

## **Briefs**

## **Chinese** envoy Yao **Jing called** on PM Imran

**ADNAN YOUSAF** 

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister conveyed sincere gratitude to China for supporting Pakistan in helping contain COVID-19. The medical equipment provided by China will greatly strengthen Pakistan's capacity.

Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's support and solidarity with the people of China in its fight against Coronavirus.

## Automatic renewal of **UAE work** permits

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The United Arab Emirates announced exemption of medical tests for labourers having expired work permits, the Emirates News Agency said on Thursday

# **COVID 19 HANDLING** China to send experts to Pakistan

China is preparing a medical team to visit Pakistan and this team of experts will pay field trips to different localities in Pakistan; China shared with Pakistan immediately therapeutic and prevention protocols for Covid-19

parts and also the Chinese

ogy support.

Covid-19.

ment," he added.

of Pakistan in wake of the

Acknowledging Pakistan's

for uplift projects

### **MONITERING DESK**

BEIJING: China will send a team of medical experts to Pakistan to work closely with local health authorities and provide assistance and expertise in their fight against the novel coronavirus pandemic, Zeng Yixin, Vice Minister of China's National Health Commission said on Thursday.

"As required by Pakistani side, China is preparing a medical team to visit Pakistan and this team of experts will pay field trips to different localities in Pakistan," Zeng said while responding to APP at a press conference on China's cooperation with the new coronavirus outbreak. international community in fighting COVID-19 held at China's State Council Information Office. He said the team would have experience sharing and technology exchanges with Pakistani counterat home, Pakistan extended great support.

team would be discussing Pakistan mobilized all with Pakistani side on other assistance and technolpossible medical supplies to support China and that measure had moved nu-The Chinese vice minismerous Chinese people. ter said that in terms of He said at a moment, the medical technology, China shared with Pakistan imtwo countries were facing mediately therapeutic and the challenge and China was ready to share its exprevention protocols for perience with Pakistan and "We also shared with Pakiprovide Pakistan with badly stani friends through vidneeded medical supplies. eo-link China's experience Deng said that so far, in treatment and contain-China had provided four batches of international Zeng Yixin also said that assistance and added, "As the Chinese authorities a matter of fact, we have also had a very good disalready provided four cussion on other issues batches of assistance to

Protection Suits to be used by Pakistani Doctors and para-medical staff while dealing with COVID-19 cases. Chairman NDMA, Lt. Gen. Muhammad Afzal and Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Mr. Yao Jing were also present on the occasion. - DNA **US** stands with Pak against **COVID** 19

Adnan Yousaf

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan and the United States are partners in the fight against coronavirus. In a video message released on the U.S. Mission to Pakistan's social media plat-

## Uzbek ambassador indebted to Peer Nageeb for support

Says truly corona virus nowadays is the biggest threat to the world. May ALLAH protect all of us from this disease

**OUR CORRESPONDENT** ISLAMABAD: Ambassa- Government.

with open arms, having Uzbekistan. (Arabic duas) a devoting and respectful ALLAH please protect the We pray that may Allah protect the Uzbek government and it's nation from this corona virus. He further said, people who are infected in Uzbekistan with this virus may ALLAH bless them with good health and may ALLAH always protect the pure land of Uzbekistan. Now our respected sheikh hoped that this situation shall soon be over. will do the special pray for

Government of Uzbekistan it's nation and the pure land from any kind of bad air. May this country grow more and more in all fields of life. Please bless this country with your blessing. Always protect this beautiful land from this corona virus. Please forgive all of us and bless us. The ambassador also

ISLAMABAD: Ms. Yan Chen, Managing Director, Challenge Group of Companies from

China called on Prime Minister Imran Khan today in Islamabad and donated 15,000

Friendship with China



The work permits and residence visas will be issued and renewed automatically for labourers employed by companies and support service staff such as domestic workers as part of precautionary measures taken by the UAE to curb the spread of COVID-19.

support to China against the coronavirus, Deng Boqing, Vice Chairman of China International Development Cooperation Agency said that as China was fighting the epidemic

and medical sup plies.'

He said for the next stage, the Chinese side also had a plan to provide more urgently needed assistance to Pakistan.

Pakistan in terms of test-

ing kits, protective suits,

facial masks, ventilators

forms today, Ambassador Paul Jones highlighted the support the United States is providing Pakistan, our commitment to deepen our collaboration with new technologies and resources, and guidance for American citizens in Pakistan. Japan approves grants In particular, Ambassador Jones encouraged Amer-

ican Citizens in Pakistan to register for the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program to receive security and health alerts at: http:// step.state.gov. Ambassador Jones noted, "We've made Pakistan a priority country for emergency coronavirus assis-

tance. We redirected \$1 million in existing funding, and provided \$1 million in new funding for lab and emergency supplies and to enable communities to identify potential coronavi-

dor of Uzbekistan Furgat Sidikov has thanked Peer Nageeb ur Rehman and his son for supporting Uzbekistan on this difficult times.

In a message he said, trulv corona virus nowadavs is the biggest threat to the world. May ALLAH protect all of us from this disease.

We have a very dear and close to our heart a Muslim country. The land of Imam Al Buhari, Imam Termezi, The land of our spiritual leaders Hazrat Gajdwani, Shah e Naqshband Bahuddindin Nagshband.

Uzbekistan is also the land of Sahabas. This land is called Uzbekistan a beautiful land with a Nation with beautiful hearts. They welcome everyone



**Business fraternity** demands deferring receipt of utility bills

Inside..

