

Minimum 26°C
Maximum 40°C
Sunset 06:48pm
Sunrise 05:10am
(Tomorrow)



FAJAR	03:39 AM
ZOHAR	11:59 PM
ASR	04:48 PM
MAGRIB	06:48 PM
ISHA	08:19 PM

Quick Read

PINS conducts corona tests of 50 employees, two get positive

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Corona tests have been started of the employees of Punjab Institute of Neuro Sciences (PINS). In the first phase tests were conducted of 50 employees of PINS, out of which two persons were got positive.

Executive Director PINS, Prof. Dr. Khalid Mahmood, said that even in the days of corona, patients are being examined 24 hours a day and emergency is open as well. He told that a separate lift and operation theater has been allotted for Corona patients. Similarly, no one is being allowed to enter the Punjab Institute of Neuro Sciences without a safety mask.

According to Prof. Dr. Khalid Mahmood, under the policy of the Punjab Government, all protective items are being provided to doctors, nurses and medical staff. So far, more than 24,000 surgical masks, 1127 N95 masks, 950 protective kits, 100 spectacles and 13,710 gloves have been provided. Prof. Dr. Khalid Mahmood told that 24-hour medical procedure in a state-of-the-art isolation ward for corona patients is underway. Similarly, screening with thermal guns on admission to Punjab Institute of Neuro Sciences is also being ensured.

Executive Director Prof. Dr. Khalid Mahmood clarified that in the light of orders of Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar and Health Minister Dr. Yasmeen Rashid this organization of PINS is working round the clock to provide better medical care and treatment while following the Government's SOPs maintaining social distance and working in the organization so that the citizens as well as those performing their duties on the front line could be saved from Corona Virus.

Punjab govt seizes 2,550 wheat sacks in Gujranwala

LAHORE: The Punjab government on Friday continued its clampdown on smuggling and hoardings of wheat and seized 2,550 wheat sacks in Ahmed Nagar, Gujranwala, media reported.

In line with the government's efforts to tighten the noose against smugglers and hoarders to avoid any crisis of wheat, the local administration led by Deputy Commissioner Wazirabad, Sohail Ashraf, carried out raid at a godown in Ahmed Nagar.

In the action 2,550 sacks full of wheat were taken into custody while the godown owners were fined for Rs0.2 million. Earlier this week, the Punjab government had conducted raids in Attock, Chinio, Piplan, Sadiqabad, Multan, Hafizabad, Sargodha and Mandi Bahauddin.

A bid to smuggle wheat via Indus River was also thwarted and scores of sacks full of grain were taken into custody. Punjab Senior Minister Abdul Aleem Khan had said the government would not allow anyone to create an artificial shortage of basic food items by hoarding. Those indulging in such practices in the fasting month of Ramadan are the country's enemy, he maintained.



LAHORE: Punjab Governor Ch Mohammad Sarwar speaking to media persons after distributing ration among the Sikh families.

Indian rulers, forces can never suppress Muslims' voice in IOK

Minorities enjoying full freedom in Pak: Sarwar

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Punjab Governor Ch Mohammad Sarwar has said that the minorities in Pakistan are enjoying complete independence status that world at large has recognised, while Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is busy targeting minorities and becoming an internal threat for India.

Indian renowned writers, human rights activists and people at large were unanimous in saying that Modi was working on an agenda to disintegrate India, the governor said.

He was addressing a ceremony on Friday and speaking to media persons after distributing ration among Sikh families, whose wage-earners lost their jobs during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic crisis, at Gurdwara Janamsatan. Sardar Satwant Singh, Sardar Ameer Singh, Dr Mimpal Singh, Pir Syed Hassan Shah, Moon Khan and

others were present on the occasion.

Governor Punjab said that the US and all world human rights organisations had started raising their voice against Indian administration's intolerance and extremism being committed against minorities in India.

He said it was mind-boggling that Modi was busy in terrorising the minorities in India as well as committing brutalities and killing innocent Muslims in Indian Held Kashmir, when the whole world was fighting against the dreadful coronavirus pandemic. Still, the Governor said, Indian rulers and armed forces could never suppress the voice of Muslims in Kashmir as they want the UN resolutions to be implemented in true letter and spirit. "The Kashmiris are keeping their movement of independence alive despite all inhumane situations created by Indian forces in the Held Kashmir," the governor said and added Pakistan would continue

standing with the Kashmiris in their just cause.

