



# Islamabad POST

Thursday, March 26, 2020

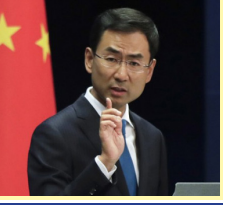
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**Tokyo Olympics rescheduled until 2021: Matsuda**

**RCCI chief seeks relief for SMEs**

**Over 74,000 COVID 19 patients cured in China**



## Tokyo Olympics rescheduled until 2021: Matsuda

It was a tough decision to delay the Games; Japan was determined to further support Pakistan in the field of sports; Pakistani players should continue preparation for the games: Japanese Ambassador

**MAHNOOR ANSAR**

ISLAMABAD: It is unfortunate but it was unavoidable. Tokyo 2020 Olympics & Paralympics have been postponed until summer 2021, said a communiqué issued by the Japanese embassy on Wednesday. It further said, that the IOC President Thomas Bach and Prime Minister ABE Shinzo, after a wide-ranging consultations and deliberations, have announced yesterday to postpone the Tokyo Olympic & Paralympic Games because of the coronavirus pandemic to safeguard the health of the athletes, everybody involved in the Games and the international community.

The IOC President said the Tokyo Games would still be called the 2020 Olympics, even though they will be held in 2021 as 'light at the end of pandemic tunnel'. Ambassador MATSUDA in his message to the Pakistani athletes, who were all set to take part in the mega event, has said that it was a tough decision to delay

the Games. However, after analyzing the situation arising out of the COVID-19, IOC and the Government of Japan together have ultimately decided to reschedule the Olympic & Paralympic Games to a later date beyond 2020, but not later than summer 2021, after a complete victory over the pandemic. "Please continue prepara-

tions for the Olympic & Paralympic Games with renewed zeal and spirit", advised the Ambassador to Pakistani athletes. Also expressing his gratitude to Lt General (ret'd) Syed Arif Hasan, the President of Pakistan Olympic Association, for his support, Ambassador MATSUDA said that Japan was determined to further support Pakistan in the field of sports and he was looking forward to further cooperating with POA. The Ambassador hoped that the pandemic COVID-19 would be defeated through the collective efforts of the international community, and assured Pakistan all of his support in the face of this global challenge.



QUETTA: Security forces including Police, Levies Force and Balochistan Frontier Corps patrolling the areas of during lockdown as people restricted their movement to prevent COVID-19 outbreak. - APP photo

## Experts call for mitigating COVID-19 impact on labour force

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Experts at an Online Seminar at SDPI stressed the need for a coordinated policy approach mechanism among the federal and provincial government institutions which they said is crucial to mitigate impact of COVID-19 on the labour force, a pandemic that has surrounded almost the whole world. The participants agreed that the implementation time to deal with this crisis could have been greatly reduced if local governments and local actors were engaged. The online seminar on 'Mitigation action against COVID-19 and its impact on Pakistan's labour market' was organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) on Wednesday. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, the

former governor State Bank of Pakistan, said the government needs to move forward in an aggressive manner and revisit the macroeconomic framework completely. She emphasized the need for intensive discussions with the IMF and other international financial institutions. She also called for lowering the interest rate that she said is more of a market-based solutions than cash transfers. Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri, SDPI Executive Director, said philanthropy at an individual and firm level needs to be activated, as it has worked previously in floods and earthquakes with any organization such as NDMA and ERRA taking the lead. Furthermore, he added, if deputy commissioner's office is used to make a list of the necessary items, local philanthropists and

charity organizations will be in a better position to provide their assistance. He stated that tax should be made as an incentive and firms should be provided relief in utility bills that can be linked with tax returns. Dr. Muhammad Nasir from Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) said that there were different stages of lockdown as provinces were experiencing different impacts of it. We are moving closer to stage 3, which is the final stage of complete lockdown. He said that this stage can result in 18 million layoffs, that's why the Prime Minister is reluctant to opt for this option. He added that estimates regarding daily wages, street vendors, labourers and self-employed are conservative and do not reflect the ground realities.

