



# Islamabad POST

Wednesday, April 08, 2020

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

**We will emerge stronger from this challenge: Army Chief**

**USD 250,000 Japanese assistance**

**FO rejects Indian media reports**



## CABINET DECISIONS

# Sugar, wheat mafias to face music

Cabinet approved proposals regarding revamping, reconstructing and reorganizing Evacuee Trust Property Board, giving nod to utilize its properties in Health, Education and Housing sectors: Firdous Ashiq

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The government will take strict action against those involved in artificial crisis of wheat and sugar after release of Inquiry Commission's report on 25th of this month. This was stated by Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan while briefing to newsmen about Federal Cabinet's decisions, which met in Islamabad today (Tuesday) with Prime Minister Imran Khan in the chair. She said the government machinery is fully active to ensure the availability of quality edibles at affordable prices and no negligence would be tolerated in this regard. Firdous Ashiq Awan said the prime minister has warned that strict action will be taken against those found involved in hurling threats to commission.



The Special Assistant said the Prime Minister has directed to resolve the issues being faced by growers and farmers on immediate basis. Prime Minister Imran Khan's Special Assistant on Accountability, Shahzad Akbar presented report to the cabinet regarding shortage of sugar and wheat in the country. The Cabinet approved proposals regarding revamping, reconstruct-

ing and reorganizing Evacuee Trust Property Board, giving nod to utilize its properties in Health, Education and Housing sectors. Special Assistant on National health Services Dr. Zafar Mirza gave briefing to the cabinet about ongoing Coronavirus cases and government's measures to provide relief to Corona-hit labour population. The Cabinet was told that 39,000 personal protective kits have been dispatched to all provinces for protection of paramedical staff engaged in Coronavirus-hit patients. Special Assistant on Youth Affairs Usman Dar informed the cabinet that 7,17,119 youth have so far been registered with Corona Relief Tigers Force, which is working in district, tehsil and Union Council-level across the country. Special Assistant on Social Protection Dr Sania Nishtar gave detailed briefing to the cabinet on Ehsaas Emergency Cash Programme.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan chairing Cabinet meeting. -- DNA

## Romanian doctors to reach Italy

DNA

BUCHAREST: Romania has decided to send a team of 11 doctors and 6 nurses to Italy tomorrow to express solidarity with Italy government and their people who are suffering due to COVID-19.

## Flight operation resumed

DNA

KARACHI: The national flag-carrier resumed its flight operation as pilots end strike and started returning to airports after dialogues between Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) administration and PALPA (Pakistan Airline Pilots' Association). The flight operation of the national airline resumed after PIA and pilots' association reached an agreement for the safety measures of aircraft crew due to coronavirus pandemic. Pilots started returning to the airports who were previously went on strike to protest against PIA administration over the calls of PALPA. The flights from Islamabad and Lahore have been readied for departure to United Kingdom and Canada. The boarding process has started for the passengers of Lahore-Toronto flight PK-783 and Islamabad-Birmingham flight PK-791. PIA spokesperson said that more than 600 passengers will depart from the country through the special flights.

## Corps commanders vow to defeat virus

Being a nation with vibrant youth and resilient people ready to share and sacrifice, we will emerge stronger from this challenge: Army Chief

DNA

RAWALPINDI: 231st Corps Commanders' Conference chaired by General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) held at Rawalpindi. Corps Commanders participated through video link from respective Headquarters. The forum reviewed geo strategic, regional and national security environment with particular emphasis on latest situation arising from COVID-19. Forum under took comprehensive review of de-

ployment of Pakistan army troops assisting civil administration in aid of civil power across the country. Forum was apprised on functioning of NCOC established to synergise & articulate National effort for containment of COVID-19. Appreciating the troops in the field for efforts so far, COAS directed all commanders to extend maximum assistance in moving critical resources and reaching out to mitigate suffering of people in far flung areas including GB, AJ&K, Interior Sindh and Balochistan. Forum paid tribute to those on frontline including doctors, paramedics, health care workers and LEAs for braving this pandemic under challenging environment. Forum also paid tribute to the Kashmiri people who are fighting the pandemic under Indian atrocities and struggling for their just cause of self determination. Every citizen counts as we strive to scale this calamity. Being a nation with vibrant youth and resilient people ready to share & sacrifice, we will emerge stronger from this challenge, InshaAllah, COAS concluded.

## Briefs

### Taliban halts talks with Afghan government

DNA

KABUL: The Taliban group announced that it has stopped negotiations with the Afghan government over the release of Taliban prisoners with effect from Tuesday. "We sent a technical team of the Prisoner's Commission to Kabul for verification and identification of our prisoners as release of prisoners was to start as per the signed agreement and the promise made (to us)," Suhail Shaheen, a spokesperson for Taliban's political office said in a Twitter post.

## Morocco govt's goodwill gesture for Pakistanis



ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: As unique goodwill and brother gesture, the Govt of Morocco has extended a special facility to Pa-

kistanis who are stranded in Morocco due to lockdown by allowing them to stay without seeking extension in their visas. According to a letter of Pakistan's ambassador to Morocco Hamid Asghar Khan, which he wrote the Pakistani community living in Morocco, during the lockdown no extension of visit visa is required. Also during the lockdown no extension of resident permit shall be required. Ambassador Hamid Asghar Khan further informed the Pakistani community that when flights resume, Pakistani residents and visitors would exit from the Kingdom without having to secure extensions in the visas that expired during the lockdown.

## PSX gains 652.40 points

KARACHI: The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Tuesday witnessed bullish trend as KSE 100 index closed at 31,231.55 points as compared to 30,579.15 points on the last working day with the positive change of 652.40 points (2.13 %). A total of 172,769,586 shares were traded compared to the trade 233,329,238 shares during the previous day, whereas the value of shares traded during the day stood at 6.751 billion as compared to Rs8.711 billion during last trading day. As many as 335 companies transacted shares in the Stock Market on Tuesday, out of which 215 recorded gain and 100 sustained losses whereas the share price of 20 companies remained unchanged. -- DNA

## USD 250,000 Japanese assistance

The Government of Japan remains committed to assisting Pakistan in its goal to fight against COVID-19. Japan proactively takes initiatives to tackle with this issue of COVID-19 working with the international community: Ambassador Matsuda

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan has decided to provide grant of USD 250,000 through the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to the Government of Pakistan to equip Pakistani people to fight against the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection. With this support of IFRC, the Government of Pakistan will be strengthened on surveillance, contact tracing, screening and will also be equipped with Personal

Protective Equipment (PPE), medical consumables and medical equipment to prevent the spread of COVID-19. IFRC will contribute to reducing morbidity, mortality and social impacts of COVID-19 outbreak by preventing or slowing transmission and helping to ensure communities affected by the outbreak to maintain access to basic social services. The Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, Matsuda Kuninori, commended the tremendous efforts by the Government of Pakistan and its people against the COVID-19 as the issue is becoming even more serious worldwide.



