

PAKISTAN'S COVID-19 DEATHS CROSS 10,000 MARK



ISLAMABAD
STAFF REPORT

THE death toll due to the coronavirus pandemic in the country crossed the grave mark of 10,000 and reached 10,047 after 55 more people died of Covid-19 during the last 24 hours, said the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) issued on Wednesday.

A total of 2,155 new infections were reported during the last 24 hours, surging the national tally of cases to 477,240. Almost 4,619 patients have recovered from the virus in a day and 2,219 patients are in critical condition. The total count of active cases is 37,080 as 430,113 people have recovered from the deadly disease.

A total of 36,390 tests were conducted across the country during the last 24 hours, while so far 6,656,373 samples have been tested.

The positivity rate of Covid-19 cases has been recorded highest in Karachi up to 13.84 per cent and lowest in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) region up to 0.62 per cent. The overall

positivity rate of novel coronavirus cases stands at 5.92 per cent.

The positivity rate was recorded 2.14 per cent in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), 4.95 per cent in Balochistan, 0.62 per cent in GB, 4.44 per cent in Punjab, 3.98 per cent in Islamabad Capital Territory, 5.87 per cent in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and 8.4 per cent in Sindh.

The positivity rate in different cities was reported as; 4.9 per cent in Rawalpindi, 6.12 per cent in Lahore, 4.21 per cent in Faisalabad, 4.85 per cent in Multan, 8.79 per cent in Hyderabad, 7.21 per cent in Peshawar, 7.89 per cent in Swat, 9.94 per cent in Quetta and 1.79 per cent in Muzaffarabad.

Meanwhile, the highest number of oxygenated bed occupancy in the country was in Peshawar at 63 per cent, followed by Multan 39 per cent, Islamabad 35 per cent and Rawalpindi 30 per cent.

The NCOC reported that of the 2.1 per cent fatality rate in the country, 70 per cent of males and 77.5 per cent people over the age of 50 succumbed to the virus; 73 per cent had chronic comorbidities and 91 per cent of the deceased remained hospitalised.

Meanwhile, the NCOC in collaboration

with the Ministry of Health, National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) and National Information Technology Board (NITB) has developed a National Immunisation Management System (NIMS) to ensure efficient supply chain management and administration of the Covid-19 vaccine.

The system will enable automated phase-wise registration of citizens for Covid-19 vaccine through SMS/internet, based on CNIC numbers. The immunisation mechanism will be intimated to citizens shortly. NIMS will be made available by mid-January.

The NCOC was informed that the federal government is in close liaison with the world's leading Covid-19 vaccine manufacturers for its early availability in Pakistan.

Furthermore, the NCOC said that a cabinet committee has authorised the procurement of more than one million vaccines. Asad Umar confirmed on Twitter that the number "will cover all frontline health workers".

He said what remains now is for DRAP (Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan) to approve a vaccine. Umar said that the government aims to deploy the vaccines within the first quarter of 2021.



Govt to cancel Nawaz's passport on February 16, says interior minister

ISLAMABAD
STAFF REPORT

The government will cancel the passport of deposed prime minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supreme leader Nawaz Sharif on February 16, Minister for Interior Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed announced on Wednesday.

After spending a year in prison, Sharif, 71, after securing a conditional bail in November 2019, travelled to London on the pretext of medical treatment and has since refused to return.

His party insists that despite being summoned by the courts, that declared him a proclaimed offender in separate corruption probes, the former premier will only return after the completion of his medical treatment.

Speaking to reporters in Islamabad, Ahmed said the opposition had been "exposed" as money launderers and people who obtained iqamas (a residence permit used in Saudi Arabia) because they were not honest with the country.

The minister said all the

"thieves" got united when their wealth obtained through money laundering and corruption was exposed and claimed victimisation.

To a question about potential arrests following Tuesday's detention of former defense minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Khawaja Asif, Ahmed said it wasn't yet known.

"[We] will cancel Nawaz Sharif's passport on February 16," he added. However, he did not offer any details.

In October, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) asked the Ministry of Interior to cancel Sharif's passport and national identity card (NIC). The agency also recommended approaching Interpol for Sharif's arrest after he refused to collect his arrest warrants.

Islamabad has since been seeking his deportation. Later in October, Mirza Shahzad Akbar, adviser to the prime minister on accountability, wrote to British Home Secretary Priti Patel, reminding her London was "duty bound" to deport Sharif to serve his jail. >> CONTINUED ON

CORONAVIRUS IN PAKISTAN

CONFIRMED
477,240

LAST UPDATED AT 8:13 AM ON

DAY'S DEATH NEW CASES:

55 **2,155**

RECOVER DEATHS
430,113 **10,047**

SINDH: PUNJAB:
213,193 **137,295**

KP: BALOCHI
57,982 **18,118**

AJK/GB: ISLAMABAD
8,241/4,855 **37,556**

Historic Hindu temple in Karak sets ablaze by mob

KARAK
TLTP

A highly-charged mob on Wednesday, reportedly led by local clerics, vandalised and set ablaze a historic Hindu temple in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa's (KP) Karak district, officials said.

The temple in Karak's Terri area was considered a site of pilgrimage for Hindu community due to its importance as a Yogi Astan. However, local residents were resentful due to the ongoing renovation work in the temple and they attacked the building, demolished it and then set it ablaze.

Police and local authorities were unable to prevent the incident due to the large number of people involved. The historic temple became non-functional after the Partition when all local Hindu families migrated to India but four years ago it was handed over to the Hindu community by the Supreme Court (SC) and ever since it was a site for pilgrimage for the community from all over the country especially from Sindh who paid a weekly visit to the site every Thursday.

Local clerics were reportedly not happy over the decision

and repeatedly demanded the closure of the temple.

"There was a weekly bazaar in the area for which people from all the nearby areas come to Terri town and some miscreants took advantage of it and encouraged the visitors to stop the renovation work in the temple," said Wazir Zada, CM's adviser on minority affairs in KP.

Terming the incident as "unfortunate", he said that he was himself on his way to the affected area along with other government dignitaries.

"This a sacred site for the Hindu community and each week and month a large number of people visit it from all over Pakistan," he said, adding that the provincial government had ordered the inspector general police (IGP) to take strict action against those involved and police had already started

raiding houses of the suspects with the help of the video footage being circulated on social media.

"The IGP has already reached Karak. District police officer is himself leading the police force involved in raids and arrest of the culprits while DC [deputy commissioner] is assisting them," Wazir Zada said, adding that he asked the IGP to tighten the security for religious places of minorities across the province.

Federal Minister for Human Rights Shireen Mazari, while condemning the incident, urged the KP government to ensure the culprits are brought to justice.

"MOHR [Ministry of Human Rights] also moving on this. We as a govt have a responsibility to ensure safety & security of all our citizens & their places of worship," she wrote on her offi-

5 people arrested in India for attempting to damage mosque: report

>> CONTINUED ON

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