## RCCI chief seeks relief for SMEs

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has sought extension of relief package to small and medium enterprise. RCCI President Saaboor Malik in a statement said that 100 billion allocated for SMEs and agriculture sector. The relief announced for domestic consumers of electricity and gas is appreciated however, its scope should be extended to SMEs as well. Sabor Malik demanded that electricity bills be exempted for SMEs as well. He said that in the current situation, businesses that were already in decline now unable to pay bills due to 14 days lock down.

## 'Govt spending 1.25 trillion to address Covid-19'

APP

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue Dr. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh on Wednesday said that Rs1.25 trillion would be spent through multi-sectoral relief package, aimed at addressing the ongoing challenges that emerged due to outbreak Covid-19 (Coronavirus). Addressing a press conference, he said that purpose of the package was to provide immediate relief to those who had been affected by the pandemic.

## Briefs

### Prince Charles tested positive for COVID



DNA

LONDON: Britain's heir to the throne, Prince Charles, has tested positive for the coronavirus, according to a statement from his London household. "He has been displaying mild symptoms but otherwise remains in good health and has been working from home throughout the last few days as usual," a statement from Clarence House, his residence in the capital, said Wednesday. It is not possible to determine who gave the prince - whose official name is the Prince of Wales - the virus, the statement said, "owing to the high number of engagements he carried out in his public role during recent weeks."

### New UN enoy for Afghanistan



UNITED NATIONS: United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has appointed Canadian diplomat Deborah Lyons as his new Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

## Xinjiang donates medical masks to Pakistan

China sends third group of medical experts to Italy

APP

BEIJING: China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region has donated 380,000 medical masks to eight countries including Pakistan to help with the global fight against the novel coronavirus. The masks were delivered to Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Tunisia and Algeria, according to local media here on Wednesday. The regional government has organized local enterprises to increase production while Customs and China Post were coordinated to ensure the timely delivery of the materials. Meanwhile, Hunan Chinese traditional medicine enterprises will donate Chinese patent medicine

to Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran Around 1,500 boxes of silver-yellow lung capsules, produced by Hunan Anbang Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd have been donated to Karachi University. Meanwhile, a team of 14 medical experts from east China's Fujian Province departed on a chartered flight to Italy on Wednesday morning to aid the European country's fight against the COVID-19 outbreak. The team consists of experts from several hospitals and the center for disease control and prevention (CDC) of Fujian, as well as an epidemiologist from the national CDC and a pulmonologist of Anhui Province. The experts specialize in areas including respiratory, intensive care.

## Pakistan condemns attack on Gurdwara in Kabul

NEHAL MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Wednesday strongly condemned the heinous terrorist attack on a Gurdwara in Kabul, that has resulted in the loss of precious lives and injuries to several worshippers. Such despicable attacks have no political, religious or moral justification and must be rejected outright. Our hearts go out to the families who have lost their loved ones in this inhuman act and we pray for the swiftest recovery of the injured. We also express our abiding solidarity with the fraternal people of Afghanistan. Pakistan condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. All places of worship are sacrosanct and their sanctity must be respected at all times.

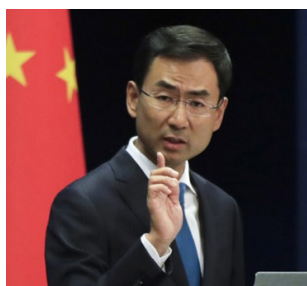
## Over 74,000 COVID 19 patients cured in China

The facts are very clear. The US, out of its long-standing ideological bias against China, has continuously escalated its political oppression and unreasonable restrictions on Chinese journalists. This is simply intolerable.

