



Islamabad POST

Sunday, May 03, 2020

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

PM Imran Khan orders cut in daily use items

Amends to NAB Ord to take time, says Sh Rashid

ICCI for more cut in prices: President ICCI



AFTER FUEL PRICES REDUCTION

PM orders cut in daily use items

Prices of items will be brought down under any circumstances, and strict action will be taken against those who do not comply, says Imran Khan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has ordered provincial governments to ensure that daily commodities are available in markets at reduced prices after a recent cut in petrol prices. "People must feel some relief after petroleum prices were decreased due to a global slump in demand amid the pandemic," the premier said in a statement Saturday. Earlier, the federal government has slashed the prices of petroleum products by Rs15 per litre for

the month of May. The new price of petrol will be Rs81.58 per litre, according to a notification issued by the Finance Division. The prime minister wants the benefit of this cut to reach the public and has ordered provinces to take immediate measures to ensure this. "After the significant reduction in oil prices, it will be ensured that rates of other items are also decreased," said the prime minister. The Prime Minister said the prices of daily commodities have been raised in the past with a rise in petrol prices "without further ado". He wants strict action against offend-

ers and directed the provinces to get help of district administrations to help locate those who are artificially inflating prices. He said that prices of items will be brought down under any circumstances, and strict action will be taken against those who do not comply. The premier also directed the provincial governments of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to take measures for reducing inflation. PM Imran said that the government, with the cooperation of district administrations, will initiate action against illegal profiteering.



ISLAMABAD: Advisor to PM on Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Babar Awan calls on Prime Minister Imran Khan. - DNA

Briefs

PM Fund touches 3 bln mark

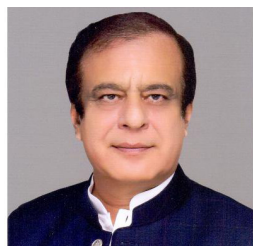
DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Senator Faisal Javed Khan said Prime Minister Relief Fund for COVID-19 has touched the 3 billion mark. While admiring the generosity and spirit shown by people towards the great cause, Faisal Javed told that Rs 3,022 million have been deposited in the fund so far. He urged all to keep contributing and termed Pakistan as the most generous country. Together we can and together we must, he added.

Shibli asks Opp to avoid politics on Covid-19

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Shibli Faraz has stressed on the need for a collective response to combat the Coronavirus pandemic. Talking to a private news channel, he asked the opposition parties including Pakistan Peoples Party Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari to avoid doing politics over the issue of COVID-19. The Minister said the relief packages announced by the Federal government is for the whole



country rather any specific province or area. He said the deserving families from across the country including Sindh are getting an amount of 12,000 rupees each transparently under the Ehsaas Emergency Cash Programme. Shibli Faraz said the government has given the concept of smart lock-

down keeping in view the difficulties of the daily wagers and labourers from the impacts of Coronavirus as our country is not in a position to afford a complete lockdown due to its economic situation. The Minister said the Federal government handled the issue of COVID-19 better than many other countries despite a lot of challenges including the economic one. Replying to a question, Shibli Faraz said improvement in health sector is responsibility of the provincial governments after the passage of 18th Amendment.

Spain eases strict lockdown

MADRID: Spaniards were allowed out of their homes to exercise and walk freely after 48 days of confinement on Saturday as some European nations began cautiously easing virus lockdowns while others like Russia faced a spike in new infections. As governments across the globe balance lifting restrictions to restart economies against the risk of new infections, US authorities brought some hope by approving an experimental drug for emergency use on coronavirus patients. The measure was the latest step in a global push to find viable treatments and a vaccine for the coronavirus, which has left half of humanity under some form of lockdown, hammered the world economy and caused more than 3.3 million confirmed infections. - APP

