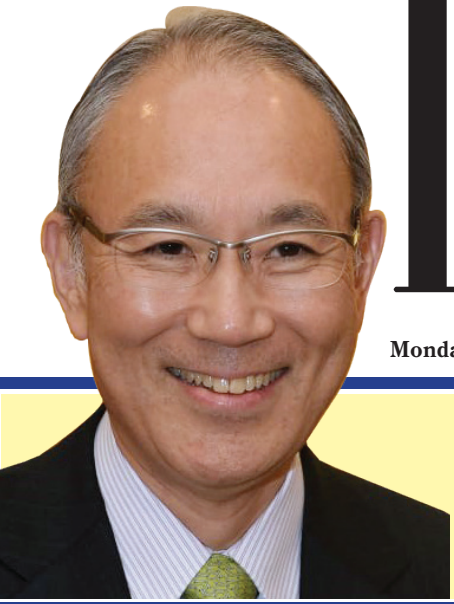


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Japanese ambassador's message on Pakistan Day

Palestine for deeper business ties with Pakistan



Mayor says MCI ready to cope with COVID 19



Japan's lucrative offer for Pakistan professionals

Japanese government greatly values its ties with Pakistan: Shindo Yusuke

By ANSAR M. BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: SHINDO Yusuke, Deputy Chief of Mission/Minister of the Embassy of Japan has said Japan was keen to invite more and more Pakistani skilled and semi-skilled workers/professionals with a view to promoting and strengthening bilateral bonds and overcoming the ageing Japanese population. Mr. Shindo further said Japanese government greatly values its relations with Pakistan adding Japanese markets offered a lot of opportunities to Pakistani workforce. He talked about three categories in which workforce from Pakistani were invited. These categories included technical intern training; specified skilled worker and profession required higher training. The Japanese envoy unfurled these details during a media talk. Ryuji Iwasaki Counsellor and Head of Culture and Public Information Section was also present on the

occasion. Shindo Yusuke further said keeping in view the potential and scope of this program, number of people participating in this scheme was very small. He said both sides needed to gear up efforts to increase this number. To a question he said, many Japanese companies do not know about Pakistani workforce and their potential that is why they prefer workers from other countries. "The Pakistan ambassador in Japan Imtiaz Ahmed is doing great job to spread awareness about Pakistani potential. However his efforts can bear more fruit only when supported by the government of Pakistan



and Ministry of Foreign Affairs". While underlining various impediments in the way of increase in number of Pakistani workers to Japan he said language ostensibly was a major hurdle. He added, the Japan Foundation in Pakistan had already undertaken various Japanese languages course. Such courses are offered twice a year in July and December. March 27 is the deadline for course being offered in July 2020. Talking about the first category the Japanese envoy said purpose of this program is to transfer technical skills, techniques and knowledge to foreign countries including Pakistan, through an experience of "On the Job Training (OJT)" in Japan, to contribute to the human resource development by the development of the economy of that country. This would thus promote international cooperation. He added, Japan and Pakistan signed the Memorandum of Cooperation on this program in February 2019.

Continued on Page 02



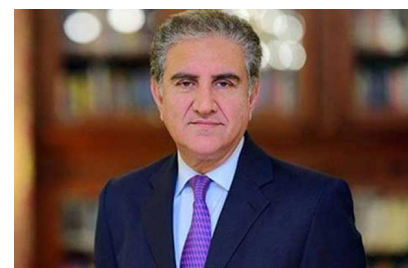
ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan addressing the nation, on Sunday. – DNA photo

FM Qureshi telephones his Iranian counterpart

By NIHAL MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi held a telephonic conversation with Foreign Minister Javad Zarif, his Iranian counterpart, on Sunday. Conveying deep concern and sorrow over the tragic loss of innocent lives in the on-going pandemic, the Foreign Minister commended the government and people of Iran for valiantly combating the COVID-19 global pandemic. The Foreign Minister underscored that the pandemic was one of the greatest challenges to confront humanity in a century. Successfully overcoming it necessitated both compassion and innovation. He apprised his Iranian counterpart of Pakistan's efforts to contain the pandemic. Foreign Minister Qureshi also reiterated

the earlier call made by Prime Minister Imran Khan to lift sanctions against Iran, to enable it to utilize its resources to save precious human lives. He also apprised the Iranian Foreign Minister of Pakistan's diplomatic outreach in this regard. Prospects of enhanced bilateral cooperation and coordination at the border in the context of the ongoing pandemic, also came under discussion. Support and solidarity and call to lift sanctions on Iran, in view of COVID-19. He informed the Foreign Minister that under President Hassan Rouhan's instructions, two hospitals had been allocated for foreign pilgrims from Pakistan and other countries. The two Foreign Ministers underlined that Pakistan and Iran were not only close neighbours, but brotherly countries, that had stood by each other through difficult times. The two leaders agreed to stay in close contact.



Ukraine President greets Pakistan president on Pakistan Day

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky has congratulated President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Arif Alvi on the occasion of Pakistan Day. "I would like to extend to you sincere congratulations on the occasion of the national holiday - Pakistan Day. I am convinced that through our joint efforts to realize

the significant potential of bilateral relations in all areas of mutual interest, we will ensure the further development of traditionally constructive and mutually beneficial cooperation between Ukraine and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. I avail myself of this opportunity to wish you, Your Excellency, success in your important state activities, and to the friendly Pakistani people - peace and prosperity".

PM urges nation to show self discipline

APP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan Sunday appealed to the nation to impose self discipline and should not indulge in panic buying, as with collective efforts, they would overcome the threats of Coronavirus (COVID 19) pandemic. In his second televised address to the nation after the country reported above 600 Coronavirus cases, the prime minister said that they were not going for complete lockdown as the situation in Pakistan was different from the rest of the world. It would create economic woes as 25 per cent chunk of its population was living below the poverty line. "The issue of panic is more dangerous than Coronavirus. If all go on panic buying, it will result in irreparable damage to society," he stressed.