DNA

BEIJING: According to the latest figures from the NHC, 456 patients cured and discharged from hospital in China's mainland, bringing the tally to 73,159. Geng Shuang the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs told media on Wednesday that On March 24, experts on COVID-19 from China and Latin American and Caribbean countries exchanged views in a video conference. About 200 officials and experts from China, Latin American and Caribbean countries having diplomatic relations

with China, and Nicaragua, as well as representatives of WHO, UNICEF, the Pan American Health Organization and the Inter-American Development Bank attended the video conference, which lasted for over three hours and achieved positive results. Chinese experts talked in detail about the trajectory and features of the epidemic and Chinese experience in disease control, clinical treatment, customs administration and community-based quarantine and gave thorough answers to their foreign counterparts' questions.



Foreign officials and experts spoke highly of China's effective measures to contain the virus and its important contributions to global public health security. They believed this timely, professional and efficient video conference offered important guid-

ance for their countries. They would like to draw on China's experience and maintain communication and coordination with China to defeat the pandemic together. Going forward, China will uphold the vision of a community with a shared future for mankind and follow closely the situation in Latin American and Caribbean countries. We will do our utmost to coordinate domestic resources and enhance cooperation with these countries in light of their needs to jointly overcome the challenge posed by the virus.

We stated China's position for many times. The measures taken by the Chinese side against the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, among other US media, are all necessary countermeasures against US' unreasonable oppression of Chinese media in recent years. The US side provoked China first and China was only responding in legitimate self-defense. Last week, I briefed you on the discriminatory restrictions the US has long imposed on Chinese journalists with regard to visa, administrative review and reporting.

## Inside...

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## CITY BRIEFS

### Training held regarding corona virus preventive measures

MUNIR FAISAL

ATTOCK: Police personnel have been given orientation training regarding Corona Virus preventive measures and are being followed in letter and spirit under the close supervision of DPO Khalid Hamdani.

PRO Attock Police Taimoor Alizai said this while talking to this journalist. While giving details he said that three training sessions were held in Police Lines which were attended by SDPOs, SHOs, ASIs, SIs and other police personnel.

During these sessions Dr Riaz of DHQ Hospital Attock imparted orientation training and after these sessions the precautionary measures are being taken.

He said that all personnels have been provided gloves and masks while efforts are being made to ensure availability of sanitizers and tissue papers. While replying to a question said that so for disinfection/fumigation of police lines, police offices and police stations has not been done however concerned authorities have been approached in this regard.

### 50 people arrested for violating ban on public gatherings in Attock

DNA

ATTOCK: Police arrested fifty peoples in Attock including two grooms, for violating Section 144 imposed as a precautionary measure against the spread of Covid-19.

Hassanabdal police arrested a groom, wali Muhammad for arranging a marriage ceremony.

Attock police raided various parts of the city and arrested 24 shopkeepers for opening their workplaces. Those who arrested included block manufacturing unit owners, tailors, car dealers, paint shop owners and Tent services owners.

In Jand police booked 14 people, including four cattle dealers for organising cattle markets in Domial.

Moreover, in Wah Cantonment police booked a groom identified as Shahjehan and two other persons, Rizwan and Nasir, for organising a marriage party. Seven hotel owners identified as Waseem, Khalid, Sher Mohammad, Shahbaz, Shahid, Sabir and Mehmood, were also arrested by the same police for opening their hotels.

### 'Preventive steps taken to keep Attock jail hygienically clean'

DNA

ATTOCK: All possible steps have been taken to keep the Jail hygienically clean to control the spread of any infectious disease among the prisoners.

Deputy Superintendent Distt Jail Attock said this while talking to newsmen. He said that barracks of the prisoners were being washed with antiseptics while close supervision is being carried out to have a look on the health of the prisoners. He said that the jail was over crowded and if prisoners involved in petty crimes are shifted to some other location.

### ICT Admin announces steps to ensure public safety in view of covid-19

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Administration has announced specific measures to ensure public safety and maintain peace and tranquility in the city in the wake of Coronavirus.

It was the continuation of the order issued by the Ministry of Interior earlier to impose the Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code (Crpc) in Islamabad, said a notification issued by the ICT Administration.

