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CM warns strict action against violators of corona SOPs



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Trump addresses West Point grads



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## Smart lockdown necessary to run national economy: Zafar

By Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Health, Dr Zafar Mirza on Sunday said that there was a need of smart lockdown for running the wheel of the national economy.

Talking to a private TV channel, he said the government was providing all health facilities, equipments and enhancing the capacity building of hospitals as well.

He said that the people would have to act according to the Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs) with full spirit which were issued by the government otherwise problems would be created for the government and the people as well.

Dr Zafar Mirza said the government was not agreed with proposal of the World Health Organization (WHO) for imposing 15 days lockdown and 15 days to ease in it.

Replying to a question, he said the government would be increased the capacity of 1,000 ventilation beds in different hospitals in the provinces.

He said that the people should avoid to attend gatherings, adding the government was providing health facilities to the hospitals and the people as per available resources.

### FIA inquiry acquits Zafar Mirza in masks smuggling case

Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) investigation report has acquitted Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) Zafar Mirza after probing his alleged involvement in masks smuggling, sources claimed on Sunday.

According to FIA sources, no allegation was proved against SAPM on Health Zafar Mirza as petitioner failed to provide evidence of his allegations during the agency's investigation of export of 20 million masks to China.

Sources say that according to FIA's report no collusion was proved in issuance of permit for export of the masks and Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) allowed the export under the rules and regulations.

FIA has recommended halting the probe into mask export case.

It is to be noted here that the complaint was submitted by Young Pharmacists' Association's Secretary General Dr Furqan Ibrahim with the Prime Minister's Complaint Cell.

According to the complainant, 20 million masks were smuggled out of Pakistan allegedly by Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Health Dr Zafar Mirza in collusion with an aide of Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) Deputy Director Ghazafar Ali Khan.

## PSMA refuses to supply sugar to utility stores at Rs63 per kg

By Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Sugar Mills Association (PSMA) has refused to supply sugar to utility stores at the reduced rate of Rs63, as was recommended by the government, saying that the recommendation "has no legal standing".

On Saturday, the Ministry of Industries and Production had written a letter to PSMA in the pursuance of an Islamabad High Court (IHC) order.

An official of the ministry said that PSMA should provide sugar at Rs63 per kilogram to utility stores, so it could sell the commodity at Rs70 per kg to the consumer, as directed by IHC. In a letter written in response to the ministry on Sunday, the PSMA said it agrees to supply sugar at Rs70 per kg under the interim court order.

"We are ready to give sugar at a rate of Rs70 per kg to non-commercial establishments for domestic use," the association said, adding that about 60,000 tonnes of sugar will be delivered to markets.

It said that until under the court order, the federal government can make arrangements to procure the sugar at that rate.

"Until the arrangements are finalised regarding the sugar price, the sugar mills will supply sugar at Rs70 per kg for commercial use," the association wrote in the letter.



LAHORE: A view of deserted The Mall during the weekly complete virus lockdown. —Online

# COVID-19 cases could reach 1.2m by end July, warns Asad

— By middle of June, we would have around 150,000 cases, if such situation prevails

By Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar on Sunday expressed fear that coronavirus cases could be surged till 1.2 million by end of July if strict action would not be taken against violators of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), issued by the government to prevent spread of COVID-19.

"By middle of June, we have around 150,000 cases, if such situation prevails and no change is made then according to the experts, the number could be increased by two folds to 300,000 by end of current month and could also be surged up to around one mil-

lion to 1.2 million by end of next month," Asad Umar said in a media briefing after chairing meeting of National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) on COVID-19 here.

"This is of course a matter of worry but the good thing is that we have the capability to avoid such situation by taking administrative actions." He said the administrative measures were already being taken against the violators of SOPs, however, he informed that the NCOC had decided to take stricter administrative actions against such people to avoid spread of the pandemic.

He said the government does not want to hurt people but it was the constitutional as well as moral responsibility of the government to prevent them from the disease.

Simultaneously, the minister informed that the capacity of health system was also being improved. In this regard, he said the NCOC had also decided to increase the testing capacity of COVID-19 from current 40,000-50,000 daily to around 150,000 tests within four to six weeks, which means that we would be testing around 100,000 people on daily basis by mid-July.

About availability of beds with oxygen for coronavirus patients, Umar informed that at present around 2000 patients were on oxygen beds across the country while keeping in view the growing numbers of patients, the federal government would provide 1000 more beds by end of current month and 1000 beds by end of next month.