Iranian ambassador extends felicitations on Nowruz

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Iran Seyed Mohammad Ali Hossaini has extended his felicitations to Pakistani people on the occasion of Nowruz. In a message issued on Thursday the Iranian ambassador said Nowruz, comes with the vitality and freshness of the nature and conveys the beautiful message of the green and blooming spring season. Nowruz is thousands of years old and is a sign of Iranian culture and civilization. "We are proud that this magnificent event is not only celebrated in Iran, but also people in many countries around the world, including Pakistan celebrate Nowruz. It is interesting that in Pakistan, Nowruz is called the "Alam-Afroz", meaning a new day that brightens the world with its arrival". He added, the salient feature of Nowruz is that transformation takes place in the universe and everything becomes fresh.

Briefs

Flight operation between Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan to start soon

By SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Flight operation between Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan shall be started. This was said by Ghulam Sarwar Khan, Federal Minister for Aviation during his meeting with Eric Beishemhiev, Kyrgyzstan's Ambassador on Wednesday in Aviation Division. Federal Minister also added that Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan are brotherly countries. Our relations are warm and cordial based on trust and respect. Similarly, Eric Beishemhiev said that Kyrgyzstan is keen on enhancing ties with Pakistan. Ambassador was of the view that both countries should start a weekly flight. Federal Minister added that Aviation Division will consider this request of Kyrgyzstan under 5th Right of Freedom.

PEMRA wants TV shows without guests

APP

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) has advised the media houses to promote "social distancing" and conduct morning, satirical/comedy shows without inviting any gathering/live audience in view of precautionary measures advised by the health experts. As it is an established fact that the virus is contagious and spreads from one person to another.

Japanes envoy greeds Pakistani people on Pakistan Day

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador MATSUDA Kuninori conveys his heartfelt congratulations and best wishes for the health of the leadership and the people of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the auspicious occasion of Pakistan Day. In his message of felicitations, Ambassador MATSUDA has said that the day holds a great national significance for the people of Pakistan and on this festive occasion I deeply congratulate and wish you all well-being and a prosperous future. The Ambassador said that the longstanding friendship between Japan and Pakistan is unwavering

even through this difficult time when the entire world is grappling with the Coronavirus pandemic. "Japan is fully determined to support Pakistan in fighting COVID-19, as it was the first country to have provided the test materials, also we are working on supporting the country to ably counter the feared damage in the agricultural sector caused by the desert locusts. As the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, I am convinced that both countries will be able to overcome the challenges together", said Ambassador MATSUDA. The Ambassador wished the Pakistani people a prosperous and bright future.

Ahmed Saleem as Ambassador-at-large

DNA

MALE: President of Maldives Ibrahim Mohamed Solih has appointed Mr. Ahmed Saleem as Ambassador-at-large. The

ceremony was held this morning at the President's Office. Prior to this appointment, Mr Saleem fulfilled the role of Ambassador of the Maldives to Pakistan.

Uzbek President orders return of citizens

TASHKENT: In order to protect the interests of our citizens who are abroad and find themselves in a difficult situation, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev was entrusted to the Special Republican Commission to prepare a program of measures to prevent the importation and spread of a new type of coronavirus into the Republic of Uzbekistan under the leadership of Prime Minister A. Aripov, to work out the issue of organizing flights for the return of compatriots to their homeland.

The Commission promptly developed a schedule of charter flights, providing for the arrival of airliners in Uzbekistan: - on 21 March from Moscow (Russia) at 03.30 a.m. and Delhi (India) at 17:30 a.m., - on 22 March from Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) at 04.30 hours, Moscow (Russia) at 05.00 hours, Istanbul (Turkey) at 06.00 hours and Novosibirsk (time to be specified); - from 23 March from Seoul (Republic of Korea) at 02.00.

Housing foundation hopes Sector G 14 issue to be resolved in April, 2020

The award for Built up Property in G 14/3 could only be announced in 2014 and supplementary award in 2017. Almost 70 per cent of the area of Sector G 14/3 has been got vacated and development work is being executed on the site.

By A.M.Bhatti

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Govt Employees Housing Foundation (FGEHF) has announced that 15 year old issue of development of Sector G 14 shall be resolved by end of April 2020. The FGEHF further said that measurement target in Sector G 14/1 have also been set and responsibilities assigned in this regard. The housing foundation made this announcement in response to a number of queries emanating from Prime Minister's Citizen Portal regarding development of Sector G 14 and its sub sectors.

The G 14 sector was announced in 2004 but due to illegal Built Up Properties (BUP) it could not be developed. The foundation further said land for Sector G 14/1,2,3 was acquired by the DC office Islamabad vide an award under Section 11 of the Land Acquisition Act 1894 in January 2005. The award for Built up Property in G 14/3 could only be announced in 2014 and supplementary award in 2017. Almost 70 per cent of the area of Sector G 14/3 has been got vacated and development work is being executed on the site. It further stated, the measurements for BUP are being conducted in Sector G 14/2 and award of BUPs in G 14/2 was done in

February 2020. Similarly measurements for BUP have already started in G 14/1 and award of BUPs is expected by 31 March 2020. The foundation further announced that measurement targets have been set and responsibilities have been assigned leading to the payments and subsequent demolishing of BUPs leading to availability of land for carrying out the development works. Earlier, FGEHF had decided to accommodate settlers of G 14/1 to G 15 and a summary in this connection was forwarded to the concerned authorities for approval. It may be mentioned here that Sector G 14/1 is still inhabited by "illegal occupants"

who have not vacated the land even after being paid by the Foundation. On the contrary, the occupants claim they have not yet been paid fully. According to sources the Foundation had also sought CDA approval to auction commercial plots on the area in order to arrange for the required amount of money. Many people who were allotted plots in this particular sector have died while majority of the allottees has sold out plots because they had lost hopes of early development of this sector. The FGEHF recent announcement has instilled a new ray of hope and allottees have welcomed this announcement. – DNA

Indonesian embassy offers KNB Scholarship to Pak students

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Embassy of Indonesia has offered Kemitraan Negara Berkembang (KNB) Scholarship for Pakistani students to pursue higher education in Indonesia. It was decided by the Indonesian embassy in order to provide an opportunity to potential students in Pakistan to get their Master's degree in Indonesian University.