Pak lodges protest over ceasefire violations

NEHAL MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has lodged a strong protest with India over the recent ceasefire violations by the Indian occupation forces along the Line of Control in Hajjir and Sankh Sectors which resulted in serious injuries to an innocent civilian. A senior Indian diplomat was summoned to the foreign office on Saturday to register the protest. The Indian occupation forces along the LoC and the Working Boundary (WB) have continuously been targeting civilian populated areas with artillery fire, heavy-calibre mortars and automatic weapons. In 2020, India has so far committed 940 ceasefire

violations. Due to indiscriminate and unprovoked firing by the Indian occupation forces, a 30 years old innocent woman, Nasreen Akhtar w/o Rafique, r/o village Khwaja Bandi, sustained serious injuries. The Foreign Office Spokesperson in a statement condemned the deplorable targeting of innocent civilians by the Indian forces saying such senseless acts are in clear violations of the 2003 ceasefire understanding and are against all established humanitarian norms and professional military conduct. "These egregious violations of international law reflect consistent Indian attempts to escalate the situation along the LoC and are a threat to regional peace and security. It

was added that by raising tensions along the LoC and the WB, India cannot divert attention from the grave human rights situation in the Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJ&K)," the spokesperson said. The spokesperson said that by raising tensions along the LoC and the working boundary, India cannot divert attention from the grave human rights situation in the Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The spokesperson urged the Indian side to allow the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) to play its mandated role as per the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions.

Confirmed virus cases 18,114

ISLAMABAD: The number of confirmed coronavirus cases in Pakistan on Saturday jumped to 18,114, media reported. According to National Command and Operation Center, record 1,297 cases were reported across the country in last 24 hours, taking the tally to 18,114. - DNA

Worldwide death toll rises to 239,500

DNA



ISLAMABAD: The worldwide death toll from coronavirus pandemic has risen to 239,500 while over 3.4 million cases have been registered. According to latest data, over one million patients have recovered from the pandemic so far. In United States, death toll from the pandemic now stands at 65,700 with over one million infections from the virus. Italy is the second worst-hit country in terms of deaths with 28,000 casualties and 207,000 infections, followed by UK with over 27,500 deaths and more than 177,000 infections.

FM Qureshi talks to Swiss FM

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi held a telephonic conversation with Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis of Switzerland to discuss matters related to the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic. Expressing deep condolences over loss of precious lives, the foreign minister commended efforts made by the Swiss government to contain the pandemic. He also appreciated projecting the Pakistan's flag on Matterhorn mountain a few days back as a special gesture of solidarity, a press release issued here on Saturday said.

PIA flight for US on May 7

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan International Airlines' (PIA) flight to depart for Washington on May 7 to bring back stranded countrymen, ARY News reported on Saturday, citing sources. The national flag-carrier after approval from the US for direct flights to repatriate stranded Pakistanis, has started planning the schedule of the flights. In this regard, it was learnt that a Boeing-777 aircraft of the PIA will depart from Islamabad to the US on May 7 to bring back 300 stranded citizens from the United States. It may be noted that, last week, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) was allowed to operate di-

rect flights to the United States (US) to airlift its stranded citizens. The permission was granted by the US Transport Department on Pakistan's request to repatriate its stranded citizens in the United States of America. According to the permission granted by the US, the PIA can operate as many as 12 flights in a month to bring back the stranded Pakistanis. The PIA spokesperson had said that the permission was granted to Pakistan by the US after improvement in the security situation. CEO PIA Air Marshal Arshad Malik thanked Prime Minister Imran Khan, Foreign Ministry and Aviation Ministry for taking the issue with the US.

FAO, OCHA join

DNA

QUETTA: The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) have strengthened their collaboration by signing an exchange of letters as the UN continues to help Government respond to challenges posed by COVID-19 in Balochistan and all over Pakistan. In the light of the current increase in humanitarian needs, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, FAO jointly with OCHA have deployed a Humanitarian Affairs Officer to strengthen humanitarian coordination activities in Balochistan, says a press statement here Saturday. This will further reinforce coordination mechanisms between the Government of Balochistan, the UN, NGOs and development partners.

