-i-Ali, which falls on Friday, will go ahead. A delegation of Shia ulema met the federal religious affairs minister on Friday in Islamabad and said the processions will be taken out. Although the minister remained ambiguous, the Sindh government had recently issued a notification indicating that processions and all other large-scale religious programmes would not be allowed.

This is a time for prudence, not emotionalism. While clerics say the processions will be brought out 'by observing SOPs', this is easier said than done. After all, tens of thousands of people attend the main processions, and especially in Karachi, when the juloos winds its way through the old city area social distancing becomes impossible. Local Shia ulema need to reconsider their inflexible approach, especially when the highest Jafari jurisprudential authorities in Iraq and Iran have urged caution, and have called on the faithful to follow government protocols. No heed should be paid to social media campaigns being run by anti-Shia extremist groups celebrating the temporary suspension of mourning processions. At this juncture, preventing more infections and saving lives should be of paramount concern.

(By Editorial Dawn, 06, 10/05/2020)

Passenger plane carrying 99 slams into houses near Karachi

At least 85 people died when a Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flight carrying 91 passengers and eight crewmembers crashed into a thickly-populated neighbourhood while trying to land at the Karachi airport on Friday afternoon.



At least two passengers, namely Mohammad Zubair and Bank of Punjab president Zafar Masud, miraculously survived the crash and were taken to hospitals, as rescue work after firefighting operations continued into the night.

The Sindh health authorities are trying to ascertain the identity of the deceased persons, as officials have yet to confirm how many of them were residents of the Model Colony, where the plane crashed, passengers and crewmembers. The officials said DNA samples were being collected from the bodies for identification, as many of them were charred beyond recognition.

It was 2.39pm when the PIA flight PK-8303 (Aircraft Airbus A-320, registration AP-BLD) carrying passengers from Lahore to Karachi crashed into the houses situated in Jinnah Garden (a Model Colony locality between the airport and Malir cantonment), the officials said.

Witnesses said the aircraft had already caught fire before it came down with a bang. The pilot could be heard making mayday call in his last conversation with air-traffic controller just before the crash.

Footage that went viral on social media and later picked by TV channels showed plumes of black smoke rising from the residential area. Flames rising from the top-floor of a house could be seen in another clip. In one video, area people were seen rescuing a person, who was later identified as BoP president Zafar Masud, who miraculously survived the crash.

The area presented the look of a war-torn site with the aircraft's smouldering wreckage lying along with the rubble of damaged houses and burning vehicles.

Firefighters and rescuers as well as security forces reached the scene. However, the presence of a large number of onlookers, narrow streets, broken electric poles and overhead wires made the rescue job difficult. Heavy machinery was sent to the area to clear the rubble of the houses and search for bodies and survivors underneath.

Edhi and Chhipa ambulances shifted the deceased and the injured to different hospitals. The Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre received 53 bodies, while the Civil Hospital Karachi got 32 bodies. The health department spokesperson, Meeran Yousuf, confirmed to Dawn that the death toll was 85 till midnight, while all the eight injured were area residents.

In a video statement, PIA CEO Air Marshal Arshad Malik said that the pilot of the A-320 flight coming from Lahore to Karachi was heard telling about a technical problem in his last conversation. "He was told both runways are ready for landing, but the pilot decided to go round. Why he decided this and what was the technical problem we will look into it," Air Marshal Malik said.

The pilot of the ill-fated aircraft was also heard telling the air-traffic controller he lost "the engine" and making a mayday call in radio conversation with the control tower. He was asked to confirm whether he was belly landing and told that two runways were available.

Army troops and its firefighters were among the first responders as the site of the crash was close to the garrison.

Inter-Services Public Relations chief Maj Gen Babar Iftikhar said in a tweet that the Quick Reaction Force of the army and the Rangers reached the site and were carrying out relief and rescue efforts along with the civil administration.

He also tweeted that army's aviation helicopters were also part of rescue efforts and were assessing damage. "Urban Search & Rescue Teams are being sent on site for rescue efforts," he said.

The PIA CEO later told a presser in Karachi in the evening that it could take two to three days to complete the rescue operation at the scene of crash, where surface was still hot and a cooling process was going on late in the evening.

He claimed that the aircraft was technically sound and only a probe would help find what had actually happened. PIA would not be part of the probe committee, he said.

The incident sparked a debate within PIA as well as aviation circles as to whether or not PIA was following international safety standards and procedure.

A probe has been assigned to the Safety Investigation Board — an independent body that falls within the aviation division — as per standard operating procedures and only its report would determine the exact causes of the crash and fix responsibility.

SIB investigators visited the site and collected important evidence including the black box.