Replying a question of media persons, the governor said Pakistan was always a supporter of peace but Modi must understand that Pakistan's wish for peace was not its weakness. "Pakistan has a capability to respond India in the same coin, if it tried any misadventure against Pakistan," the Governor asserted. He said people in India had started raising their voices against Modi's war hysteria and believing that Indian premier was converting world's largest democracy into an extremist state. Stating that such a mindset will eventually disintegrate India from within, the governor said it was now impossible to restore peace in India until Modi rules in India.

Responding to another question, the Governor said the lifting of restrictions on small businesses in the country did not mean that the coronavirus pan-

demic was subsiding. "In the days to come, the coronavirus spread will be seeing spikes and people must take proper precautionary measures while going to markets. Any mistake may prove as fatal," the governor warned.

Alongside the federal and Punjab governments, Chaudhry Sarwar said that he himself, in coordination with over 60 NGOs and social work organisations, was working to provide relief to poor and vulnerable families in these hard times. He said that he specially came to Nankana Sahib to provide ration to the poor families of the Sikh community.

Asserting that the PTI govt would not leave poor people unattended in these testing times, the governor said various NGOs and social work organisations under the banner of Punjab Development Network had so far distributed ration among over 550,000 poor families. He said the minorities' lives and properties as well as due rights would be

57 percent wheat procurement target achieved: CM

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar Friday said the province has procured 57 percent of the required wheat and affirmed to complete the target of 4.5 million metric tons.

The CM said in his statement that the Punjab government has procured 2.6 million metric tons of wheat and 85 percent bardana (gunny bags) have been distributed among growers. He further told that special preparations have been done at all buying centers regarding social distancing and necessary facilities have been provided for farmers.

I am monitoring the campaign myself to protect the interests of growers, Usman Buzdar said while adding that the government is giving full payment to farmers. On the other hand, CM Buzdar said in his message on World Thalassaemia Day Friday that thalassaemia is a hereditary disease and a painful problem of children who deserve society's special attention. Usman Buzdar said a compact policy has been formed for prevention of thalassaemia across the province. —Online

Jails reforms on the cards, says Basharat

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Social Welfare Raja Basharat has said that it has been decided to bring comprehensive reforms for the betterment of Punjab's jails and prisoners. He was presiding over a meeting in this regard at the Civil Secretariat on Friday.

The meeting was briefed by officials of Home Department, Prisons Department and Law Department. Raja Basharat stressed that the prison reform programme should be completed as per the directions of the Chief Minister. He said that the main purpose of the new reforms was to make prisoners responsible citizens by reshaping their character.

He said that the establishment of parole service and independent department is an important step of the PTI government which will facilitate the work of parole and eliminate the existing complications. The meeting agreed to amend existing laws and rules related to prisons and increase the use of modern technology.

Earlier in the departmental briefing, it was informed that the amended draft of the Prisons Act, 1894 would be prepared by May 12, while the notification of the Punjab Probation and Parole Service Act, 2019 has been issued. "The Punjab Chief Minister has approved the Parole Board and the nomination process of the board members is underway". It was further informed that a modern management information system has been introduced for automation of prisons' records.

Augustine distributes ration under AWT at Green Town

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Human Rights and Minority Affairs Ijaz Alam Augustine along with MPA Sadia Sohail and Hamza Karamet distributed ration among deserving persons, especially Christian community at Green Town Lahore on Friday under Allah Walay Trust (AWT) camp.

On this occasion, Provincial Minister Ijaz Alam Augustine distributed Food items among working class, Labourer especially the Christian community.

The minister Ijaz Alam Augustine extolled the efforts of AWT for aiding humanity and said that the youth of AWT always found ready for welfare work without any discrimination. He said that the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan and Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar are monitoring day-to-day activities to deal with the Corona virus while all the provincial ministers are busy in their respective constituencies to serve the nation. The minister said that every possible step being taken to control coronavirus and organisations like AWT can help reaching out to at the grassroots level volunteers.

He urged the nation to take special care of cleanliness and maintain social distance. He also appealed to the people having many resources to come forward

for the help of needy families. MPA Sadia Sohail said that this was best example of peace, love and harmony as serving humanity without any distinction of religion, caste and creed by the AWT.

Hamza Karamat of Youth Foundation also appreciated the efforts of the welfare organisation and encouraged the youth to come forward and perform their

proactive role. Head of AWT Shahid Naeem while expressing his views said that trust is arranging Sehri and Iftar at quarantine centres while rations etc being distributed among the laborers and deserving persons.

Provincial Minister Ijaz Alam Augustine also appealed to philanthropists to come forward and help the needy persons.