UAE develops coronavirus medicine

Abu Dhabi Stem Cell Centre doctors have developed this medicine; the treatment was administered to 73 coronavirus patients who have each gone on to recover completely

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The UAE has developed an aerosol medication that has shown promising results in the treatment of Covid-19. Developed by a team of doctors and researchers at Abu Dhabi Stem Cell Centre, the treatment was administered to 73 coronavirus pa-

tients who have each gone on to recover completely from the disease. On Friday, the Ministry of Economy revealed it had granted a patent to the centre to develop the treatment using stem cells. The treatment involves extracting stem cells from the patient's blood and reintroducing them after "activating" them. The

patent was granted for the method in which the stem cells are collected. After it has been nebulised into a fine mist, the treatment is inhaled into the lungs of a patient. Researchers believe it has a therapeutic effect caused by regeneration of lung cells. The treatment is also thought to modulate the immune response to

keep it from overreacting to the Covid-19 infection and causing further damage to healthy cells. The treatment has successfully undergone the initial phase of clinical trials, demonstrating its safety. None of the patients who received the treatment reported immediate adverse effects and there have been no interactions

found with the conventional treatment protocols for Covid-19 patients. Trials to demonstrate the efficacy of the treatment are ongoing and expected to be completed in a couple of weeks. Non-pharmacological interventions to prevent the spread of Covid-19 including staying at home, social distancing as well as

infection prevention and control measures remain necessary to reduce the burden of the disease on the healthcare system, authorities said. Abu Dhabi Stem Cells Centre is a specialist healthcare centre that focuses on cell therapy, regenerative medicine and cutting-edge research on stem cells.

Drive-in ceremonies in Iran

DNA

TEHRAN: With mosques in Iran closed as it battles the coronavirus, worshippers have adopted the novel solution of getting behind the wheel at drive-ins to gather during the fasting month of Ramadan.

Inside...

Exports value to remain at US \$22 bn in FY 2019-20

- Page 02

China's endeavors to bring economic stability amid COVID-19

- Page 03

China Cultural Center in Pak celebrates 5th Anniversary

No fiddling with 18th Amend: speakers

- Back Page

Briefs

16 held on violation in Pindi

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Police on Saturday rounded up 16 persons and registered 12 cases for violating the orders of Punjab government lockdown in wake of pandemic Coronavirus. According to police spokesman, Rawal division Police arrested seven person and registered 7 cases, Potohar division held 4 person and registered 7 cases, Suddar Division Police apprehended 2 persons besides registered 1 case on the violation including closure of shop and pillion ridding ban in different areas and not following the set rules of the administration. City Police Officer (CPO) Muhammad Ahsan Younas said police would take action against the violators and advised the people to take preemptive measures to fight against coronavirus.

NAHE start online faculty

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE) has launched its first online National Faculty Development Programme (NDFP) 2020. The four-week intensive online programme is designed to provide a strong foundation for new faculty in the areas of teaching effectiveness, research management and professional practice, a press release on Saturday said. The programme led by a team of international and national experts is designed and delivered following the processes of the COVID-19 online readiness Policy Guidance No. 5 for universities in Pakistan. All relevant documents are available as examples for best practice on the NAHE webpage as a resource for universities preparing to offer online teaching from June 1, 2020.

Mirza urges citizens to follow SOPs

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on National Health Services Dr Zafar Mirza on Saturday advised the citizens to strictly follow all 13 SOPs countrywide to effectively fight against the disease. In a media briefing, Dr Zafar Mirza said these SOPs had been prepared for all persons concerned keeping in view the prevailing disease situation, asking people to visit official website to read these SOPs. He said there were 20-point SOPs regarding Mosques during Ramazan-ul-Mubarak. He added that there were SOPs for corona positive patients with regard to their quarantine and travelling. He said the government had also issued SOPs on burial of the deceased from coronavirus, adding there were SOPs on categorization of hospitals regarding coronavirus.