The ill-fated aircraft was flown by Captain Sajjad Gul, who was among the deceased. He was married and had four kids. He was a resident of Lahore.

The Pakistan Airlines' Pilots Association (Palpa) expressed deep sorrow over the loss of their beloved and experienced crew members, especially Capt Gul who it said had 24 years of service experience and 15,000-plus flying hours and considered among the most experienced pilots of the airline.

(By Azfar-ul-Ashfaq Dawn, 01, 23/05/2020)

Tragedy strikes Model Colony

It happened in the blink of an eye. One moment, the aircraft was up in the sky, the next, it nosedived to the ground, crashing over houses in Model Colony's congested Jinnah Garden, a neighbourhood near Jinnah International Airport, around half past two on Friday afternoon.

Residents said their walls shook before an explosion reverberated through the air as the Pakistan International Airlines aircraft, travelling from Lahore to Karachi, slammed into their neighbourhood.

The air soon reverberated with the cries of the residents as a fireball rose into the air.

When dust settled over the ruins of the disaster, those who had survived the catastrophe reeled from the shock of the sudden tragedy. Fire erupted at various spots in the neighbourhood's streets and plumes of smoke turned the sky a dark shade of grey.

The aircraft's wreckage was sprawled across two or three streets and bodies lay on the streets and the crumbling rooftops of houses.

According to accounts shared by eyewitnesses, the aircraft's wheels and landing gear bounced off the houses' walls in the areas, before falling far off.

"The crash rocked the entire neighbourhood," said one among them. "We had just finished offering Friday prayers at the mosque when we heard the explosive sound and perplexed, we rushed to the place of the incident," he told *The Express Tribune*.

Another eyewitness, Hassan, who said he was among the first few to reach the site of the incident, said, "There was debris and fire everywhere. We couldn't breathe properly due to the smoke."

"It was like doomsday," said Aslam, who lives near the destroyed neighbourhood. "The entire street was in ruins," he added.

"I was coming from the mosque when I saw the plane tilting on one side. The engines' sounds were quite weird. It was so low that the walls of my house were trembling," said a 14-year-old witness.

Another resident, Mudassar Ali, said he "heard a big bang and woke up to people calling for the fire brigade."

Around half a dozen houses were completely demolished and the upper storeys of most houses were severely damaged, with their balconies uprooted as well.

As rubble piled up, the entrance to many houses was blocked and as per the initial estimate, at least 15 houses were damaged under the impact of the crash. In addition, over 20 vehicles and several motorcycles parked in the streets were wrecked.

Electricity poles hit the ground too, badly affecting the electricity and communication network in the area. And soon after the crash,

the electricity supply to the neighbourhood was suspended and the area was cordoned off. Besides, debris also blocked the street most affected by the crash.

Cutting through the clamour was the humming noise of a helicopter hovering over the area for surveillance. And amid that cacophony and confusion, there were efforts to help the victims.

While firefighters, law enforcement personnel, including Rangers and police, and rescue workers continued to carry out rescue operations, area residents also contributed in efforts to shift bodies, as they made their way through the debris in the hopes of finding survivors.

According to Hassan, he, along with other area residents had already shifted multiple bodies and injured to ambulances before rescue personnel reached the spot.

Aslam, too, said that he and a few others had somehow managed to enter the collapsed houses and rescue some of the injured, with few among the suffering severe burn injuries.

"Smoke and suffocation made the task difficult but we continued to rescue people," he added.

Rescue work was further hampered by residents from nearby localities crowding the narrow street and making videos. They were eventually asked to vacate the area so that rescue operation could be carried out without any hindrance.

Sarfraz Ahmed - a firefighter at the crash site - told AFP the nose of the Airbus A320 and the fuselage had been heavily damaged by the impact, adding that rescuers had pulled bodies from the wrecked aircraft, including some who were still wearing seat belts.

Later, as night descended and darkness shrouded the locality, the severity of the damage dawned on the residents who were gripped by fear.

Reports emerged of multiple area residents going missing after the incident, with their families finding it difficult to locate them due to the debris strewn across the neighbourhood.

But they continued to look for their loved ones, fearing that they may have died and in hopes of finding them alive.

"Moments before the crash, they had no idea what was to befall them and now they are completely bewildered by what has happened," said another eyewitness.

(By Farooq Amir The Express Tribune, 04, 23/05/2020)

DNA sampling underway to identify crash victims

Families of the victims of the plane crash in Model Colony visited the University of Karachi (KU) on Saturday, where a sample collection point has been set up for the purpose of DNA testing to identify the deceased.

