



# Islamabad POST

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**Kashmir is unfinished agenda of partition**

**Pakistan stand on Nagorno-Karabakh appreciable**

**Air link between Kazakhstan and Pakistan vital**



**Briefs**

**Punjab govt decides lock down for 14 days**

DNA

LAHORE:Chief Minister of Punjab Usman Buzdar has decided to lock down city for 14 days. This decision came during the meeting presided by Chief Minister Punjab Usman Buzdar on Monday. CM Usman Buzdar will officially announce lock down decision within an hour.

**No night-long prayers in mosques, shrines in Kashmir**

APP

ISLAMABAD: In Indian occupied Kashmir, no night-long prayers were held on Shab-e-Meraj in any major mosques or shrines in Kashmir due to intensified clamp-down imposed by Indian authorities in the name of Coronavirus threat. According to Kashmir Media Service, Shab-e-Meraj is observed on 27th of Rajab of Islamic lunar calendar every year. Every year, the biggest congregational on this occasion was traditionally witnessed at revered Hazratbal shrine in Srinagar where thousands of devotees would assemble. However, no such observation was held at the shrine, this year. The authorities had forced the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Wakf Board on Saturday to announce suspension of celebrations.

**Section 144 imposed in Islamabad**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The local administration has imposed Section 144 in federal capital in a bid to curb the spread of the pandemic coronavirus on the directions of Prime Minister Imran Khan.

- Inside...**
- **Iranian ambassador article**  
— Page-03
  - **Azerbaijan support on Karabakh**  
— Back Page
  - **Indonesia steps up protection**  
— Back Page
  - **Seminar on Khojaly at NUML**  
— Page 02

# Azeri, Uzbek Presidents vow to cement ties with Pakistan

*Send letter to President Arif Alvi; greet Pakistani nation on Pakistan Day occasion; wish peace and prosperity; Say our values serve as a solid basis for our active dialogue; the future highest level dialogue and negotiations with you will give an impetus to raise our partnership in political, trade-economic investment, transport and communications, cultural and humanitarian spheres to a completely new level.*

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: IlhamAliyev President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev in their separate messages have congratulated President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi and people of Pakisgtan on the occasion of Pakistan Day. In a letter written to President of Pakistan, the Azerbaijani President said, “on my own behalf and on behalf of the people of Azerbaijan, I extend my heartiest congratulations to You and to Your people on the National Day of Your country – Pakistan Day”. He further said that the present level of relations between Azerbaijan and Pakistan that are bound with the ties of traditional friendship and brotherhood is gratifying. “I am confident that our strate-



gic partnership, particularly the cooperation within the framework of Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Non-Aligned Movement, will serve further the interests of our countries and peoples”. “On this notable day, I wish strong health to You and success in Your endeavors, and tranquility and prosperity to the brotherly people of Pakistan”. Meanwhile, President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev in his

letter written to President Dr. Arif Alvi greeted him and Pakistani nation on the occasion of Pakistan Day. The letter reads,” I would like to sincerely congratulate you on the occasion of the National Day of your country-Pakistan Day and express my best wishes to friendly people of Pakistan. He further said, he would like to emphasize that unique ancient history; similar cultural and

spiritual values that are closely linked to the peoples of Uzbekistan and Pakistan still serve as a solid basis for our active dialogue. “We are particularly pleased that large scale, long term and mutually beneficial relations between our brotherly countries have been rapidly developing in various fields in recent years. Undoubtedly, the future highest level dialogue and negotiations

with you will give an impetus to raise our partnership in political, trade-economic investment, transport and communications, cultural and humanitarian spheres to a completely new level. “I would like to take this opportunity to wish you good health, long life and new successes in your state activities, as well as to the friendly people of Pakistan-further development, prosperity and progress.

## APNS urges PM to include media dues in relief package

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The All Pakistan newspapers society has called upon the Prime Minister Imran Khan to include payment of media dues in his relief package scheduled to be announced tomorrow.

Hameed Haroon, President, and Sarmad Ali, Secretary general APNS appealed to the Prime

Minister to instruct the federal and provincial governments of Punjab and KP to release the advertising dues of the media amounting to approximately Rs 6 billion, on priority basis to enable the crisis ridden media industry to effectively play its role in creating awareness about COVID-19 and combatting fake news. The APNS office bearers stated in their

statement that newspapers are an authentic source of information and in these trying times when things are spinning out of control they are an essential tool to combat fake news and rumour mongering. They requested the Prime Minister to announce this as part of the relief package that he intends to announce on Tuesday. The newspaper industry

is going through an acute financial crisis due to a cut in government advertising and delay in payments of advertising dues, they said. COVID-19 is likely to further aggravate this crisis. The gesture of the Prime Minister to clear the advertising dues will enable newspapers to play their due role in helping the government to fight against the pandemic crisis.

## Kashmir is unfinished agenda of partition: PM

*He advised the countrymen not to panic and just follow the precautionary steps being advised by the health experts in order to beat the pandemic.*

“We have capacity to deal with this crucial situation.” He advised the countrymen not to panic and just follow the precautionary steps being advised by the health experts in order to beat the pandemic. He said March 23, is a golden day in country’s history. On this day the Muslims of India demanded a sovereign state for them. The premier said Kashmir is unfinished agenda of the partition. “Pakistan will continue to support Kashmiris at all diplomatic forums.” Yesterday, PM Imran Khan had said that a lockdown is not being considered as 25% population of Pakistan is below the poverty line who cannot survive if a 14-day closure of the country occurs. He was addressing to the countrymen on government strategy and current development with regards to the global coronavirus pandemic.