Ahsan Bakhtawari donates ventilator for Poly Clinic

#### - Page 02

King Salman calls for a united global response to Covid

40 facilities at doorsteps, PM's vision to maximize tech for social benefit: Firdous

– Back Page

### ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: As a part of efforts to promote human security, the Government of Japan has decided to provide financial assistance of US\$ 236,230 for four social development projects in education and rural electrification in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces.

The grants will be provided to four national NGOs, Learning Awareness & Motivation Programme (LAMP) in Khyber district, Friends Welfare Association (FWA) in Torghar district, Hana Development Council (HDC) in Mandi Bahauddin district and Actions for Human Advancement (AHAT) in Kasur district.

Human security is an idea, focusing on individual member of community, to promote to strengthen the community and independence of each person with protection and capability development in order to achieve rich potential of each member of community. There are vari-



ety of areas that Japanese Government has been extending assistance with this idea in Pakistan and education is one of the very focused area as education is the equal basic right for everybody to enjoy, will be a tool for everybody to develop its own potential, and naturally resulting in the accomplishment of sustainable development of each nation.

Continued on Page 2

rus outbreaks ... The United States and Pakistan are longstanding partners in tackling global health challenges, and this partnership has been critical as we work together against coronavirus...to achieve our shared goals

CORONAVIRI of health and prosperity of our peoples."

# **Bulgaria, COMSATS mull cooperation**

Bulgarian Ambassador assured of his support for expediting the membership process. Dr Parashkevov expressed interest in collaborating with COMSATS' Network for expertexchanges, faculty development, training and capacity building of scientific workforce

#### NEHAL MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable development in the South (COMSATS) explored avenues of cooperation with Bulgaria in areas of mutual interest including faculty development, scholars exchange and capacity building of scientific workforce in a meeting held here Thursday.

The meeting was held between Executive Director COMSATS, Dr S M Junaid



ly appointed ambassador Zaidi and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenion COMSATS' operations potentiary of the Republic focused on bringing peace of Bulgaria to Pakistan. Dr and development in the Aleksandar Borisov Par-Global South aided by inashkevov at the Embassy terventions aimed at socioeconomic development of Bulgaria. Dr Zaidi briefed the newthrough scientific tools and mechanisms. He informed that COM-SATS has forged partnerships globally and instituted programmes and projects in health. education, internet services, climate change and sustainability.

With membership of 27 countries, COMSATS has completed its 25 years of successful operations with wide array of programmes.

The Bulgarian Ambassador assured of his support for expediting the mem-

bership process. Dr Parashkevov expressed interest in collaborating with COMSATS' Network for expert-exchanges, faculty development, training and capacity building of scientific workforce.

The meeting ended on a cordial note with the invitation to the ambassador to visit COMSATS Secretariat and its Centre of Excellence in Islamabad-COMSATS University Islamabad (CU), for furthering cooperation ties which was accepted.

SERENA ASSOCIATES PLEDGE ONE DAY SALARY

THE COMPANY CONTRIBUTES AN EQUAL AMOUNT IN SUPPORT OF THE UNDERSERVED COMMUNITY

> SERENA HOTELS PAKISTAN

SERENA STANDS UNITED IN FIGHTING THE



### ArtAid' to put art works for online auction

#### DNA

ISLAMABAD: "ArtAid" will put art works for online auction both for funds as well as barter for supplies to provide much needed assistance for the affected low income families in the testing time.

Renowned artist Jamal Shah said "ArtAid" was launched in 2005 as a platform to support the earthquake affected people and held the historic Marathon Live Art Auction in collaboration with PTV.

He said that it was time for them to engage all their supporting network in order to reach out to the needy such as the daily wagers and other downtrodden communities exposed to Covid-19 onslaught. "ArtAid" will collect necessities such as grocery items, tea, cooking oil, sugar, medicines, dettol and soap or detergents.

QAU Alumni extends awareness, assistance drive to 20 cities

APP

ISLAMABAD: Quaid-e-Azam University Alumni Association, in collaboration with Safar-e-Meharbani and Quaidian Sindh Forum, have extended its drive to more than 20 cities in order to create awareness and ensure assistance for needy people in the wake of Covid-19. In view of current circumstances, QAU Alumni after consultation with other senior members, have requested the Quaidians to participate in the awareness drive and charity work in order to extend to other cities as well, said General Secretary QAU Alumni Association Murtaza Noor on Thursday. Talking to APP, he said that the students had also been suggested to own a village or families in their respective areas through possible means, keeping in view precautionary measures prescribed by the government authorities. In case they need any further assistance or coordination, please contact on following contact numbers 0300-9840120. 0304-8178283 or 03018488572, resources and services to he added.

## **Business fraternity demands** deferring receipt of utility bills

ICCI has called upon the government to defer the receipt of utility bills from business community for few months in order to save the businesses from default; businesses struggling for survival in the prevailing conditions

#### SHAHEEN QURESHI

period.

ing threat of closure.

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) has called upon the government to defer the receipt of utility bills from business community for few months in order to save the businesses from default.

It further said that busi-He said that manufacnesses were struggling for turing activities have reached shut down level survival in the prevailing conditions and governand manufactured goods ment should allow them were waiting for buyers to pay monthly utility bills with no good prospect in

in three installments after the expiry of deferment Muhammad Ahmed Waheed. President. Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that due to coronavirus issue, business activities have almost come to a halt and businesses were fac-

near future.

He said in these circumstances, it has become difficult for businesses to meet their day-to-day expenses and pay the wages to idle labor.

He said deferring the refault. ceipt of utility bills from businesses for few months would provide them some relief.

ICCI President said that energy cost in Pakistan was very high that has pushed up the cost of doing business manifold. This situation has made it difficult for industry to remain competitive and

meet domestic & international orders. He said that high energy cost has pushed many businesses towards de-

He said that government has announced a stimulus packages for industry, but it might not save many industrial units.

