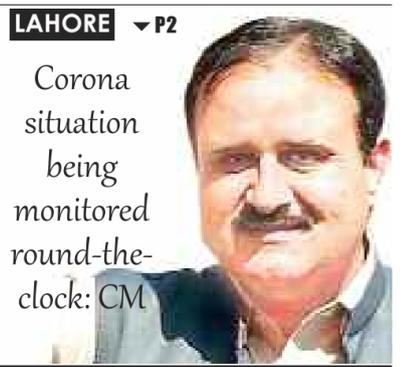




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Negative politics of opposition fails: Punjab Governor

The Business

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Corona situation being monitored round-the-clock: CM

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COVID-19 vaccine very effective, says Faisal Sultan

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on National Health, Dr Faisal Sultan has said that the COVID-19 vaccine is very effective to protect citizens from medical complications of many virus variants.

In a statement issued here on Sunday, he said keeping in view the detection of new COVID-19 variants in Pakistan and raising questions on the effectiveness of vaccine process, the country men are advised to must go for vaccination against the virus to avoid facing more complications and hospitalization. He made it clear that there are so many variants of COVID-19 in the world presently, and some virus variants have a tendency of having more chances of re-occurrence of infection. Dr Faisal Sultan said regardless of which variants have been detected, the SOPs recommended globally continue to be our first line of defense against coronavirus.

On the other hand, deaths from Covid-19 have crossed 18,000 mark in Pakistan as the number of positive cases has surged to 829,933.

'US bill to clear way for duty-free export zones

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The Pak-US Business Council has said that a bipartisan bill, moved in the US Senate recently, for establishment of duty-free export zones along the Pak-Afghan border, would provide economic benefits to both countries and boost US efforts to promote peace in the region.

Lauding the move, founder chairman of Pak-US Business Council and President SAARC Chambers of Commerce and Industry Iftikhar Ali Malik, told the media here on Sunday that the bill would help establish reconstruction opportunity zones (ROZs) in Pakistan and Afghanistan's border regions. He said the bill would generate economic opportunities for the people of these war-torn areas and lay the groundwork for a more stable region.

He said the ROZs would export textiles and apparel goods to the United States without paying duties.

PML-N rejects govt's proposal of electronic voting

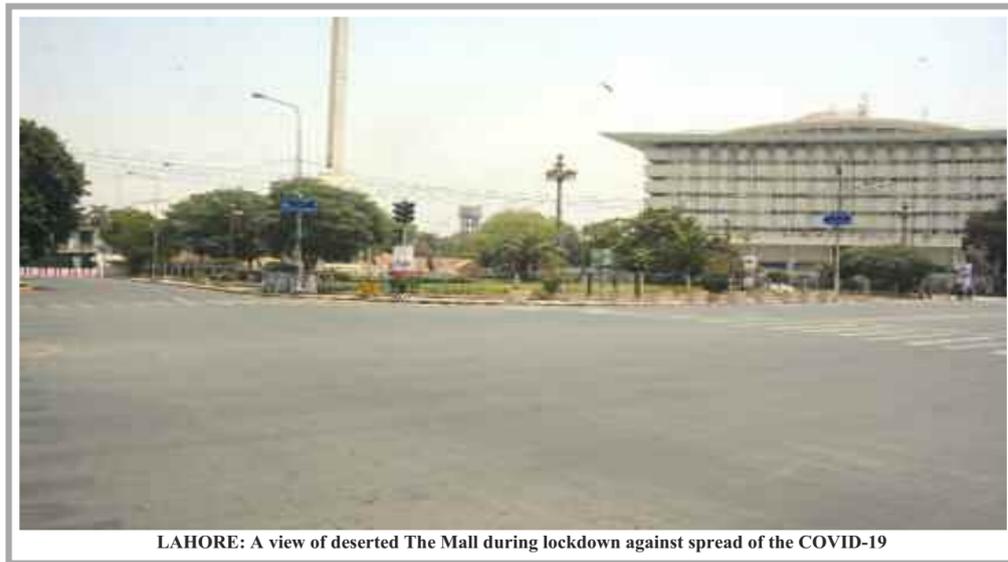
By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif rejected on Sunday the government's proposal to use electronic voting machines, saying such decisions cannot be made by one individual.

"The sensitive process of electoral reforms is undertaken with the will and confidence of the entirety of the nation," said Shehbaz said in a statement. "The reforms come to fore through consultation between all the sides involved and in the light of the masses' opinion and unanimity," he added. The PML-N chief went on to add that "crucial national steps do not take place on the aspirations or order of one individual."