H.E. also added, "the Government of Japan remains committed to assisting Pakistan in its goal to fight against COVID-19. Japan proactively takes initiatives to tackle with this issue of COVID-19 working with the international community." Japan's assistance provided to Pakistan for COVID-19 is USD 2.45 million in total including the amount of USD 0.25 million through IFRC. The Government of Japan is further willing to cooperate with the Government of Pakistan to fight against the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection.

## FO rejects Indian media reports

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office on Tuesday outright rejected "officially-inspired" Indian media reports seeking to link Pakistan with a terrorist attack on a Gurdwara in Kabul. Spokesperson Ayesha Farooqui in a statement termed the attempt is "highly mischievous and condemnable". "Pakistan has already strongly condemned the dastardly terrorist attack on the Gurdwara, in which so many precious lives were lost," she said, adding places of worship are sacrosanct and their sanctity must be respected at all times and



the perpetrators of this heinous crime must be brought to justice. As a country that has suffered the most from and has fought resolutely against the scourge of terrorism, including state-sponsored terrorism emanating from across the border, the spokesperson said, Pakistan firmly believes that such despicable terrorist acts have no political, religious or moral justification.

## Dollar hits all-time high

DNA

KARACHI: The US dollar has hit an all-time high against the Pakistani rupee in the interbank market on Tuesday. According to details, the value of the greenback surged by 0.92 paise today to trade at Rs167.90 in the interbank market. The value of dollar soared by Rs9.23 during the last 15 days. In the foreign exchange market, the dollar in world forex lost ground on Tuesday as riskier currencies rebounded on tentative hopes that lockdowns may be slowing the spread of the coronavirus in some countries.

## Sindh lockdown will remain in effect

DNA

KARACHI: The lockdown in Sindh will remain in effect on Shab-e-Baraat and people won't be allowed to visit graveyards, the provincial government announced Tuesday. Congregations in mosques with regard to Shab-e-Baraat are prohibited, the government said in a statement. It urged the masses to stay indoors and pray for the pandemic to end.

## Inside...

UNHCR welcomes Pakistan's efforts: COVID-19 response

— Page 02

Uzbekistan's Anti-COVID-19 Strategies: an overview

— Page 03

China respects the rights of Muslim Community

Azerbaijan creates modern facility of masks manufacturing in short time: Ilham Aliyev

— Back Page



**Briefs**  
**Military stands with nation: Maj. Gen Majid**

**MUNIR FAISAL**  
 ATTOCK: General Officer Commanding (GoC) Major General Majid Jehangir on Tuesday reviewed the anti-Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) measures taken by the health department and local administration in district Attock. On this occasion Commissioner Rawalpindi Captain (retd) Muhammad Mehmood, Deputy Commissioner Attock Ali Annan Qammar, District Police Officer Khalid Hamdani and officials of health department, local administration and army were also present on this occasion. During his visit, he checked the preparedness of the administration to meet any challenge in wake of outbreak of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) in district Attock. He visited the Quarantine centre in Govt Technical College checking the facilities. Major General Majid Jehangir also attended a briefing at Deputy Commissioner office. On this occasion, Deputy Commissioner Attock Ali Annan Qammar briefed the participants about current statistics, action taken, issues and future planning of district.

**Rupee loses 90 paises in interbank**

**DNA**  
 ISLAMABAD: The exchange rate of Pakistani rupee against US dollar Tuesday witnessed a decrease of 90 paises in interbank and traded at Rs167.89 against Rs166.99 on last trading day, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported. However, according to Forex Association of Pakistan, the buying and selling rates of dollar in open market were recorded at Rs163 and Rs165.5 respectively. The SBP further reported that in interbank, the price of Euro appreciated by Rs2.10 and traded at Rs182.36 against the last closing of Rs180.26 on last trading day.

**UNHCR welcomes Pakistan's efforts: COVID-19 response**

UNHCR has provided 10 fully equipped ambulances and 28 large housing unit facilities to the provincial Health Departments and the Provincial Disaster Management Authorities in Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab

**RAJA FURQAN**  
 ISLAMABAD: (UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency appreciated the Government of Pakistan's efforts to include all vulnerable individuals regardless of their nationality or status in its multi-layered response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Iain Hall UNHCR Deputy Representative said: "UNHCR welcomes the recent directives of Prime Minister Imran Khan to include the most vulnerable internally displaced people

and Afghan refugees in the overall relief assistance and support schemes". He added that when confined to their villages and homes due to the coronavirus pandemic, many people are unable to meet even their most basic needs. Mr. Hall highlighted some of the tangible support that UNHCR has been providing to the Government for ongoing COVID-19 interventions in health, water and sanitation, and outreach to the most vulnerable communities. UNHCR has provided 10 fully equipped



ambulances and 28 large housing unit facilities to the provincial Health Departments and the Provincial Disaster Management Authorities in Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab. UNHCR has also provided large Rubb halls to support isolation facilities being established by the Balochistan Government. In addition, the UN Refuge

Agency has distributed medical supplies, personal protective equipment and sanitation products, such as sanitary clothes, soap and disinfectants, and other relief items to rural health facilities in support of refugees and their host communities in Pakistan. At this difficult time, UNHCR is also reaching out to communities to disseminate critical public health information. Last week, the UN Refugee Agency announced an Rs.1,000 mobile top-up for each of its 3,000 Outreach

Volunteers and community mobilizers across the country to strengthen digital communication. This support will assist in further transmitting information on COVID-19 while following the Government's directives on social distancing. UNHCR, together with the Ministry of SAFRON/Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees and NGO partners, is in the process of upgrading water and sanitation facilities in the health centers and schools in refugee villages across the country.