According to South deputy commissioner Irshad Sodhar, the collection point has been set up at a forensic laboratory at the varsity and the bereaved family members have been requested to visit the facility for sampling.

"It is necessary for identifying victims who thus far remain unidentified," he remarked.

As per KU officials, they are prioritising collecting samples from the victims' parents, followed by their children and siblings, in that order. Meanwhile, the samples collected at Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC) and Dr Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital Karachi (CHK) have already been sent to the laboratory for testing, one of the officials said.

Another official told *The Express Tribune* that more than two samples were being collected from each family.

They were unable to specify the time it would take to test the samples, some estimating that it could take three to five days. However, according to Sindh Health Minister Dr Azra Fazal Pechuho, it will take around 21 days for the test results to come.

Addressing a press conference on Saturday, Pechuho said that rescue workers had recovered 97 bodies from the rubble, all of which were likely those of passengers on board the aircraft.

She said that the deceased include 68 males, 26 females and three children, adding that samples from the unidentifiable bodies, which had been burned beyond recognition, were sent to KU for testing while 47 samples had been collected from the bereaved family members at the varsity.

She said that 19 bodies had been identified so far and six injured persons, including two surviving passengers and four residents of Model Colony, were under treatment.

The surviving passengers have been identified as Muhammad Zubair and Zafar Masood.

Earlier, JPMC executive director Dr Seemin Jamali told *The Express Tribune* that 66 bodies brought to the hospital were sent for medical examination and identification, among which 17 were handed over to the heirs after identification.

The identified bodies include those of Captain Sajjad Gul, Muhammad Tahir, Fareeha Rasool, Faryal Begum, Syeda Saima Imran, Farhan, Dilshad Ahmed, Shaheed Mohammad Ahmed, Nida Waqas, Ammar Rashid, Shehnaz Parveen, Shoaib Raza, Waqas Tariq, Iqra Shahid, Maham and Aliza Sheriyar.

Dr Jamali stated that the hospital staff had promptly taken samples from the bodies for DNA testing.

According to JPMC and CHK managements, all bodies had been shifted to morgues by Saturday and now just three persons injured in the incident were undergoing treatment at CHK.

"None of the injured from the crash are being treated at JPMC," clarified Dr Jamali.

Meanwhile, according to Edhi Foundation spokesperson Muhammad Bilal, as many as 53 bodies of the victims were shifted from JPMC and CHK to the welfare organisation's morgue in Sohrab Goth.

"Among them, seven have been identified and handed over to their families," he said.

According to the Sindh health department, only two passengers onboard the aircraft have survived the crash. "All others died in the accident," said health department spokesperson Meeran Yousuf. She said that 66 bodies were shifted to JPMC and 31 to CHK following the crash, including six women and 25 men.

From those shifted to DRPCHK, three of the deceased have been identified as Major Sheriyar, Lieutenant Balach and Syed Danish Shah, son of Syed Ahad Shah. The bodies of Major Sheriyar and Lieutenant Balach were shifted to Combined Military Hospital.

Saying that the identification process was to continue in the coming days, Yousuf maintained that the police has been assigned the task to collect DNA samples and they were to share the details of the developments in this regard with the health department.

Meanwhile, forensic teams from the Punjab Forensic Science Agency (PFSA) reached Karachi on Saturday to collect DNA samples from the victims of the crash for testing in Lahore.

(By Sameer Mandhro The Express Tribune, 04, 24/05/2020)

Model Colony Woes

Spare a thought for Karachi. The city was, and perhaps still is, in the middle of a torrid tit-for-tat debate on Covid-19 regulations between the federal and Sindh governments, leaving its citizens baffled, wondering who to listen to. One of the arguments made by the latter was the unmanageable burden that might be put on the province's health services if the SOPs, such as adherence to lockdown, were not followed. And on Friday afternoon an unthinkable and heart-wrenching incident in these uncertain times unfolded when a PIA flight from Lahore to Karachi, with 91 passengers and a crew of eight on board, a minute before touchdown crashed in the residential neighbourhood of Model Colony near the airport.

It was a little disconcerting to hear both on mainstream and social media that not too long after the crash took place and news of a couple of survivors — thank God for that — came, the most discussed topics were an inquiry into the incident and legality of the construction of buildings near the airport. These are fair points. But shouldn't they have first been curious about the well-being of the residents of Model Colony hit by a tragedy out of nowhere?

Think for a moment. We are living in a time where a deadly pandemic has forced us to remain indoors; and if we go outside for unavoidable reasons, we need to wear a mask and keep a three-foot distance from each other. Then summer has set in, the sun is beating down on the city with all its might ... and Eidul Fitr is here. Without a shadow of doubt, it's physically damaging for the people living in the vicinity; and at the same time extremely debilitating on the psychological level.