## Pak urges global effort for combating Coronavirus

APP

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan, in the wake of Coronavirus situation worldwide, has urged the international community to join hands in dealing with the menace and take measures such as lifting of sanctions on Iran, relieving burden of debt-ridden developing countries and ensuring access of medical and essential supplies

to Kashmiris in the Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK). The call was made by Pakistan in a letter written by Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi to Josep Borrell, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, European Union on Sunday, a press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here on

Monday said. “As we all recognize, Coronavirus (Covid-19) is now a global pandemic which has affected nearly all countries of the world. These are extremely testing times for the entire humanity and, therefore, it becomes all the more important for the international community to join hands in dealing with this menace,” he said.

## Two infected with Virus in Sargodha

APP

SARGODHA: A spokesman of the Health department said that a total of 83 pilgrims from Sargodha district have been present at Quarantine center in Dera Ghazi Khan for the last 11 days out of which only 10 pilgrims have confirmed affected with Corona virus while others have been declared cleared.

# Bulgaria, Pak diplomatic ties improving with each passing day: ambassador

*Bulgaria and Pakistan have always enjoyed friendly ties built upon mutual respect and convergence of views and global and regional developments; trade between Bulgaria and Pakistan is about \$7 million*

STAFF REPORT

SIALKOT: Ambassador of Bulgaria to Pakistan Aleksandar Parashkevov has said the Bulgaria and Pakistan established diplomatic relations on 15th June 1965 while these relations are improving with each passing day. He expressed these views during his visit to Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) on Saturday. The ambassador said Bulgaria and Pakistan have always enjoyed friendly ties built upon mutual respect and convergence of views and global and regional developments. He further said that Bulgaria is very important country and gateway to Europe.

He said Bulgaria want to attach extreme importance to Eastern European countries and look forward to further building upon the friendly Relations existing between the two countries. He said that Bulgaria mentioned for according GSP+ status to Pakistan was put to a vote and Bulgarian members of the European Parliamentarian supported the move. He said that both Bulgaria and Pakistan were committed and making joint efforts towards the promotion of bilateral relations especially the trade which is evident from several meetings of inter-governmental commission and rounds of Bilateral of political consultation. He said that the problems for progres-



sive development in every sector but it is important that Bulgaria and Pakistan collaborate and develop a coordinated approach and strategy for the betterment of the people of the brotherly countries.

He said that the trade between Bulgaria and Pakistan is about \$7 million where is trade should be increased where so many opportunities are available to increase trade relation between Bulgaria and Pakistan. He said that the Sialkot is hub of SME culture while highly conducive to business collaborations an joint ventures in various industries in Sialkot. He said that the further joint venture should improve in SME so that the SME business increase day by day. He said that the need for promoting business contacts between the businessmen of Bulgaria and Pakistan. He said that the Bulgaria could be biggest market of Sialkot and traditional and non traditional export products.

## Pakistanis stranded in Doha arrive

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The government on Monday decided to evacuate 72 Pakistanis stranded at Doha airport, allowing the Qatar Airways to operate a special flight and transport the transit passengers to the Islamabad International Airport (IIAP). The special flight, carrying 72 Pakistanis who were in the transit at Doha, arrived at the IIAP on March 24 at 0140 hours, a spokesman for the Aviation Division said in a press release. Upon arrival, the passengers would undergo the ‘strict health screening’ as advised by the Ministry of Health to curb the spread of novel coronavirus.

## Pakistan Day celebrated at Pakistan Embassy

APP

BEIJING: A flag hoisting ceremony was held to mark Pakistan Day here at the Embassy of Pakistan, Beijing on Monday. The Pakistan Day was celebrated with simplicity in face of the outbreak of novel Coronavirus and with the pledge to fight the pandemic. The proceedings commenced with the recitation from the Holy Quran followed by flag hoisting by the Ambassador of Pakistan to China, Naghma Alamgir Hashmi. Messages of the President and Prime Minister were also read on this occasion. President Dr. Arif Alvi in his message highlighted the importance of the 23rd March in our national history as the day when Muslims of South Asia resolved to create a separate homeland under the leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah. He paid rich tribute to the entire leadership of the freedom struggle. The President also expressed solidarity with the people of Indian occupied Kashmir and assured them of unwavering Pakistani support.

## Pak Navy celebrates Pak day

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy celebrated Pakistan Day with simplicity. This promising day is reminiscent of great efforts of Muslims of sub-continent when they determine their destiny in line with vision of our great leaders. The day resonates the demand of a separate homeland to safeguard sanctity of rights of Muslims in the sub-continent. The day dawned with Gun Salutes and prayers were offered for solidarity and longevity of the beloved homeland. Pakistan Navy Ships and Establishments were illuminated as ceremonial norms. Pakistan Day marks the determination and special eminence of the resilient nation to fight on-going covid-19.



**Zartaj seeks citizens' help in corona fight with govt**

APP

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Climate Change Zartaj Gul Monday called on the public to cooperate with the government to stop spread of the coronavirus and said people should stay at home. Talking to Radio programme, she said the incumbent government was taking all precautionary measures to contain the spread of coronavirus and Prime Minister Imran Khan was highly concerned with the healthcare facilities in the country. It was not right to blame a particular group for the spread of coronavirus in Pakistan, she added. The general public should cooperate with the government instead of unnecessary criticism, she said, adding, the coronavirus spread because the people did not take precautionary measures initially. Zartaj said the government has established quarantines and isolation centers in different parts of the country. There was an emergency situation in the country and the government has directed to close all the educational institutions, she mentioned.