**RCCI ask Gov't to open business centers**

**DNA**  
 ISLAMABAD: RCCI President Saboor Malik in a statement said that the Lockdown is due until April 14th, prompting the district administration to consult with the business community and the Chamber of Commerce regarding SOPs. He suggested that district Government must ensure all protective measures being disseminate to all business centers prior opening the lock down. The guidelines must be observed strictly and awareness drive will also be continued for everyone for wearing masks, sprays and social distancing. He said that RCCI welcomes Punjab government notification to open industries. He expressed hope that the notification for partial or complete opening of business centers and key institutions will be issued soon.

**ICCI delegation calls on new Chairperson FBR**



**FIAZ CHAUDRHY**  
 ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) led by Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President called on Nausheen Javed Amjad and congratulated her on being appointed as Chairperson FBR. SaifurRehman Khan Vice President and Malik Sohail Hussain were in the delegation. Dr. Arsalan Subtageen, Member Legal & Accounts - Customs, FBR was also present at the occasion. Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Ahmed Waheed hoped that Ms. Nausheen Javed Amjad

would play effective role in making FBR stronger institution and bringing needed reforms in the tax machinery. He said that a transparent and equal tax system was the basic requirement to promote tax culture and hoped that Chairperson FBR would take necessary measures to realize this goal. He said that due to Covid-19 pandemic, business activities have come to a half due to which business community was suffering great losses. He hoped that in these difficult circumstances, FBR would take measures to resolve tax issues of business community and facilitate them in tax matters so that

with joint efforts, tax revenue of the country could be improved besides reviving business activities. Ms. Nausheen Javed Amjad, Chairperson, FBR speaking at the occasion said that business community was playing key role in the economic development of the country and efforts would be made to address their key tax issues. She said that coronavirus has badly hit the entire world and economy of Pakistan could face more problems. She said that in this difficult situation, business community should come forward to pay its due share of tax and play role in reducing the fiscal problems of the country.

**Asad Umar warns people**

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar Tuesday asked the people to take the pandemic Coronavirus (COVID-19) as very serious and adopt all precautionary measures to prevent its spread. "Those who think they are immune from serious effects of Covid 19, please learn from British Prime Minister Boris Johnson," Asad Umar warned in his tweet. He said if the Prime Minister of a country with one of the best health systems in the world could end up in Intensive Care Unit (ICU), "Trust me you are not too powerful for it." "The effects can be serious, very very serious," he added. - APP

**11 telecom projects approved**

ISLAMABAD: The Departmental Development Working Party (DDWP) has approved 11 projects of Information Technology and Telecom sector worth Rs 11.515 billion for financial year 2020-21. Federal Secretary Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication Shoaib Ahmad Siddiqui chaired the meeting. The meeting was given detailed briefing about IT and Telecom related projects said a press issued here on Tuesday. Out of these 11 projects five projects are based in Azad Jammu Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) for providing telecom facilities there. - APP

**INGOs, NGOs offer all-out support to govt**

**STAFF REPORT**  
 ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Humanitarian Forum (PHF) and the National Humanitarian Network (NHN) have offered all-out cooperation and support to the government in the ongoing battle against coronavirus outbreak in the country. "We fully appreciate the clear commitment and resolve shown by federal and provincial governments in ensuring quality and timely medical care being provided to those affected by coronavirus pandemic. We also reaffirm our resolve to extend all-out assistance to the government in its relief operations across country to protect communities and citizens in these hard times," a joint statement issued by both the organizations read. Both PHF and NHN as platforms of active and credible international and national NGOs and humanitarian workers from across Pakistan offered their support to the government authorities in areas of food security and nutrition programmes, livelihood uplift and economic empowerment. "We can provide sizeable outreach support to government, especially in reaching difficult/remote areas, accessing communities, identifying people in need and raising awareness on safe practices and preventive measures through nationwide campaigns," the statement read. "The organizations who are part of both networks have already activated their health facilities to support the government in dealing with the pandemic and will make all-out efforts to arrange required medical kits and equipment without any cost," it added. Both the networks appreciated the timely decision of the Ministry of Interior allowing national and international NGOs to stepup their efforts in support of NDMA and PDMA's and all other local, provincial and national authorities fighting against COVID-19 outbreak. "The decision indicates confidence of the government in the role and contribution of INGOs in tackling such national catastrophes in the past and will also boost avenues of cooperation, jointaction and complementarity of efforts. Both the networks suggested that all medical equipment, kits and machinery brought in to fight COVID-19 should be dealt as 'most urgent' at ports of entry and procedures be made efficient to save on critical time. All duties, taxes for NGOs be waived off to ensure the delivery of required items at affordable costs, they said. "Clear humanitarian response plan needs to be defined inculcating and formalizing role and contribution of all stakeholders including PHF and NHN. Both entities can support NDMA in developing strategic framework for response with all essential requirements to ensure efficiency both in operations and information dissemination," the statement concluded.

**DOAM preserves historical monuments**

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Museum, the Federal Department of Archeology and Museums (DOAM) is preserving historical monuments and archaeological sites in the country. Pursuance of a uniform national policy of field researches such as archaeological explorations and excavations being carried out by DOAM. According to an official, DOAM usually collaborate with foreign archaeological missions to regulate their activities under the uniform policy and working at various sites in Pakistan. DOAM also exercise control over dealing in the export of antiquities and works of art and to regulate chance discoveries and control over movement of cultural property. - APP

**AIOU extends admissions' date**

**DNA**  
 ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has extended the last date of admission for its continuing students of Matric and FA programs till April 15. The interested students could enroll themselves for semester, spring 2020 before the stipulated date, the university announced on Tuesday.

The decision to this effect was taken in order to compensate the continuing students who were stuck up at their homes in wake of outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19). Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Zia-Ul-Qayyum has decided to grant further extension in fee-submission date for continuing students of these programs without late fee charges, as a special case, said Director Admissions, Mian Muhammad Riaz.

