

Coronavirus: Shortage of mask N95 in markets need monitoring

LAHORE: Despite non-prevalence of the coronavirus in the country so far, the protective mask for the virus called N95 is becoming non-available in the markets, and the authorities concerned should take notice of the situation.

This was revealed by the health sources, associated with manufacturing and distribution of the medical devices in the province. The actual price of N95 mask is Rs 190 per piece, but it is being sold in the market for up to Rs 900, claimed the sources.

The Drug Regulatory Authority Pakistan (DRAP) had issued a letter to all federal and provincial drug inspectors on Feb 4, 2020 to visit importers and distributors of the protective devices including mask N95, face shields, disposable gloves, disposable gowns, disposable shoe cover, disposable caps, tyvec suits, biohazards bags, hands sanitisers, air-purifying respirators and powder, etc.

DRAP has also directed the companies and stockists concerned to send details of stock-in-hand to Additional Director, Medical Devices and Medicated Cosmetics, head office.

DRAP has also imposed restrictions on export of all above mentioned protective devices and asked the drug inspectors to ensure implementation on restrictions on their export. Meanwhile, different drug associations including Pakistan Drugs Lawyers Forum, Pakistan Pharmacists Association and Young Pharmacists Association have welcomed the decision of export of these protective devices from coronavirus and termed it a step in the right direction.

However, it was stressed to allow maximum pharmaceutical companies to prepare these protective devices and ensure their distribution in market in abundant quantity so that any impending situation could be tackled in a smooth way.

SNGPL to continue RLNG supply for CNG sector

LAHORE: Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Ltd (SNGPL) has said that supply of the Regasified Liquefied Natural Gas (RLNG) will continue to the CNG (Compressed Natural Gas) sector in Punjab.

According to the media release, it has become possible due to the change in weather in recent days which resulted less demand by the domestic consumers as compare to the demand in cold weather.

The department has clarified that the RLNG was not suspended last night.

PHC nominates Tech Advisory Committee's convener

LAHORE: The office bearers of the Pakistan Medical Association, Lahore has congratulated Prof Dr Ashraf Nizami on his nomination as convener of Technical Advisory Committee of Punjab Healthcare Commission (PHC).

The PHC after consultation with Convener Dr Ashraf Nizami has also announced members of the Technical Advisory Committee which included Prof Shahida Khawaja, Dr Mian Tariq, Dr Khalid Mehmood, Col (ret'd) Dr Ghulam Shabir and Dr Kamran Saeed Shaikh.

No place for profiteers in province: minister

LAHORE: Punjab Auqaf Minister Syed Saeed-ul-Hassan Shah has said that action against elements behind artificial price-hike and hoarding is under way across the province.

According to a handout issued here on Sunday, he said that action against hoarders and illegal profiteers must continue without any discrimination.

The administration should take practical steps to control prices of daily-use items besides ensuring selling of essential items on fixed rates, he added.

The minister said that for facilitating people, the price control magistrates should check the prices of daily-use items on daily basis.

He said the number of Kisan platforms had been increased across the province and there was no place for illegal profiteers in the province. He said that people would not be left at the mercy of hoarders and illegal profiteers.



LAHORE: Activists of Pakistan Sunni Tehreek hold a protest against unemployment, price-hike, and increase in electricity and gas rates, outside the Press Club. —Online

Many months of March yet to come till 2023

Opposition protest aimed at stopping accountability

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Punjab Governor Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar has said that opposition is solacing itself while expecting something in March. Many months of March have yet to come till 2023 but Imran Khan will continue to remain as Prime Minister. Opposition's protest in and out of the parliament is aimed at obstructing accountability process that will not stop. Nobody can point finger at the honesty of Prime Minister Imran Khan. Government's steps to control price-hike are being monitored by Prime Minister Imran Khan.

He was talking to Provincial Forests Minister Muhammad Sib-

tain Khan, CM Complaint Cell's Chairman Zubair Khan Niazi, Punjab Overseas Commission's Vice Chairman Muhammad Waseem Ramey, MPA Khayal Kastro and delegations from various districts here at Governor House.