He appealed to the Prime Minister Imran Khan to also announce a bailout package, especially for steel industry to save it from destruction.

He said that business community was standing with the government in this difficult time and would contribute to save the labor class from unemployment.

## **CITY BRIEFS** AIOU's employees get salary well before time

#### DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) paid salary to its employees all over the country for the current month well be before time, by March 25. The salary was disbursed through their banks' account to facilitate them in the wake of COVID-19 (coronavirus), a press release Thursday said. On the directives of the Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Zia-Ul-Qayyum, the wages have also been paid to daily wages' labourers employees, considering them as working in routine. At the difficult time, when the country is facing the threat of coronavirus epidemic, the employees were also given relaxation in attending their offices and only necessary staff was put on duty, to attend day-today work. Special arrangements have been made to facilitate the students for enrollment in the ongoing

admission through online.

### Seven places declared quarantine in Peshawar APP

PESHAWAR: As many as seven places in Peshawar have been declared quarantine where suspects of coronavirus would be kept. One quarantine has been setup at Doranpor Peshawar where 146 people were kept, according to officials documents. As many as 195 houses at welfare trust colonv

Badabair, seven houses at Shaheen Colony Bara Road and one house at Bashirabad were declared quarantine. Similarly, 17 houses were declared quarantine at posh phase 3 Hayatabad, 25 houses on Canal Road and 50 houses at Karkhano market.

## PEIRA establishes facilitation desk to help private schools

APP

ISLAMABAD: Private Educational Institutions Regulatory Authority (PEIRA) has temporarily panned public entry in the jurisdiction of authority in wake of Corona Virus (COVID-19). According to a notification, PEIRA has also established a facilitation desk to continue the daily work and help in resolving private schools issues. PEIRA has directed the officials of private schools and colleges to submit their forms at the desk. They have also been requested to cooperate the staff on duty for

smooth working. The step has been taken in the large public interest and their safety.



ISLAMABAD: MCI officials carrying out cleanliness drive in the Capital. - DNA

running a public aware-

ness campaign against

the spread of Corona

Virus. DC Islamabad Mr.

Hamza Shafqaat appreci-

ated the role of D Watson

Group in the fight against

Corona Virus by provid-

ing free masks to the

people of Islamabad and

a ventilator to Poly Clin-

ic Islamabad which was

direly needed during the

current emergency situ-

ation. Mr. Ahsan further

added that D Watson staff

also deserves appprecia-

tion by media as they are

working day and night to

fight against Corona and

ensuring smooth availa-

bility of medicines and

health supplies.

## Ahsan Bakhtawari donates ventilator for Poly Clinic

#### **IBRAR KHAN**

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari CEO D Watson group has donated a ventilator to the Deputy Commissioner Islamabad, Mr. Hamza Shaqaat to fulfill the emergency requirement of ventilators in Poly Clinic Islamabad which is facing an acute shortage of ventilators at the moment. On the advice of Deputy Commissioner the ventilator was handed over to the administration of Poly Clinic. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, while talking at the occasion said that we are actively contributing our



help the government and the health workers in this present situation of health emergency. We at D Watson and our staff is working day and night to fight against the Corona Virus pandemic and our struggle will keep going on till the complete eradication of Corona Virus. He further said that we are also

## Japan approves grants for uplift projects

#### FROM PAGE 01

The grant of US\$ 73,514 provided to LAMP will be utilized for the expansion of a primary section of the school for boys and girls in a village of Khyber district to overcome the problem of overcrowded classrooms. Currently, the school having classes from Play Group till Grade 10 has over 950 enrollment, and over 300 students sit outside their classrooms in open space because of the limited sitting capacity in the classrooms. Earlier, the school was expanded up to grade 10 with the financial assistance provided by the Government of Japan in financial year 2011 and 2015.

The grant of US\$ 64,868 provided to Friends Welfare Association will be spent for the construction of a building for primary and middle school in Torghar district of KPK. At present over 130 girls and boys use the premises of a local mosque for their classes because of the lack of availability of school building. The new school building will also be used in second shift for middle school classes for girls specifically. The project

is expected to provide a conducive environment to the students for study.

The grant of US\$ 42,818 provided to Hana Development Council will assist in installation of electricity scheme for seven communities of Mandi Bahauddin district in Punjab province where there is no facility of electricity at present. Together with a local power generation company and participation of local communities, the project will install electricity equipment - transformers, polls, electricity lines and meters and connect it with the national grid. The scheme is expected to benefit over 1650 local community members.

AHAT will spend the grant of US\$ 55,030 for the expansion of a public elementary school in Kasur district. Currently, the NGO runs the school in a rented building, which has poor infrastructure and limited capacity in the classrooms. With the construction of new school building, children will be able to continue their education in conducive environment. Over 700 boys and girls will get benefit from this project.

Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan,

MATSUDA Kuninori, congratulated the recipient organizations for winning the Japanese grant for their respective development projects. He expressed his hope that these projects will help girls and boys to have an easy access to their basic right of education and help local communities get maximum benefit from the rural electrification project. He especially added his strong desire that education will promote understanding and respect to the others and different culture, then will promote peace and stability.

Japan, sharing our experience of modernization and rapid economic growth after the WWII, has been extending assistance in the area of education in Pakistan. For those interested in Japanese experience, Embassy is happy to share this with the education institutes in Pakistan, he mentioned.

Japan will continue to support the people of Pakistan to improve their living standard and these project will contribute to strengthen decade's long friendly relationship between the people of Japan and Pakistan, said Ambassador MATSUDA.