**President Kim Il Sung and His Humanity**

President Kim Il Sung is possessed of warm affection for man and humane feelings that make all follow him; just as beautiful flowers give out fragrance to attract bees and butterflies

**P**RESIDENT Kim Il Sung (1912-1994), eternal leader of the Korean people, was a peerlessly great man who attracted the world with his ennobling affection for mankind and virtues. All his life he met over 70 000 foreigners including political and social figures. All those who met him were attracted to him regardless of their ideologies, political views, nationalities and religious beliefs. A former justice minister of Austria said: President Kim Il Sung is possessed of warm affection for man and humane feelings that make all follow him; just as beautiful flowers give out fragrance to attract bees and butterflies, so the warm affection for man, humane feelings and humane fragrance of President Kim Il Sung have attracted many people; indeed, he is a boundlessly polite, unceremonious and generous man before being a statesman. With magnanimity, Kim Il Sung met figures from all social strata around the world, including US evangelist Billy Graham, German authoress Luise Rinser and so on.

His humane feelings produced many anecdotes: When Emile Tompapa, general director of a broadcasting station of Guinea, was at the jaw of death during his visit to the DPRK, he ensured that an emergency medical treatment was organized so as to bring him back to life; when Bruno Kreisky, former Austrian prime minister, suffered troubles in his legs, he sent a group of efficient doctors of the DPRK to the country to cure his disease. There are many people who were brought back to life by his great generosity. Based on the principle that man is the most precious and powerful being in the world, President Kim Il Sung authored the Juche idea that illumines the way for an independent man to shape his destiny, and indicated the road ahead for the progressive people. Attracted by his ideology and humane feelings, Takagi Takeo, famous Japanese journalist, Kanemaru Shin, a former Japanese deputy prime minister, and many other people made a dramatic U-turn in their life.

His ennobling sense of obligation reached beyond national boundaries. He took care of the family of Zhang Weihua, his Chinese comrade-in-arms, and his offspring even after dozens of years had passed since Zhang died; when Zhou Enlai, former Chinese prime minister, passed away, he ensured that a bronze statue of Zhou was set up in the DPRK for the first time as the one of a foreigner. In the days of the anti-Japanese war for the liberation of his motherland, Kim Il Sung led the Korean revolutionaries to defend the Chinese revolution and the Soviet Union at the cost of their blood. During the period of the operations to liberate Northeast China, he saw to it that large quantities of war supplies were sent to China though his country was in a difficult situation as it had been liberated from Japanese colonial rule not long ago. The Chinese leaders such as Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai said that the five-star red flag of the People's Republic of China was associated with the red blood shed by the

Korean revolutionaries. Many people across the world established unique friendship with him, and this relationship produced many anecdotes about his love for mankind. Among those people were Ho Chi Minh of Vietnam, King Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia, Che Guevara, Chilean President Salvador Allende, Chairman of the International World Group of Italy Giancarlo Elia Valori, and Novichenko, a former army officer of the USSR. He rendered an outstanding contribution to the independent development of the countries in their building of a new society. When Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Algeria, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia and other countries were experiencing hardships in building a new society, he ensured that efficient experts and technicians were sent to these countries, so as to render sincere assistance to the development of various sectors, ranging from building a party, state and armed forces to developing industry, agricul-

ture, education, public health, sports and so on. For his ennobling sense of internationalist obligation, he enjoyed high respect and trust of many political leaders across the world, including Stalin, Mao Zedong, Sukarno, Tito and other famous persons in the 20th century. The attraction to his personalities and humane feelings pulled down even the barriers of hostile relations. Former US President Jimmy Carter said that President Kim Il Sung was greater than the three American presidents, who had represented nation building and destiny of the United States—George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln—put together. Former Deputy Prime Minister Kanemaru Shin of Japan said that there was no other ennobling person equal to President Kim Il Sung in the world, and that he would dedicate the rest of his life to living up to his expectations. As the former Portuguese President Gomes said, Kim Il Sung was a great man who moved the world by his humanity.



## US COVID-19 deaths top 10,000

**T**HE number of deaths from COVID-19 in the United States surpassed 10,000 on Monday afternoon U.S. Eastern Time, as total cases topped 360,000, according to data compiled by the Johns Hopkins University.

U.S. Vice President Mike Pence said Monday night that "remarkable progress" in slowing down the transmission of the virus has been seen in states like Washington and California where stay-at-home orders and social distancing protocols have taken effect.

Meanwhile, the numbers of the newly hospitalized, daily ICU admissions and daily incubations are all down from Sunday to Monday, which "are all good signs," said Cuomo. It remains unclear whether the state is currently at a plateau or has reached the apex of the pandemic, said Cuomo while stressing that it's "no time to be lax." The governor on Monday extended the statewide shutdown of non-essential businesses, the ban on gatherings and the closure of public schools until April 29 to keep the trend going.

He also announced an increase of maximum fine for violations of the social distancing protocol from 500 to 1,000 U.S. dollars. He noted that a lot of Chinese Americans are contributing to efforts to save lives and fight the pandemic, despite facing discrimination. "I want to thank all of these good working people for what they are doing," he said.

In California, Governor Gavin Newsom announced Monday that the Golden State will lend 500 ventilators to the Strategic National Stockpile inventory in order to help other states like New York fight the COVID-19 epidemic. California hospitals currently holds an inventory of 11,036 ventilators, a jump from their original estimate of 7,587 ventilators. That increase is due to old ventilators being refurbished and the acquisition of new ventilators, according to the governor.

"California is stepping up to help our fellow Americans in New York and across the country who are being impacted the hardest right now by the COVID-19 pandemic," said Newsom, adding that even though the state prepared for a surge of infections but "we can't turn our back on Americans whose lives depend on having a ventilator now."

This could be a timely assistance to New York, as de Blasio said Sunday the city's medical supplies could make it through the middle of the week and an additional 1,000 to 1,500 more ventilators are needed for the rest of the week. By Monday night, New York state had reported 131,815 cases and 4,758 deaths, while California reported 16,310 cases and 388 deaths, according to Johns Hopkins University.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti

Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Vol: 01 Issue: 15

Email: [dailyisbpost@gmail.com](mailto:dailyisbpost@gmail.com)

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad



## Over 1,000 stranded Pakistanis airlifted

**M**INISTRY of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development has affirmed that more than 1,000 stranded Pakistanis had been repatriated after partial resumption of international flight operations, initiated by Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) on April, 4. "The evacuation of those Pakistanis, who are stuck up at the foreign airports in transit, is government's top priority," a senior officer in the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development said while sharing data of repatriated Pakistanis.