"We will provide 500 beds each to Sindh and Punjab provinces, 450 to Islamabad, 400

beds to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 200 beds to Balochistan, 60 to Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and 40 beds to Gilgit Baltistan.

Asad Umar said according to the experts, wearing masks was the most effective way to control the pandemic as it could even help decreasing the spread rate by 50 per cent.

He said social distancing was the second most important requirement the people should follow.

It has been repeatedly advised that the people should avoid going out of home unnecessarily, however if going out is unavoidable, observe social distancing whether you are in market, at office or anywhere else, he added. He warned that in order to save maximum people from the disease, actions would be taken more strict against those who did not follow SOPs, some particular shops and even markets would be locked in such cases.

He said in Islamabad, the government has taken actions and some areas were sealed, similar actions would also be taken in Lahore and other cities of Punjab.

Umar said according to the vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan, the government was also concerned about the economic situation of common man.

Pakistan managed to do something for the poor due to timely actions by the Prime Minister, however, in other countries like India, the situation is worst, he said adding India imposed strict lockdown with short notice which resulted in worst situation as people were dying of hunger and despite such strict lock down the pandemic was spread like

# Qureshi tells India to focus on domestic issues

— Asks India avoid 'igniting border disputes'

By Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Sunday advised the Indian government to focus on its domestic issues instead of "behaving like an expansionist nation".

In a two-part tweet, the Foreign Minister said: "It would serve PM Modi's government and 'neighbourhood first' policy well to realise India's neighbours pose far less of a problem than their own domestic inadequacies, failures and fascism."

Qureshi also criticised India for "igniting border disputes with every neighbour" and said that the incumbent Bharatiya Janata Party government should be "focused on serving the poor, downtrodden and minorities of India better".

Qureshi's tweets come days after Prime Minister Imran Khan offered to "help and

share the government's successful cash transfer programme, lauded internationally for its reach and transparency, with India". The PTI government has launched the Ehsaas Emergency Cash Programme under which about 12 million lower-income families each received Rs12,000 to cover basic needs for three months.

The Prime Minister's "offer" came after a study by University of Pennsylvania, the University of Chicago and the Mumbai-based Centre for Monitoring the Indian Economy (CMIE) concluded that about 84 per cent of Indian households were suffering from a decline in income due to the pandemic. In addition to the economic setback, the virus has also fuelled hate against Muslims in India as well as insecurities among the poor people who have lost work due to the government's measures to curb the spread. Indian forces often resort to aggres-

sion at the Line of Control (LoC) and target soldiers as well as civilians in "unprovoked" attacks, which results in damage to both life and property.

Apart from its disputes with Pakistan, India is currently engaged in a standoff with China's forces in the remote snow desert of Ladakh where hundreds of soldiers have been ranged against each other since April in the most serious border flare-ups for years after Chinese patrols advanced into what India deems its side of the de facto border.

Both sides are holding talks and, according to an Indian official, after weeks of tension, including an incident in which patrolling soldiers from the two sides came to blows on the banks of Pangong Lake, resulting in injuries, friction has eased somewhat. Another conflict India is involved in is with Nepal, who has protested to India over a border road.

## 'Over 64,000 stranded Pakistanis repatriated'

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The government has so far repatriated more than 64,000 stranded Pakistanis from 50 countries, with thousands still stuck at the foreign shores, looking for their return amid the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Nevertheless, the evacuation of such a large number of stranded nationals is a feather in the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government's cap, which took lead in launching the world's largest repatriation operation soon after the imposition of travel restrictions worldwide to contain the coronavirus spread.

As of June 11, at least 64,855 Pakistanis were brought to the country shores via air and land routes, said a document shared by the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (OP&HRD) on Sunday.

Out of total, 60,526 were brought to the country under special flight operations, whereas repatriation of 4,329 Pakistanis was done via land borders of India, Afghanistan and Iran.

The GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) countries remained a main focus for the government where a whooping number of expats were still stuck due to limited number of flights operated by Pakistan.

Some 25,514 (including 460 prisoners) were evacuated from the United Arab Emirates, followed by Saudi Arabia from where 8,740 (including 480 Umrah Zaireens and 195 detainees) brought back to the country.