The federal and Sindh governments would do well to help the Model Colony families rebuild both their lives and their homes

There are houses that have been destroyed. We are talking about an area populated by the middle class or lower middle class segments of society. Who doesn't know how hard it is for them to put together a roof over their heads.

Also, by the time of writing this piece, there is a yet-to-be ascertained number of people that have died (some charred beyond recognition) and those who have sustained injuries. Such injuries can leave a mental scar for life.

The federal and Sindh governments will do good to initiate an inquiry into the incident, though many suspect its outcome, but they will do great if they're able to shore up the morale of the surviving members of the Model Colony families and help them rebuild both their lives and homes. After all, we've been hearing a lot about being 'proactive' to counter the coronavirus crisis. This is the time to show Karachiites that their governments care for them.

(By Peerzada Salman Dawn, 13, 24/05/2020)

Model Colony, a day after the nightmare

Friday turned out to be a long day, full of trials, tribulations and tragedy, for the residents of Model Colony, a neighbourhood that now presents a picture of devastation, reeling from the aftermath of a plane crash.

It was under the scorching heat of the afternoon sun that Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flight PK-8303, carrying 99 passengers from Lahore to Karachi, plunged into locality just moments before landing.

What came next was cries, destruction, fire, rubble, chaos, uncertainty and terror.

The fear still grips its residents who are struggling to coming to terms with the reality of what has befallen them.

At least 15 houses in Jinnah Garden, the area in Model Colony most affected by the crash, have been badly affected while the blackened, sooty walls of most houses along the street that bore the greatest degree of the crash's impact continue to remind the residents of the nightmare.

"I was at my house when we heard a loud blast," recalled Noman Shami, a resident of the area, whose house has also been damaged. "The walls shook under the impact of the explosion and it felt as if an earthquake had struck," he said, reliving the tragedy. "We were all inside, too scared and frightened go out. We stayed inside, praying for our safety, even though we could hear the cries of the people outside."

Before silence fell, Shami said he heard cries of Allahu Akbar coming from the wreckage.

Another resident of the street said that he was about to leave in his car when the crash happened. He rushed back inside the house as the plane fell apart.

"I feared that none from the family living on the upper story of my house would survive the tragedy but we sighed in relief when eventually one of them came downstairs," he said. "But three members of the family living in the house opposite to mine have been injured. It was terrifying and we didn't have the courage to step out for a long time."

The extent of damage

One side of the street is lined by 120 square feet houses that have been badly affected by the crash, while the larger houses on the other side suffered relatively less damage. The upper storeys of the houses are in bad shape, with wreckage from the plane still littering some rooftops.

Eyewitnesses, on condition of anonymity, told *The Express Tribune* a blaze had erupted soon after the aircraft nosedived in the neighbourhood. The roaring flames terrified many residents into staying inside until law enforcement personnel and rescue teams, including firefighters, reached the spot and began rescue work.

For many in the neighbourhood, the nightmare is over, at least on the surface. But the residents continue to suffer from its ramifications.

One of the residents said that gas and electricity supply to the street had been suspended and with the water tanks of most houses being badly damaged, they were now living in abject conditions without basic necessities.

Others said that federal government teams have surveyed the area to gauge the extent of the damage. They claimed that they have been told the owners of badly damaged houses would be given Rs1 million in compensation and those whose houses had been damaged to a lesser degree would be given Rs500,000 and Rs250,000, depending on the extent of the damage.

Security and surveillance

As the residents of Model Colony struggle to wrap their heads around what happened, rescue and law enforcement personnel have amped up the security and surveillance in the area.

On Saturday, Pakistan Army, Rangers and Special Security Unit personnel remained deployed in the neighbourhood all day long, not allowing any irrelevant person, including media representatives, to enter the locality. Even the residents of the affected streets were only allowed entry after proper inquiry, amid tight security arrangements.

The area was cordoned off early in the morning and officials from utility companies, such as K-Electric (KE) and Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC), too had to seek permission before entering the neighbourhood.

However, KE, SSGC, Karachi Water and Sewerage Board, Civil Aviation Authority and PIA officials, as well as members of welfare organisations, were later allowed to visit the locality.

A police picket has also been set up at one end of the street.

Clearing the debris

Meanwhile, the wreckage and the debris from the aircraft was moved to a corner of the street with the use of heavy machinery, so that it could be used for preparing the forensic report.

The rubble from the houses was cleared by a team of Pakistan Army's engineering wing and district administration officials.

