

Minimum 26:°C
Maximum 37:°C
Sunset 07:11pm
Sunrise 05:04am
(Today)

LAHORE

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Wednesday, July 29, 2020



FAJAR.....03:40 AM
ZOHR.....12:07 PM
ASR.....5:03 PM
MAGRIB.....07:11 PM
ISHA.....09:00 PM

Quick Read

Monsoon activity likely to strengthen in next 48 hours

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The Flood Forecasting Division (FFD) has said that monsoon activity is likely to strengthen over North & Northeastern Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Kashmir, besides, over upper catchments of all the major rivers of Indus River System during the next 48 hours.

A fresh wet spell of Moderate intensity with few heavy falls is likely to start from today (Wednesday). Currently, there is no riverine flood situation in the country. Present storage of Tarbela reservoir is 1.633 MAF which is 178.56 % lesser than the last year's storage on the same date with 33,000 cusecs water is discharging downstream Kotri.

Water level at Mangla reservoir is same as of yesterday's i.e 1228.80 feet (13.20 feet below MCL of 1242.00 feet).

As per FFD, Lahore, moist currents from Arabian Sea are penetrating into upper parts of Pakistan upto 5000 feet with Seasonal Low presently over Northern Balochistan. Yesterday's trough of Westerly Wave earlier over Northern parts of Afghanistan lies over Northeastern Afghanistan. Under the influence of prevailing Met conditions, for the next 24 hours, FFD's, Lahore, forecast predicts scattered thunderstorm/rain of Moderate Intensity with few Heavy Falls over Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Sargodha, Lahore, Faisalabad & Sahiwal Divisions of Punjab, Malakand, Hazara & Peshawar Divisions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including upper catchments of all the major rivers of Indus River System. Further to above, isolated thunderstorm/rain is also expected during the same period over D.G. Khan Division (Punjab), Kohat, Bannu, D.I. Khan Divisions (KP), Southern Sindh and Northeastern Balochistan.

Govt issues list of businesses to remain open during lockdown

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The Primary & Secondary Health Department (P&SHD) has issued a list of businesses to remain opened during the current lockdown imposed on Monday night.

According to the list issued here on Tuesday, all medical and health centers, medical stores, pharmacies, tyre puncture shops, flour mills (aata chakiyan), postal/courier services, drivers, hostels, patrol pumps and oil depots will remain open round-the-clock during lockdown. The restaurants will only be allowed to provide home-delivery and take-away services to their customers. LPG shops, filling plants, agriculture machinery shops, printing press, call-centers (with 50 per cent staff), workshops and spare parts shops can also be opened according to SOPs.

Grocery, bakery, general stores (karyana stores), fruit and vegetable shops, meat shops, milk shops and tandoor shops will also be opened. Intercity public transport and local city transport will be allowed to operate round the clock. Banks, currency exchange shops, telecom franchises, dry-cleaners and tailors can also open their businesses during lockdown according to SOPs. Auto-workshops, building material shops, glass and aluminum shops will also continue their work.

CM orders to ensure foolproof security for protecting life, property of citizens

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Usman Buzdar chaired a meeting at his office here on Tuesday to review Eid ul-Azha related arrangements.

The CM directed to ensure foolproof security arrangements for protecting the life and property of citizens.

Security of Eid congregations should be ensured at every cost, he added and made it clear that any violation of SOPs will not be tolerated in cattle markets and further directed to take legal action in case of violation. Similarly, cleanliness arrangements of cattle markets should be ensured along with the smooth flow of traffic around such markets, he said. He further directed that best cleanliness arrangements should be ensured on Eid ul-Adha.