Under the first phase, she said 195 were brought back from Istanbul, and 170 from Thailand, 150 each from the United Kingdom and Canada, 132 Dushanbe, 128 Uzbekistan, 101 the United Arab Emirates and 40 from Qatar. She said the remaining Pakistanis, who were still in transit, would be brought back within current week. Those Pakistani, whose visas got expired, would be airlifted under the second phase that would commence next week, she added.

The ICT official said the administration had also arranged the quarantine facilities for the passenger of two flights which returned the other day. Tests of the recently returned people had been conducted and sent to the health authorities, he added. As of now, he said around 20 Pakistanis, who came back from Turkey, tested positive for the coronavirus while rest of the returnees had been sent home after their test results were negative.

He said the evacuated Pakistanis were being sent to the various quarantine centers after their screening at the airports/ According the CAA spokesperson, the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the international arrivals at airports had been modified to control spread of the coronavirus.

Under the new SOPs, everyone would be screened as per practice upon arrival from International flights. The swab sample shall not be collected at the airport. All passengers and flight crew would be quarantined for 24 hours at a location decided by the authorities. After 24 hours swab sample shall be collected for test at the designated facility.

Anyone with positive test result shall be retained at the quarantine or other relevant location. Those with negative test result shall be allowed to leave with strict instructions and guidance for home quarantine.

Data of all passengers and flight crew with their mobile numbers will be kept for record and further follow up. The spokesman said the new directives would be applicable on all passengers and flight crew with immediate effect.

## Uzbekistan's Anti-COVID-19 Strategies: an overview

Dr Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan



*President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has now introduced many important integrated measures to put its macro-economy on the right path of sustainability and productive despite expected regional as well as global recession.*

**T**HE Republic of Uzbekistan has become "pioneer state" in the Central Asia Region (CAR) to introduce various meaningful socio-economic, administrative and legal measures to launch a comprehensive and effective fight against the Corona-virus (COVID-19). Indeed, national response of Uzbekistan against COVID-19 is "imense" and "decisive" which has now saved its people from any imminent collateral damage.

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has initiated various short, medium and long term measures to control and develop alternative model for maintaining the national economy and productive channels in safe-zone and approved a 10 trillion sum (\$1 billion) package focused on four areas: stemming the spread of the coronavirus, supporting business and em-

ployment, expanding social welfare provisions and ensuring the continued functioning of the financial sector.

Right from the beginning of COVID-19 in China the Uzbekistan government was already conducting temperature checks at international borders and airports in January 2020. In February Uzbekistan Airways cancelled direct air travel between Uzbekistan and China and Uzbekistan and South Korea. Afterwards, it banned the export of face masks to ensure ample domestic supply, while sending emergency medical supplies to China. Its comprehensive actions have now prevented any panic throughout. COVID-19 has now become global epidemic and is affecting millions. A global threat of this enormity demands global solidarity to support the most vulnerable countries as they cope with this unfolding crisis. But inclusive and development oriented policies and people's friendly measure of Uzbekistan has become a role model in the region and beyond. Despite its global intensity and regional widespread existence first case of COVID-19 was registered on March 15 in Uzbekistan because of immaculate policies framework, strong political commitment, people's friendly plans and smooth supplies of medical facilities. Uzbekistan has been put under emergency quarantine on 16 March 2020.

According to Uzbekistan official reports (January 20, 2020), the government of Uzbekistan formed the "Special Republican Commission" to prevent the outbreak or spread of the coronavirus in Uzbekistan which was chaired by the Prime Minister of Uzbekistan. It was established to take all possible measures to save lives and national economy and enforced the quarantine and introduced measures concerning the following: enforcement of force majeure clause, export-import ban, business support plans, labor relations, and various other national level measures.

A Presidential Decree was adopted to mitigate the negative pandemic effects which empowered the Ministry of Investments and Foreign Trade, international authority and the Chamber of Commerce and Trade, local authority with the mandate to publish an official note regarding force majeure circumstances enforceable during quarantine period. Both the authorities have regulatory discretions and responsible for the issuance of force majeure certificates within one business day upon receiving application from businesses.

Being a "responsive" country, the Republic of Uzbekistan initiated "sensible measures" in the aviation industry and enforced "certain checks" to safeguard the national interests of its people and businesses alike. International air and rail services to all countries were suspended immediately but apply to the carriage of goods remained open. The government of Uzbekistan has also initiated comprehensive measures in the field of customs. According to the Presidential Decree, starting from 1 April 2020, customs clearance of imported food products will be carried out in an accelerated mode, including by issuing permits before the arrival of goods on the territory of Uzbekistan. The State Customs Committee and other authorized agencies responsible for permits issuance will implement these measures.

To lessen global economic recession and meltdown of regional economic activities the government of Uzbekistan through a Presidential Decree suspended tax audits up to 1 January 2021. The Uzbek Tax authorities will suspend interest payments on businesses struggling to cover the cost of property, land and water resources taxes. In most cases, tax audits will be suspended until January 2021.

Moreover, business corporations have been eligible to receive 6-months tax holidays with exemption for property tax, land tax and water use tax. To give maximum relief the Uzbek tax authorities suspend the accrual of penalties for property tax, land tax and water use tax payable by business entities experiencing temporary difficulties, and will not take measures to forcibly recover tax arrears up to October 2020.

According to Presidential Decree all entities public & private have been instructed to transfer their employees to remote "home-based" work or send to annual leave from March 24, 2020. A corresponding procedure shall be introduced within a week that will specify how employers are able to transfer employees to a remote method of work, flexible working hours or to work at home for the quarantine period. If an employee is sent to quarantine, the employer must pay temporary disability benefits.

The Decree also stipulates that the benefit amounts to 100% of the average employee's salary if an employee has children under 14 years will be granted. In all other cases the benefit amount varies from 60% to 100% of the average employee's salary.

According to the Labor Code and the Law on Labor Protec-

tion, all employers take extra care about their health and will face disciplinary measures towards employees responsible for violation of requirements of labor protection.

Being prominent regional expert of Uzbekistan and CIS, I highly appreciate the strong political commitment of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and his deep economic insight to announce the "largest economic" and "financial" bailout package of "Uzbekistan history" after the breakout of COVID-19 a global pandemic with severs regional socio-economic repercussions.

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has now introduced many important integrated measures to put its macro-economy on the right path of sustainability and productive despite expected regional as well as global recession. The Uzbek President approved a 10 trillion sum (\$1 billion) package focused on four areas i.e. controlling the spread of the COVID-19, supporting business and employment, expanding social welfare provisions and ensuring the continued functioning of the financial sector.