(By Vakeel Rao *The Express Tribune*, 04, 24/05/2020)

Number of road casualties fell in April thanks to lockdown

Though the coronavirus lockdown has brought new challenges to life, the number of road and traffic accidents have come down significantly, killing eight people and injuring four — the lowest number recorded in more than a decade in April.



in January and 14 in March 2020.

Thin traffic movement on roads due to the lockdown and almost non-existence of heavy traffic on main links of the city during this period has automatically cut down the number of road accidents, resulting in a smaller number of injuries and fatalities.

Recently compiled data suggests that during April 2020 when the lockdown was in place after it was imposed on March 23, eight road accidents were reported in a month. Six accidents proved fatal, killing eight people and injuring four others. In the three earlier months — January to March 2020 — 51 people had died in road accidents, most of them in February when 24 people were killed. Thirteen people died in road accidents

An official said the number of deaths in road accidents in April had never been so low and it was for the first time in more than 10 years that the number of traffic collisions had come to a single digit figure.

‘Despite the lockdown, we have not cut the number of our officers and constables performing operational duties’

“In April 2015, 34 people died in road accidents and in the same month next year [2016] 23 people were killed on roads in different accidents involving vehicles and different modes of traffic. In April 2017, 17 people lost their lives and in the same month of the next two years [2018 and 2019] 21 each died in road accidents,” he added.

He said the least number of deaths in April was registered more than 17 years ago but that too was in double digits. Though the situation looks positive for the authorities, it does not appear surprising to them amid the reduced movement of traffic on roads and almost non-existent commercial activities during the period under study.

Officials said that heavy vehicles always remained a key factor in most of the deadly road accidents.

“The number of heavy vehicles plying in the city crossed the 100,000 mark more than a year ago, making it a serious challenge for the authorities to manage the movement of these vehicles as they pose a serious threat to other motorists,” said an official.

He referred to a report compiled by the municipal authorities regarding the traffic situation in the city and number of vehicles moving on Karachi roads suggested how big the challenge was amid growing traffic, limited available space and insufficient number of traffic policemen.

“The report says that the number of heavy vehicles in Karachi right now stands at 107,000,” said the official. “Among them is the highest number of oil tankers, which are 65,000 in total, and then 13,000 10-wheel trucks. There are some 10,000 long-haul, or 22-wheel trailer trucks, which are seen moving in the city; there are 8,000 water tankers, 7,000 dumpers and 4,000 six-wheel trucks.” The new situation, however, has brought new challenges for the law enforcement agencies which are directly related to the imposition of lockdown and keeping the commuters off the roads under the recently-designed standard operating procedures.

“We have more than 7,000 personnel for Karachi,” DIG Javed Mahar told Dawn. “Despite the lockdown, we have not cut the number of our officers and constables performing operational duties. There are some 200 traffic intersections on different roads and key links for the imposition of lockdown. We have experienced mixed response from the people, but we have to implement the rules in the larger interest of the public.”

He said the traffic police faced challenges while enforcing the ban on pillion riding and those who were travelling on four-wheelers against SOPs set by the government. The traffic personnel, he said, were actively involved in implementing the government orders, which led to challans over violation of the pillion-riding ban and against travel of more than two persons in a car.

(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 27/05/2020)

Survey report finds 20 houses, 24 vehicles damaged in PIA plane crash

The city administration finalised a list of the loss of property caused by the [May 22 plane crash](#) in the Jinnah Garden area of Model Colony, finding 18 houses partially damaged and two completely damaged as the federal government on Tuesday vowed to bear all financial burden of the compensation to the affected families.

A committee formed by Karachi Commissioner Iftikhar Shallwani completed its survey and finally came up with a report that suggested that two houses measuring 120 square yards each were completely damaged while structures of 18 other houses was partially damaged in the incident.

“The street which bore the brunt of the crash has total 20 houses,” said a source citing details of the report. “In the 20 houses, two are completely damaged and razed to the ground. They need reconstruction. Other 18 houses were damaged as well. In most of the cases, upper parts of the houses were damaged where their concrete structure was hit by the crashed plane. Fortunately, their structures mostly remained intact.”

In other losses, he said, total 10 cars and 14 motorbikes were also hit by the plane's burning wreckage and all of them got almost completely destroyed.

These vehicles were parked in the street or inside the houses, he said, adding a team also took their details into account while compiling the report.

The federal government will provide compensation to the affected residents of Model Colony

Center to pay compensation

Meanwhile, Sindh Governor Imran Ismail announced that Prime Minister Imran Khan had clearly directed the authorities to pay compensation to each affected family in Model Colony.

"There is a clear directive from the prime minister that every house or family which has lost its property or anything due to this incident would be compensated from the federal government," he told reporters.