According to the Indonesian embassy's officials, it is essential for the applicants

to be eligible for the Kemitraan Negara Berkembang (KNB) Scholarship; they must meet the following criteria: Maximum age for an applicant to apply for the scholarship is 35 years old, Applicant must hold a bachelor degree, Applicant should have a TOEFL or IELTS score of 80 or 6.0, Applicant must be able to maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher, Must be nominated by Indonesian Embassy. Students can apply for Kemitraan Negara Berkembang (KNB) 2020 scholarship offered by the government of Indonesia till April 20 this year.

ASEAN CHAIRMANSHIP GOES TO VIETNAM



Handover ceremony of the ASEAN Countries in Islamabad (ACI) Chairmanship 2020 from The Ambassador of Thailand to Ambassador of Vietnam. ASEAN ambassadors attended the ceremony.

President reiterates unwavering support to Kashmir

AGENCIES

ISLAMABAD: While paying homage to the founding leaders on Pakistan Day, President Dr Arif Alvi expressed unshakable support with the people of Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir who had been subjected to an inhuman lockdown and communication blockade for over seven months.

"I assure the people of Jammu and Kashmir that Pakistan will stand shoulder to shoulder with them and will continue its moral, political and diplomatic support for their legitimate right of self-determination," the president said in a message on Pakistan Day being commemorated on March 23. The president said that March 23rd was an important landmark in the history of our nation as on this day in 1940, the historic Lahore Resolution was passed.

Waqar Bakhtawari appointed as CDA Coordinator

BY IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Waqar Bakhtawari a prominent business personality of Islamabad and local leader of PTI, has been appointed as CDA coordinator. Appointment notification issued by Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar, he has been tasked with effectively playing a role in solving public issues related to the citizens of Islamabad and especially in NA-54. Federal Minister Asad Umar expressed the hope that Waqar Bakhtawari would play an important

role in resolving issues regarding CDA.

On this occasion, Waqar Bakhtawari thanked Asad Umar and reiterated that he would do everything

possible to meet their expectations in making Islamabad a green and clean city. As well as he will take steps to make the CDA a people friendly institution.



Cell set up to address expats' queries about COVID-19

APP

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (OP&HRD) has set up an emergency cell to address queries of the Pakistani expatriates and their families about the coronavirus. The initiative was taken after the government made an announcement for suspension of the international flight operations for two weeks to contain the coronavirus spread, said the OP&HRD ministry in a statement issued here. According to the ministry, a dedicated facility had been established at the headquarters of the Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF), Islamabad to render best possible assistance to the expats and their families in wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Musician Nisar Bazmi remembered

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The 13th death anniversary of eminent musician of South Asian and composer of famous songs for Pakistani film industry Nisar Bazmi was observed in the country on Sunday with tributes were paid to his services in the capacity of musician.

Born on December 01, 1924 in Jalgaon in Khandesh area of Maharashtra state India, Bazmi started his career by joining Yasin Khan's Qawwali Group in Mumbai

at the age of 11 and then learned music from Khan Saheb Aman Ali Khan. In 1962, Bazmi decided to settle in Pakistan after accepting the offer of veteran film producer Fazal Ahmed Karim Fazli to compose music for Pakistani films. His first song in Pakistan was "Mohabbat mei tere sar ki qasam" sung by Ahmed Rushdi, Noor Jahan for the 1964 film "Aisa bhi hota hai". He also composed many songs for Runa Laila, Ahmed Rushdi, Mehdi Hassan, Faisal Nadeem, Khurshed Nurali (Sheerazi), and Saleem Shahzaad.

Shehryar overviews plans made against Corona

DNA

KOHAT: Minister for Narcotics Control Shehryar Afridi on Sunday visited Kohat to overview arrangements made against Corona. The minister said, "I have arrived here to ensure arrangements for

the Coronavirus on Prime Minister Imran Khan's directives".

Along with Commissioner and the Medical Superintendents, Afridi was briefed on the current status of Corona by concerned staff at the District Headquarters Hospital.

Coronavirus: every day counts

BY KHALID BIN MAJEED

Coronavirus has thrown the entire world in a tailspin, forcing the world capitals to declare national emergencies, quarantine hundreds of thousands of people, slap international travel restrictions, padlock their educational institutions, put off international sports events, allocate big sums of money to fight off the deadly infection and manipulate the flow of information.

The gory tentacles of the infection, which has now been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization [WHO], has almost choked the global food, non-food, and oil supply chains, knocked the bottom out of stock exchanges, and brought the world economies to a virtual standstill. The pandemic is estimated to cause a loss of \$1.1tr dollar to \$2 trillion to the international economy.

According to the WHO, the so far uncontrollable pandemic is spreading apace affecting 146 countries, areas, or territories. Though health experts have put their heads together to come up with a magic bullet to cure the infection, their efforts seem to be leading nowhere. The coronavirus is already here, in Pakistan. It's largely hidden, except for a few dozen cases, but it can be growing exponentially. Already we can see a significant rise in coronavirus tally in Pakistan, with new cases hitting as high as 20 in a single day, which used to be one or two in the earlier days.