Punjab Governor Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar said that Prime Minister Imran Khan is working with all sincerity and honesty for progress of the country and prosperity of the nation due to which health, education and other sectors are improving with each passing day.

Inshaallah, country will be purged of problems like poverty, price-hike and corruption till completion of constitutional tenure of

the present government. Due to viable and better policies of the government, he added, terrorism has been eliminated, while country is attaining internal stability with improved economic indicators.

World Bank and other international institutions are acknowledging Pakistan's economic stability, while European Union also appreciated Pakistan government's steps to control corruption and other crimes. Governor Punjab said that the opposition parties, which had committed massive corruption and put the country under billions of dollars debt during their respective tenure in governments, is now criticizing unjustifiably the government mere to gain cheap political popularity. However, he

said, the people well recognize the real face of the opposition and it can no more hoodwink the masses through its false propaganda.

The opposition's uproar in and out of the parliament is aimed at hampering only the accountability process, while Prime Minister Imran Khan has already said categorically that whatever the opposition does, the accountability against corruption will not be stopped in the country.

He argued that if opposition is with clean hands then it must face cases in the court of law instead of taking to streets for protests, and Pakistani courts are independent and deciding the cases in accordance with provisions of law, constitution and justice.

Minister reviews various development projects

Plunderers will have to account for their misdeeds, warns Aslam

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Provincial Industries and Trade Minister Mian Aslam Iqbal visited his constituency 151 and inaugurated different development projects. He also reviewed pace of work on various ongoing development schemes. Mian Aslam Iqbal inaugurated repair and construction work of different roads at Dholanwal Bund Road.

While expressing his views on this occasion, the minister said that he was deeply grieved over the death of PTI senior leader Naeem-ul-Haq and the deceased was one of the pioneers of PTI and an old companion of Prime Minister Imran Khan.

His services can never be forgotten with regard to stabilizing the party and helping in achieving popularity, he lauded. Due to his sad demise PTI has been deprived of a sincere and brave party leader.

Allah Almighty grant him with highest place in heaven and eternal peace.

Aslam Iqbal also condoled with the grieved family members and prayed that Allah Almighty grant them fortitude to bear this irreparable loss.

He while talking with the media said that PTI government has taken such exemplary development steps which previous governments could not undertake despite ruling for years.

The priority of past rulers was indulging into

PHC seals 64 quacks' outlets

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE – The Punjab Healthcare Commission (PHC) has shuttered 64 quacks' outlets during its campaign in a week.

In 357 raids on various types of treatment centres in different cities, enforcement teams of the PHC also found out that 76 quacks had left their businesses. These teams visited 24 centres on average every day. The maximum number of quackery centres sealed were: 13 in Okara, while 12 each were in Lahore, Faisalabad Saddar and Muzaffargarh, Nankana Sahab 8, and three each were in Jatoi and Jaranwalla.

Out of the closed down centres, a major chunk was of the dental clinics. In Lahore, these were: Shoaib Dental Clinic, American Dental Surgery, Ashraf Dental Clinic, Hassan Dental Clinic, Family Dental Surgery and Asif Dental Clinic, while National Clinical Lab and Clinic, Aftab-Jirrah, Haji Medical Store, Majid Clinic, Taqwa Dawakhana and Raja Homoeopath Healthcare Clinic were also sealed.

As per a spokesperson of the Commission, so far the PHC had conducted raids on more than 62 thousand treatment centres, sealed 24,267 quackery centres, and imposed a fine of around Rs501 million on the quacks.

loot and plunder and they had setup such projects which did not provide any relief and benefit to the masses rather they filled up their own coffers, he lamented. Public welfare schemes being launched by PTI government have astonished their opponents.

We will defeat every mafia trying to create obstacles in the way of progress and prosperity of the country, he vowed. Neither the journey of progress will halt now nor the war against cor-

ruption.

The plunderers will have to account for their corruption and misdeeds. PTI government is standing like a solid rock against powerful, corrupt mafia as well as exploitative forces.

The country has come out of economic crisis and 2020 will be the year of progress and prosperity. New industries are being setup and employment opportunities are also being generated, he concluded.

