

Will land at Lahore airport on Friday evening, Maryam says

Contrary to earlier reports of their arrival at Islamabad, PML-N leader Maryam Nawaz on Sunday said she and her father, ousted prime minister Nawaz Sharif, will land at Lahore airport on Friday evening.

The father-daughter duo is set to return to the country on July 13, exactly a week after being convicted by an accountability court in Islamabad in the Avenfield properties reference.

The court had on Friday sentenced Sharif to 10 years, Maryam to seven and his son-in-law retired Capt Safdar to one year in jail in the corruption case.

Sharing the itinerary of her journey back home, Maryam told reporters in London she and Sharif would board an Etihad Airways flights from London at 8:45pm on Thursday. The flight will reach Abu Dhabi at 7am on Friday, and following an hours-long layover, it will depart for Pakistan in the afternoon. EY-243 will land at Lahore airport at 6:15 in the evening, Maryam revealed.

Maryam said a large number of people wish to accompany them on the flight, however, she could not provide the exact number at the moment.

PML-N information secretary Mushahidullah Khan had earlier told *IPP* the party would soon give a call to its workers to reach the airport to accord a historic welcome to their supreme leader.

On the occasion, Maryam praised her husband Safdar for

“bravely” surrendering to National Accountability Bureau authorities on Sunday evening.

“Safdar *sahib* is a soldier of Mian [Nawaz Sharif] *sahib*. I am happy that he has offered his arrest bravely, like a lion,” she told reporters.

Shortly after the accountability court’s verdict, Sharif had in a press conference said he was not afraid of going to jail and reiterated that he would soon return to Pakistan. However, he did not announce any date that kept the debate alive whether the father-daughter duo would ever return.

Talking to reporters in London on Saturday, Maryam said they would return before the expiry of the 10-day time limit for filing of an appeal in the Islamabad High Court against the NAB’s court verdict.

‘Don’t try to be Nelson Mandela,’ Imran tells Nawaz

Meanwhile, Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan scoffed at the news of Sharifs’ return to Pakistan, telling the ex-prime minister to not try to become Nelson Mandela.

“[I] have heard that the father and daughter are returning to Pakistan next Friday,” he said while addressing a gathering in Abbottabad. “Come [back] by all means, but for God’s sake, Nawaz Sharif don’t try to become Nelson Mandela. ”

Khan reminded Sharif that Mandela, the South African anti-apartheid icon, had “spent 27 years in jail for the freedom of his nation”.

The PTI chairman also taunted Sharif’s son-in-law Safdar for taking out a rally before surrendering to NAB. Instead of being embarrassed at his conviction in the corruption reference, Safdar is proceeding to surrender “as if he has

just conquered Kashmir”, Khan alleged.