

Sindh govt decides to reopen shrine of Lal Shahbaz Qalander

KARACHI: Government of Sindh has decided to reopen shrine of Lal Shahbaz Qalander for visitors under SOPs. The decision was taken by Sindh government after consultation with Auqaf department. Chief Administrator of Sindh Auqaf Department said that the shrine will reopen for general visitors under strict implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The shrine was closed on March 14 by the provincial government to stop the spread of deadly coronavirus. —DNA

The Business

Lahore, Thursday, May 28, 2020 Shawwal 05, 1441

Pakistan navy continues relief operations

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy relief operations continued in various part of the country. The operations are aimed to support deserving families during coronavirus. Pakistan Navy troops reached out to urban, far-flung rural towns/villages and distributed necessary commodities including safety items to the underprivileged populace. Protective suits were also provided to related authorities/hospitals. In Sindh and Balochistan, thousands of families were provided ration bags, protection masks and disinfectant material. —DNA

Qureshi warns world against India's policy

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Wednesday warned the international community about the Indian aggressive policy towards its neighbors that is putting the regional peace and security at stake.

The world community must take notice of it, he said while talking to Pakistan Television News (PTV).

The Foreign Minister expressed his concerns over the India's construction of air strips and other infrastructure in the disputed territory of Ladakh.

Replying to a question, he said China does not want confrontation with India and want to resolve all its issues through dialogue. He, however, said "China cannot remain oblivious to India's illegal constructions".

Shah Mahmood Qureshi said the Indian atrocities in occupied Jammu and Kashmir are not secret from the world and now banting upon changing the demographic composition of the territory.

He said that India has also used the land of Afghanistan against Pakistan. —APP

India wants to team up to fight locusts: Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has confirmed that arch-rival India is proposing a trilateral response in partnership with Iran to fight a crop-killing desert locust invasion, which threatens food security for millions of people across the region.

India's rare offer of cooperation comes amid escalating military tensions with Pakistan over the disputed Kashmir region, worsening historically strained relations between the nuclear-armed neighbours, the Voice of America (VOA) reported.

"We have received a proposal from India," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Aisha Farooqui told VOA. "We believe that a well-coordinated response is critical to deal with the challenge posed by desert locusts," she stressed. She would not say what Islamabad's possible response to the Indian proposal would be.

Farooqui, however, noted that Pakistan was "working closely" with regional countries, including India and global partners, particularly the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), to address the looming locust threat. —DNA

Govt firm to resolve media problems: Shibli

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz has said that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government firmly believed in the fundamental right of freedom of expression and was committed to resolving the issues faced by the journalists and media workers. —Online

APNS concerned over govt's indifference

KARACHI: The All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) has expressed its dismay over the federal government's consistent indifference to payment of media dues before Eid despite clear instructions by Prime Minister Imran Khan. —Online

Govt begins clearing media dues

ISLAMABAD: In the light of the directives of Prime Minister Office for clearing outstanding payments of media organisations, the Press Information Department (PID) has taken up the issue with all the federal ministries/departments/organisations and expedited the payment process. —Online



KARACHI: A view of covered vehicle as wreckage of the PIA plane crash removed from the site. —Online

KCCI for winding up lockdown, deploying Army to ensure SOPs

By Our Staff Correspondent

KARACHI: Chairman Businessmen Group (BMG) and Former President Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry Siraj Kassam Teli, while urging the government to completely wind-up the lockdown so that all types of businesses and industries could restart their operations with full swing, also advised the government to deploy troops from the army whose presence and patrolling at various commercial markets would ensure strict adherence to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) devised to contain further spread of coronavirus pandemic.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, Siraj Teli said that Pakistan's economy was already in deep crises and the country cannot afford further damages hence, it was really critical to restart all businesses with normal timings and get back to routine life in presence of the virus. "On one hand, we have to contain coronavirus pandemic but on the other, we also have to save the already ailing economy therefore, the patriotic and disciplined troops from armed forces must be given the task to ensure across the board implementation of SOPs, which has to be done on top priority in order to save the economy from plunging into further crises", he said, adding that reopening of businesses under army's supervision would help in protect-

ing the businesses from complete collapse and save the masses from unemployment, poverty and starvation.

