

Sindh govt ends Covid-19 lockdown across province

KARACHI: The Sindh government Monday announced reopening of almost all the sectors which had been closed for months due to the coronavirus pandemic.

According to a notification, the Sindh Home Department said businesses have been allowed to reopen across province subject to strict adherence of SOPs in view of the decline in Covid-19 cases in the country, but acknowledged that the disease is still prevalent and likely to increase if no adequate precautions are taken.

Educational institutions, marriage halls, business and expo centres in the province will be allowed to reopen from September 15.

The activities/businesses allowed to resume from August 10 include:

Hotels, restaurants and cafes, parks and grounds, cinemas and theatres, non-contact sports, sports clubs and gyms, sports tournaments (indoor and outdoor) without audience, beauty parlours and spas, shrines (for permitted gatherings), tourism and public transport with SOPs.

According to the order, which will remain in effect until Sept 15,, businesses in Sindh will be allowed to open six days a week, with an off either Friday or Sunday except pharmacies and essential services. Their timings will be from 6am to 8pm except Saturday when they will remain open until 9pm.

Businesses will be required to allow only around one-third of their normal capacity of visitors/customers inside their establishments at a time to ensure social distancing.

Restaurants and cafes will be allowed to operate all days of the week but with limited dine-in services until 10pm daily except on Saturday when they can stay open until 11pm. The last order must be taken an hour before closing. Customers must be seated with a distance of over three feet between them.

Takeaway will be allowed from morning until 10pm on all days of the week except Saturday, when it will be permitted until 11pm.

Businesses will be bound to maintain a distance of more than three feet between customers, staff or visitors and deny entry to persons showing Covid-19 symptoms or those not wearing a mask.

"The provincial government/district administration, by an order, may restrict all/any activity and business," the Home Department said.