## **Solid Waste Association** offers support to **combat Coronavirus**

management services were

lagging due to the capacity

"We offer our services to

the concerned local govern-

ments in the entire country

to combat the spreading

threat of the Coronavirus

which has so far attacked

over 1000 people in Paki-

stan killing 8 persons to

Major cities like Karachi

and Lahore are also now

failing to provide proper

waste management servic-

es due to lack of capacity in

their systems. We feel that

it's our duty to step up to

the call of the day and of-

fer ourselves as the front

line fighters against this

dangerous threat. The Sanitary Workers, Jharoo Kash

Union, Drivers & Mechan-

ics Union and all other al-

lied organizations are with

us in this campaign which

are offering their services

for the entire country.

date." said Bhatti.

of the local municipality.

#### SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Solid Waste Association of Pakistan (SWAP) held an emergency meeting of the trade organization at its Head Office in Islamabad to discuss the prevailing situation in the country due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

"We realized that the root cause of this Pandemic is lack of hygiene and cleanliness" said Jamil Asghar Bhatti, Chairman SWAP in his address to the executive committee which was convened with representatives from Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan and KPK. The executive committee expressed its desire to offer all out support voluntarily to the Government in providing spray, fumigation and cleanliness campaigns throughout the country especially in far flung areas and towns where the waste

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### Entry of passenger buses, vans banned on motorways

APP

ISLAMABAD: National Highways and Motorway Police on Thursday announced ban on entry passenger buses and vans in the Motorway network to make lockdown against coronavirus successful, said a press release issued here. However vehicles carrying goods, petroleum products and daily use items with minimum staff would be allowed. Private vehicles with maximum two passengers giving valid reason of travelling would also be allowed to enter the network.

## **Reduction in POL** prices widely hailed

APP

ISLAMABAD: People from different walks of life on Thursday lauded the government decision to reduce the petroleum prices by Rs 15 per liter, hoping that it would help bring down the transportation cost of essential items, especially edibles, for benefit of the common man. They said there was economic slowdown due to the coronavirus threat in the country and termed the reduction in petroleum prices a 'timely relief' for the common man. After announcement of the relief package and subsequent notification of the Finance Ministry, the prices of Petrol, High Speed Diesel (HSD), Kerosene Oil and Light Diesel Oil (LDO) had been reduced by Rs 15 per liter. Now, the petrol was being sold at Rs96.58, the HSD at Rs107.25, the Kerosene oil at Rs77.45 and the LDO at Rs62.51 per liter at all the fuel stations.



# 03

## Presidential election to decide which path US takes on Iran

**W** OLLOWING more primary elections last week, it appears that former Vice President Joe Biden is very likely to be the Democratic Party's nominee to compete against President Donald Trump in the November election. Recent retaliatory strikes between the US and Iran-affiliated militants in Iraq have highlighted that Iran will continue to pose a challenge for whoever is the next US president. Trump's presidency has represented a major break with previous Republican and Democratic foreign policy precedents. Biden promises an approach much more similar to that of former President Barack Obama. However, the world has changed significantly in the last four years, and even the type of centrist foreign policy experts that Biden would likely look to for advice would suggest some changes to US foreign policy.

Trump's approach toward Iran is already well known. His disdain for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) – and for the Obama administration's negotiation of it – was clear during his campaign for president. He withdrew the US from the agreement in May 2018. His administration subsequently imposed severe sanctions on Iran, as the key element of a "maximum pressure" campaign. Under Trump, America has been more assertive toward Iran militarily while seeking to avoid an all-out war. Most notably, a US strike killed key Iranian figure Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani in January.

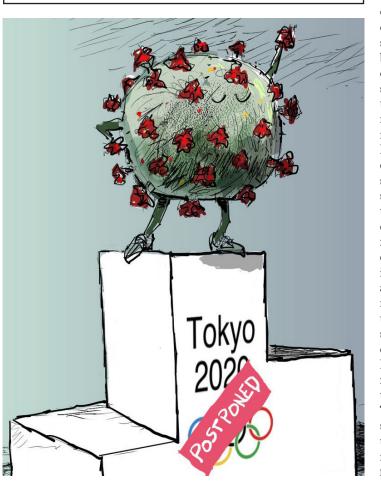
If Trump wins re-election, it is likely that his administration will continue its maximum pressure approach. The cycle of escalation and de-escalation between Iran and the US would also be likely to continue. This would raise the ongoing risk of war.

Biden has defended the JCPOA, saying that it significantly reduced the risk of Iran developing nuclear weapons and created space for diplomacy to help manage other problems related to Iran. If he became president, Biden has said that he would rejoin the JCPOA, on the condition that Iran returned to compliance with the agreement. He suggests that restarting the JCPOA would be a first step, rebuilding US credibility and re-establishing an international consensus against an Iranian nuclear weapons program. He would hope to build on that to gain other compromises from Iran and to ensure multilateral cooperation to contain Iran's regional activities. – *Arab News* 

# Slamabar POST Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Vol: 01 Issue: 05 Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960 Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad



## Cut in interest rate; will it serve the purpose?

N an extraordinary development, the State Bank of Pakistan announced a large cut in the discount rate equal to 1.5 percentage points. This happened in an unscheduled meeting of the monetary policy committee that was called at short notice and deliberated while the prime minister and his team in Islamabad announced the details of the trillion-rupee-plus stimulus package. It was, by all accounts, an extraordinary day, with the government coming up with a mid-year stimulus package of unprecedented size together with the central bank announcing a rate cut, which, if coupled with the previous 75bps cut a week earlier, amounts to 2.25 percentage points, probably the single largest cut in over a decade. With both these announcements, the stabilisation that began under the auspices of the IMF programme now stands terminated and the government's hand has been forced to move towards supporting growth.

Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures. Now that the decision to move towards stimulus has been made in so comprehensive a manner, the next thing to look out for is stimulus-induced instability. An example would be the exchange rate where the effects of the rate cut have been felt right away as the rupee fell by Rs2.6 to the dollar in the interbank market the very next day. The finance team may well have placed the bet that with oil prices crashing and a large deflation about to sweep the economy with collapsing demand, there is ample room to resort to extraordinary steps like steep rate cuts and ramped-up spending. There is no reason to fault them for having made this judgement call, because these are, after all, extraordinary times. But having made the judgement call, they must now show some fortitude in the face of the market reactions that will inevitably come. The finance team, now led by the finance adviser and the State Bank governor, must make their government colleagues aware of the risks of the moves that are being made, and ensure that the authorities do not panic if the market sees sharp swings in the coming days. These swings will be there wherever the market is still operational, stock trading and the exchange rate being key. Demands for shoring up the exchange rate must now be managed, and those for a stock market bailout fund, which are sure to come at some point, must be fended off comprehensively. - Courtesy DAWN

## **COVID-19: Clash between Globalization & Apartheid**

#### Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan



Despite US and western media propaganda, China has merged as "hope of the last restore". China is helping out more than 100 countries around the globe to fight against ongoing uncontrollable COVID-19 pandemic with supply of medical staff, modern equipment, medicines and financial assistance Chinese President Xi called various EU head of the states and offered his unconditional support to curb the ongoing COVID-19. Chinese government has also sent financial assistance, medical staff, gadgetries and artificial intelligence installations to Pakistan for further strengthening its capacity to fight against COVID-19.

From religious clergy to showbiz stars, from intellectuals to mediocre masses, from researchers to functionalists and from rulers to rural monads everybody is pleading to have a "global response" free from any discrimination, marginalization, bigotry, hatred and cruelty against COVID-19. They all call the world to show solidarity and care for each other. However, various powerful countries and arrogant leaders are not showing any solidarity to rescue the struggling people and communities from COVID-19 epidemic. Despite repeated requests of the government of Pakistan to lift socio-economic sanctions against Iran, the US administration seems to be not ready to give some comfort and ease to Iran government and its people to fight against COVID-19 due to which despite sincere efforts of Iranian government, the death toll is on the rise. Out of its super power "obsession" and "wise man syndrome" the US is not ready to seek guidance and help from Cuba which with joint collaboration of China has made a very effective medicine for COVID-19. So, every state of the US is going to be sieged because of the constant denial of US government and uninterrupted political inflexibility towards CUBA and China. Israel the "champion of illegal occupation" has rejected to ease out coronavirus infections and showed no intention of easing apartheid to make sure Palestinians are able to face the epidemic under more humane and suitable conditions. Despite ongoing global survival crisis in shape of coronavirus infections and "political debacle" within Israel itself, the forces of darkness and destruction are on the move to launch raids on various people and communities living in the Issawiya neighborhood in East Jerusalem and home demolitions in places like Kafr Qasim village and the destruction of crops in Bedouin communities in the Naqab desert. According to latest information (March 25, 2020), four Palestinian prisoners has been tested positive for COVID-19, the Israeli government has so far refused to heed calls to release the 5,000 Palestinians including 180 children. The Palestine authority and its people do not expect any mercy from Israel to lift the incapacitating siege on the Gaza Strip, which has annihilated its public services.

Moreover, in a political move, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has tried to exclude the mostly Palestinian Joint List from the formation of an emergency unity government to tackle the outbreak which may be taken as act of sever apartheid. On the other hand as its mentor US (China Virus rhetoric) Israel have been quick to represent Palestinians as carriers of the virus and a threat to public health.

The Palestinian Ministry of Health (PMH) announced it had confirmed the first seven cases of the coronavirus in the occupied Palestinian territory; Israeli Defense minister Naftali Bennett was quick to shut down the city of Bethlehem, where all the cases were located. On the other hand, some members of the Jewish population of Israel, out rightly refused to shut down religious schools and businesses.

It seems that apart from the century old systematic subjugation and discernment, during the COVID-19 epidemic, Palestinians will be facing another consequence of occupation and apartheid. The situation in the West Bank may seem bleak, but the one in the Gaza Strip is simply catastrophic. The United Nations announced that the strip will be unlivable by 2020. It is now 2020 and the residents of the Gaza Strip apart from inhuman living conditions - are now also facing a COVID-19 outbreak.

Occupied Kashmir is another prime example of Indian "hegemonic apartheid". Many cases of COV-ID-19 have been detected in the valley but still Indian authorities and forces are not ready to relax the lives of besieged Kashmiris. The people of occupied Kashmiris are under blockade for the last 250 days and even basic rights and necessities of life have not been in reach of them. It has now labeled as "biggest jail" of the world. It fears that without normalcy, a "human catastrophe" may outbreak in valley of beauty, Kashmir where beasts are treating the people like bandits.

Unfortunately, widespread of COVID-19 has also produced a "widening gap" between various communi-

ORONAVIRUS has now badly damaged the global economy. Fears of acute recession are haunting regional economies as well as their alliances. COVID-19 has now emerged as one of the biggest non-state actor's security threat. It has also severed regional as well as security repercussions. Although, it is a new "global leveler" because of its "immense global" reach and potential of devastations still humanity is at the mercy of elements of planned socio-economic marginalization, sanctions, political isolation, human rights violation and last but not least, perpetual apartheid.

Despite US and western media propaganda, China has merged as "hope of the last restore". China is helping out more than 100 countries around the globe to fight against ongoing uncontrollable COV-ID-19 pandemic with supply of medical staff, modern equipment, medicines and financial assistance. Right from the beginning, Palestinians have not been allowed to establish their own health system. Initial the British discouraged the formation of a Palestinian-run healthcare sector. Subsequently, the British colonialists and various Western missionaries established medical facilities in these araes. Meanwhile, the Jewish settlers were allowed to set up their own healthcare system, funded generously from abroad and run independently of the mandate.