**Usman urges citizens to avoid gatherings**

APP

ISLAMABAD: Special Advisor to Prime Minister for Youth Affairs Usman Dar Monday urged the citizens to avoid mass gatherings and everyone should avoid crowded places due to the current situation of the coronavirus and its spread in several countries. He urged people to practice social distancing and show utmost unity, discipline in order to prevent the spread of deadly coronavirus. Talking to PTV news channel, he said it was the responsibility of all segments of society including Ulema, media and political leaders to play their proactive role in educating the masses about the preventive measures against the virus.

## Establishment of Air links between Isb-Almaty to give impetus to existing bilateral relations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser has said that enormous economic potential exists between Pakistan and Kazakhstan, which needed to be utilized for mutual benefit of both the countries. He also stressed the need to establish air links between both the capitals for



fully realizing that potential. He expressed his desire to further strengthen bilateral relations through promoting parliamentary and commercial cooperation. He expressed these views while talking to Ambassador of Kazakhstan Akan Rakhmatlin, who met with the Speaker at Parliament House, today. The Speaker said that

strong fraternal bonds exist between Pakistan and Kazakhstan that are built on strong foundations of religion, brotherhood, history and culture. He emphasized the need to promote cooperation in the socio-economic sectors between the two brotherly countries. He said that the two countries have enormous opportunities

to promote cooperation in trade, energy, tourism, agriculture and other sectors. He said that trade volume between the two countries does not commensurate the opportunities in both countries, therefore, needed to be improved. He said that Kazakhstan's role in regional peace and stability was of the utmost importance. He said that parliamentary diplomacy could play an important role in expanding cooperation between the two countries. Stressing the need for closer ties between the two countries' parliament, Asad Qaiser said that the parliamentarians of both countries could play an important role in furthering bilateral relations. He told the Ambassador that the Pak-Kazakh Friendship Group in the National Assembly could play a vital role in promoting relations between the two countries' parliaments.

## SEMINAR ON KHOJALAY GENOCIDE

# Pakistan to continue supporting Azerbaijan on Nagorno-Karabakh

*Ambassador Alizade says double standards on Nagorno-Karabakh and Kashmir must be shelved; thanks Pakistan for whole-hearted support*



MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Khojaly genocide is one of the most serious crimes in history not only against the people of Azerbaijan but humanity as a whole said Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed Chairman Senate Defence Committee, on Monday. He expressed these views at a Seminar on "Together for Peace and Humanity. End to Ethnic Cleansing and Genocide" dedicated to 28th anniversary of Khojaly Genocide organised by NUML in collaboration with the Embassy of Azerbaijan on Monday. Other dignitaries of the seminar included Sakib Foric Ambassador of Bosnia and former President of Azad Kashmir Sardar Anwar. The Director General National Institute of Modern Languages (NUML) welcomed the guests.

Senator Mushahid said Pakistan and Azerbaijan have always been on the same page. He stated that Pakistan faces a similar situation in Kashmir, so Pakistan is well aware of what the people of Azerbaijan sense and is very grateful to the people of Azerbaijan for their support on the Kashmir issue. The Khojaly genocide is most definitely one of the worst massacres the world has seen-the gravity and enormity of the situation is overwhelming and cannot be justified and the way the people of Azerbaijan have come out of this bilateral issue is highly commendable. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed stated that Pakistan has given unreserved support to Azerbaijan. He highlighted the commonality between the situations in Kashmir and Nagorno-Karabakh. Pakistan and Azerbaijan have a solid history and in the future there needs to be greater coordination between both countries especially on the issues of Kashmir and Nagorno-Karabakh. He said that Pakistan and Azerbaijan are linked by histories and intense exchange of thinkers. Pakistan has provided endless support to Azerbaijan and has consulted its efforts with Azerbaijan in highlighting this tragedy. He also drew attention to the Human Rights report and UN resolutions which described the event in Khojaly as "the largest massacre to date in the conflict". He also highlighted the insensitivity of the international community, the silence of global media, and, no major actions from major powers. The Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizade gave



a brief overview of the events of the genocide – the Khojaly graveyard is a symbol of all the atrocities that took place during this incident. He made it clear that the world should exercise same principles and rules while dealing with the issues of Nagorno-Karabakh and Kashmir. The world must stop exercising double standards, he emphasized. He stated that history provides evidence that such events can occur in the future too, and to avoid this repetition he said that there has to be a uniform stand against this crime and the perpetrators need to be brought to justice. The Ambassador was very appreciative of the friendship between the two countries and the solidarity between the two nations and acknowledged that Pakistan was one of the first countries which recognised this massacre as genocide.

He stated that the Khojaly massacre is a bloody episode of human history and a bloody page of the policy of ethnic cleansing and genocide pursued by the Armenian nationalists against Azerbaijani people over a hundred years. He stated that the principle position of both countries on humanitarian issues demonstrates their fidelity to international law and upholding of human rights and international human law and serves to reinforce the deep bonds of friendship between the two nations. The ambassador also quoted national leader of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev who said on many occasions that Armenians had unleashed a systematic genocide of innocent Azerbaijani people. Ambassador Alizade called for collective efforts on the part of the international community in order to ensure peace and stability both in Nagorno-Karabakh and Kashmir. – DNA

## Ambassador of Tunisia meets Mayor Sheikh Anser Aziz



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Tunisia Mr. Borhene El Kamel met Mayor of Islamabad, Sheikh Anser Aziz at his office on Wednesday. Ambassador of Tunisia and Sheikh Anser Aziz, Mayor of Islamabad discussed matters of mutual interest including promising avenues of cooperation between the two capital cities of Tunisia and Pakistan during the meeting.