It said the decision was taken on the recommendations of the public health expert so as to ensure public safety, conserve lives, and maintain peace and tranquility in the territorial jurisdiction of Islamabad. "All markets, shopping malls, restaurants and private offices shall remain closed. Public offices will function from 10:00 am to 04:00 pm except on Friday for which timing will be 10:00 am to 01:00 pm," it said. Intra-city, inter-district and inter-province movements of people by public transport have been banned in the city while the metro bus service of Rawalpindi and Islamabad would be allowed to operate for four hours a day, it added.

It said the bus will remain functional from 08:30 am to 10:30 am and from 03:30 pm to 05:30. Friday timing for the metro would be 08:30 am to 10:30 am and from 12:30 pm to 02:30 pm.

The passengers have to keep a distance of one seat during their travel through the bus. The cabs are allowed to operate for which a separate Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) will be issued soon, it added. There shall also be a complete ban on all kinds of gatherings including social and religious at any place such as public or private.

"Langar Khannas (food centre) and Panagahs (shelter home) shall remain functional and Islamabad Administration will also establish 'Ration' warehouses for the needy and underprivileged."

The Out Door Patient Departments in all hospitals would remain suspended. However, emergency services would remain operational.

## HEC to fund research to address covid-19 crisis: Chairman

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has sought proposals from universities, institutes, and individual researchers on ideas to address the Novel Coronavirus crisis. This was decided on Tuesday in a special video meeting of HEC's senior management. The bulk of HEC staff has been directed to work from home, following the directives of the Health Ministry, so all the work of the Commission is conducted electronically. Applications are received online or through courier, meetings are conducted by video link, and all papers and files are handled electronically. These arrangements have

been out in place in order to ensure that all major services of the Commission continue to be provided without interruption during the current emergency.

The research initiative launched today, with the support of the World Bank, is entitled the RAPID Research and Innovation Fund (RRIF) program. It aims to mobilize the research capacities of universities in support of national efforts to address the COVID-19 crisis.

Under the initiative, a rapid assessment and review mechanism has been established to analyze research and innovation proposals urgently. Each applicant seeking funding through the RAPID Research and Innovation



Fund can propose an idea based on one of the priority themes. The proposals are due by April 3, and funding decisions will be made within the month of April. Funding will be provided to selected research-intensive institutions for analysis

of data, testing of specimens, access to facilities or equipment, or development of essential products or services.

Besides the research initiative, HEC has also been working with universities to minimize the impact of the lockdown of univer-

sities on academic activities. To this end, three specialized committees have been established to help arrange IT facilities, software, tech support, and curate substantive online content.

The objective is to enable faculty members to (virtually) continue teaching their courses from where they left off at the time of closure of universities.

Individual faculty members will share their course outline/s and required reading materials with their students through online learning management systems. Universities will develop repositories of online courses. HEC will facilitate access to an extensive digital library of lectures and courses.

### NBF suspends all its activities due to Corona



DNA

ISLAMABAD: With an unfortunate developing situation on Coronavirus in the country National Book Foundation (NBF) has postponed its National Annual Book Fair.

The NBF has suspended its all activities and public gatherings immediately till further orders.

The annual Book Fair would be rescheduled after overcoming the Coronavirus situation.



ISLAMABAD: Ustad Shafiq uz Zaman Khan presenting gold medal and certificate to Shahbbir Ahmed Zia renowned calligrapher of Pakistan on the occasion of his photo exhibition. - DNA photo

## ICCI hails cut in POL prices, demands further cut in interest rate

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) has hailed the decision of the government to reduce the prices of petroleum products by Rs.15 per litre as it would provide good relief to the inflation-stricken people and demanded that government should further cut the interest rate to bring it down to 5 percent in order to ease the problems of business community that has been badly hit by the emerging crisis caused by the coronavirus. President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & In-

dustry said that business community was expecting significant cut in the interest rate, but SBP has reduced policy rate by only 1.5 percent, which was not enough in the prevailing conditions. He stressed that government should bring down policy interest rate to at least 5 percent that would provide significant relief to the business community in these difficult times. He welcomed the stimulus packaged announced by the Prime Minister Imran Khan and said that business community would be able to give its full reaction on it after revelation of its full details. However, he said that gov-

ernment should also reduce the prices of gas and electricity for commercial and industrial consumers and allow them to pay these bills in instalments so that businesses could cope with the current crisis situation. ICCI President said that many industrial units have made required payments of imported raw material, but due to restrictions on transportation, their raw material was lying at ports while they have to pay banks mark up and demurrage charges.