In Pakistan, cases have been reported from different cities and provinces: Karachi, Sukkur, Quetta, Gilgit-Baltistan, Lahore and Islamabad. Being unable to contain it, now we have to play a different game: mitigation. We need to make this virus as inoffensive as possible. And the best way to make it possible is 'social distancing'. It means lesser interactions ... by keeping as many people home as possible. Wuhan can certainly be a case study, where complete lockdown helped containing the virus to the city to a large extent. Being the next-door neighbour of China, we are more prone to coronavirus infection. Pakistan has certainly taken an array of measures to contain its spread. The country has closed its borders with Afghanistan and Iran and all incoming passengers from other countries at all entry points are being screened. Schools, colleges and universities, marriage and banquet halls,

shrines and cinemas have been closed, while the jail administrations would allow no visitors initially for three weeks.

Through such measures, if we are able to reduce the coronavirus infections as much as possible, our healthcare system will be able to handle cases much better. Since we can't eliminate it, our goal must be to postpone it until a vaccine is invented and the humanity is saved from this evil.

Plenty of nonsense about coronavirus cure circulating on social media is another challenge. Albeit, the only authentic 'cure' available so far is 'prevention'. In its latest advisory, the World

Health Organization (WHO) has busted all the myths associated with the disease. According to the advisory, coronavirus can be transmitted in all areas, including areas with hot and humid weather; hot bath will not prevent you from catching COVID-19; praying alcohol or chlorine all over your body will not kill viruses that have already entered your body; vaccines against pneumonia do not provide protection against coronavirus; regularly rinsing nose with saline does not necessarily protect people from infection; eating garlic does not protect people from coronavirus and people of all ages can be infected by coronavirus.



The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the coronavirus. Washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after having been in a public place;

using a hand sanitizer which contains at least 60% alcohol; and avoiding touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands are some of the measures that can help prevent the infection. Buttressing the government efforts and banking on its huge force of skilled volunteers, the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) – indisputably the largest humanitarian organization in Pakistan – under the leadership of Chairman Abrar ul Haq, who himself is a known philanthropist and humanitarian worker, has undertaken a panoply of measures to contain the virus and educate the masses about how to avoid contracting

the infection. The PRCS in close coordination with the IFRC, Movement Partners, and federal and provincial governments, especially the National Institute of Health Islamabad, has launched a nationwide awareness campaign under the slogan #Ehtiat-Karona and health teams and trained volunteers are working across country to help people stay safe. Qualified screening teams with ambulances have been deployed at Chaman and Taftan borders to support Balochistan health department in screening of people. A quarantine facility has been established at the Taftan border in addition to provision of six high-tech and fully equipped containers, one generator, and one Watson Plant to the health department. Ambulances with first aiders have been deployed at the Islamabad, Lahore and

Japan's lucrative offer for Pak workforce

From Page 01

He said applicants should be at least 18 years old with good health conditions adding Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training of the Government of Pakistan nominated "National Vocational & Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC)" and "National University of Technology (NUTECH)" to choose participants for this category. He said third category has a variety of fields. This status of residence is permitted for foreigners who have higher expertise, technique such as academic background or career history with a contract with public/private entity in Japan. IT software engineers are included in this status of residence. This doesn't have any restriction on the period of stay in Japan which is required for the "Technical Intern Training" and the "Specified Skilled Worker". To a question about remuneration Mr. Shindo said all workers are treated equally and as per the Japanese law. All foreigners get compensation at par with their Japanese colleagues. He hoped that Pakistani people would benefit from this Japanese offer. He stressed to circulate this information in order to enable more and more Pakistanis to avail this opportunity. – DNA

The writer is Secretary General of Pakistan Red Crescent Society.

Parliamentary Elections in Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan, an important transcontinental country with a population of around 10.14 million inhabitants, steadily continues its journey towards development and modernization after declaring its independence from Soviet Union in 1991.

The architect of the Republic Heydar Aliyev incurred upon himself the onus of driving the nascent republic to a modern and forward looking state where people of all nationalities, religions and faiths could co-exist happily.

After passing away of Heydar Aliyev his son Ilham Aliyev stepped into shoes of his father with a view to not only furthering his agenda of development and harmony but to make Azerbaijan a leading regional and global player. And his efforts ostensibly bore fruit thus making Azerbaijan one of the leading political and economic players.

The incumbent government of President Ilham Aliyev ever since its establishment has been focusing zealously on improving the lot of especially those who do not have access to state of the art technologies. That is why those living in remote areas such as Gabala and Quba—two wonderful cities of Azerbaijan I visited almost 8 years ago, can cherish fruits of modernization and development. People of these areas are not only industrious but skillful also. They would prefer to stay at home and undertake some skilled work such as handicrafts; carpet making; embroidery etc, instead of going abroad or other cities for jobs.

This virtue of theirs has successfully preserved and sustained originality of these places therefore people visiting these places would certainly get a true color and taste of Azerbaijani lifestyle; culture and cuisines.

Azerbaijan under President Ilham Aliyev continues its march towards progress and prosperity. The govt top priority appears to be better facilitation of people by providing them all basic necessities of life.

The Heydar Aliyev Foundation has been actively participating in building a new society and contributing to the social and economic development of the country, by implementing various projects in spheres such as education, public health, culture, sports, science and technology, environment, and social and other spheres.

President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation is Azerbaijan's First Vice President, First Lady, UNESCO and ISESCO Goodwill Ambassador Mehriban Aliyeva, under whose guidance the Foundation has undertaken a number of humanitarian projects in Pakistan as well.

The Foundation immediately started relief work after the deadly earthquake in Pakistan. Since then the Foundation has established a number of schools, especially in Kashmir where mostly the needy children get education.

The humanitarian work of this Foundation has not only won laurels for Azerbaijan at home but abroad also.