"Anyone who has lost his car, motorbike or house would get the proper compensation on fast track. The PM has asked the Civil Aviation, PIA and all other relevant institutions to do their job properly and fast. Everyone has worked tirelessly so the wounds of these families can be healed."

Sindh govt assures support to residents

Sindh Information Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah and provincial government spokesperson Barrister Murtaza Wahab offered condolences to the families of the martyrs of the plane crash and those who died of the coronavirus on Eid.

They visited the bereaved families and spent some time with them. Mr Shah said that the Sindh government was with them in this hour of grief.

They also visited three domestic workers, who suffered burn wounds while sitting in a street in Model Colony where the PIA plane crashed, at the Dr Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital Karachi and gave them Rs100,000 each on behalf of the Sindh government.

The two leaders also visited other injured people and assured them of full cooperation from the Sindh government.

Minister Shah said that the Sindh government was paying for the treatment of all the injured.

He said that the bodies of all the martyrs would be handed over to their heirs after the DNA test.
(By Our Staff Reporter Dawn, 13, 27/05/2020)

Model Colony residents demand early repair to houses damaged in plane crash

Lamenting the lethargic attitude of the authorities concerned despite promises both from the federal and the provincial governments, affected residents of Model Colony's Jinnah Garden, where a Pakistan International Airlines plane crashed on May 22, on Tuesday called for early rebuilding of their damaged houses and compensation for their properties.

Speaking at a press conference at the site of the PK-8303 crash, which claimed the lives of 99 passengers and crewmembers and one teenage girl on the ground, the residents said the governments and their officers were more interested in collecting data and meeting formalities instead of focusing on "real issues".

They said majority of the affected residents were living in alternative places hoping to return to their homes as soon as possible.

"[It is] true that structures of majority of the houses are intact," said Liaquat Hussain, one of the residents. "But they [houses] are not liveable. They are badly damaged and can collapse anytime. Is the government waiting for another disaster? The utility services of the area are not effective anymore. They all need renovation and revival. It has been more than 10 days that majority of the families of this street are living in their relatives' houses or temporary rented places."

Affected people are unhappy over unmet promises of federal and provincial govts

The city administration after the incident had finalised a list of the loss of property caused by the May 22 plane crash, finding 18 houses partially damaged and two completely damaged as the federal government had also vowed to bear all financial burden of the compensation to the affected families.

A committee formed by Karachi Commissioner Iftikhar Shallwani completed its survey and finally came up with a report that suggested that two houses measuring 120 square yards each were completely damaged while structures of 18 other houses was partially damaged in the incident.

"The street which bore the brunt of the crash has total 20 houses," said the report. "In the 20 houses, two are completely damaged and razed to the ground. They need reconstruction. Other 18 houses were damaged as well. In most of the cases, upper parts of the houses were damaged where their concrete structure was hit by the crashed plane. Fortunately, their structures mostly remained intact."

In other losses, the report said, total 10 cars and 14 motorbikes were also hit by the plane's burning wreckage and all of them got almost completely destroyed.

Another resident Malik Ashraf said that the families were fed up with the formalities as every day different departments of the government demanded new details and data to "compile the final list".

The formalities, he said, had yet to come to an end before the relief operation for the victims started.

"The families of this area have already experienced enough trauma and the government departments are making things worse. No one is here to address the real issues. One day they need one thing and the second day they need another. And all is being done in the name of formalities and procedure," he said.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 13, 03/06/2020)

Residents hit by PIA plane crash get cheques

The Pakistan International Airlines has distributed cheques among those residents of Model Colony whose property and vehicles were damaged in the May 22 plane crash that claimed lives of 97 passengers and crewmembers.

According to a press release, the cheques were distributed at a programme held at the airlines' head office here. Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf's federal and provincial lawmakers from Karachi Akram Cheema, Aftab Hussain Siddiqui, Firdous Shahmim Naqvi and others gave the cheques to the affected.

PIA's Chief Operating Officer Aijaz Mazhar, senior officials Khalilullah Sheikh, Amanullah Qureshi, Soban Nazir, Younus Khan, Muhammad Shuaib and the affected residents were present.

However, the press release did not mention the compensation amount given to each affected person.

The PIA said it was providing all possible support and assistance to the persons injured on the ground and whose houses and vehicles were damaged due to the air crash.

It said that the initial damage costs pertaining to houses and vehicles were ascertained by the PIA and government officials immediately after the incident. "Besides this, a technical surveyor had also been appointed by the insurance company who has evaluated the damages and the final claim amount will be settled accordingly," it added.

The national carrier had provided temporary accommodations to the affected residents and those sustained injuries on ground were provided full medical support and hospitalisation.