He demanded that government should orders deferring the receipt of banks mark up and demurrages for at least six months so that businesses could be able to sail through the current difficult situation that would provide business community some relief in this tough situation. He said that in the prevailing conditions, it was difficult for businesses to meet the domestic orders and added that cut in the utility charges for commercial and industrial consumers would reduce their problems to some extent. They said that business community was standing with the government in this tough time and would fully cooperate with it in mitigating the problems of the general public.

## No gas shortage in Islamabad region

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) clarified that there was no gas shortage in any area of the Islamabad region in the evolving coronavirus (COVID-19) situation.

"Infrastructure development projects are already underway in the areas where the consumers used to face gas supply or pressure issues in past," a spokesman for the company said. He said the company had fully authorized the regional management to take timely and appropriate action to address consumer complaints in the prevailing situation. Keeping in view the consumers' hardships, the spokesman said the company had been advertising telephone number of regional offices for filing complaints about gas sup-

ply or low pressure issues. The consumers could contact General Manager Islamabad Region on 03335482013, Chief Engineer Nazir on 03364367575, Deputy Chief Engineer Metering Masam Ibrar on 0332 4047722, Deputy Chief Engineer Operations Zahid Ali on 03364046622, Deputy Chief Engineer Maintenance Raza on 03334777526, Deputy Chief Engineer Customer Services Shakeel on 03008502981, Executive Engineer Metering Ehsan Ellahi Mirza on 03364199961, Executive Engineer Metering on 03354234343, Executive Engineer Operations Arbab Hussain on 03338389701, Executive Engineer Maintenance Shahzad Saleem on 03354238282 and Officer Customer Services on 03455295486 numbers for redressal of their complaints.

## KP Govt to soon announce relief package: CM

APP

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Mehmood Khan Wednesday said the provincial government would soon announce relief package for the province in the wake of coronavirus pandemic. Talking to media during his visit to District Headquarters Hospital in Khyber district, he said "together we can defeat corona pandemic", adding that with cooperation of public, government and military the coronavirus could be defeated. Seeking public support to overcome coronavirus, the CM said that all the precautionary measures had been taken for public safety and these could only yield result if the masses would cooperate and remain in self quarantine. Mehmood Khan said the government was working to constituting volunteer



teams to assist stoppage of coronavirus outbreak.

The government was appointing as many as 2000 doctors on contract basis, he said and added that 1300 doctors had been appointed while approval of 600 more doctors through public service commission had been granted.

On the occasion KP Government spokesman Ajmal Wazir told media that no local case of corona had been reported from D I Khan district while all the coronavirus affected patients at quarantine centres were Zaireen from other areas of the country.

## UNHCR supports training for 2,500 Pakistanis

DNA

ISLAMABAD: UNHCR, the Refugee Agency, in partnership with NAVTTC - the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission, has announced technical skills training opportunities for 2,500 Pakistanis and Afghan refugees.

Despite the challenges that the global pandemic is presenting, UNHCR remains committed to maintaining its essential activities, including by offering livelihood opportunities that benefit both Pakistanis and Afghan refugees.

