

Business community rejects lockdown extension

KARACHI: Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI) president Agha Shahab Ahmed Khan and Businessmen Group (BMG) chairman Siraj Kassam Teli strongly rejected the extension in lockdown and urged the Sindh government to immediately revoke the relevant notification and allow all types of businesses to operate at full capacity which is the only way to save the economy and the businesses from total collapse.

Agha Shahab Ahmed Khan cautioned that if the lockdown is not suspended immediately, many businesses would shut down forever that would lead to a chaotic situation as the people would find no other option but to come out on streets to protest due to rising unemployment and poverty.

Keeping in view the overall situation and grievances suffered by the business and industrial community, KCCI chief hoped that the Sindh government would provide the desperately needed relief to local businesses by completely revoking the lockdown on top priority so that the businesses and the economy could be saved from further disaster.

Siraj Kassam Teli said various businesses including restaurants, hotels, marriage halls, beauty parlors, cinema houses, business centers, sports facilities, and educational institutes have been closed since last four consecutive months resulting in plunging all these businesses on the verge of complete collapse.

Siraj Teli, therefore, stressed that the extension in lockdown must immediately be withdrawn while the administration should be effectively utilized for strict implementation of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

It has created a very odd situation when neither any income is being generated nor financial relief has been provided by the government which happens nowhere around the world. Therefore, this biased Relief Ordinance should also be withdrawn", Siraj Teli said.

Chairman BMG, while referring to numerous measures adopted by the federal and provincial governments since the imposition of lockdown from March 23, said Sindh government strived really hard to deal with Covid-19 pandemic and they deserve to be appreciated but unfortunately, the number of people affected by coronavirus continues to rise as the public and also the members of the business community have been largely ignoring the SOPs due to lack of discipline.

"It is high time that the administration must actively play its due role and if it fails to do so, the patriotic troops from Pakistan Army can be engaged to rescue the country, teach discipline to the masses and get the SOPs enforced all the time which is the only way to save our beloved motherland from further disaster", he added.