The CM asserted that solid waste management companies, as well as the local government department, should ensure zero-waste management on the occasion of Eid. The Punjab government has decided to set up a control room at Punjab Local Government Board for the monitoring of cleanliness arrangements, he said. He fur-

ther directed that best cleanliness arrangements should be ensured in the whole of the province and citizen's complaints be immediately redressed. The garbage and animal waste should be properly disposed of, the CM directed. I will go to the field to personally monitor the ground situation, he added. The best arrangements should be made and Commissioners and DCs should personally monitor cleanliness arrangements so that societal transformation should be visible to everyone. He disclosed the first three best performing districts will be encouraged upon for ensuring best cleanliness arrangements while poor-performers will be held accountable. I will not tolerate any leniency in cleanliness arrangements of Lahore and other big cities as line departments are responsible for a neat and clean environment, the CM stated.

The CM admonished Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) Toba Tek Singh for disposing of other matters during the meeting and enquired if it is the proper way of attending a meeting. Such a non-serious and non-professional attitude will not be tolerated in future, he warned. IG

Police briefed about security arrangements while secretary local government and commissioners apprised about cleanliness arrangements. Chief Secretary, ACS (Home), administrative secretaries, DC Lahore and MD LWMC attended the meeting while commissioners, DCs and MDs of waste management companies participated through video link.

Reviews steps taken for implementation of smart lockdown: Chief Minister Punjab Sardar Usman Buzdar paid a surprise visit to different areas of the provincial metropolis without protocol or security late at night for three hours.

During the visit, he telephonically directed the Deputy Commissioner to shift people found sleeping in a park near Liberty to the shelter home.

The CM also reviewed the steps taken for implementation of smart lockdown and, while expressing indignation over the presence of garbage in some areas, telephonically directed the LWMC officials to improve the cleanliness arrangements.

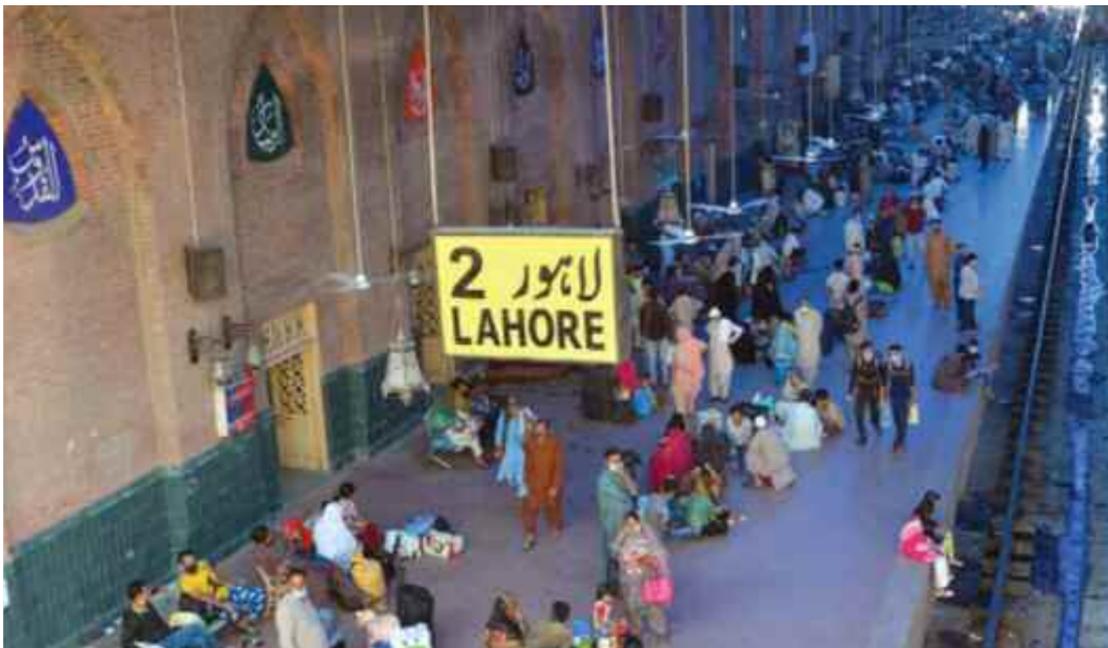
The CM talked to the confined accused and reprimanded the officials over poor sanitation conditions during raids at

Mughalpura and Shadman police stations. He directed to improve the cleanliness and enquired the visitors about their problems. He put up questions to front desk staff about the confined accused and flicked through the daily work register besides checking attendance. Later, the CM inspected a shelter home near the city's railway station and questioned the inmates about their problems and the facilities provided to them. They expressed satisfaction over the quality of food and other amenities.