Chairman NAB cannot order retrial of 20 years old case, says Kamil Agha

LAHORE: While talking to the media on Friday, PML-Pakistan central leader Senator Kamil Ali Agha has said that the NAB every now and then brings up case based on an anonymous application although the investigation officer have written to their institution regarding this case that it should be closed because there is nothing in it.

Senator Kamil Ali Agha said now we want to know that what are the reasons for taking action on this anonymous application, who is he who is getting action taken on this application. He said that in the petition filed in the court have adopted this stance that the institution of NAB is being used for political engineering, in 2002 also when we were in the government even then action was being taken against us, we want to know from the court about the whereabouts of who has filed this anonymous application, now everything will come up openly. He said that in 2000 raids were conducted on the residences and offices of the Chaudhry Brothers, now it is too much, we have reached the court seeking justice, we fully expect from the court that justice will be done with us and process of taking action of anonymous applications will be stopped. —DNA



LAHORE: An elderly woman, Sakina Bibi pushes a pushcart (Rahri) to earn her livelihood at the Shadman Road. According to her, she has not been given any financial help from the Ehsaas Emergency or Insaaf Imdad despite being a patient.

SECP launches Digital Secured Transactions Registry with support from Karandaaz

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Karandaaz Pakistan, with financial support from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), is helping the Securities Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) digitalise its key operations.

In the first phase of this process, a digital Secured Transactions Registry (STR), governed by The Financial Institutions (Secured Transactions) Act, 2016 has been launched. The STR is an electronic database in which financial institutions can record charges or security interests created by unincorporated entities or individuals on their movable assets. Movable assets include receivables, intellectual property, inventory, agricultural produce, petroleum or min-

erals, motor vehicles, etc.

A digitalized STR will open up new avenues for small and medium enterprises and agriculture sector borrowers to secure credit from financial institutions, while offering greater transparency and visibility around recorded charges or security interests to financial institutions. According to a 2017 report by Haidermota BNR & Co. titled Financial Inclusion and Secured Transactions: Expanding access to credit in Pakistan's MSME Sector, most SMES in Pakistan are in trade and services (51 percent and 35 percent, respectively) and their assets mostly comprise of moveable property, such as inventory and receivables. They have limited immovable property to mortgage which severely impacts their ability to grow

and expand.

Aamir Khan, Chairman SECP said, "While the STR will improve access to finance for micro, small and medium businesses, this initiative would help in meeting 'Getting Credit' indicator of World bank's 'Doing Business Index' and make Pakistan able to meet seven out of 12 indicators".

Khan said that SECP has already commenced work for the next year to strive for 100 percent coverage of this indicator and as a result, Pakistan would be in the forefront of 'getting credit' reforms in South Asia.

"This improvement, coupled with other changes SECP has been able to drive during the current year, in 'starting a business', 'protection of minority interests' and 'resolving

insolvency' indicators shall lift Pakistan's overall ranking," he added.

Dr Shamsad Akhtar, Chairperson Karandaaz said, "Pakistan ranks 108th on Ease of Doing Business Index making the country less attractive for foreign direct investment. The absence of a Secured Transaction Registry (STR) was one of the factors that contributed to our lower score on this index.

It also compromises the allocative efficiency of capital as a wide class of moveable assets could not be used as collateral. I am pleased that Karandaaz Pakistan in partnership with SECP has implemented STR through the support of the UK's Department for International Development.

The STR promises to substantially redress the information asymmetries

and legal uncertainties that have hampered the supply of credit to micro, small and medium businesses. Apart from improving Pakistan's score on the Index, it will enable the financial ecosystem to leverage a useful database for AI-driven credit models helping in unleashing the potential of financial markets for economic development."

Ali Sarfraz, CEO Karandaaz Pakistan said, "Rural enterprises and SMEs have low access to formal credit in Pakistan. One of the reasons for their low credit penetration is their inability to provide quality collateral which meets their risk profile to the satisfaction of formal creditors. In many cases, SMEs do not even bother applying for loans as they are certain that they will be unable to meet the collateral requirements of

financial institutions. We know however, that more often than not, these smaller borrowers do own valuable movable assets that can be utilised as collateral. We are confident that the STR will enable unserved enterprises to access formal financing leveraging their moveable assets and have a greater chance to grow and earn better revenues and create more jobs."

British High Commissioner, Christian Turner said, "Congratulations to Pakistan on rolling out the digital Secured Transaction Registry. This UK supported initiative will help Pakistan's ranking on the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business, enhance firms' access to finance and assist with attracting foreign investment. We recognise the deep impact that Covid-19 has had on the