Unfortunately, Palestinians have been at the receiving end due to which many missionaries left and closed down their clinics during World War II and after 1948, the British withdrew, leaving behind an ill-performing healthcare infrastructure. In 1949, Egypt annexed Gaza. The following year, Jordan did the same with the West Bank. Over the next 17 years, Cairo and Amman provided for the Palestinian population living under their rule, but they did not really establish a well-functioning healthcare system.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) in the Near East had to step up its services, providing primary healthcare, while the Palestinians started building a network of charitable healthcare facilities.

With just 1.23 beds per 1,000 people, 2,550 working doctors, less than 20 intensive care specialists and less than 120 ventilators in all public hospitals, the occupied West Bank is facing a public health disaster if the authorities do not contain the spread of COVID-19.

ties in the world and Pakistan is not any exception. Unsterilized Shia devotees of Pakistan returned recently from Iran have created a serious security threat in many parts of the country. Public anger is on the rise among the other local communities which may trigger ethnic chaos in the country. Uncontrolled mobilization of Tablighi Jamaat (the outreach society or the society for spreading faith) is also getting momentum in spreading COVID-19 in the country. So faith and factualism is inching towards a fatal collide in the country which may create a serious security threat in the days to come.

World and regions are now at the mercy of a global response full of solidarity against COVID-19 but it seems that world superpowers and movers and shakers are not ready to listen the weakening voices of struggling people and communities alike. They still believe in brutal persuasions of apartheid, socio-economic marginalization and last but not least, sanctions.

From Pope to Pop, from reformists to traditionalists, from communisms to communalism, socialism to capitalism every actor of the human survival on this planet is requesting for global coordination and regional collaboration against COVID-19. Let us hope against hope that doves of peace and harmony may fly high to shun horrendous crimes against struggling humanity in Palestine, Kashmir, Nagorno-Karabakh, Northern Cyprus, Syria, Yemen and Sudan because Coronavirus has become a new political leveler. It may be.

## Learning from China's Exemplary Response to COVID-19

#### Kiran Naz

It is not without reason that international bodies such as World Health Organization (WHO) are all praise for Chinese response to COVID-19. The Chinese experience of fighting the disease tells that response against this plague would have to be timely, strong, all-around and the whole nations would have to rise to this challenge. Well done China. Now it is up to the rest of the world to play its part.

A S the whole world now deals with deadly impacts of COVID-19, time is telling that the way China dealt with the virus after its outbreak late last year was highly effective, timely, and example setting.

The global pandemic of CoronaVirus – also known as COVID-19 – has now reached almost all the parts of the world, almost half a million people are infected, and total deaths have crossed the 20000 mark at the time of writing of this piece, on March 25.

Alarmingly, this has all happened in a quick span of just a few weeks, signaling much worse to come.

While the world – Europe and the US in particular – brace for an extraordinary attack of the pandemic, China at the same time is announcing to open Wuhan, the capital of its worst infected province, Hubei. From Wednesday, March 25 onwards, intra-city restrictions are being eased and from the 8th of April, the citizens of the city would also be able to travel to the rest of the country.

With more than 80 thousands of people infected with CoronaVirus, China still tops the table of the nation with worst impact so far. However, the positive side of this picture is that more than 70 thousand people in China have been cured out of disease. The fatality rate, at over 3200, is around 3%.

By contrast, Italy has become the country with more than double the deaths recorded in China, the highest in the world. Italy fatality rate with around 7000 deaths out of 60 thousand positive cases comes to the tune of 12%, 4 times higher than in China.

The point here is not to criticize any country, much less the one facing the highest number of deaths, but to point towards the toll that pandemic has taken, correspondingly. Voices are now emerging that Italy's response was not as timely and all-around as that of China.

When China imposed strict measures to keep its citizens within homes and businesses closed all across major urban centers, it was criticized as suppression of movement and infringing upon civic rights. China not only put the whole of Wuhan city into a complete lockdown, but major cities also went through strong blockades. Businesses were kept close weeks after Chinese New Year.

Transport – road, rail, air and water borne – was closed. And Migrants workers were asked to stay at homes as factories and work places were stopped from working.

The whole world saw that these measures not only saved millions – perhaps tens of millions – from getting infected but China also provided the world with necessary time before the pandemic could strike elsewhere, if from China.

Although, it is now emerging that what is the world is seeing now did not necessarily originate inside China.

In this period, China effectively mobilized all its central and provincial resources. It built massive makeshift hospitals, deployed state-of-the-art technology, and its doctors and paramedics worked tirelessly. Chinese leadership was leading these efforts from the front, setting an example like no other.

More importantly, Chinese people paid heed to the call of their leadership and thus played their part by staying home and isolated, safeguarding themselves and others, as long as it was necessary.

China also rolled out a number of financial incentives and taxation relaxations for the businesses impacted by the lockdown, specially small and medium enterprises, so that employment and livelihoods would not be affected beyond a certain extent.

The countries that took it lightly are now suffering the most: not only Italy, but other European countries, the US and Iran are just some examples. In China, the local infections now are just next to zero, while the real danger is now coming from the 'imported' cases, which are seeing a constant rise. Even in this case, China has imposed timely restrictions and measures.

For example, every international traveler to Beijing has to undergo necessary 14 day quarantine upon arrival.

It is heartening to note that China, after by and large controlling the malaise on its soil, is now going all out to help other affected nations in a big way.