Terming the parliament a centre and reflection of the aspirations of people, he said, "It has been locked up for the last three years." "We can undertake electoral reforms as we have the patience and will to take political rivals along and implement their proposals."

Shehbaz recalled that the PML-N undertook historic political reforms with the consultation of all political parties, including the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). "No one had objected to those reforms as it was a reflection of endorsement by all," he said, adding that "the opposition was mocked by chants of NRO as it attempted to introduce the charter of economy and [other] positive propositions." Concluding, the PML-N chief said that the world has rejected electronic voting, adding that the Election Commission has also termed it unviable.



LAHORE: A view of deserted The Mall during lockdown against spread of the COVID-19

-Covid-19 variants emerge in region

NCOC bans inbound pedestrian movement from Afghanistan, Iran

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) on Sunday reviewed border management protocols with neighbouring Afghanistan and Iran as new Covid-19 variants emerge in the region.

"The current policy of Land Border Management with Afghanistan and Iran has been reviewed to ensure regulated inbound pedestrian movement and effective management of COVID protocols at Border Terminals (BTS)," read the statement issued by National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC). The revised policy will be effective from midnight May 4-5 till midnight May 19-20. The policy will only be applicable to inbound pedestrians with no effect on the existing cargo/trade (bilateral / Afghan Transit Trade) movement.

According to the NCOC statement, Border Terminals (BTS) will remain open for seven days a week. "Employment strength of LEAs/health staff at BTS will be increased for implementation of testing protocols and to control high traffic density," read the statement.

NCOC reviews border management protocols with neighbouring Afghanistan and Iran; Revised policy will be effective from midnight May 4-5 till midnight May 19-20

The coronavirus monitoring body said inbound pedestrian movement would cease with effect from midnight May 4-5 with the exception of Pakistani nationals in Afghanistan and Iran who desire to return to their country and in extreme medical emergency cases etc. It also said that all outbound pedestrian movement is permissible.

Highlighting the testing and quarantining protocols, NCOC said inbound pedestrians will undergo Rapid Antigen Test (RAT). Positive cases (for Pakistani nationals only) will be shifted to nearby quarantine facilities. "Inbound pedestrian with Afghan exemptions will also undergo RAT testing at BTS. Positive cases, if any, will be reverted back to

Afghanistan," read the NCOC statement. It also said that thermal scanning for all drivers and co-drivers will be carried out on arrival at the BTS. Symptomatic cases will undergo RAT testing, positive cases will be dealt with as per the procedure spelled above. National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) said that 394 new cases of Coronavirus were reported from the federal capital during the last 24 hours. According to an official of NCOC, as many as 431 cases were reported on Sunday. He said so far 75,892 cases were reported from the federal capital while 691 deaths were reported from Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). He added 62,959 patients had been recovered completely.

PM did not mention Justice Qazi Faez Isa's name: Bashir Memon

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Former DG Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Bashir Memon has clarified that Prime Minister Imran Khan did not mention Justice Qazi Faez Isa's name during their brief meeting.

However, he clarified Federal Law Minister Farogh Naseem had mentioned the judge by name.

A few days ago, Memon had leveled serious allegations against the government when he said the Prime Minister had demanded he register treason cases against Maryam Nawaz, Khawaja Asif and book other PML-N leaders in cases.

This allegedly took place when Memon was the DG FIA. He also clarified that Naseem and PM Imran Khan's aide Shahzad Akbar wanted him to register cases against Supreme Court judge Justice Qazi Faez Isa.

In an interview on Saturday night, Memon clarified the Prime Minister never

mentioned Justice Isa's name. "That is what I am saying," Memon had said in response to a question by the anchor. "In the brief meeting of two to three minutes, he did not talk about any particular case."

When asked whether the premier had mentioned Justice Isa by name, Memon replied in the negative. He demanded the formation of a Judicial Commission to further probe the matter, adding that whatever verdict the commission would give, he would accept it.

Memon had also claimed he had told Law Minister Farogh Naseem in his meeting with the Minister that the Prime Minister had not asked him about Justice Isa; otherwise he would have explained to the premier that it was not the FIA's job to book cases against him and the Supreme Judicial Council was the right forum to investigate the matter.

The former DG FIA said he would have attempted to explain to the Prime Minister the legal issues had he talked to him about

the judge during the meeting.