It had arranged provision of six month's rent to the affected, including house owners and tenants, to provide interim and immediate relief to them.

A special prayer was also held for the victims of the air crash and for the speedy recovery of the injured on the ground.

(By The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 13, 22/06/2020)

Five killed in traffic accidents across city

Five people were killed and one injured in separate traffic accidents across the city on Thursday.

Two young men riding a motorcycle were killed when a speeding vehicle rammed into them near Jamali Flyover on the Super Highway, within the jurisdiction of the Sachal police station.

They both sustained severe injuries and were rushed to Abbasi Shaheed Hospital, but succumbed to their injuries before they could reach the health facility. The deceased were identified as Sarfaraz, 20, and Usman, 22.

Separately, two men were killed in a road mishap near Kathore River, within the jurisdiction of the Steel Town police station.

The police arrived at the spot after being informed about the incident and shifted the injured to the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre, where they breathed their last while receiving treatment. The deceased were later identified as 17-year-old Asad and 35-year-old Waqar.

Moreover, according to the police, two men were injured when two trailer trucks collided on the Northern Bypass in the limits of the Site Super Highway police station.

The injured were taken to Abbasi Shaheed Hospital, where Ameerullah, 35, was pronounced dead during treatment while Sajjad, 40, survived.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 04, 26/06/2020)

Four people sitting on Lyari Expressway killed in accident

Four people, including two teenagers, were killed while a young boy was injured when an apparently fast-moving car hit them on the Lyari Expressway near Mira Naka early on Friday morning, said rescue services, local police and Motorway police officials.

The victims were reportedly sitting in the open area of the expressway because the electricity in the locality had gone.

The fast-moving vehicle went out of control of its driver and hit five people sitting there and then fell down from the bridge as it broke the road fence. However, miraculously, the driver and another person travelling in the car remained unhurt in the accident. The driver was taken into custody by the Shershah police. The police said that there were two versions of the incident.

Witnesses told the police that the driver was allegedly driving the car rashly and ran over the persons sitting on one side of the expressway.

However, the driver in his statement before the police claimed that all of a sudden, one person came in front of his vehicle. He tried to save him and hit the fence, where the people were sitting.

The five wounded persons were taken to the Dr Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital Karachi, where doctors pronounced four of them dead on arrival, said police surgeon Dr Qarar Ahmed Abbasi.

The deceased were identified as Aamir Rahman, 30; Asif Rafique, 20; Adeel Mohammad Azam, 19; and Mohammad Ahmed, 18 while one injured Ali Hussain, 18, was admitted to the hospital for treatment.

A Motorway Police Officer, who wished not to be named, told Dawn that they had prevented people from sitting or coming on the Lyari Expressway, but the people living in the congested localities of Agra Taj Colony and other areas used to sit on the expressway as there was prolonged electricity outages in these poor localities of Lyari.

Three to four vehicles of the Motorway police also use to ply on both tracks of the 32-kilometre-long Lyari Expressway.

The officer expressed regret that some poor people had started living on islands/open places of Lyari Expressway near nullah/drain by setting up huts there.

The Motorway police had written letters to the district administration, local police and National Highway Authority to construct walls or create other fences and strengthen existing barriers to prevent people sitting or coming on the expressway to avoid such tragedy because the Motorway police were supposed to manage the traffic only.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 14, 27/06/2020)

Speeding car rams into bystanders, killing four in Karachi

Four bystanders were killed while one was injured when a speeding car ran into them at the Lyari Expressway late on Thursday night. The car then drove off the flyover, injuring two passengers, including a child, and the driver.

Police and rescue teams shifted the injured and the deceased to Dr Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital for treatment and medico-legal formalities, respectively.

Shershah SHO Rafiq Mughal disclosed that the driver of the car, Mehtab, and his brother were taken into police custody. He added that Mehtab told the police he had been attempting to avoid hitting a pedestrian who had suddenly walked in front of the car when he lost control of the vehicle and drove into the bystanders.

According to Mughal, Mehtab, his brother and the 10-year-old boy who were in the car sustained slight injuries despite the fall, while the car was wrecked. He added that the vehicle was taken to the police station as well.

The SHO further revealed that the deceased have been identified as Atif, Adeel and Amir while the fourth body could not be identified till the filing of this report. Meanwhile, the injured bystander was identified as 18-year-old Ali Hassan, who is now in stable condition.

According to area residents, there was a power outage at the time of the accident and so people had stepped out of their houses to cool down in the night air, while some residents had even taken to sleeping by the road in the sweltering heat.