## Shahid Afridi donates hospital for corona patients

APP

PESHAWAR: Cricket legend, Shahid Khan Afridi here Wednesday donated his hospital in Kohat district for treatment of corona patients. Deputy Commissioner Kohat Captain

(Retd) Abdur Rehman visited Shahid Afridi Memorial Trust Jerma in Kohat district and met legendary Cricketer Shahid Afridi. On the request of Deputy Commissioner Kohat, Shahid Afridi donated his Hospital to District

Administration which will be used as isolation center for coronavirus patients. Moreover, Shahid Afridi also donated 500 Panaflexes for COVID-19 awareness which will be displayed at different areas of the city.

## Education Ministry seeks contents for education to be aired on National TV

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training had asked the contents providers to share their contents with the ministry as it was in the process of launching a National TV channel so that learning continues while schools were closed.

According to an official notification issued by the Education Ministry on Wednesday, it was stated that in light of nationwide school closures due to COVID-19, the ministry had planned to start a national TV channel to disseminate SLO-based educational contents for Grade 1-12. It said that the contents providers who were willing to share

their contents free of cost to the ministry for this national cause during current emergency, were requested to contact the technical advisers of the education ministry within 72 hours. It further stated that due acknowledgment shall be given to those whose contents are selected for airing. However, the education ministry

in a Tweet informed that educators at the forefront with health workers to ensure learning can continue in these difficult times. The teachers were sifting through the education content provided free of cost by content developers to make it ready for airing through dedicated television channel, the Tweet added.



## Iran dumps refugees across Afghan border

DNA

HERAT: Iranian security forces are rounding up thousands of Afghan refugees suspected or confirmed of having the coronavirus and forcefully deporting them to Afghanistan with no regard for international safeguards meant to protect the world from the spread of the deadly pandemic.

About 70,000 Afghans have returned from virus-hit Iran in the past 20 days, overwhelming health workers at border crossings and raising fears of a major outbreak, AFP reported Monday (March 16), citing the International Organisation for Migration.

Ahmad Ahmadi, an Afghan refugee who worked in Tehran, said that the Iranian military arrested him and his nine-year-old son and then deported them to Afghanistan through the Islam Qala border crossing.

## SBP allows importers to advance payment, open account without limit

APP

ISLAMABAD: State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Wednesday allowed importer to advance payment and open account without any limit for the import of medical equipments, medicines and other ancillary items for the treatment of COVID-19.

According to a press release issued here, all federal and provincial government departments, hospitals in public and private sectors, charitable organizations, manufacturers and commercial importers can make Advance Payment and Import on Open Account, without any limit.

Further, the banks have been allowed to approve Electronic Import Form (EIF) for import of the equipments, donated by international donor agencies and foreign governments to facilitate their seamless and speedy imports.

The numbers of COVID-19 cases in Pakistan were increasing. An effective strategy to fight against the menace of COVID-19 requires timely availability of needed equipments. In the backdrop of unprecedented spread of the deadly virus.

## Beijing reports two imported COVID-19 cases in 12 hours

APP

BEIJING: Beijing reported two new confirmed cases of novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) from Canada and France, respectively, over the past 12 hours by Wednesday noon, according to the municipal health commission. The latest reports have brought the total number of confirmed imported cases in Beijing to 145 as of Wednesday noon. In addition, 416 confirmed indigenous cases have been reported in the city, of which 392 have been discharged from hospital after recovery.



LAHORE: Firefighters extinguishing fire after an LPG container caught fire in Lahore's Shahdara on Wednesday morning. - DNA photo by Sindhu

## Islamabad introduces guidelines for shopkeepers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A new set of guidelines for shopkeepers in the capital have been introduced by the district administration of Islamabad.

People coming to buy essentials from grocery stores have to first create a circle outside the shops while maintaining a distance of 1.5 meters from each other.

Then, one by one, each person will go inside the stores and buy whatever they want. According to Islamabad District Commissioner, the sellers are responsible for implementing the new rules.

"Shops of those who violate these rules will be sealed," he said.