## 1.5 mln Illegal cigarettes confiscated by RTO Peshawar

DNA

PESHAWAR: FBR braces for strict and speedy action against the illegal cigarettes. As per the orders by Commissioner Regional Tax Peshawar, Corporate Zone

Tariq Jamal and under the supervision of Commissioner In land revenue Tariq, Special Surveillance squad and Nowshetra and Chamkani Police carried out a joint operation and confiscated 15 lac illegal counterfeit cigarettes

worth Rs. 47 million. According to the sources, the Special Surveillance squad of FBR during regular checking, ceased a car numbered as LOT-1801, which was transporting illegal counterfeit cigarettes to Punjab.

## Shab-e-Mairaj observed

APP

ISLAMABAD: Shab-e-Miraj-un-Nabi (Peace Be Upon Him) was observed across the country on Sunday night by avoiding large gatherings aiming to contain the spreading of deadly coronavirus pandemic. Muslims every-year on (Rajab-ul-Marajab 26) the night of 27th of Rajab (Islamic calendar) observe Shab-e-Miraj in which the Holy Prophet (PBUH) went on a special journey to meet Allah Almighty.

## Pakistani company introduces Uzbek apparel in Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Uzbekistan Furqat Sidikov with Owner of Gul Ahmed Company Ali Mohammad Bashir and discussed the perspectives of bilateral relations for the sake of two brotherly countries. [We came to conclusion that Uzbekistan and Pakistan has big economic potential that should be more strengthened. It was mentioned that Uzbekistan became largest trade partner of Pakistan in Central Asia". The ambassador also expressed gratefulness to Gul Ahmed Company for the creation of the special ladies' collection UZBEK ENSEMBLE as well as for UZ-



BEK SUZANA bed sheets. He mentioned that such kind of friendly actions would support to further cultural interactions. Both sides also reached agreement to establish regular contacts to discuss business issues.

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## Morocco playing key role in Bringing Africa, Asia closer

King Mohammad VI of Morocco has announced a comprehensive policy. He has characterized Africa as the top priority of his country's foreign policy, emphasizing that "this multi-dimensional relationship puts Morocco in the center of Africa" and "Africa holds a special place in the heart of Moroccans."

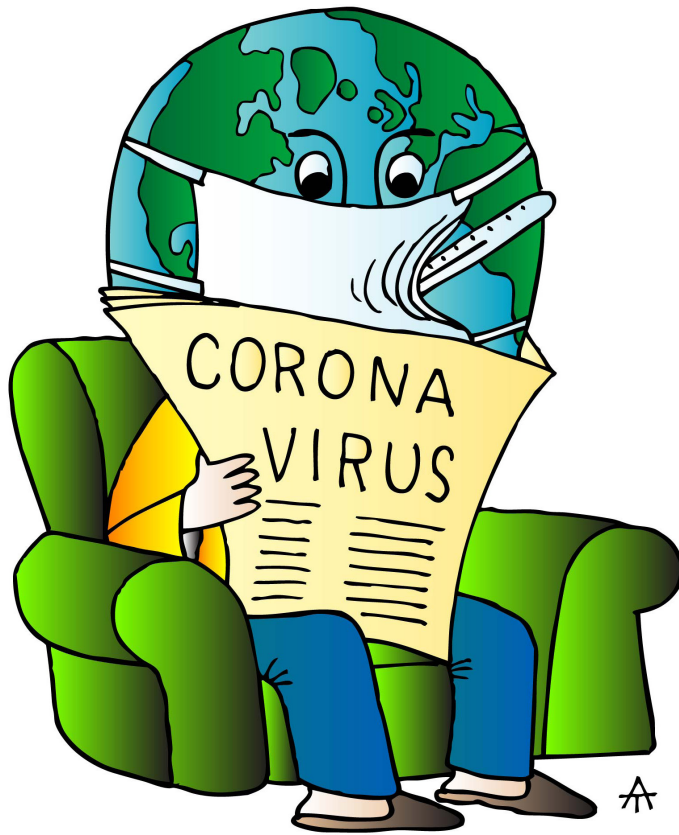
In fact, King Mohammed VI expressed his confidence that "Africa has the means to ensure its development and to take its destiny into its own hands, thanks to the resolve of African peoples and to the continent's human and natural resources," citing evidence of Moroccan contributions to human development, social services and trade and investment across the region.

Overall, Morocco is driving some 85 percent of its foreign direct investment into Africa, a benchmark that drew praise from the President of African Development Bank when he visited the country. This was good enough a cause for Mohammed VI to boast at the India-Africa Summit in New Delhi in October 2015, "Morocco has become the top African investor in West Africa and the second biggest in the continent as a whole." After Morocco's summit with India, similar contacts were established with Indonesia and Malaysia also. According to Global Financial Centres Index not only is Casablanca ranked the second business and financial hub in Africa, but it was the only center in the entire Middle East and Africa region to have increased its overall rating and rank since the last report.

Having spent a few days in Casablanca, I can indeed second the Global Financial Centre report that the city is fast evolving as a vibrant and potential business hub in Africa, which is not only fully poised to facilitate various multinational enterprises to establish their African headquarters but also to offer lucrative business opportunities to countries from other continents. The incumbent government has focused much on improving the law and order and governance situation owing to which influx of foreign investors seems to have increased manifold.

Morocco under King Mohammed VI has also largely contributed towards addressing the menace of extremism and his policies have already won wide acclaim. Likewise, the Climate Change issue has also been a cornerstone of the sitting government's policies and holding of COP2 conference bears testimony to government's commitment towards this end.