Being responsive country of international community, the Republic of Uzbekistan has now been rated the best "National Health System" and qualitative capacity building apparatus in the region. National government horizontal and vertical operationalization and optimal utilities of city and regional functionaries throughout the country has now created diminishing effects in the country and succeeded to safeguard its socio-economic and geopolitical vested interests.

National lockdown, closing of education schools, colleges, universities and vocation centers, introduction of business and investment friendly policies, tax exemptions, incentives, persuasion of alternative model of sustainable economic growth and social unity/harmony, provision of basic necessities of life to elderly and needy people throughout the country, institutionalization of economics of charity, countrywide public awareness campaigns of social distancing, self-checking of body temperature, cancellation of social events, imposition of strict administrative measures at every level, restrictions on aviation industry, and last but not least, legal cover to infected people and employees in Uzbekistan has eradicated the chances of COVID-19. It also shows Uzbek national resilience and high level of responsibilities towards struggling people and weakening humanity.

## Indian State Sponsored Terrorism in Sri Lanka

Sajjad Shaukat



*It is notable that Easter Sunday Bombing on April 21, 2019 rocked the entire Sri Lanka, as the suicide bombings killed more than 250 people by targeting three churches in and three luxury hotels in the capital, Colombo*

**H**ISTORICALLY, India has continued interventionist and hegemonic policies vis-vis her neighboring countries through its military and intelligence agency RAW. Besides supporting separatism in East Pakistan which resulted in dismemberment of Pakistan and continued assistance to the separatist elements of Pakistan's Balochistan province, New Delhi occupied Sikkim, subdued Bhutan. It particularly employed state sponsored terrorism which still continues in Sri Lanka. After the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, took a policy decision to support Sri Lankan northern insurgency

in August 1983, within years, the number of Tamil training camps increased in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Over 20,000 Sri Lankan Tamil insurgents had been imparted armed training—tactics of guerrilla warfare by the Indian Army. Specialised training was also imparted by the Indian army instructors to Sri Lankan militants in New Delhi, Bombay and other cities. Besides, its navy and air force also played their roguish role in connection with the Sri Lankan insurgents. By openly violating the maritime laws, Indian navy had supplied larger cache of arms and ammunition to the Tamil rebels. Despite the capture of some Indian ships, and despite the complaints of Colombo, the illegitimate practice continued by the Indian military.

In this context, Rohan Gunaratne in his book, "Sri Lanka Tamil Insurgency", disclosed that with the Indo-Lanka Accord of July 1987, Rajiv Gandhi ordered the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to fight the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE). However, it was double game of New Delhi.

Sri Lanka which has crushed the Tamil rebels successfully, offers an unprecedented instance. But, Tamil Nadu still remains LTTE's main source of weapon supplies. LTTE, the most ruthless terrorist organization of the world, fought against the State of Sri Lanka, killed thousands of civilians and military personnel, damaged state assets and bared economic growth of the country for about three decades. The outfit as launching pad for the insurgents' activities included most deadly weapon "The Suicide Cadre" that introduced new trend in terrorism.

Today, LTTE is almost banned globally; however, in India, it has a temporary ban which is reviewed periodically. Tamils who make almost 12% of the Sri Lankan population are mostly concentrated in north, collocated in proximity of Indian Tamil Nadu. Ethnic group in past, had armed conflict with the state duly supported by India and Tamil Diaspora to achieve separate state; nevertheless, after the military defeat, now only promote autonomy/merger of Northern and Eastern Province.

It is notable that Easter Sunday Bombing on April 21, 2019 rocked the entire Sri Lanka, as the suicide bombings killed more than 250 people by targeting three churches in and three luxury hotels in the capital, Colombo. In this regard, Islamic State group (Also known as Daesh, ISIS and ISIL) claimed Easter Sunday's suicide attacks in Sri Lanka.

In a statement, Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena had said that the attacks "were the work of international drug dealers" to disrupt his anti-narcotics drive.. However, a happy nation could not believe that she has to suffer another wave of terrorism. Unfortunately, like LTTE which originated from Tamil Nadu; NTJ whose members under the influence of ISIS ideology carried out the bombings also belonged to the same state of India, having its headquarters at Chennai.

It is mentionable that Indian State of Kerala, which is almost a neighboring geo entity to Sri Lanka, is one of the leading source of ISIS influx and drugs in Sri Lanka. Tons of cannabis and other drugs are sent to Sri Lanka through sea.

Sri Lanka is a beautiful island and her serene beaches, astounding sea life, wild life and nature attracts tourists' from various parts of the world. While, fishing is one of the leading sources of sustenance for the people mostly living on the coastline.

Palk Strait which divides Jaffna Peninsula from mainland India remains a contested place despite clear demarcation of international maritime boundaries between both the countries. Poaching and illegal fishing by Indian fishermen into Sri Lankan waters is not only depleting the sustenance of poor Sri Lankans but also seriously affecting the marine environment which can ultimately affect the tourism industry of Sri Lanka, leading to huge economic losses.

It is noteworthy that New Delhi is trying thwart cordial relations of Sri Lanka with China.

In this respect, on April 27, 2019, on a website, LiveMint-Com, Elizabeth Roche under the caption, "India renews Sri Lanka ties to counter China influence in South Asia" wrote:

"India moved to cement closer economic ties with Sri Lanka in a bid to negate the growing influence of strategic rival China in the Indian Ocean region and South Asia. A pact on economic cooperation was signed in the presence of visiting Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and his host Prime Minister Narendra Modi."

Similarly, Indian media and websites gave much coverage to an article, published by a German TV Channel (Which also publishes online news items) under the title "India Nips at China's Heels in Race to Collect Lanka Port Assets written by Iain Marlow and Saket Sundria on April 26, 2017. They wrote: "India is looking to invest in a colonial-era Sri Lankan oil-storage facility as it seeks to further its naval interests in the Indian Ocean and push China back in the process. A unit of state-owned Indian Oil Corp., the country's largest refiner, is set to help fund the \$350 million development of an 84-tank facility at the strategically located Trincomalee port on Sri Lanka's east coast. India and Sri Lanka are also discussing setting up a refinery in the island nation, according to Shyam Bohra, managing director of Indian Oil's subsidiary Lanka IOC.