Bashir Memon, however, claimed again that the PM did ask him to register cases against political leaders which included Nawaz Sharif, Shahbaz Sharif, Maryam Nawaz, Hamza Shahbaz, Suleman Shahbaz, Khwaja Asif, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Rana Sanaullah, Khurshid Shah, Nafeesa Shah, Mustafa Nawaz Khokhar, Asfandyar Wali and some officials including Arsalan Iftikhar Chaudhry, and former NAB Chairman Qamar Zaman Chaudhry.

About visits to Prime Minister's Office, the former DG said the records of the main entrance and the protocol office would confirm how many times he had visited the PM Office. Memon said sometimes he had to visit the PM Office thrice a week.

Reacting to Memon's statements, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Fawad Chaudhry said the practice of blaming the Prime Minister for an offence, then running headlines on it and at the end, taking a U-turn should end.

President urges adherence to SOPs during Majalis

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Sunday, in a telephonic conversation with Allama Sajid Naqvi, stressed upon strict observance of standard operating procedures (SOPs) during Ramazan ul Mubarak and Majalis to contain spread of coronavirus.

During the conversation, the president further emphasized that people should wear masks and observe social distancing. The elderly people should perform religious duties at homes.

Allama Sajid Naqvi assured the president of complete observance of SOPs during Majalis. The president urged ulema to advise people to stick to these SOPs. He underlined the need to act upon advice of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) with regard to pandemic.

He said the nation with united stand has to overcome the trying times of coronavirus pandemic.

The president also contacted Maulana Hafeez Jalandhari and said ulema should advise the faithful to observe SOPs in mosques.

Wafaq ul Madaris had already written a letter to madaris to implement SOPs, Maulana Jalandhari said.

No chance of Eid crescent sighting on 12th

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: According to astronomical considerations, there is absolutely no chance of the sighting of Shawwal crescent on the evening of May 12 (Wednesday).

Talking to APP, Astronomers forecast that Ramazan, the 9th month of the Islamic calendar, would consist of 30 days in Pakistan and some other countries this year as the chances of Shawaal moon being sighted on that day were pretty slim.

However, an official decision would be announced by Central Ruet-e-Hilal committee Chairman Maulana Syed Muhammad Abdul Khair Azad following the meeting of the committee being held on 29th of Ramadan (May 12) Wednesday.

PTDC to develop tourism industry

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Digital marketing holds promising future for tourism sector. Thanks to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government which has realized this fact in time.

Soon after coming into the power, it tasked the PTDC to develop a customized brand for introducing the local tourism industry at the global stage through digital means.

The task has now been accomplished with the help of International experts and all the relevant stakeholders.



FIQH-E-HANFIA
SEHR 03:45 IFTAR 6:45

FIQH-E-JAFRIA
SEHR 3:35 IFTAR 6:55



GAWADAR: Labourers busy in their work at under construction CPEC 19KM Eastbay Express-

COVID-19 claims 113 lives, infects 4,414 more people

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The national tally on Sunday of total active COVID-19 cases recorded 89,661 with 4,414 more people tested positive for the deadly virus and 5,193 people recovered from the disease during the last 24 hours.

One hundred and thirteen corona patients have died during past 24 hours, 102 of whom were under treatment in hospital and 11 out of the hospital in their respective quarantines or homes, according to the latest update issued by the National command and Operation Centre (NCOC). During the past 24 hours, most of the deaths have occurred in the Punjab followed by Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa.

Out of the total 113 deaths occurred in the last 24 hours 41 were on ventilators. The maximum ventilators were occupied in four major cities including Lahore 68 percent, Multan 74 percent, Bahawalpur 67 percent and Mardan 70 percent. The maximum Oxygen beds (alternate oxygen providing facility other than ventilator administered as per medical requirement of COVID patient) was also occupied in four major areas including Swabi 63 percent, Mardan 69 percent, Peshawar 71 percent and Swat 60 percent. Around 663 ventilators were occupied elsewhere in the country while no COVID affected person was on ventilator in Gilgit Baltistan (GB) and Balochis-

tan. Some 45,275 tests were conducted across the country on Saturday, including 14,739 in Sindh, 16,846 in Punjab, 7,913 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), 3,894 in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), 768 in Balochistan, 384 in GB, and 731 in AJK. Around 722,202 people have recovered from the disease so far across the country making it a significant count with over 90 percent recovery ratio of the affected patients. Since the pandemic spread, a total of 829,933 cases were detected that also included the perished, recovered and under treatment COVID-19 patients so far, including Azad Jammy and Kashmir 17,297, Balochistan 22,528, Gilgit Baltistan 5,312, Islamabad Capital Territory