To cultivate and strengthen friendly relations with Pakistan also ranks high in the foreign policy principles of Moroccan government. Ambassador Mohammed Karmoune, in his recent interview with this publication had categorically stated that Morocco is keen to give new dimensions to its ties with Pakistan in all fields including trade, economy, education and political as well as culture. We can look forward that the brotherly relations between Pakistan and Morocco will strengthen in the days to come.



## America should reinvent itself – I

The experience of the past three years has shattered the myth that the US constitution on its own can protect American democracy from a narcissistic, unpredictable, polarising, and authoritarian president. But the country's problems are not limited to the menace in the White House. All Americans also bear responsibility for the current state of affairs, because we have neglected critical institutions and ignored the intensifying structural weaknesses that created the conditions for a demagogue like Trump to emerge in the first place.

At least three major fault lines underlie America's current structural problems. The first is economic. In the decades after World War II, the United States achieved not only rapid but also broadly shared growth, with wages for most workers tracking increases in productivity at a rate of around 2 per cent per year, on average. This growth was bolstered by labour-market institutions such as minimum wages and unions, and by technological changes that generated good (high-paying, secure) jobs for the majority of US workers. These institutional arrangements started to come apart in the 1980s. Good jobs began to disappear, inequality began widening, median real wages stagnated, and real wages for low-education workers actually started to fall. A variety of factors drove this turnaround, including the erosion of the federal minimum wage, new laws and court rulings undercutting collective bargaining, changes in wage-setting norms, trade with China and offshoring, and automation. Cheap imports and automation technologies initially reduced employment in many light industries, such as textiles, apparel, and furniture. But with the spread of robotics technologies, heavy industries soon followed. Historically, the decline of some industries had been met by the creation of new ones offering good jobs to at least some of the displaced workers. But that process began breaking down in the 1980s. Since then, and especially since around 2000, the burden of economic change has increasingly fallen on middle-class communities.

The second fault line is political. The democratic system could have given a voice to economically disadvantaged Americans, thus providing a corrective to the aforementioned economic trends. But the system failed for a variety of reasons, not least because political power was redistributed away from middle-class voters over the past few decades. A third fault line concerns the loss of trust in institutions. American institutions and high-status elites not only failed to avert the 2008 financial crisis and subsequent recession; they were complicit in it. When the crash came, millions of families lost their homes and livelihoods while Wall Street was bailed out.

To be continued

## Wisdom of World's Leaders in saying "NO" to Covid-19 + Sanctions

*The main reason of this situation is unilateral coercive measures and unfair sanctions that hamper Iranian access to medical requirements. Neither international humanitarian norms nor recent international judiciary verdicts supports such brutal sanctions. The continuation of this situation will lead to a humanitarian catastrophe and needs the immediate reaction of the global and especially neighboring countries' leaders.*

*Any inaction or passive stance of the others towards these opportunistic unfair sanctions will bring the future responsibility of world leaders.*

*Eradication of the virus needs a global and collective endeavor and there is no guarantee for other countries to immune itself from the situation.*

By Mohammad Ali Hossaini



Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Pakistan Experience has proved that on time

cooperation for preventing proliferation of a crisis are both logic and an issue of public interest.

Today, the world is witnessing infection of increasing number of people to a scourge called COVID-19. Any inattention by the world leaders to this scourge will lead to a greater and more expansion of the virus even to their own people; the subject that will cause their future responsibility.

Regarding the global aspect and depth of the catastrophe, the leaders' responsibility is not just an internal one and its external aspects can be even more important. The leaders cannot immune their nations just by closing their own borders and be ignorant to the other countries. It is absolutely needed to take a holistic measure. Today, Iran is badly plagued with COVID-19. The level and dimension of virus expansion in Iran

which privileges one of the highest health standards in the world is something quite considerable. Despite the torturous efforts of medical teams, Iranians still suffer a very high death toll of the disease.

The main reason of this situation is unilateral coercive measures and unfair sanctions that hamper Iranian access to medical requirements. Neither international humanitarian norms nor recent international judiciary verdicts supports such brutal sanctions. The continuation of this situation will lead to a humanitarian catastrophe and needs the immediate reaction of the global and especially neighboring countries' leaders. Any inaction or passive stance of the others towards these opportunistic unfair sanctions will bring the future responsibility of world leaders. Eradication of the virus needs a global and col-

lective endeavor and there is no guarantee for other countries to immune itself from the situation.

Quoting from Iranian grate poet Saadi Shirazi: Human beings are members of a whole, In creation of one essence and soul. If one member is afflicted with pain, Other members uneasy will remain. If you've no sympathy for human pain, The name of human you cannot retain! In this regard, we appreciate the recent call of Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan for lifting sanctions against Iran and we thank his wisdom in understanding the importance of virus control over political rivalries. May Allah protect all of us

*The writer is Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan*

## Covid-19: Myths Deluging Faster than Virus Itself

Ms. Minahil Shawal Afridi



*Having deliberated upon the myths revolving around blaming China of the Covid-19, let us now face some harsh realities of the United States' concerning the pandemic. The Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Robert Redfield confessed something very questionable, in the House Oversight Committee. He admitted that Americans who died from influenza were later tested positive for Covid-19, in the posthumous diagnosis.*

*This statement raises so many questions and concerns about the irresponsibility and carelessness on the US' part. Also, it shifts all eyes on US' regarding the debate about the origin of Covid-19, instead of China. So the U.S. officials including Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, calling the disease.*

While Beijing is taking every possible measure to halt the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic in China and abroad, Washington is busy playing the blame game rather than making concrete efforts to address the global issue. China is very wisely dealing with the health conditions in affected areas and has granted all kinds of possible assistance to improve the health systems in developing as well as underdeveloped countries. Having glance of the international scenario at the moment, it can be seen that China has emerged as a global leader in curbing the menace of a deadly virus, which is accused of originating in China's own Wuhan City. However, the evidence and facts that are now unveiling on different international media platforms and the research being conducted by seasoned health experts raises new queries about the timeline of the pandemic and suggest that Covid-19 though detected in China – has no origin in the country. This article highlights the facts, supporting the aforementioned claim.