The talks come before a meeting between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe in New Delhi."

It is of particular attention that during his visit to New Delhi on February 8, this year, Indian Premier Modi urged the visiting Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa to empower the minority Tamil community in the island nation and fulfill their aspirations for justice, respect, and equality. Modi said at a joint press briefing, Rajapaksa's visit to India was being closely watched by foreign policy analysts, as during his term as president between 2005 and 2016, Colombo grew closer to Beijing. Nonetheless, Indian neighbouring countries now look ahead for the peace and development in the region and do not deserve to be suppressed with such kind of traditional heinous designs of New Delhi. Let's walk on a track where all the regional countries are considered equal and sovereign for the betterment of human kind; India on this chess board of South Asian place has a major role to play.



**Briefs**

**Britain set for 66,000 corona deaths**

PARIS: Britain could see as many as 66,000 COVID-19 deaths during the first wave of the current pandemic, new research showed Tuesday, making the outbreak there by far the deadliest in Europe. Modelling conducted by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington's School of Medicine showed that approximately 151,680 people were likely to die from the virus across the continent. While the novel coronavirus emerged in China and was initially focussed in east Asia, the World Health Organization now says the pandemic is centred in western Europe, with Spain, Italy and France experiencing devastating death tolls. — APP

**Easypaisa joins hands with Zakat**

ISLAMABAD: Easypaisa, Pakistan's leading provider of digital financial services has partnered with Zakat and Ushr Department of the Government of Punjab to digitally disburse funds to those who are being affected by the lockdown amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The collaboration is aimed to disburse Zakat funds of PKR 1.5 billion to more than 170,000 beneficiaries who need them the most during these trying times in a convenient and safe manner. Easypaisa has become the first branchless banking service to provide its platform for relief efforts in this time of need. The lockdown initiated across the country to curb the spread of Coronavirus has made life difficult for individuals and families, especially the low-income segment and daily wage earners.

**16 more patients recover**

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah on Tuesday confirmed that 16 more people have recovered from the COVID-19 in Karachi. Charing a meeting in Karachi, the chief minister Murad Ali Shah said that as many as 309 patients have recovered from COVID-19 thus far. He said that 54 new cases of COVID-19 were reported on Tuesday, taking the provincial tally to 986. Murad Ali Shah further said that one more patient has died from the novel coronavirus today, while overall 10219 coronavirus tests had been conducted in the province so far. As per breakup, 16 of the deceased were from Karachi and 2 deaths were reported in Hyderabad.

**China respects the rights of Muslim Community**

Mr. Brownback is an expert in rumor-mongering. His claim that China has imprisoned a large number of people for their religious beliefs, including a million Muslims in Xinjiang, is totally out of thin air and could not be farther from the truth

DNA  
BEIJING: China will continue to respect the freedom and religious rights of its minorities including million of Muslims, said a spokesperson of the Chinese Foreign Ministry Hua Chunying here at a regular news briefing. The spokesperson was commenting on the reported statement of Samuel Brownback, the US State Department's Ambassador at large for international religious freedom in which he had alleged that China continues to have a number of people imprisoned for their faith. The spokesperson said, "Mr. Brownback is an expert in rumor-mongering. His claim that

China has imprisoned a large number of people for their religious beliefs, including a million Muslims in Xinjiang, is totally out of thin air and could not be farther from the truth. Through hard work, the Chinese people have achieved positive results in the fight against the pandemic, effectively safeguarded the health and safety of all Chinese people, including those who follow Islam, and made important contributions to global public health security. This is universally acknowledged, but a handful of US politicians, such as Mr. Brownback, are simply unwilling or afraid to face up to the fact. The Chinese government protects

its citizens' freedom of religious belief in accordance with law, and Chinese people of all ethnic groups enjoy full freedom of religious belief. There is no such thing as "religious prisoners" in China, let alone "a million Muslims from Xinjiang in detention". Meanwhile, as a country under the rule of law, China will never allow anyone to engage in illegal and criminal activities in the name of religion. At present, China has nearly 200 million religious believers, of whom more than 20 million are Muslims. There are more than 380,000 clerical personnel, some 5,500 religious organizations and more than 140,000 venues for religious activities registered according

to law. Xinjiang now has 24,400 mosques, one for every 530 Muslims. A few American and western politicians can repeat their lies a thousand times but it's impossible to alter these facts. Pandemics are a common challenge to mankind, regardless of national boundaries or ethnic groups. Only by working together can countries stand a chance to win the war. We urge Mr. Brownback and his like to stop manipulating political issues under the pretext of the pandemic, stop smearing China and undermining the cooperation between China and the US in fighting the pandemic, and instead focus on responding to the situation in the US and rescuing American lives."

**China says no new deaths in corona milestone**

WUHAN: China on Tuesday reported no new coronavirus deaths for the first time since it started publishing figures in January, just a day before it plans to lift travel curbs from the contagion's epicentre of Wuhan. The twin milestones illustrate the progress China says it has made in its all-consuming battle against the pandemic, which originated in Wuhan and spread throughout the country and the world. But the announcement comes as suspicions linger that the ruling Communist Party government — already accused of bungling the initial response to the outbreak — continues to intentionally under-report the real number of deaths and infections. China denies the suggestion. Beijing imposed an unprecedented lockdown on tens of millions of people in Wuhan and the rest of Hubei province in late January in a bid to smother the virus, and the number of new domestic infections has dwindled for weeks. — APP

**Pakistan welcomes statement by int'l bodies on Kashmir**

ADNAN YOUSAF  
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has welcomed the joint statement by six international human rights organizations, calling on India to immediately release all arbitrarily detained prisoners and restore full high speed internet access in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

In a tweet on Tuesday, Foreign Office Spokesperson Aisha Farooqui said the joint statement rightly underlines that measures to combat Covid-19 must respect human rights of every individual. Urgent release of political prisoners, human rights defenders and all those arrested in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir after 5 August 2019 is therefore imperative. The Spokesperson said Expressing concern on isolation of inmates from outside world due to communication blackout and ban on prison visits, the statement underscores that allegations of torture against Kashmiri prisoners as part of a decades-long pattern of abuses have been repeatedly denounced by human rights and UN bodies.