New Uzbekistan New Opportunities

Uzbekistan is one of those countries that have made progress in all spheres by leaps and bounds. Development activities in this landlocked country got an added spur when President Shavkat Mirziyoyev took over after demise of Islam Karimov, the architect of modern Uzbekistan. Since then the country is constantly on the move. The Uzbek leadership is keen to not only improve infrastructural network in the country but to bring the less privileged class at par with those who have access to all modern facilities. The beauty of Uzbek system is that everybody has access to basic amenities of life. Education is free. Everybody gets free healthcare facilities no matter he or she belongs to government or private sector. Even those who do not have a job can enjoy all such facilities.

In universities talented students are offered scholarships as well while those who do not have a place to live are provided with a decent accommodation by the government. For jobless people a dedicated institution is working round the clock that gathers data of all such people and then recommends them suitable jobs. The effectiveness of this system can be gauged from the fact that those Uzbek people who had left the country long ago in search of jobs abroad, are now rushing back as the govt has set for it target of providing jobs to all needy people within next few years.

The security situation in Uzbekistan is meticulous. It is because of fool proof security that foreigners come to this country without any hesitation and fear. During past few years number of tourist coming to Uzbekistan has multiplied, told the Deputy Chairman of the State Tourism Committee in an exclusive interview with DNA, CENTRELINE and daily Islamabad Post. He further told that the Uzbek government led by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has already taken plenty of measures to ensure security of tourists besides development and improvement of the touristic places.

The Uzbek embassy in Islamabad sent a group of professionals as observers to Uzbekistan for monitoring the parliamentary and local government elections. Here too many lessons can be learnt from the Uzbek experience. The entire electoral drill was conducted in a peaceful and harmonious manner. The opposition parties got a level playing field and participated in the elections with full fervor and interest. For the first time live debates were telecast on national hook-up thus all five political parties had opportunity of reaching out to their electorates.

Summing up, Uzbekistan under President Shavkat Mirziyoyev is well on track of progress and prosperity. The way things are moving ahead in Uzbekistan, in next few years the country would surely emerge as a key player not only in the region but at global stage also.

Azerbaijan's Parliamentary Election: an overview

Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan



including OSCE/ODIHR on a fair and constructive basis. It is now proved that the preliminary statement of the OSCE/ODIHR is full of misconceptions & misperceptions and self-contradictions.

More than 50 per cent candidates were below 40 year participated in the election. There were 5,573 polling stations. Total voters were 5.3 million. Most of them were independent with higher education. More than 90 per cent of the 1,314 candidates from the 19 contesting political parties were university graduates. For the first time even facility/provision of exit poll was also allowed in the country. 6,189 people voted for the first time. 79 per cent of the candidates were males, and 21 per cent were females which showed vibrancy of Azerbaijan society and its traditions which granted the women right to vote in 1918 by the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic even before most of the Europe.

Some 89,676 local observers and more than 900 international observers were granted accreditation to observe the election. Some 199 representatives from 132 international mass media outlets were given access to cover the election. So, preliminary statement of the OSCE/ODIHR is baseless. In the last parliamentary election held in 2015, the ruling New Azerbaijan Party (YAP) won 69 out of 125 seats and according to latest figure it has now won 81 seats which reconfirmed that people of Azerbaijan trusted the socio-economic reforms of the government.

OSCE/ODIHR also mentioned low participation of women in the snap parliament election. In the last parliament election held in 2015 there was only 141 women participated in the election whereas, 344 women candidates nominated by the political parties an increase of 2.4 times. So, observation of the OSCE/ODIHR does not match with the reality. OSCE/ODIHR statement also mentioned low turnout in the currently held parliament election. According to CEC turnout was acceptable as it was only 32 % in the local bodies election in 2019. It was 47 percent in the snap parliament election 2020 which showed that a free, fair and transparent voting was carried out in the country. If there were any engineered rigging or rampant proxy voting as mentioned by the OSCE/ODIHR turnout would have been on higher side. The CEC ensured transparency in the process of nomination, registration of candidates, meetings with voters which showed that all conditions had been created for candidates in the parliament election.

Elections have been held in Azerbaijan on regular basis since its inception. Even Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (ADR) was formed, developed and survived through fair,

free and transparent elections. The journey from electoral democracy to substantial and liberal democracy may not be achieved within a day, week, month or year.

On its part the Republic of Azerbaijan has been striving hard to achieve equilibrium between an economic sustainability and liberal democracy since its inception. The Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (ADR) being pioneer secular democracy in the entire Muslim World and in the region laid out the foundation of political pluralism, justice, protection of basic rights of minorities and provision of basic human rights. The dawn of the Republic of Azerbaijan (AR) also continued the true democratic spirits of the ADR and excelled in every sphere of life and art of governance.

The SCO, CIS, OIC, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Turkic-speaking countries (TURKPA) and the Inter-parliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA-CIS) and many more showed their complete satisfaction over the election process and termed it free, fair and transparent in all respects.

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) preliminary statement does not show the real picture about the election. It has some serious miscalculations and misperceptions too. It seems that despite highlighting the positive attributes of the snap parliament election, the statement confined only to its own fabricated and false notions which are in reality merely a mirage.

It pinpointed some so called serious shortcomings during the election process especially on the day of final political battle i.e. election day in counting and proxy voting. Foreign Ministry of Azerbaijan immediately responded it and termed it not true and factual. Procedural errors are commonly reported in all over the world and labeled it errors in human judgment. Azerbaijan also upheld it as human errors which had not been schemed or supported by any governmental organizations.

Being prominent regional expert of Azerbaijan & CIS I suggest that the government of Azerbaijan and the Chief Election Commission should take some meaningful steps to enhance the volume of political activities in the country. Sincere efforts should be taken to change the system from "unicameral" to "bicameral" until the next parliament election in the country. It is suggested that "feasibility" of holding "joint elections" i.e. local/municipal & parliament may be a workable idea to increase political participation in the country.