'Badami Bagh General Bus Stand to be modernised'

LAHORE: The Metropolitan Corporation Lahore (MCL) will convert the Badami Bagh Bus Stand into a modern public general bus stand.

According to sources, the MCL has approved the four-phase master plan of the up-gradation of the general bus stand at Badami Bagh.

In the first two phases, work on sewerage lines and Plain Cement Concrete (PCC) work at central roads will be completed and the MCL has approved Rs 13 million and Rs 35 million, respectively for the two phases. The beautification of the main terminal, floor tiles and male/female separate washrooms, along with the green-belt, will be established in the master plan. Walk-through gates and security fence will be built around the bus stand whereas tuff-tiles at 50-kanal area for parking and service station will be part of the phase-2 of the plan.

MCL confiscates encroachment materials, demolishes structures

LAHORE: The Metropolitan Corporation Lahore (MCL) in an anti-encroachment drive demolished illegal structures on Sunday.

Headed by Metropolitan officer (Regulation) Zubair Ahmed Watto, the MCL squad also imposed a total fine of Rs 20,000 on various shopkeepers and confiscated seven truckloads of material, said the MCL spokesman here.

The MCL zonal squads of Data Ganj Bakhsh, Nashtar Town, Gulberg, Allama Iqbal, Samnabad and Ravi zone also took into custody belongings of encroachers from Lorry Adda, Chauburji, Kharak Nala, The Mall, Defence Road, Zaman Park, Canal Road, Davis Road, Dharam Pura, Town Ship, College Road and Thokar Niaz Baig.

Mehmood expresses condolence over Naeem's death

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Housing and Urban Development Mian Mehmood ur Rasheedon Sunday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the sad demise of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) senior leader Naeem-ul-Haq.

In a condolence message issued here, he prayed that may Allah Almighty rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family members to bear this loss with fortitude.

He said that late Naeem-ul-Haq had played major role in making PTI a people friendly party, adding that services of Naeem-ul-Haq would always be remembered.

HED XI beats GCU VC XI by six wickets

LAHORE: Higher Education Department, Punjab (HED XI) beat the Government College University Lahore (GCU VC XI) by six wickets at a friendly cricket match here at the University's Cricket Ground on Sunday.

Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi led the GCU VC XI while Secretary Higher Education Punjab Sajid Zafar Dall was seen in action from HED XI.

Earlier, winning the toss GCU VC XI chose to bat first and posted 119 runs in just 20 overs. Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi scored 23 quick runs in the early overs of the inning. Engineer Dr Junaid Zafar scored 34 runs which included six boundaries.

The HED XI chased the score in the 19th over. Secretary HED played fine innings of 15 runs, while Prof. Anees scored 46 runs. Prof. Anees declared man of the match while Prof. Dr Asghar Zaidi won the all round performance award for scoring 23 runs and getting two wickets for just 18 runs.

HED Deputy Director Sports Ms. Shamsa Hashmi, the only female player of the match, was also presented special participation award.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Asghar Zaidi said that the friendly match was organized in the spirit of University Sports League to inspire youth towards healthy sports activities. —APP

Young talent to watch out at HBL PSL 2020

LAHORE: The HBL Pakistan Super League has historically been a major platform for Pakistan's emerging players as the limelight, the attention and the huge number of fans and followers of the league provide the perfect breeding ground for players looking to make their presence felt.

From Hasan Ali, Shadab Khan, Fakhar Zaman to Shaheen Shah Afridi, Faheem Ashraf and Haris Rauf, the HBL PSL has catapulted careers of a number of players in the last four years. —APP

Who is benefitting from amendments in NAB laws?

Malik Muhammad Aslam Awan

The overwhelming majority of the masses are groaning under the undue burden of price-hike, inflation and above all a series of injustices inflicted upon them by organs of the state. People are of the unanimous opinion that no society can exist and flourish without justice. But the picture in Pakistan is so dismal that the oppressed segments of masses cannot pin their hopes on the government to redress their grievances. Being fully aware of the developed notion that the state is like a mother, they have no hope to be treated equally, because the mother has been kept captive by her sons.