# Pilgrims asked to download mobile Apps during Hajj

The Rehnuma-e-Hajj app provides guidelines about the Manasik-e-Hajj and provides information about the complete set of rituals during the pilgrimage

APP

ISLAMABAD: The intending pilgrims have been asked to download five smart phone mobile applications (Apps) for ensuring hassle free Hajj 2020, said official of Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony. Talking to APP, he said the apps could prove very important as they contain documentaries on Hajj performance process and complete guidelines to facilitate the intending pilgrims.

The five android phone applications including 'Mina Locator'; 'Al Maqсад'; PakHajj Muavin; 'Rehnuma-e-Hajj'; and 'Pak Hajj Guide' had worked satisfactorily last year's Hajj.

The mobile-phone applications could be downloaded for getting Hajj-related prayers and other important information about Hajj rituals.

Mina Locator App helps people locate their residence, Mina Maktab, train stations, the route to different camps, mosques, hospitals and all other

important places in Mina with reference to the user's current location. AIMaqсад mobile application provides detailed 3D indoor navigation for Masjid Al Haram.

The app is created to assist visitors in determining their location accurately inside the corridor of the Grand Mosque and guide their way anywhere they want to go during their stay.

PakHajj Muavin helps Hajj pilgrims to check their own details regarding their group's information,

buildings that they are staying in, travel information and other details about hajjis.

The Rehnuma-e-Hajj app provides guidelines about the Manasik-e-Hajj and provides information about the complete set of rituals during the pilgrimage.

Pak Hajj Guide app educates the pilgrims about how to make preparations for this religious event, it includes performing Umrah and Hajj, Ziarat-e-Madinah, and things to remember for the pilgrimage.

## SBP reports 3.92pc decline in imports

APP

ISLAMABAD: The imports of vegetable products into the country decreased by 3.92 percent during the first eight months of financial year 2019-20 as compared to the corresponding period of last year, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported.

The vegetable product imports into the country during July-February (2019-20) were recorded at \$1610.657 million against the import of \$1676.530 million during July-February (2018-19), showing declined of 3.92 percent, according to SBP report.

The food commodities that contributed in negatively growth included edible fruits and nuts, import of which dip from \$23.535 million last year to \$22.129 million during the period under review, showing declined of 5.97 percent.

## CDA to wash markets, major roads to ensure public safety

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA), ICT Administration and Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) have been directed to wash all markets, busy area and major roads of the city with Chemicals as well as to carry out cleanliness in the all parts of the city.

All the departments are participating in this special operation, the steps has been taken as preventive measure to control the spread of Coronavirus in the city.

Chemical to be used for washing are secured by the ICT Administration from a Chemicals factory at Attock and is an route. The activity would be

started from tomorrow after input from Ministry of Health.

The step has been taken to prevent the spread of Coronavirus in the city. Furthermore, in line with the instructions of CDA Management, four ventilators are being made operative at CDA Hospital from Thursday.

Moreover in accordance with instructions of CDA management, Doctors and Paramedical staff of CDA Hospital have been directed to remain alert to cope any emergent situation.

Furthermore, a camp office has also been established at CDA Hospital implementation on medical advisory issued by the Government is being ensured.

## Pak cricketers ask fans to adhere to safety policy to combat coronavirus

APP

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan cricketers have stepped in to support government's efforts to limit the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) by asking their fans to remain indoors and adopt safety measures.

For the past couple of days, they are active on social media, imploring the public to stay at home and adhere to safety policy.

Former skipper Ramiz Raja said that social distancing was extremely necessary for the safety of general public. "You should not go to social gatherings and other activities. Also avoid visiting your relatives and keep distance from your colleagues because the

more you will get closer, the more this virus will bite you. So you need to be careful," the cricket-returned commentator said on his YouTube channel RamizSpeaks.