Exports value to remain at US \$22 bn in FY 2019-20: Dawood

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to the Prime Minister on Commerce, Abdul Razak Dawood said that the country's exports target of US \$ 25 billion could not be achieved due to the ongoing situation of lockdown in the country and it could decline to more or less to US \$ 22 billion. The exports decreased in April by 50 percent and home remittances also declined in this situation, Abdul Razak Dawood said in an interview with Voice of America (VOA) here. To a question he said Pakistan could get benefits from low oil prices in current evolving situation in international market

and there would be no larger impact of Current Account Deficit (CoD) because of decline in petroleum prices. He also vowed for opening the industrial sector in coming months to provide opportunity to the local exporters to get more benefits in current scenario and major shift in international trade market. He urged the exporters to get orders freely from all countries including textile industry to tap the new opportunities in the world market. Replying to a question on impact of current situation on country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), he forecast that it would contract by 0.5 percent during the current fiscal year.



He said even in recent challenging situation Pakistan has opened various sectors including information Technology and services sectors, which attracted the world to the Pakistan product in these sectors. To a question on textile sector export, he said Pakistan was receiving big orders of face masks and sanitizers. "We have also received huge demand of Hydroxychloroquine

and Pakistan has exported raw material to Germany and Turkey and 1000,000 tablets to Saudi Arabia," he added. Replying to another question on United States-Pakistan Trade dialogue, he said Pakistan wanted access in potential US market for this, "We demanded the US government to eliminate the travel restriction for Pakistan to increase bilateral trade." He said during the visit of Prime Minister Imran Khan, both the countries were agreed to start dialogue for searching the new avenues for bilateral trade in US and Pakistan. The adviser said that Pakistan also demanded to the United States and other international brands and companies to open

their offices in Pakistan for bringing foreign investment in the country. He said Pakistan wanted access in Textile, Information Technology and Services sectors in potential US market to increase our exports. Replying to another question on Afghan Transit Trade, he said our trade agreement was going to expire in June 2021, and now "we are in preparation to negotiate with them". He said Afghan transit trade gave loss to local industry. He said Pakistan wanted to increase the bilateral trade with Afghanistan but "we had some reservation and there is need to take some measures to protect the local industrial sector".

Pak-Turk Maarif school increases fee

RAWALPINDI: Pak-Turk Maarif International School Junior Branch Sixth Road Rawalpindi has increased the fee of each child from four to five thousand - brazenly flouting Punjab's government's 20 percent fee cut orders. According to students, the school has also reduced the installments from 12 to 10 for the reason best known to them. The phenomenal increase has been made in the grab of shifting of child from one section to other. A number of parents talking to APP has asked the relevant authorities to take notice of the violation of Punjab orders and ensure implementation of 20 percent reduction in fee orders. - APP



ISLAMABAD: MNAs from Malakand Division called on Prime Minister Imran Khan. - DNA

ICCI for more cut in prices

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) has called upon the government to make proportionate cut in the prices of electricity and gas as has been made in the prices of petroleum products that would reduce high cost of doing business, bringing down inflation and provide good relief to the common man in these difficult times. Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that in these tough circumstances, government has taken a good decision by reducing prices of petroleum products from 15-38 percent that would bring down production cost and provide important relief to people. However, he urged that government should also make proportionate cut in the prices of electricity and gas prices that would further reduce cost of doing business and ease the burden of

inflation-stricken people. He said that Pakistan was producing major share of electricity from thermal fuel while the oil prices in international market have come down drastically. He said it was the best time for the government to cut energy prices to give crucial relief to business sector and the general public. ICCI President said that at the one hand, government has reduced prices of POL products, but at the other hand, it has further increased taxes and levy on these products that should be revised. He said that government has increased tax of Rs.5.68 per litre on petrol, Rs.6.79 on HSD and Rs.14.06 per litre on kerosene oil. Similarly, petroleum levy of Rs.23.76 per litre has been increased on petrol, which was Rs.10 in January last year. He said that petroleum levy on HSD has also been increased Rs.30 from Rs.8 of last year and Rs.18 on kerosene oil from Rs.6 of last year.