There is scope of improvement in the political sphere of Azerbaijan because absence of real optics i.e. limited ex-

posures of rallies, processions, corner meetings, hanging of posters, pamphlets and last not the least, door to door political campaigns always create elements of doubts and suspiciousness in the eyes of foreign international observers and organizations alike.

Media plays a crucial role in the election process and its meaningful interaction may further increase elements of fair, free and transparency in the election process. There is a vital need to formulate the future "strategies" for appropriate media coverage, projection and contribution in the days to come. Azerbaijan is a civilized country with one of the highest literacy rates among the all the regional countries must find out "innovative means" to disseminate political messages, discussions and debates during the pre & post-election scenarios. FM radios, regulated "Youtube" Channels and series of interactive sessions among all the participating candidates during the electioneering may bring the desired goals of arduous participatory political system and turnout in the country.

Azerbaijan has its own ideal model of "multiculturalism" which is indeed basis of its democratic journey, political stability, social strength and last but not least economic sustainability. It is hoped that successful holding of snap parliament election 2020 will open new window of opportunities, exploration of untapped potentials, improvement in the process of operationalization and channelization of national resources and human capitals and will also cater the basic needs of the common people. Simply collective free will of its people/voters prevailed in the recently held snap parliament election in Azerbaijan. Ultimately, democracy secured victory over vicious circles, notorious schemes and ill designs of the regional as well as international forces and their franchises.

Being International Official Observer, I must appreciate the sincere efforts of the Chief Election Commission and strong political will of the government to hold a snap parliament election despite having comfortable majority in the dissolved parliament. The western international observers and organizations must understand the basic differences of a political system and social harmony and do not try to disturb the equation of survival and productivity. Every country has its own unique political parameters, converging to its traditions, culture and heritage and being a democratic country the Republic of Azerbaijan implements the ideal matching-box of politics and societal forces to foster its ongoing socio-economic structural reforms and consolidate its future persuasions of qualitative life for all the people.

The True Spirit of the Pakistan Day

By Sajjad Shaukat

India's preplanned drama has been proved even by Indian media on January 12, this year. In this respect, Indian media disclosed that "Deputy Superintendent (DSP) Davinder Singh was caught along with two militants, Jammu Kashmir Police (JKP) on Sunday [January 12]...Davinder Singh was alleged to have been ferrying the militants from the Shopian area of the Valley. Five grenades and three AK-47 rifles were also recovered from the cop's residence...DSP was under surveillance for the past two months over suspicious activities".

Every year, people of Pakistan celebrate the 23rd of March as the Pakistan Day, with great enthusiasm and zeal. But, this time, this very day has come at a time when Pakistan is facing multiple challenges, which are worrying all the citizens. While Pakistan's Armed Forces are coping with these challenges successfully.

More than seven months have passed. But, Indian fanatic government led by the extremist Prime Minister Narendra Modi's continued lockdown in the Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK). While Indian fanatic rulers are also escalating tensions with Pakistan to divert attention from the drastic situation of the (IOK), and have continued shelling inside Pakistani side of Kashmir by violating the ceasefire agreement in relation to the Line of Control (LoC).

Externally, Pakistan's forces, especially, Pak Army and Rangers have been boldly responding to India's unprovoked firing at the LoC.

Meanwhile, the Indian Citizenship Amendment Act 2019 (CAA), passed by the Indian Parliament further exposed the discriminatory policies of the Modi government. The CAA coupled with the National Register of Citizens (NRC) is mainly against the Muslim immigrants especially from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

Since December 15, 2019, daily mass protests have been taking place across every state in India against the CAA and the NRC. Despite criticism of the rights groups, foreign leaders, the UNO and moderate Hindus in wake of violent protests which resulted into killing of more than 100 persons and injuring 800-mostly Muslims by the police and fanatic Hindus, Modi-led regime has not withdrawn the CAA/NRC.

So, in order to divert attention from internal crises, New Delhi can arrange another Pulwama-like false flag terror attack in the Indian Held Kashmir to justify military adventure against Pakistan.

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an media on January 12, this year. In this respect, Indian media disclosed that "Deputy Superintendent (DSP) Davinder Singh was caught along with two militants, Jammu Kashmir Police (JKP) on Sunday [January 12]... Davinder Singh was alleged to have been ferrying the militants from the Shopian area of the Valley. Five grenades and three AK-47 rifles were also recovered from the cop's residence...DSP was under surveillance for the past two months over suspicious activities".

But, Indian intelligence and investigating agencies are hiding the reality about Davinder Singh and other two militants, which indicate that New Delhi may be setting a stage for new drama to associate the Police Officer with Pakistan's intelligence agencies.

In this connection, Pakistan's civil and military leadership have repeatedly warned the international community about India's another Pulwama-type false flag operation to involve Islamabad and to conduct another military adventure in the Pakistani side of Kashmir.

While, Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan and Chief of the Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa have repeatedly said that Pakistan's Armed Forces are fully ready to meet any prospective aggression or invasion by India. Internally, Pakistan's Armed Forces and country's primarily intelligence agency ISI have successfully broken the backbone of the foreign-backed terrorists. Peace has been restored in the Balochistan province and Karachi, including other vulnerable regions.

Despite it, in the recent past, terrorist attacks particularly in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and Balochistan which is central point of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) show that the CIA-led Indian RAW, Afghanistan's intelligence agency National Directorate of Security and Israeli Mossad are destabilizing Pakistan and want to damage the CPEC project which is part of China's One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative or BRI, as the US and India have already opposed this project. Be-

sides, Pakistan is the only nuclear country in the Islamic World. Therefore, it has become special target of some Western external entities. However, it is good development that political parties of the country have come to terms in order to strengthen institutions of Pakistan, as geo-politics surrounding the country requires.

In this context, Pakistan's ruling party Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf (PTI), opposition parties, members of civil societies and military are on one page regarding Indian prospective aggression.