He also suggested public to arrange indoor exercises and eat healthy foods to keep themselves fit during the shutdown period. "This coronavirus is knocking at your gates. So you have to increase your lungs' capacity and immunity system to resist it by eating healthy foods and doing exercise," he added. Former captain Shahid Khan Afridi in a video message asked the fans to take care of their health by washing their hands regularly and avoid coughing and sneezing openly. He

also asked people to follow Islamic teachings and avoid hoarding. "When the poor go to buy sanitizers and masks they don't find these as the rich people have bought and collected them in their homes. And if at some places these things are available they are beyond the reach of the poor. "I request you all that this is the time to become a nation. I'm also the son of this soil. You all have given me a lot of respect and love. [To fulfill my duty] I've started a little effort to distribute ration among the needy. So, please you also play your role," said Afridi, who came forward to provide ration to around 2000 families of Kohat besides opening doors of his fully equipped charity hospital as quarantine centre.

## China resumes construction of 65 airport projects

APP

BEIJING: Construction works of 65 airport projects have been resumed across China, representing more than 80 percent of the country's airport projects under construction, according to the civil aviation authorities.

Among which, 27 projects are the national major airport projects, accounting for 90 percent of the total sum of 30, said the Civil Aviation Administration of China.

Airports are key public infrastructures that sustain the continuous and fast growth of China's civil aviation industry. By the end of 2019, China had a total of 238 civil airports.

## First Corona case confirmed in Attock

MUNIR FAISAL

ATTOCK: First case of Corona Virus has been confirmed in Attock district. The female patient whose Corona Virus test has been found positive is from Village Gharibwal of Tehsil Pindi Gheb in Attock District on Wednesday.

Nusrat Nisar who came back from Saudi Arabia after performing Umra but they were not kept in Quarantine which may now cause a great threat to this area. He said that Gharibwal village has now been cordoned off and exit and entry points have been locked and now screening of all the residents of the residents of Gharibwal and nearby Village Dhulian is in progress.

positive while the test result of her husband Muhammad Javed was declared negative. Nusrat Nisar has now been shifted to an isolation ward of DHQ Hospital Attock.

Deputy District Health Officer Pindigheb Manzoor Hussain said that almost 17 members of Gharibwal came back from Saudi Arabia after performing Umra but they were not kept in Quarantine which may now cause a great threat to this area. He said that Gharibwal village has now been cordoned off and exit and entry points have been locked and now screening of all the residents of the residents of Gharibwal and nearby Village Dhulian is in progress.

## Sino-Pak cooperation in cultural creativity industry stressed

AGENCIES

BEIJING: The cooperation in cultural creativity industry can become a new field of cultural exchanges and economic collaboration between China and Pakistan, Cheng Xizhong, visiting professor at Southwest University of Political Science and Law said on Wednesday.

"I believe that cooperation in cultural creativity industry can become a new field of cultural exchanges and economic cooperation between China and Pakistan. It can also further enhance mutual understanding between the two peoples," China Economic Net reported.

At present, the cooperation between China and Pakistan in this field has just started. However, he believed there was great potential for cooperation. While commenting on special relief program for export-oriented industries announced by the government of Pakistan, he said that in addition to the current export-oriented industries, Pakistan had many sectors that had potentials to earn foreign exchange, such as tourism, service, software, and cultural creativity, etc.

# US corona-virus deaths top 800, cases over 55,200

APP

ANKARA: The corona-virus-related deaths in the U.S. topped 800 on Wednesday, while the number of cases reached over 55,200, according to latest figures by Johns Hopkins University. The figures put the U.S. in the top three countries worldwide with the most infection cases, after Italy and China.

New York City and the

northwestern state of Washington - where the country's first case was reported in late January - are the hardest hit with 192 and 128 fatalities, respectively. In all, 354 people diagnosed with COVID-19 in the U.S. have recovered so far.

Cases have been reported in all 50 states of the U.S., as well as Washington, D.C. and the territories of Puerto Rico,

Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The figures by the university's Corona-virus Resource Center exceed the official tally compiled by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which are updated daily but only for cases reported by 4 p.m. local time (2000GMT) the preceding day.

After emerging in Wuhan, China last December, the virus has spread to at



least 170 countries and regions around the globe,

claiming nearly 19,000 lives as of Wednesday,

while confirmed cases topped 424,000.