As the pandemic takes Pakistanis into its grip fastly, large scale help from China has already started to arrive. Such Chinese help is also finding ways to the developed Europe, Iran and elsewhere.

Nobody says that what China did on its soil can be replicated as it was to just about any other country or situation. However, Chinese experience tells us that this is not a pandemic to take lightly, no matter what is the level of modernizations of a country's healthcare system or resources at a government's disposal.

It is not without reason that international bodies such as World Health Organization (WHO) are all praise for Chinese response to COVID-19.

The Chinese experience of fighting the disease tells that response against this plague would have to be timely, strong, all-around and the whole nations would have to rise to this challenge. Well done China. Now it is up to the rest of the world to play its part.

The writer is an Islamabad-based legal professional and a freelance contributor







**Masks Donation Ceremony** By China Gezhouba Group Company Limited

ISLAMABADI: CEO China Gezhouba Group Company Shi Yu pose for a group photo with the WAPDA Authorities and others during the handing over the face mask donation ceremony at WAPDA Office: - DNA

time on incentive package

for National Electric Vehi-

cle policy, comprising Min-

Austerity and Institutional

Reforms, Deputy Chair-

sion, SA PM on Commerce

troleum, Secretaries Indus-

by Ministry of Climate

of patience is much higher

Advising the people she

said "There is no other

than Pakistan.

# **ECC** approves four grants

ECC formed an inter-ministerial committee, to firm up proposals in a month's time

#### FIAZ CHAUDHRY

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue Dr. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh. chaired the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet here at the Cabinet Division.

Four technical supplementary grants (1: Rs. 275 million in favor of Ministry of Housing and works for capital outlay on civil works, 2: Rs. 84,352,265 equivalent to \$ 532,152 to be provided to NADRA for FATA TDP Emergency Re-

covery Project, 3: Rs, 5500 million for Sustainable Development Goals Achievement Program, 4: Rs. 5 ister Planning & Developbillion to NDMA for fightment, Minister Science and technology, SA PM on ing the spread of Corona virus on emergency basis) were approved by ECC. The technical supplemenman Planning Commistary grant approved for NDMA shall be utilized to (Chairman), SA PM on Pegain logistic support and try and Climate Change. the provision of different types of personal protec-ECC acknowledged the tion equipments against role and efforts made

Change on preparing face masks etc. ECC formed an inter-min-Incentive proposals for National Electric Vehicle isterial committee, to firm up proposals in a month's Policy.

the virus like respirators/

'Pakistan contributes to 66 studies on Coronavirus' APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Chaudhry Fawad Hussain Thursday said Pakistan was also contributing to the 66 global studies being conducted on Coronavirus adopting three different approaches including Re-purposed Drugs, Antibodies and Vaccines.

Taking to twitter, Fawad Chaudhry informed that out of these 66 studies worldwide, 43 studies were focused on new vaccines. 16 on new antibiotics and seven on antibodies

The minister said "all the major health researchers in the world were focusing on this research and Pakistan was also included in

# **King Salman calls for** a united global response to COVID

We are holding this meeting to carry out our responsibilities as the leaders of the world's largest economies, in order to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, which requires that we take firm measures on various fronts.

DNA IEDDAH: Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman has called for a united global response to combat coronavirus

On the eve of a virtual global summit of G20 leaders, convened by Saudi Arabia, which currently holds the group's presidency, on coronavirus outbreak and its economic fallout, King Salman made a strong appeal for a coordinated united action.

"As the world confronts the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges to healthcare systems and the global economy, we convene this extraordinary G20 summit to unite efforts towards a global response, King Salman said in a tweet.

Earlier, Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman, deputy premier and minister of defense, and US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo held talks over a phone call and they ex-

extend our deepest condolences to all countries around the world and to their respective citizens over the lives lost to this pandemic, wishing speedy recovery for all those who are infected.

The impact of this pandemic has spread to reach the global economy, financial markets, trade, and

est economies, in order

to combat the COVID-19

pandemic, which requires

that we take firm meas-

ures on various fronts.

This pandemic has great-

ly taken toll on human

lives and caused tremen-

dous suffering to many

people around the world.

And here, I would like to



global supply chains, hampering growth and development and reversing the gains accomplished in the previous years.

This human crisis requires a global response. The world counts on us to come together and cooperate in order to face this challenge.

On the health front, the Saudi G20 Presidency took the lead and worked with partners and relevant organizations to take all necessary actions in order to contain the spread of COVID-19 and safeguard people's health. And, here, we value the effec-

tive measures adopted by different countries in this regard. We reaffirm our full support for the World Health Organization in coordinating the efforts to counter this pandemic. To complement these efforts, the G20 must assume the responsibility of reinforcing cooperation in financing research and development for therapeutics and a vaccine for COVID-19 and ensure the availability of the vital medical supplies and equipment. We must also strengthen the global preparedness to counter infectious diseases that may spread in the future.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Shahzad Waseem and Governor Punjab Ch Sarwar visited Corona

Tele Medicine Centre at PIMS. DNA

pressed deep concern over coronavirus and the need for all countries to work together to contain the pandemic, according

## staying at homes: Kanwal

Corona can be defeated by

#### STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Member National Assembly Kanwal Shauzab Thursday urged the opposition leaderships to show solidarity with people by helping them in this difficult time, besides supporting the government initiatives to stop the spread of corona virus in the country.

Talking to a private news

### Nine doctors die from coronavirus in Philippines

#### APP

MANILA: Nine doctors have died in the Philippines from the coronavirus, the country's top medical association said Thursday, as hospitals were overwhelmed and medics complained about a lack of protection on the front lines.

The announcement of the doctors' deaths heightened fears that the scale of the health crisis in the Philippines is much worse than is being officially reported, with the confirmed virus death toll at just 38.