Mughal claimed the police would record the statements of the deceased's families and the injured after which legal action would be taken. The bodies were handed over to the families while the unidentified body was taken a morgue after the completion of medico-legal formalities.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter The Express Tribune, 04, 27/06/2020)

Relatives of plane crash victims reject preliminary report issued by AAIB

The grieving relatives of passengers who lost their lives in the May 22 [PK-8303 tragedy](#) held a press conference at the Karachi Press Club on Monday to reject the findings of the preliminary crash report issued by the Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB).

There was the father, who lost his three children and wife, there were the sisters who lost their only brother, a 27-year-old with dreams of a bright future in his eyes, there was the son of the only American on the flight who was made to run from pillar to post to



find his father's real remains, there was the widower who still seeks to know what actually happened even after 10 years of losing his wife in the Airblue Flight 202 crash. And together they rejected the preliminary report, calling it a mere narration of various recordings of the cockpit voice recorder and the flight data recorder. They demanded that the data be further analysed and the proper crash report be issued in light of the Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation procedure issued by the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

'It is easy to blame a poor employee and a dead man'

Asif Iqbal Faruqi, who lost his wife and three children in the crash, asked people to imagine his plight and the plight of others like him who were not even being given the remains of their loved ones, and instead being called liars and being thrown out of offices. He pointed out that DNA, and not dental records, is the only way to determine the identity of bodies that are completely charred, which was the case with the victims of the ill-fated PK-8303. He also said that it is not just an airline but an entire system, which in this case was the Pakistan International Airlines, the pilots, the Civil Aviation Authority and the worker unions that are responsible for checking each part of a plane before putting it in the air. "All these need a major restructuring," he said.

Kanwal Arsalan, who lost her only brother in the crash, questioned the airline's standard operating procedures. "If the air traffic control [ATC] staff was on a prayer break when the flight was supposed to land, where were their substitutes? It is, after all, not a single person's responsibility. Why didn't air traffic control notice that the plane's engines were on fire when the pilot was taking it up again? Why wasn't there any foam on the runway for the plane? Why didn't they take any emergency action on learning that the plane was in distress? Only Allah knows what must have those poor passengers gone through in those 17 minutes of failed landings before the eventual crash. Think also what we the relatives of the ones who lost their lives must be going through now," she said. She also asked how come the buildings around the airport happened to be three- or four-storey high? "Why did the Sindh Building Control Authority allow it?"

Yaseen Elaayi said his father, who perished in the crash, used to tell him that Pakistan was a majestic country with honourable, hospitable and humble people who weren't aware themselves how they are tricked and fooled by those in power. "I have found the people here going out of their way to remove the roadblocks in my way. But I have also encountered here those who have put the blocks in my way and thrown me out of their offices," he said, adding that he arrived in Pakistan 10 days after the crash on June 2 for which he thanked the Pakistan embassy in the US for issuing him a visa.

"At the time when I reached here, there were still 10 bodies that were awaiting identification. I was taken by PIA to the Edhi morgue and shown each of those bodies for identification," he said, adding that when he couldn't identify the charred bodies, he was taken to Karachi University for a DNA test, the results of which were taking time. He had to be tested thrice actually with repeat DNA tests done by the forensics lab in Punjab too. Then when he was found to be a perfect match with a Chhipa body with a particular number and was ready to bury his father with a Lebanese and American flag in his hand, he was informed that they couldn't find that body he was said to be a match with. Finally, he was helped by other people to find his father and where he had already been buried.

While sharing their personal experiences, all the relatives said that they reject the preliminary report and are throwing it in the dustbin, where it really belongs. "We are here as a direct result of this report, which besides being full of typos, is also full of factual errors. It lacks substance, and with its numerous inconsistencies, raises many questions while putting the full blame on the pilot and air traffic controller. It is easy to blame a poor employee and a dead man," said Elaayi.

Junaid Hamid, an affectee of the Airblue crash of 2010, and who has now formed the Airblue Crash Affectees Association, said that in Pakistan, no detailed reports have ever been produced for the previous crashes, too, after the presenting of a preliminary report that has also been issued due to public pressure or on court orders.

Compensation issue

The press conference also took up the issue of compensation to the victims' families, saying that an initial amount of Rs1 million has been given by the federal government. "But Rs5 million is the first tier liability," Mr Hamid said.

He also said that insurance/compensation after the apportionment of the blame is going to be determined on the basis of different factors based on personal profiles of the victim, such as their age, education, professional experience, social status, number of dependants, future growth possibilities, etc.

He said that currently PIA's representative lawyer has been contacting families to sign a release document, which they should not sign as the Peshawar High Court has categorically barred families from signing such a document.

(By Shazia Hasan Dawn, 13, 30/06/2020)