

Pakistan renewable electricity

PESHAWAR: Pakistan reported another polio case from the country's northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province on Wednesday, taking this year's tally of the disease to 56 cases as Islamabad struggles in its efforts to contain the infection.

Pakistan, along with neighboring Afghanistan, remains the last polio-endemic country in the world. The nation's polio eradication campaign has faced serious problems with a spike in reported cases this year that have prompted officials to review their approach to stopping the crippling disease.

The Regional Reference Laboratory for Polio Eradication at the National Institute of Health (NIH) confirmed the detection of the 56th wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1) case of the year, saying that a male child in the northwestern district of Dera Ismail Khan had contracted the disease.

"This is the seventh polio case of the year from D.I. Khan, one of the seven polio-endemic districts of southern KP," the polio program said.

Pakistan's southwestern Balochistan province and KP have reported the highest number of polio cases this year, 26 and 15, respectively, while 13 have been reported from Sindh and one each from Punjab and Islamabad.

Poliovirus, which can cause crippling paralysis particularly in young children, is incurable and remains a threat to human health as long as it has not been eradicated. Immunization campaigns have succeeded in most countries and have come close in Pakistan, but persistent problems remain.

Pakistan's polio program began in 1994 but efforts to eradicate the virus have since been undermined by vaccine misinformation and opposition from some religious hard-liners, who say immunization is a foreign ploy to sterilize Muslim children or a cover for Western spies. Militant groups also frequently attack and kill members of polio vaccine teams.

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday vowed not to let former prime minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party "destroy" the country's economic progress, lamenting that the recent protests in Islamabad had cost the national exchequer a whopping Rs190 billion (\$684 million) per day.

Thousands of supporters of Khan's PTI entered Pakistan's capital on Tuesday morning, braving teargas and arrests and crossing security barriers across the country. Pakistan's government said clashes between Khan supporters, who were demanding the jailed former premier's release from prison, left three Rangers personnel and one cop dead. The PTI says eight of its supporters were killed and "hundreds" were feared dead, a claim the government challenges.

Sharif cited the finance ministry's statement which had earlier this week said Pakistan suffered losses of \$684 million per day due to the protests.

The prime minister urged the government to think about the future course of action regarding these protests, saying that it cannot be "business as usual."

"We cannot let Pakistan be sacrificed under any circumstances," Sharif said. "We will break the hand that wants to sacrifice Pakistan."

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