Similarly, 4,406 were repatriated from Qatar, 4,301 from the United Kingdom, 2,987 from Afghanistan (via land route) and 91 by air, 2,956 Oman, 1,159 Malaysia, 1,349 the United States of America, 924 Iran (via land route) and 418 from India (via land route).

Multiple countries such as Australia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Canada, China, Congo, Egypt, Germany, Iraq, Indonesia, Japan, Kuwait, Maldives, Norway, South Africa, Somalia Sri Lanka, Sudan Turkey, Thailand, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan were also among others from where a number of stranded nationals were airlifted by the government.

The repatriated nationals also included Tablighees (2,018), Prisoners/ Detainees (1,712) and Zaireen (1,326).

The repatriation process would last till the return of all stranded citizens, an official of the OP&HRD ministry told APP, pointing out the gradual increase in repatriation flights.

## NAB to take Interpol's help for extradition of Salman

By Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on Sunday has decided to take Interpol's help for extradition of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif's son Salman Shabbaz.

According to details, the anti-graft watchdog will provide all the evidences against Salman Shabbaz to the national crime agency.

Salman Shabbaz is absconder in money laundering case and non-bailable arrest warrant has also been issued against him, the bureau stated.

## Punjab Budget 2020-2021 to be presented today

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Punjab Budget for the next fiscal year 2020-2021 will be presented today (Monday).

Provincial Minister for Finance Hashim Jawan Bakhat will present the budget in the session of provincial assembly at a local hotel in Lahore at 2:00 P.M. Meanwhile, the spokesperson of the Finance Department in a statement has said that for the first time, the

# Record 6,825 corona cases in one day, 81 die

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Pakistan has confirmed 81 deaths by novel coronavirus in one day as the number of positive cases has surged to 139,230. The nationwide tally of fatalities has jumped to 2,652 on Sunday.

According to the latest figures by the National Command and Operation Center (NCOC), record 6,825 persons have been tested positive for COVID-19 in 24 hours.

Punjab remains the worst-hit province by the pandemic followed by Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan.

Till now 52,601 coronavirus cases have been confirmed in Punjab, 53,805 in Sindh,

17,450 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 8,170 in Balochistan, 7,934 in Islamabad, 1,095 in Gilgit-Baltistan and 604 in Azad Kashmir.

Patients are under treatment at quarantine centers of 462 hospitals where 7,295 beds are available.

Pakistan has so far conducted 868,565 coronavirus tests and 29,546 in last 24 hours. 51,735 coronavirus patients have recovered in the country whereas many are in critical condition.

### Coronavirus update: 2,514 new cases reported in Punjab

The number of COVID-19 patients reached to 52,601 in the province after the registration of 2514 new cases during the

last 24 hours.

Punjab Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department spokesperson said on Sunday noon that 31 more citizens lost their lives while death toll reached to 969 in the province while 17,560 patients have so far recovered.

As many as 1331 new coronavirus cases were registered in Lahore, 5 in Nankana Sahib district, 18 in Kasur, 26 in Sheikhupura, 234 in Rawalpindi, 8 in Attock, 6 in Jehlum, 55 in Gujranwala, 130 in Sialkot, 3 in Narowal, 102 in Gujrat, 1 in Hafizabad, 157 in Multan, 9 in Khanewal, 12 in Vehari, 11 in Muzafargarh, 123 in Faisalabad, 2 in Chiniot, 7 in Toba Tek

Singh, 3 in Jhang, 53 in Rahimyar Khan, 43 in Sargodha, 5 in Mianwali, 2 in Khoshab, 16 in Layyah, 8 in Bhakkar, 8 in Bahawalnagar, 47 in Bahawalpur, 9 in Lodhran, 46 in Dera Ghazi Khan, 2 in Rajanpur, 10 in Okara, 20 in Sakiwal, and 2 new case were reported in Pakpatan district during the 24 hours.

The Punjab health department so far conducted 338,714 tests for COVID-19. The department has appealed to the masses to opt SOPs by covering faces with masks and washing hands with soap several times in a day. People have been advised to contact 1033 immediately on symptoms of coronavirus.

## CORONAVIRUS IN PAKISTAN

Confirmed cases:	141,666
ICT:	7,934
Punjab:	52,601
Sindh:	53,805
KP:	17,450
Balochistan:	8,170
AJK:	604
GB:	1,095
Recovered:	51,735
Deaths:	2,649