At this juncture, Pakistan is also facing multi-faceted crises and challenges like corruption, soaring prices, energy-shortage, unemployment, crimes, lack of health facilities, and dependence upon the US-led developed countries, IMF and World Bank for financial aid.

Meanwhile, coronavirus pandemic also named as COVID-19 has affected Pakistan in wake of country's fragile economy. In this regard, civil and army institutes are implementing comprehensive plans for treatment of the patients and to further stop the spread of this novel virus.

Nevertheless, the 23rd of March 1940 was a watershed in the history of the Sub-continent, when All India Muslim League passed the Resolution in Lahore for the creation of an independent state. Now, it is popularly called as Pakistan Resolution. Earlier, in his address to the Muslim League at Allahabad in 1930, the idea of a homeland for Muslims in their majority areas had been envisioned by the poet Allama Sir Muhammad Iqbal, and had become the aspiration of Indian Muslims.

In fact, the British colonialists in connivance with majority Hindu population had manipulated and targeted Muslims through every possible way. In that background, Muslims started struggle for a separate state.

(Sajjad Shaukat writes on international affairs and is author of the book: "US vs Islamic Militants, Invisible Balance of Power: Dangerous Shift in International Relations". His Email is: sajjad_logic@yahoo.com)

China donates medical supplies to Pakistan

AGENCIES

BEIJING: The Jack Ma Foundation and Alibaba Foundation will donate medical supplies to another ten countries in Asia including Pakistan to assist their fight against the novel coronavirus. A total of 1.8 million masks, 210,000 Covid-19 testing kits, 36,000 pieces of protective suits and other materials like ventilators and forehead thermometers will be delivered to Pakistan and other Asian countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Founder of Alibaba, Jack Ma announced in a tweet, according to local media here on Sunday. "Delivering fast is not easy, but we'll get it done," Jack Ma, founder of Alibaba Group, posted on his Twitter account. "Go Asia!" Jack Ma in his tweet said, "Go Asia! We will donate emergency supplies (1.8 million masks, 210,000 test kits, 36,000 protective suits, plus ventilators and thermometers) to Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Delivering fast is not easy, but we'll get it done!" "The pandemic we face today can no longer be resolved by any individual country," Jack Ma has said in a recent statement. Jack Ma said speedy and accurate testing and adequate personal protective equipment for medical professionals are most effective in preventing the spread of the virus.

Aviation ties between Pakistan, Indonesia to grow further

By FIAZ CHAUDHARY

ISLAMABAD: Aviation relations between Pakistan and Indonesia can be made stronger. This was said by Federal Minister for Aviation, Ghulam Sarwar Khan during a meeting with Indonesian Ambassador, Iwan Suyudhie Amri. Ambassador was of the point of view that private airline; Lion Air is interested in starting flights from Lahore, Karachi or Islamabad to Jakarta on daily basis. He was of the view that nearly 2 thousand overseas Pakistani reside in Indonesia. Ghulam Sarwar Khan, Federal Minister for Aviation added that there is a dire need of more flight operation between 2 countries. Air Services Agreement between Pakistan and Indonesia was signed on January 14, 1966. The ASA stipulates multiple airline designation. PIA is the designated carrier of Pakistan while Garuda Indonesia is the designated carrier of Indonesia. PIA also has some intermediate points while going to Jakarta, including India-Colombo-Rangoon-Bangkok-Kuala Lumpur-Saigon-Singapore. Similarly Garuda Indonesia has some intermediate points while coming to Karachi, including Singapore-Phnom-Penh or Bangkok-Colombo or Bombay. And from Karachi the Indonesian airline also has some points beyond including Cairo or Beirut-Algiers-Rome-Paris-Amsterdam-London.



ISLAMABAD: Indonesian Ambassador, Iwan Suyudhie Amri meets Federal Minister for Aviation, Ghulam Sarwar Khan at Aviation Division. – DNA photo

Fawad tests negative for corona

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister of Science and Technology Fawad Chaudhry on Sunday announced his COVID-19, coronavirus test reports on the micro-blogging website Twitter. The minister tweeted that he is relieved to share with the world that his test reports for coronavirus detection came out negative. Fawad Chaudhry said that the time between the taking of samples for testing and then getting the final reports were very tough on him and tested his patience and gratitude greatly.

Palestine ambassador visits RCCI

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Palestinian ambassador to Pakistan Ahmed Jawad Rabie has said that his country considers Pakistan as

his brother and trusted friend. Pakistan is one of the most important countries in the Islamic world and its role is praiseworthy for the Muslim Brotherhood.

Talking to President Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) Saboor Malik at Chamber house here on Tuesday, the Ambassador said that there was a need

for promoting relations between the business community of both countries to promote economic cooperation between Palestine and Pakistan. The ambassador said that his country would provide one million olive plants to carry forward the plantation drive in Pakistan. The envoy expressed his gratitude for giving educational opportunities to more than 50,000 Palestinian students who graduated from Pakistani universities and were contributing to the development of Palestine. He suggested for enhancing interaction between the chambers of commerce of the two countries. He said that bilateral cooperation in Pharmaceutical, food, Dates, tourism and

services sectors could be enhanced. Speaking on the occasion, President Chamber Saboor Malik said that the hearts of the people of Pakistan and the business community are striking with the Palestinian people. Business community strongly condemns Israeli atrocities and violent acts on Palestine. Private sector cooperation between the two countries is essential. Bilateral trade relations can be further strengthened through close cooperation and exchanges at the Chamber of Commerce and the delegation level. He also gave the Ambassador a brief briefing on the ongoing activities of the Chamber. He also invited the Ambassador to attend the Rawal Expo 2020.