The main island of Luzon, home to 55 million people, is in the second week of a lockdown to contain the spread of the disease, however medics are warning there is a surge in cases. The Philippine Medical Association said Thursday a ninth doctor had died of the virus, and that health workers were not getting enough protection.

"If it were up to me, test the frontliners first and test them again after seven days. Doctors could be carriers themselves," Benito Atienza, vice president of the Philippine Medical Association told AFP.

channel, she said the corona virus had engulfed more than 190 countries in merely a few months

where the figure numbers

way to stop the spread of corona virus, but to stay at home and maintain social distancing in this difficult

time." Replying to a question ,she said the doctors and paramedics who were performing duties to attend corona hit patients, deserved all the praise, because they were facing threat directly.

## **Russia to ground** all Int'l flights from midnight

APP MOSCOW: Russia will halt all international flights from midnight on Friday under a government decree listing new measures against the coronavirus outbreak.

Thursday orders aviation authorities to halt all regular and charter flights, with the exception of spe-

cial flights evacuating Russian citizens from abroad. Russia's civil aviation agency Rosaviatsiya will halt "regular and charter air travel from Russian airports to airports of foreign states and back." according to the decree

create an effective and

dynamic system based on

She said that launch of a

a unique app by the PM

was poised to enhance cit-

izens' access to the latest

This app, she added.

would help citizens find

ways to solve their prob-

By using this unique app,

the people would not have

to visit government offic-

es, they would be able to

contact the concerned de-

partments online to meet

lems at their homes.

public service.

technology.

The decree published on published on the government's website. The grounding starts at midnight Friday, or 2100 GMT Thursday.

such efforts". CJ visits

district courts

APP

ISLAMABAD, Mar 26 (APP):The Chief Justice Islamabad High Court (IHC) Thursday visited district courts in the Federal capital to review the arrangements being carried out for safety of litigants, judges and lawyers. CJ Athar Minallah, on the occasion, stressed upon maintaining the social distancing in court premises and ordered for compliance of such at any cost. "There are many things that the government should be doing that we are doing instead," he remarked on the occasion. He said that courts were op-

erational in such conditions for last seventy years where they should not be for dispensing speedy justice. The CJ said that Session

judge has appointed a team which was visiting jail along with administration for monitoring the steps taken there

in 8 months of FY 2019-20 Agencies ISLAMABAD: The imports of medicinal products into the country during the first eight months of current financial year (2019-20) dipped by 8.82 percent as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

Pakistan imported medicinal products of worth US \$ 677.803 million during July-February (2019-20) compared to the imports of US \$ 743.353 million during July- February (2018-19), showing negative growth of 8.82 percent, according to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS)

In terms of quantity, Pakistan imported 15,043 metric tons of medicinal products during the period under review as compared to the imports of 15,142 metric tons during corresponding period of last year, showing nominal decrease of 0.65 percent in term of quantity.

Medicinal imports dip over 8%

Meanwhile, on year-on-year basis, the medicinal imports declined by 0.29 percent in February 2020 when compared to the imports of the same month of last year. The medicinal imports during February 2020 were recorded at \$ 87.020 million against the imports of \$ 87.274 million in February

2019. On month-on-month basis, the medicinal imports however witnessed increase of 15.48 percent during February 2020 when compared to the imports of \$75.354 million in January 2019, the PBS data revealed. It is pertinent to mention

here that the country's merchandise trade deficit plunged by 26.06 percent during the first eight months of the current fiscal year (2019-20) as compared to the deficit of the same months of last year. During the period under review, the country's exports registered about 3.62 per cent growth.

Last date for KCCI's membership renewal now April 30

#### DNA

KARACHI: DNA Referring to a notification issued by Directorate General of Trade Organizations (DGTO), the spokesman of Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI) has informed that the last date for renewal of KCCI's membership has been extended from March 31, 2020 to April 30, 2020 due to the outbreak of coronavirus pandemic.

## 40 facilities at doorsteps, PM's vision to maximize tech for social benefit: Firdous

#### DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan on Thursday said that use of modern technology to deliver more than forty facilities at the doorsteps of the masses was practical proof of Prime Minister Imran Khan's vision of a

ment. In a series of tweets, the SAPM said that the prime objective of Prime Min-

govern-

people-friendly

ister Imran Khan was to their needs.

> The entire nation has to be united to tackle the challenge of the coronavirus, and everyone should

play a responsible role at this difficult time, she stressed. With the use of this app,

citizens will be able to re-



port to the authorities if any medical store or pharmacy was selling masks

at expensive rates, she added. This app will help promote coordination and cooperation among all relevant organizations, she remarked.

In addition the app includes e-policing, emergency services, domicile, ID card, land revenue record, arms licenses, registration of vehicles, payment of token taxes, issuance of birth and death certificates and various other facilities.

## Two coronavirus patients recovered

#### Agencies

PESHAWAR: Adviser to the Chief Minister for Information, Ajmal Khan Wazir here Thursday said two Corona patients were recovered and were sent home. In a media briefing, Ajmal Wazir said two Corona patients, who were admitted in police services hospital Peshawar, has been fully recovered and were discharged. He said more patients are making recovery and their conditions are improving. The Adviser said test of 159 persons have been cleared and result of 317 others were awaited. The number of Corona virus patients in KP is 121. Wazir said Chief Minister KP was personally supervising the whole situation and availability of food services in the province. He said sufficient food services and essential commodities were available and maintained that there was no shortage of essential commodities in markets. Wazir said Corona virus can be defeated through cooperation of masses.

Published by Ansar Mahmood Bhatti, Printed at Rohani Art Press, Islamabad