Fake rumours being circulated on social media is misguiding people regarding the actual realities concerning Covid-19, and surprisingly this misinformation is spreading faster than the virus itself. The World Health Organization has defined this harmful outbreak of misleading myths as "infodemic", which is a serious matter to be concerned about. The false claims and information flooding on social media have made it problematic for people to identify reliable sources and, accurate plausible measures. This deluging false medical advice is creating difficulties for the experts in guiding people what preventive measures to take at this hour of need. According to a report cited in the Washington Post on March 1, 2020, over 2 million tweets comprising of conspiracies about the coronavirus were circulated in a time span of just two months between January and February. One of the misleading information spread across the globe initially after the outbreak of pandemic was that "The virus had been created- accidentally or deliberately - in a laboratory at the Wuhan Disease Control and Prevention Centre". This false proposition had been posted by the Washington Times on January 6, 2020, but has been widely rejected by international experts. The article reads that a government-run lab in Hubei Province of China, the "Wuhan Institute of Virology", is responsible for the outbreak of Covid-19. It's quite strange and at the same time absurd that this very claim was made merely based on a speculation by a former Intelligence officer from Israel. What is more shocking is that without having any evidence of the claimed statement, the international media outlets including The Texas radio station KPRC and The Toronto Sun columnist Candice Malcolm's YouTube show grabbed the idea and ran with it to boost their ratings. However, many inter-

national public health researchers very clearly stated in The Lancet that Covid-19 had nothing had no natural origin in China.

Another myth circulating among the international community is that the source of the coronavirus is the "wet market" in Wuhan where it was transmitted from bats. Interestingly, the exact animal source of Covid-19 has not yet been identified, and most importantly the point to note is that bats were not sold at the Wuhan wet market. Furthermore, the description of the initial cases that are published in The Lancet also challenges the hypothesis that Wuhan market is the origin of a deadly virus. Chinese scientists have found that the first reported case of the Covid-19, in December 2019, had no link to the Wuhan market. According to the report compiled by Chinese researchers from several institutions, no epidemiological link was found between the first patient and later cases. Also, 13 of the 41 cases had no link to the marketplace. Based on research and facts, it is necessary to understand that China has not started the coronavirus nor are Asians responsible for it. This kind of false statements by US government officials in creating panic among people and giving rise to hate sentiments against Asians. The US in some cases is openly claiming that China put together this virus. Just recently, what Senator Tom Cotton tweeted out on January 30, 2020:

"I would note that Wuhan has China's only biosafety level-four super laboratory that works with the world's most deadly pathogens to include, yes, coronavirus".

Surprisingly, the evidence Mr Cotton provided to support his claim was the statement itself. There is no scientific evidence for these claims and would do no good but harm as we see happening in the West specifically. This kind of attitude from senior officials has resulted in disastrous events, for example, an Asian man was attacked in London by racists who were furious about the coronavirus outbreak and held "him" responsible for it. Similar incidents of Coronavirus-related racism are observed in other Western countries too, including Germany. Having deliberated upon the myths revolving around blaming China of the Covid-19, let us now face some harsh realities of the United States' concerning the pandemic. The Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Robert Redfield confessed something very questionable, in the House Oversight Committee. He admitted that Americans who died from influenza were later tested positive for Covid-19, in the posthumous diagnosis. This statement raises so many questions and concerns about the irresponsibility and carelessness on the US' part. Also, it shifts all eyes on US' regarding the debate about the origin of Covid-19, instead of China. So the U.S. officials including Secretary of State

Mike Pompeo, calling the disease - "Wuhan virus", would now care to call it the "Bloop Virus"?

In August 2019, US observed a viral disease which they initially accredited to "vaping" which they called electronic cigarette pneumonia. Although the symptoms of the then "unknown disease" could not be explained by e-cigarettes and people had been using them for decades. This caused several deaths in the US which were attributed to common viral flu, and infected many US soldiers as well. Robert Redfield has however stated that post-mortems were performed to learn the cause of death and was found that the disease was mis-diagnosed. According to him, he wrote to the US officials that the suspected deaths were not due to flu but coronavirus. Unfortunately, his warnings were ignored by concerned authorities. These reports were highlighted on mainstream media in Taiwan and Japan.

Further tracking the timeline, in October 2019 - The Military World Games were organized in Wuhan, China. 300 US soldiers - already infected - came to Wuhan on the pretense of taking part in the military competition but very weirdly, could not win a single game. These soldiers during their visit had visited Wuhan wet markets and roamed around the entire city. Few of them got ill and were hospitalized in Wuhan for an undetermined infection. A few weeks later this novel virus appeared in Wuhan. From August 2019 to January 2020, the CDC department in the US reported that the worst flu had taken over the country causing up to 12,000 deaths. But surprisingly the US took no concrete action over this alarming situation. Later in March, the CDC director disclosed that some COVID-19 deaths were misdiagnosed as flu and COVID-19 was diagnosed when they did posthumous tests. After the Military World Games in China in October 2019, it was in December 2019 that the first confirmed case was reported in Wuhan.