Chairman BMG, while referring to numerous measures adopted by the Federal and Provincial governments since the imposition of lockdown from March 23, said that the federal government and all provincial governments strived really hard to deal with COVID-19 pandemic and they all deserve to be appreciated but unfortunately, the number of people affected by coronavirus continues to rise all over the country as the public and also the members of the business community have been largely ignoring the SOPs due to lack of discipline. "Pakistan army is well-known for its discipline all around the world hence, it is high time that the army must come forward to rescue the country, teach discipline to the masses and get the SOPs enforced all the time which is the only way to save our beloved motherland from further disaster", he added.

He stressed that the coronavirus pandemic is not going anywhere and we have to live with it and continue our businesses in a disciplined manner. "We cannot live in the lockdown forever so we have to exhibit the Discipline which is the first step on the road to success."

He cautioned that if the lockdown is not suspended immediately, many businesses,

which remain completely suspended since last more than two months, would shut down forever that would lead to creating a chaotic situation as the people would find no other option but to come out on streets to protest due to rising unemployment and poverty. "Excluding export oriented industries and industries engaged in the production of essential food items, the rest of other local industries and also the restaurants in which hundreds and thousands of workers are employed, remain closed and the relevant businessmen are finding it impossible to sustain all these employees and are looking forward to close down their businesses forever which, if happens, would prove to be more dangerous than the coronavirus pandemic as in such situation, people would come out on streets to protest and may even create law and order situation so the government will have to act sensibly and pay attention to this pressing issue by giving go ahead to army's deployment."

Keeping in view the overall situation and grievances suffered by the business and industrial community, Siraj Teli was fairly optimistic that the government would completely remove the ongoing lockdown in order to save the businesses and the economy from further crises, besides deploying the army at the earliest so that people are compelled to follow the SOPs for containing coronavirus cases.

RCCI urges for effective drive to tackle Corona

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has urged for an effective awareness drive for the prevention of Corona. The number of cases can be reduced only by strictly implementation of standard operating procedures (SOPs).

In a statement, RCCI president Saboor Malik said that due to ease in partial lockdown, the common man has ignored precautionary measures. The electronic and digital media being an effective medium, can play a vital role here in spreading awareness message to the youth, children and the elderly, he added.

We have to prove that we are responsible citizens, and this responsibility lies to everyone, he said.

He appealed to the district administration to expedite the awareness campaign. "Our health system is not capable of dealing with the growing cases of the corona virus," he said.

"The current situation is extraordinary," he added. SOPs must be followed by both

employers and consumers to run a business under limited and secure environment, he further added.

ICCI calls for re-allocation of I-17 Sector

M Waheed, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has called upon CDA to re-allocate Sector I-17 for establishment of new industrial estate in Islamabad that would boost industrial development in the region and create jobs.

He said that there was no scope for setting up new industry in the existing industrial estates in Islamabad. He said that Prime Minister Imran Khan had announced new incentives for the construction industry that would also be beneficial for establishment of new industrial estate in the federal capital, which was the dire need of the hour.

M Waheed said that about 10 years ago, an industrial estate was announced in Sector I-17 of Islamabad and for this purpose the locals were paid the price of land but due to some unknown reasons I-17 The sector has been de-notified for industrial estate. How-

ever, this move has disappointed the potential investors who were interested in setting up new industries in Islamabad.

ICCI President said that an industrial zone has also been proposed to be set up in Islamabad under CPEC project but the CDA has made an excuse that it does not have space to set up an industrial zone in Islamabad and the federal government could direct Punjab to set up an industrial zone. He further said that plots in the existing industrial sectors in Islamabad have become so expensive that the cost of setting up a new industry has increased manifold making it impossible to set up new industries in these sectors. He said that the condition of existing industrial sectors of Islamabad has also deteriorated while Kahuta Industrial Triangle was still deprived of basic amenities despite the passage of many years. He appealed to the Finance Advisor Dr. Hafeez Sheikh to re-allocate Sector I-17 for Industrial Estate to promote industrialization in the area and allocate funds in the next budget for its establishment. —DNA

Xi tells army to prepare for war: report

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping has ordered the Chinese Army to strengthen the training of its troops and "prepare for war", according to the state media reports.

The Chinese president said that it was important to "comprehensively strengthen the training of troops and prepare for war", "resolutely safeguard national sovereignty" and "safeguard the overall strategic stability of the country".

Xi's speech comes amid rising tensions with the US and escalating clashes with the Indian army at the Ladakh border. Both armies are said to have deployed additional troops in sensitive areas along the boundary with experts predicting a lengthy standoff.