The cronies are feeling uneasy with the NAB's eyes fixed on BRT and other ongoing issues of the present government. Most of PTI stalwarts hailed from the Musharraf disbanded clique. Musharraf and his picked-up politicians never yearned heartfully to assuage the woes and sufferings of the general masses. Dictators and despotic rulers always resort to handpicked politicians to use them as stooges and prolong their rule to boost their vested interests. Prime Minister

Imran Khan was of unflinching and unwavering faith that he would surely succeed to heal the wounds of the nation and bring the dilapidated cart of the country ahead with accelerated velocity. He never cared in the selection of his party-officers-bearers and perhaps he rightly knew the need and necessity that the electable can provide shooting velocity and requisite impetus to drive the machine of democracy by partially overhauling it. But his picked cohorts are politically so ripe and shrewd as to use Imran Khan as leverage to multiply their interests by making him realise that NAB laws are so draconian that the wings of NAB need to be clipped urgently.

NAB amendments were made in unwanted haste to make them the beneficiary, but the lurked diversion of NAB made it so feeble and decrepit that NAB laws appeared decrescendo as to lose its efficacy. The cohorts of Imran Khan wrongfully adhered to the notion that the changed laws would come into effect from the next day, they were unaware of the lacunas of law and the venom against PML-N was so rampant in their minds that they could not perceive that the axe may fall on their own feet.

The present government members would be the beneficiary of NAB amendments is a matter being clear in the ensuing days but the PML-N has emerged as immediate beneficiary of the amended law. PTI big guns are of the view that the NAB authorities, despite the amended version of law would appear too hawkish and inexorable towards PML-N and too lenient towards PTI. They certainly ignored the ground reality that law of the land has no favourites for some certain personalities and no venom for the opposition, it is to encompass the legal activism. Judiciary as a whole is a viable organ of the state to dispense in an equitable manner as it has the sane equilibrium to drift towards the dispensation of hallmark decisions. The hallucination of PTI has dismantled with the equitable decisions of judiciary in the PML-N big-wigs cases. The law takes its own course, with the passage of time, the PTI big-brains instead of taking steps to make NAB and its laws more all pervasive, endeavoured to affect vulnerability as to tailor these to their own needs. PTI hierarchy has drifted towards the decadence of state affairs. Wise minds and political pundits once prognosticating that the all pervasive effec-

tiveness of NAB laws are going to benefit the all big-wigs of the PLM-N implicated in NAB cases. PTI follies have made themselves in an embarrassing and simmering atmosphere. All self-styled sane and versatile minds of the incumbent government will remain stunned with the passage of a short span of time that PML-N will be out of the net of NAB and the people will malign them of awarding NRO to the PML-N. PML-N big-brains will soon be sitting abroad having heads together to devise a strategy to rusticate Imran Khan out of power corridor. Wise brains of lower segments of societal structure got amazed as the word NRO resounded in political discussions and they discussed amongst themselves how the new NRO would get its incarnation and how it will be exhumed from the complexity of laws, all the mysteries and imbroglios have been un-knotted and the much noised NRO has seen its realisation despite the repeated denial from the high-ups of the PTI. It was the looming large desire of the ever-maligned segment of bureaucracy to cripple the powers of NAB, crucify to the extent to make it shrink to just a minimal entity, not having a fang, to make the manoeuvring bureaucracy stall its

rampant lust, to devour the public exchequer. Embezzlement of public funds is the cardinal feature of the bureaucratic set-up, if we make a painful search to trace a single patriotic public servant, we would have to look deep in melancholy but cannot find a single person coming up to the definition of patriotic public servant. Embezzlement in public funds has become an all pervasive passion in the progressive society and it is taken as a maleficent crime. Male factors grow unfettered to sap public funds and the honest and visioned public servants lag behind to face societal issues and domestic matters, cropping up within the family texture due to scarcity of wealth and being incompetent to emulate the public fund fleeces.

The malevolent segment of bureaucracy is lucky enough to befool the PTI brains to award them an NRO in a surreptitious way, the masters as surrogates to evolve a stratagem to save the skins of those who have eroded the kitty to make the country sprawl its bowl before those who don't lend us to make stronger but to mirror our profile of a beggar country.

The writer is a freelance columnist and an independent analyst