Comprehending the facts further, science has proven that the family of coronaviruses has revealed 5 strains until the present, and the US is the only country with all 5 variants of the virus. Another argument is that the laboratory tests conducted in Italy gave stunning results, which showed that a strain of the virus obtained from an Italian patient was genetically different from the original strain isolated in China and two Chinese tourists who became sick in Rome. Therefore the genetic difference of the traits of the virus in Italy as well as Iran, have been declared to have similarities to one found in China. Hence it quite well supplements the claim that China is not responsible for "creating" or "spreading" the deadly virus, rather it was the inattention of US authorities which led to this alarming situation worldwide.

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## Norway proposes UN corona fund to help poor countries

APP

OSLO: Norway said Monday it wanted to start a United Nations donors' fund to help poor countries fight the new coronavirus pandemic.

"We are concerned about the way the virus will affect developing countries which have fragile healthcare systems," Norway's Development Aid Minister Dag-Inge Ulstein said in a statement.

"International solidarity across borders is more important than ever. That's why it is important for us to contribute financially to such a fund in the UN," he added.

The fund is expected to be set up quickly, "possibly even this week," Norway said, without specifying the amount of its own contribution. The initiative has been welcomed favourably by UN deputy secretary general Amina Mohammed, Oslo said. On Thursday, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres warned "millions" of lives were at stake if the international community did not show solidarity, especially with the world's poorest countries, amid the coronavirus outbreak.

## Joint corona virus fund for SAARC countries proposed

DNA

LAHORE: SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) President-designate Iftikhar Ali Malik Monday, making a strong pitch for SAARC nations to jointly combat coronavirus, proposed setting up a COVID-19 emergency fund with India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh with initial amount of USD 5 million each as the best way to deal with the pandemic is by coming together, and not growing apart.

## Indonesia steps up protection on medical workers

DNA

JAKARTA: Indonesia on Monday commenced delivery of more protective gears for medical workers across the country as six doctors have died while treating patients infected by the COVID-19. Indonesian President Joko Widodo said on Monday that 105,000 sets of personal protective equipment for the medical workers were distributed to doctors, nurses and medical personnel working on COVID-19 patients at all hospitals in the country. "There are still many complaints related with the scarcity of the protective gears," the president said in a makeshift hospital for the COVID-19 in the country's capital of Jakarta. "Ensure the availability of protective gears, as the medical workers are on the front line."

# Azerbaijan recognizes Pakistan support on Nagorno-Karabakh: Hikmat Hajiyeve

Says Railway line from Azerbaijan to Iran was in the final stages and through Iran Azerbaijan can be connected with Pakistan. Likewise from Pakistan Azerbaijan can have access to Chinese markets also; stresses deeper cooperation in tourism sector

A.M.BHATTI

BAKU: Hikmat Hajiyeve Assistant of the President of Azerbaijan and Head of Foreign Policy Affairs Department, office of the President of Azerbaijan has said Azerbaijan accords immense importance to its relations with brotherly country Pakistan adding his country was indebted to Pakistan for supporting Azerbaijan on Nagorno-Karabakh issue.

He said Pakistan in fact was the third country after Turkey and Romania that recognized Azerbaijan therefore our relations are deep-rooted and have historical perspective.

He expressed these remarks while meeting with a delegation of senior Pakistani journalists, who are in Baku to observe parliamentary elections 2020. He said Azerbaijan considers Kashmir as disputed area and calls for its resolution through UN resolutions and dialogue.

"Azerbaijan and Pakistan closely cooperate on various regional and international forums including the OIC. The OIC needs to address issue of Islamophobia. Azerbaijan is a country of religious tolerance; harmony and people hailing from various faiths and sects are living side by side in Azerbaijan".

To a question about early elections in Azerbaijan Mr. Hikmet said the par-

liament happens to be the executive branch of the government and the snap elections for sure would create harmony and further understanding.

He cited an example to further elaborate his point as to why the snap elections were called saying if you have a nice Apple processor but if the printer is not adaptable then you have you change it.

"The snap elections would help gear up reforms process in Azerbaijan and the new parliament is likely to support and augment the process of reforms in various fields", he added.

He said due to drastic steps taken but the incumbent government the level of poverty has decreased to only four percent while ratio of unemployment has also reduced considerably.

He said owing to economic and social reforms of the government Azerbaijan now happens to be the high income countries of the world.

He said much emphasis has also been laid on improvement and development of infrastructure in the country and country now stands out as one of the most development states not only in the region but in the world also.

Hikmat Hajiyeve further said Azerbaijan is keen to enhance and strengthen trade and economic relations with Pakistan. Azerbaijan is also taking keen interest in Gwadar port adding Gwadar can really be beneficial.



When asked to comment on CPEC project and Azerbaijan's prospects of joining it, he said it was indeed an important project adding Azerbaijan was keen to enhance its links with various countries mainly thru road and rail links.

He told that a railway line from Azerbaijan to Iran was in the final stages and through Iran Azerbaijan can be connected with Pakistan. Likewise from Pakistan Azerbaijan can have access to Chinese markets also.

Apart from political relations, Azerbaijan and Pakistan have cooperating in the defence field also.

To a question about direct air links he said there was a direct flight between the two countries however it had to be stopped because according the airline it was not economically viable.

While agreeing with the preposition that direct air links were a sine qua non for strengthening of trade and economic relations, he said both sides have to find ways and means in order to resolve connectivity issues.

While identifying various avenues of mutual cooperation he said Pakistan is good in textile and Azerbaijan would like to encourage Pakistani exporters to export textile related products.

This can certainly cement bilateral relations between two countries. Likewise, Pakistani mangoes are also very popular in Azerbaijan. Similarly Pakistani oranges are also very popular and Azerbaijan imports citrus from other countries. It can be yet another area which can bring both countries closer in terms of trade and economic relations.