ISLAMABAD: Daily wagers sitting at a roadside waiting for job to earn for livelihood. — APP

**12 New Tourist Routes Launched in Tajikistan**

DNA  
DUSHANBE: 12 new tourist routes have been launched in Tajikistan in honor of the celebration of 5500th anniversary of Sarazm, which is one of the unique monuments in Central Asia, reports the Committee for Tourism Development under the government of Tajikistan. While considering the requirements and wishes of tourists, most of these routes were launched on the basis of historical, cultural, environmental and mountainous areas of the country.

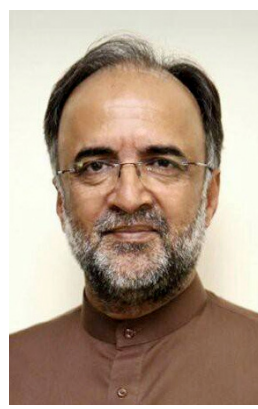
The routes last from 6 through 15 days depending on the travel season. The entire range of these routes was published in the form of a booklet with the support of development partners and is widely distributed by tourism companies among tourism lovers in Tajikistan. The ancient city of Sarazm is one of the oldest monuments of the Eneolithic period and the beginning of the Bronze Age in Central Asia. Sarazm was included in the UNESCO list of universal cultural heritage on July 31, 2010.



**Govt cancels Baisakhi celebrations**

MUNIR FAISAL  
ATTOCK: The government has cancelled Baisakhi celebrations scheduled to begin on April 14 in Hassanabdal, in which 3,000 Sikhs from India and 2,000 from elsewhere around the world were to participate. Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) Deputy Secretary Shrines Imran Gondal said that a meeting of the ETPB and the Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbhadhank Committee (PSGPC) unanimously decided that there would be no Baisakhi celebrations at Gurdwara Punja Sahib in Hassanabdal this year and the scheduled visits of Sikh pilgrims has been cancelled.

**Corona can spread due to govt's failures: Kaira**



DNA  
LAHORE: Qamar Zaman Kaira has said that coronavirus can spread due to government's failure; however, lockdown helped in controlling spread of the virus.

Qamar Zaman Kaira was addressing a meeting of divisional and district presidents of the party via video link. He said that it is unfortunate for Pakistan that PM was not able to take right decisions on time. The PPP leader said federal government did not adopt a strategy on time and on the other hand Sindh led the response to coronavirus under the leadership of Bilawal Bhutto. PM never praised efforts of Sindh government, he added. He also demanded that the government should distribute money to the needy through Benazir Income Support Program (BISP).

**SC orders to set up quarantine centers**

DNA  
ISLAMABAD: The Supreme of Pakistan of Pakistan Tuesday ordered to set up proper quarantine centers at Taftan, Chaman and Torkham borders for coronavirus patients. Hearing a case pertaining to the closure of OPDs and availability of facilities amid coronavirus pandemic, the apex court ordered the federal government to establish quarantine facilities at all three borders within one month. "Proper quarantine centers of 1000-bed and isolation wards should be set up at Taftan, Torkham and Chaman borders," said SC in its order.

**Azerbaijan creates modern facility of masks manufacturing in short time: Ilham Aliyev**

DNA  
BAKU: President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and first lady Mehriban Aliyeva attended the inauguration of medical masks manufacturing enterprise established by Baku Textile Factory LLC in Sumgayit Chemical Industry Park. Minister of Economy Mikayil Jabbarov and director of Baku Textile Factory LLC Sakina Babayeva informed the head of state and first lady about the enterprise. Established by Baku Textile Factory LLC, the medical masks manufacturing enterprise was allocated an appropriate venue in Sumgayit Chemical Industry Park and gained Industrial Park resident status. The enterprise creates more than 30 new jobs which will employ people in three shifts. At the initial stage, the enterprise will produce 120,000 medical masks a day.

Another production line will be set up in the coming days and at the second stage, the enterprise will double its production and manufacture 200-250,000 medical masks per day. After viewing the enterprise, President Ilham Aliyev appealed to the people of Azerbaijan. The production of medical masks begins in our country today. This is a very significant event because many countries of the world, including Azerbaijan, are currently experiencing a shortage of medical masks. We always relied on imports in this area. However, in the current circumstances, local production was organized in a short time, in a matter of two weeks. Entrepreneurs have played a major role in this and the Azerbaijani state also provided financial support. Thus, a new modern production facility was created in a short period of time, and this will allow us the opportunity to substantially provide ourselves

with medical masks. As you know, the use of masks in the fight against coronavirus is of particular importance. As I already noted, many countries of the world are experiencing problems in this area these days. A deficit has also arisen in Azerbaijan. In some cases, there are no medical masks in pharmacies. Therefore, this production will enable us to provide ourselves and Azerbaijan will no longer depend on imports even after the fight against coronavirus is completed.

At the same time, the production of disinfectants has been organized in Azerbaijan as well. This issue was also resolved in a short time. Our advantage was that there are several distilleries in the country where disinfectant production has begun. These disinfectants are already on sale. It has been repeatedly noted that in order to wage a more effective fight against the infection, people should be more responsible and pay attention to personal hygiene. But to do that, we need resources — medical masks and

disinfectants, which are already on the market today. At present, one of the key issues is that pharmacies and other retail outlets should not artificially inflate prices. The lack of masks has already led to an artificial overpricing, and sometimes masks were sold from under the counter. This should not be allowed under any circumstances and relevant state bodies need to exercise strict control. In the event of an artificial inflation of prices, those involved will be severely punished because in the current pandemic such actions will be perceived as treason. The production of medical masks and disinfectants once again shows that the infrastructure available in Azerbaijan allows us the opportunity to succeed in organizing the necessary production in a short time. It is no coincidence that this production enterprise was set up on the territory of the Chemical Industry Park in Sumgayit.

This park was established on my initiative and many enterprises are already in operation here. They are making a great contribution to our non-oil economy. If we take into account the areas that were most affected by the coronavirus, as well as the people engaged in private entrepreneurship, 600,000 people suffer from this situation the most because their jobs have been closed. Everyone already knows about my appeal, my unequivocal demand to entrepreneurs: no staff cuts should be made in this period. However, we must create opportunities for entrepreneurs so that they are not affected. A total of 600,000 workers, including private entrepreneurs, will be financed at the expense of the state in Azerbaijan. The state has taken on a significant part of their wages and these payments are already beginning. The problems of students and the amount of unemployment benefits — all this is being taken into account.