Turkish wood furniture company launched in Pakistan

By FIAZ CHAUDHARY

ISLAMABAD: The two brotherly countries Turkey and Pakistan have entered into a new era of close economic ties as Turkish business companies have started investing in Pakistan. Keeping in view the vision of PM Imran Khan for bringing foreign direct investment (FDI) in Pakistan, a Turkish wood working Brand MOOÖI Atolye has launched their factory in Pakistan right after the visit of Turkish President. The Turkish woodwork industry had a vast legacy of embellishing decor and unique furniture style. Turkish Ambassador was the Chief Guest here today at the inaugural ceremony who also cut the ribbon on the occasion. This newly built factory would produce Kitchens Doors and Wardrobes in Pakistan as per the European Standard. It also has great experience of developing home interiors on European standards due to its large field of expertise on different trends and furniture varieties as per the international standards. Moreover, it had become more easier to provide all its variety in Pakistan as the company is shifting technology and human resources to Pakistan.

Iran accuses US of imposing economic and medical terrorism

DNA

ISLAMABAD: When the outbreak of dangerous Corona Virus (COVID-19) has been affecting the world increasingly and people of more than 150 countries have been facing it, some of inhuman acts have negative impact on the coordinated and worldly fight against this fatal and contagious disease. Government of United States of America by adopting irresponsible unilateral and bullying behavior and in violation of international law and resolutions of UN Security Council has imposed a system based upon economic and medical terrorism on Islamic Republic of Iran which will directly affect health care and ability to cope with the health crisis. These sanctions are not only against humanitarian norms of international law and judgments of the International Court of Justice, rather depriving of Iran from access to medicine, medical equipments and violates the rights of access to health care and right of life for the people of Iran. In view of its contagious character and quick outbreak of the virus, the sanctions

will endanger health security of all the regional countries and the world. Unilateral withdrawal from JCPOA, tightening of US sanctions in the framework of racist plan of maximum pressure on Iran, pressurizing of trade partners and neighbours of Iran to refrain from trade, economic and financial cooperation at government and even peoples levels and closing of international banking channels for government and private Iranian organizations and companies, have prevented sale/ exports of oil and non oil products of Iran. People and government of Iran, cruelly, are deprived of access to their financial resources in the foreign countries and utilization of exports earnings. Whereas, production and imports of equipment, items and health and medical care medicines, treatment of patients, transfer of technology and research on ways of prevention and treatment requires huge financial resources. Policies of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding providing timely information, prevention, control and treatment of new disease are running optimally.

PIA staffer quarantined

DNA

KARACHI: A suspected patient of COVID-19 has been shifted to the hospital who is a staff member of the national flag-carrier, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), the spokesperson said Sunday. A senior technician of PIA engineering department in Peshawar has been quarantined over suspicions of coronavirus as his body temperature was detected above average during routine screening. According to the spokesperson, other crew members flight were also grounded who have been deployed on a PIA flight. The suspected coronavirus patient will be kept inside the hospital until his test reports were received by the management. Moreover, the management has started searching the persons who have come into contact with the suspected staffer.

Mayor Islamabad says MCI fully geared up to cope with COVID 19

By SHAHEEN QURESHI

ISLAMABAD: The Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) has established an emergency helpline 1122 in the wake of deadly COVID 19 with a view to enabling people to register complaints/information about this deadly disease. Mayor Islamabad Sheikh Anser Aziz disclosed this while talking to DNA on Saturday. The Mayor further told various formations of MCI have already been given necessary directions and guidelines in the regard. He said focal persons have been nominated who shall be responsible for a daily chart of coordination and liaison with regards to COVID 19, specifying details of events. He said Director General Health Services Dr. Hassan Urooj shall head the emergency arrangement and is authorized the pass orders for any assistance and facilitation until COVID 19 related emergency is intact, the Mayor added. "The entire emergency staff shall not be allowed for any leave, unless otherwise under extraordinary circumstances. The inter-directorate



coordination shall also be maintained for all possible support to citizens". Sheikh Anser Aziz further said UAN numbers such as 1122, 16 and 1334 shall be responded proactively and any emergency pertaining COVID 19 shall be responded proactively and shall be cautiously dealt assigning top priority. While talking about the safety of the employees of the Mayor told that they would be given equal priority if found affected with COVID 19, being the valuable asset of the corporation. He said the MCI had made elaborate arrangements for creating awareness among the people about this deadly virus adding no stone would be left unturned in this regard. He said the MCI staff would go to every nook and cranny as part of awareness drive. The Mayor also appealed to the people to cooperate with MCI and follow all precautionary measures.

Company submitting fake bank guarantee may be proceeded against

M NEHAL NAVEED

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Petroleum continues to drag its feet over a scandal of a fake bank guarantee submitted by a company Hycarbex American Energy. Our sources have indicated that Hycarbex is trying to deflect investigation into the whole case by blaming its potential investors. The relevant officials at the ministry have recommended that the case may be handed over to Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to unearth all the players behind the fraudulent practice, however ministry higher ups are still not processing the case. Hycarbex had acquired D&P lease of Yasin block in Sindh province for exploration activities in the year 2001 and since that time it has got it renewed many times. But in 2018 its lease was cancelled since the company failed to meet investment and activity targets.

After some litigation the company managed to convince the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources to restore its lease. The company was asked to submit a bank guarantee to the tune of 1,275,000 USD. A bank guarantee was presented to the Directorate of Petroleum Concession along with a covering letter of Hycarbex duly signed by its CEO. When the bank guarantee was checked with the bank it was found fake. Hycarbex continues to take the cover that its investors committed the wrong. Although the ministry in its view is clear that the fake bank guarantee was submitted with a cover letter duly signed by the President of the company Mr. Piers Onthank and whatever maybe their dealing with any private party the liability is squarely on Hycarbex. Hycarbex is currently a defaulter of the Government of Pakistan to the extent of Rupees 300 million. Ministry of Petroleum is refusing to respond to any queries from the media on the issue.

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Islamabad POST
11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza,
G-8 Markaz, ISLAMABAD-PAKISAN
Ph: 051-2261960, 051-2266165

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