He also underlined the need for deeper cooperation in tourism sector also. Both countries are blessed with a plethora of touristic attractions therefore tourists from both countries can be encouraged to visit these places.

## Govt taking steps to fight virus: Sarwar

STAFF REPORT

ATTOCK: Federal Minister for Aviation Ghulam Sarwar Khan has said that Government has been taking effective steps to combat Corona Virus. As per directives to Prime Minister Imran Khan was constantly monitoring the whole situation and government would take necessary administrative decisions as per the changing situation. The federal and provincial governments are ready to face the challenge of Covid-19, and all possible quarantine and treatment facilities will be provided.

## FM for fighting Corona with national spirit

APP

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi on Monday said that in order to fight the challenge of COVID-19 pandemic, there was a need to follow the qualities of sacrifice, faith, unity and discipline with which the nation rallied behind the idea of Pakistan.

"In this hour of trial, as Pakistanis, we would do well to recall the qualities of sacrifice, faith, unity and discipline with which the nation rallied behind the idea of Pakistan. To be able to successfully defeat this common enemy, we need to marshal the same

innate virtues," he said in a message on the occasion of Pakistan Day (March 23).

The Foreign Minister said, "We must not also lose sight of the dire challenge faced by all mankind, the likes of which have rarely been witnessed. The Covid-19 pandemic has shaken the world to its core. It is testing the resolve and resilience of nations and peoples around the globe. The peril has also crossed our doorstep."

"We need to acknowledge and appreciate the tremendous sacrifices and contributions that our health care personnel and others, and personnel the world over, our soldiers in

the forefront of this war, are making to keep us all safe," he added.

The Foreign Minister said, "March 23 is the day of commemorating the valiant struggle of our forefathers for a separate homeland that began with the historic Pakistan Resolution of 1940, and culminated in the attainment of freedom seven years later."

"Under the visionary leadership of Quadi-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, they rendered heroic sacrifices and overcame tremendous odds. Against the expectations of its detractors, Pakistan not only survived but flourished," he added. The Foreign Minister said.



PARIS Ambassador of Pakistan to France Moin ul Haq hoisting flag on the eve of Pakistan Day. – DNA Photo

## MCI reviews measures on controlling spread of virus

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Upon the instructions of Mayor, Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad Sheikh Ansar Aziz Rapid Response Force of the Directorate of Health Services held it 7th meeting under the Chair of Director General Health Dr. Hasan Orooj. The meeting was attended by the Director Health Services Dr. M. Iqbal Afridi, Dr. Abdul Qadeer, Medical Officer, Dr. Saira Farrukh, Lady Medical Officer, Dr. Sara Aslam Gill, Lady Medical Officer, Foot Inspectors, Vaccinators and Anti Malaria Team. The objectives of the meeting was to review and enhance coordinated efforts for the prevention of the Corona Virus in

Islamabad and to impart training to the field staff.

The staff was given basic awareness and how to deal with community during this pandemic.

The staff was directed to issue awareness campaign, brochures and pamphlets to the citizens living in various urban sectors of Islamabad. In this connection restructuring of the teams was finalized.

Medical Officer will impart awareness campaign within the vicinity of their Medical Center and to the Kachi Abadies attached.

In this connection Lady Health Worker will be utilized for kachi abadies. Vaccinators were delegated to distribute the pamphlets and organize

mosque announcement in the villages of Islamabad.

Further the vaccinators will also educate mothers who will visit vaccinator centers.

Food Inspectors have been directed to monitor the restaurants, hotels, bazars, barbers and beauticians.

The Anti Malaria staff will move in the citizens and distribute the awareness materials in different urban sectors. At the end, all the staff were handed over the IEC materials.

The Director General Health, MCI appeals the general public to adopt precautionary measures as a face mask behavior in order to save their lives of their families, lives of the neighbors and the lives of the citizens of Islamabad.

## Firdous calls for collective efforts to overcome virus

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting, Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan has called for giving impetus to collective efforts to overcome coronavirus.

On twitter on Monday, she said we have to revive the spirit of harmony and solidarity at this critical juncture.

She added that the nation has to revive the March 23,1940 like spirit of harmony and solidarity at this critical juncture. She said that March 23 was the day which provided

the Muslims a roadmap towards creation of Pakistan. On this fateful day the Muslims of the sub-continent demanded creation of a separate homeland for Muslims to get rid from British colonialism and Hindu repression, she remarked.

She paid tributes to the leaders and workers of freedom movement who gave great sacrifices for creation of Pakistan The Special Assistant also urged the international community to help the people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir to get their legitimate and democratic right to self-determination.

**DR AAMIR HANIF**  
Chairman Wellness Trust

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**1 HEALTH CARE**

- Providing basic health facilities to the under privileged
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**2 EDUCATION**

- To make education accessible to children in remote areas
- Facilitating learning and acquisition of knowledge
- Making strategies to reduce illiteracy

**3 CLEAN WATER**

- To use resources to provide clean drinking water
- Awareness about the importance of clean drinking water in order to tackle infective diseases
- Installation of water filtration plants and digging of wells

**4 GREEN ENVIRONMENT**

- Aim to raise the awareness of sustainable green environment
- Increase numbers of parks and plantation to reduce harmful effects of dangerous gases and chemicals
- To provide strategies for waste disposal mechanism

**5 ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

- Aim to support people to become creative entrepreneurs in order to stand on their feet
- Provide both financial and technical support to the deserving people
- Building financially stable nation

**6 HEALTH CARE:**

- Aim to support people to gain self-confidence and improve decision making abilities for the best interest of their communities and for the whole nation
- Leadership training camps certificates and degrees
- Targeting remote areas for flourishing of the country

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