Solving the citizen's problems is the responsibility of the government and I will continue to conduct such inspections to know about the problems of the people at the grassroots, the CM stated.

Condemns firing at CTD officials in Chilas: Buzdar has expressed a deep sense of sorrow over the martyrdom of CTD officials in Chilas and extended sympathies to bereaved heirs.

He has also prayed for early recovery of the injured. The nation pays rich tributes to the immortal courage of our martyrs and their sacrifices will not be forgotten, the CM added.



LAHORE: A large number of passengers wait for train at Railway Station as people leaving for their hometown and villages to celebrate Eid al-Azha with their love one and family members." —Online

Govt taking steps to protect people from COVID-19, says Basharat

CS expresses displeasure over absence of health dept team at sale point

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Provincial Law Minister Raja Basharat and Chief Secretary Punjab Jawwad Rafique Malik on Tuesday paid a surprise visit to various parts of the city to review the enforcement of the smart lockdown and arrangements in cattle markets.

The provincial law minister and chief secretary reviewed the situation of smart lockdown in various markets of the city including Liberty and Johar Town and issued instructions to the CCPO Lahore to deploy more police personnel.

They said that the government's measure helped control the coronavirus pandemic but carelessness could lead to the resurgence of the disease. They said that the smart lockdown is inevitable in the prevailing situation and it would be strictly enforced. Raja Basharat said that the decision of smart lockdown ahead of Eid-ul-Adha was taken in the public interest and the government would continue taking steps to protect the people from COVID-19.

During the visit to a cattle sale point at the Pine Road, the Chief Secretary expressed dis-

pleasure over the absence of a sample collection team of the Health Department for coronavirus testing. He warned that the instructions issued must be complied with in letter and spirit as no negligence would be tolerated.

The Chief Secretary had directed the Primary Health Department to set up a special counter for screening at the entry points of every cattle market. The Chief Secretary said that the government's efforts to control the coronavirus were facing a major challenge on the occasion of Eid-

ul-Adha, adding that no compromise could be made on the issue of protection of health and lives of people. He said that there was a risk of coronavirus spread due to rush in the markets before Eid, so a smart lockdown was enforced, keeping in view the experience of Eid-ul-Fitr.

The Chief Secretary said that collective efforts are needed to eradicate the coronavirus from the country. "The Prime Minister of Pakistan and Chief Minister of Punjab have appealed to people to celebrate Eid with simplicity.



First youth baseball academy will be inaugurated in Okara

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The Pakistan Baseball Federation will open its first youth baseball academy in Okara on August 9, 2020 after Eidul Adha.

Syed Fakhar Ali Shah, President Pakistan Federation Baseball, said here on Tuesday that baseball is becoming one of the most popular sports in Pakistan.

Baseball is being played at school, college and university level in the country and our national youth teams of various age categories are regularly participating in international competitions, including U-12, U-15 and U-18 teams, abroad. According to him, the federation had been working for the development of youth baseball in the country for the last ten years but the work of youth development has come to a standstill due to lack of baseball activities across the country due to ongoing corona pandemic.

This year, Pakistan's U-12 and U-18 teams will have to participate in the Asian Baseball Championships and if these events are further delayed or postponed due to Corona virus, the youth baseball will suffer a lot, he added.

Syed Fakhr Ali Shah said that the issue was discussed with the Chairman of the federation Shaukat Javed in a video link. "Shaukat Javed on this issue ordered to set up youth baseball academies in different cities of Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan to keep youth busy in the game", he said. Shaukat Javed further said that since baseball activities have been suspended due to the COVID-19 and camps of baseball are not being set up for the training of players, it would be better to set up baseball academies in different cities where young players will begin training under the watchful eyes of qualified coaches.