As per a report by ThePrint, Beijing has also increased up security on its side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) by locating an estimated 1,200 to 1,300 troops near the Pangong Lake.

Xi, who chairs China's powerful Central Military Commission (CMC), made the comments at a meeting of the delegation of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and People's Armed Police Force (PAPF) on the sidelines of the annual session of the National People's Congress (NPC), the country's parliament.

He emphasised on preparing for a military struggle "...to flexibly carry out actual combat military training, and to comprehensively improve our military's ability to carry out military missions". —DNA

176 Pakistanis stranded in India repatriated

LAHORE: A batch of 176 Pakistan citizens who were stranded in India after the outbreak of COVID-19 arrived in Lahore on Wednesday via Wagah border. They will be kept in quarantine centers in Lahore prior to their departure for native towns.

These Pakistanis were stranded in different Indian States including Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand and Delhi due to the extended lockdown and closure of Attari-Wagah border following the outbreak of coronavirus.

Pakistani citizens were visiting India to meet their relatives in various parts of the neighboring country. Earlier, the Foreign Office in a statement said that another 176 Pakistanis stranded in India due to COVID-19 lockdown will return home via Attari-Wagah border on Wednesday.

The foreign office said that in line with the Prime Minister's directions, for safe and smooth repatriation of stranded Pakistanis, the High Commission for Pakistan in New Delhi remained in close contact with the Indian authorities and the Foreign Office has been coordinating with other national authorities in Pakistan.

The Pakistan High Commission also facilitated and coordinated logistics for transfer of these Pakistanis to Attari from more than twenty different Indian cities, amid the lockdown. More than 400 stranded Pakistanis have been repatriated from India via Attari-Wagah border since March 20, 2020. —DNA

251 Pakistanis from Doha land at Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: A flight of Qatar Airways on Wednesday landed at Islamabad International Airport carrying 251 Pakistanis stranded in Doha.

The national airline is consistently serving the nationals trapped in foreign countries due to suspension of the flight operations following the spread of coronavirus pandemic.

The Qatar Airways flight QR-632 was disinfected properly by the CAA staff and passengers were shifted to quarantine facility after screening and taking samples for the coronavirus tests.

Till May 17, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) had repatriated 43,900 people through 117 special flights, said the spokesperson of national flag carrier.

According to details, PIA brought back more than 11,000 stranded Pakistanis through 69 special flights between April 1 to May 12, while 32,600 passengers were repatriated through 108 outbound flights. —DNA



EASAKHEL: Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar being given turban during his visit to the area.

Corona cases

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Transfusion Authority (SBTA). Sindh Health Minister Dr. Azra Fazl Pechuhu earlier said that passive immunization has yielded positive results and initially 11 COVID-19 patients received plasma therapy.

Sindh Blood Transfusion Authority (SBTA) has also urged patients who had recovered from coronavirus to come forward and help the doctors by donating their blood plasma.

Renowned haematologist Dr Tahir Shamsi, who had proposed the treatment of coronavirus patients through passive immunisation, said that very few recovered patients are coming, to donate their blood plasma, which is required to save the patients.

KP shops except for medical, essential items to be closed at 5pm

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government on Wednesday announced that shops — except for medical and essential item shops — in the province will close at 5pm from Wednesday onwards.

"The government measures are being done to protect the people from coronavirus," Advise to Chief Minister Aijmal Wazir announced while speaking to the media in Peshawar. He added that barbershops will only remain open from Friday till Sunday. "If the people cooperate then lockdown will be eased, [if not] then it would be stricter," said Wazir. Wazir added that profiteers and hoarders will not be allowed to take advantage of the situation. "Right now we are in a state of war," said the adviser, adding that coronavirus can only be fought if safety precautions are followed.

699 fresh coronavirus cases reported in Sindh: Murad

As many as 699 new cases of the novel coronavirus were detected in Sindh over the past 24 hours, rising the tally of infections to 24,206 across the province, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah said on Wednesday.

151 new cases reported in Islamabad, 8 in GB, 3 in AJK

Islamabad has reported 151 new coronavirus cases, according to the government's Covid-19 portal. This takes the capital's total cases to 1,879.

Gilgit Baltistan has reported eight new cases while Azad Jammu and Kashmir has reported three new cases.

The federal territories have collectively reported four additional deaths from the virus. Islamabad and GB have reported one death each while AJK has reported two fatalities. —Online