He said that after end of this epidemic when the new dates of the international baseball tournaments will be announced, we will have groups of trained players, from which we will select the best players to form our various teams to participate in the international events abroad. Shaukat Javed further said the first baseball academy in Okara will be set up under the supervision of Muhammad Hamood Lakhvi, Vice President of Pakistan Federation Baseball, who has

NGOs' re-registration under Punjab Charities Act 2018 stayed

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court restrained the Punjab government from taking coercive measures against civil society and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in terms of their re-registration under Punjab Charities Act 2018.

Justice Shahid Karim passed the order on a joint petition filed by over a dozen civil society organisations and NGOs, including Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, Aurat Foundation, South Asia Partnership-Pakistan, Asma Jahangir Legal Aid and Women Rights Association.

Representing the petitioners, Advocate Hina Jillani stated before the court that Punjab Assembly on Feb 28, 2018 enacted the law, Punjab Charities Act 2018. She said

the government or the lawmakers never consulted the civil society sector and organisations before the enactment of the legislation piece. She pointed out that Section 12 of the law makes it mandatory for all charities to get them registered with the "Charities Commission" established under the Act. She said the Home Department published an advertisement in a number of newspapers on different dates during July 2020 giving a deadline of Aug 15 for online registration by all charities with the commission. Later, the counsel said, the department circulated instructions to district administrations to coerce the registration process and some NGOs had received letters from social welfare officials. She argued that the registration of "charities" had been arbitrarily determined and the requirement of the notifi-

cation under Section 12 of the impugned Act had not been fulfilled. Therefore, Ms Jillani said, the registration process was not legally initiated and the time limit of Aug 15 intimated through a newspaper advertisement was without lawful authority and of no legal effect. She said imposing a deadline during a health emergency because of COVID-19 pandemic, when most offices of the NGOs were closed or only partially working, was not justified by any standards of reasonableness. As an immediate relief, the counsel requested the court to restrain the respondents from enforcing the deadline for re-registration process and also suspend the operation of the impugned Act, which she termed a draconian law. After hearing the arguments, Justice Shahid Karim restrained the government from

taking coercive measures against the petitioners/organisations and sought replies from the respondents by the next date of hearing to be fixed by the office.

PSM: An accountability court Monday adjourned the hearing of 'pig iron' reference against officials of Pakistan Railways and Pakistan Steel Mills by August 10. The court has also extended judicial remand of an accused, Jwad Ahmad, for the same date in the same case. The reference has been pending before the court for the last five years.

In 2015, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) had filed a corruption reference against former officials of Pakistan Railways and others allegedly involved in a Rs 48.2 million scam, also known as 'pig iron scam.'

According to a NAB, the refer-

ence was filed against Zahoor Khattak, Pakistan Railways former chief controller (purchase), Saeed Akhtar, former general manager (operations), Sameullah Khan, former chief controller (stores), Behzad Mehmood, former chief mechanical engineer (loco), Yawar Abbas, former financial adviser and chief accounts officer, Tariq Maqsood, former financial adviser and chief accounts officer, S Amin-ud-Din, former deputy manager accounts of Pakistan Steel Mills zonal office, Lahore, Suhail Sana Qazi, former deputy chief engineer/incharge PSM, Jawad Ahmad, manager of M/s Pak Steel Traders, Lahore, and Zeeshan Ahmad, contractor/proprietor of Pak Steel Traders, for misuse of authority, violation of the Public Procurement Rules 2004 and award of a contract without adver-

tisement. The railways officials allegedly in connivance with the contractor awarded the contract to Pak Steel Traders for procurement of 500 tonnes of pig iron, causing a loss of millions of rupees to the national exchequer. Bail: An anti-corruption court on Monday extended interim bail of one Engineer Imtiaz Akbar Bhatti and other officials of irrigation department until 20 August, accused of embezzling millions under the head of diesel purchase. The judge Sohaib Ahmad Rumi has also directed Investigation Officer of Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) to submit investigation report on the next hearing. As per case details, the ACE had registered a case against Imtiaz Bhatti and others on the charges of embezzling millions through bogus purchase of diesel.