Web portal jobless being launched

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan Saturday will launch a web portal to financially support those eligible individuals who have been rendered jobless due to Covid 19 pandemic. "The web-portal will be made live today by the Prime Minister", PM office media wing in press release on Saturday said. Government has allocated resources to face Covid 19 challenge and for mobilizing additional resources, the prime minister has also set up a COVID 19 Relief fund. Under this initiative, these funds will be disbursed to those who have lost their jobs as a result of the COVID 19 crisis. An amount of Rs 12,000 would be given to each individual under the Ehsaas Emergency Cash.

'26 pc women workers terminated'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) has urged the federal and provincial governments to take immediate actions to ensure that employers do not terminate or suspend the employment of workers, particularly women during the ongoing lockdown in the wake of COVID-19. According to a press release issued on Labour Day, FAFEN, which is supported by the Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability, has reported serious violations of the guidelines issued by the federal and provincial governments in connection with the protection of the rights of workers during the COVID-19 lockdown. A survey of working women revealed 26 percent of 904 respondents were terminated from their jobs after the announcement of the lockdown by the government. Of the work-

ers who lost their jobs, 14 percent were permanently laid off while the services of the remaining 12 percent were temporarily suspended. The factory workers had the highest ratio among those whose jobs were terminated. The survey was conducted between April 15 and April 30, 2020, in eight districts across the country including Faisalabad, Haripur, Lahore, Sialkot, Peshawar, Rahimyar Khan, Quetta, and Karachi. The survey respondents included factory workers, salespersons, and employees of private schools, hospitals, and other commercial establishments. Of the women interviewed, seven percent were daily wage workers, 85 percent were working on monthly wages and the remaining were paid on bimonthly or weekly basis. Estimates by Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) suggest the pandemic may push another 71 million

people below the poverty line and may cost 18 million workers their jobs. The daily wagers and contract workers are most vulnerable during this health and economic crisis. Layoffs and suspensions of workers are happening despite the federal and provincial governments' announcements of multiple tax rebates, easy credits, and utilities' relief schemes for the large and small businesses. Sindh and Balochistan governments have issued categorical orders to the industrial and commercial establishments to not lay off their employees and keep paying salaries (or minimum wage in case of Balochistan) during the lockdown. Yet, 15 percent women who said their jobs were terminated were from Sindh respondents, and three percent from Balochistan. A majority of terminated workers (51 percent) were awaiting their dues to be cleared by their employers.

CDNS Collect target of Rs 172 bln till April 30

ISLAMABAD: The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has achieved collection net target of Rs172 billion in last 10 months of current fiscal year by April 30. CDNS has set Rs 352 billion annual collection target for the year 2019-20 as compared to Rs 324 billion for the previous year's 2018-19 to enhance savings and promoting saving culture in the country, senior official of CDNS told APP here on Saturday. The directorate has also revised and increased the gross target of Rs1570 billion for fiscal year 2019-20, he said. Replying to a question, he said CDNS had collected Rs 410 billion by June 30, exceeding the target of Rs 324 billion set for the year while during the preceding year of 2017-18, CDNS collected Rs155 billion. - APP

IGP for crackdown against one wheelers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Muhammad Amir Zulfikar has ordered effective crackdown against those involved in one-wheeling and stunts on roads. Taking notice of complaints against one-wheelers, the IGP asked DIG Safe City/Traffic Sarfaraz Ahmed Falki to completely curb one-wheeling practices. He also directed SSP (Traffic) Farrukh Rasheed to take action against one-wheelers as per law. He directed to start patrolling on important roads of the city to curb one-wheeling and erect pickets at 7th avenue, 9th avenue, Sharah-e-Faisal and other boulevards to stop this practice. Islamabad police chief said that those involved in one-wheeling do not put their own lives at risk but also of others.

ISSI launches CMEA

CMEA aims to promote and provide quality research, analysis, policy input and dialogue on issues related to the Middle East and Africa

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) held the soft launch of its Centre for Middle East & Africa (CMEA). Additional Secretary Africa, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Pakistan, Ali Javed, and Director General Middle East, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Pakistan, Syed Zahid Raza were also present on the occasion. CMEA aims to promote and provide quality research, analysis, policy input and dialogue on issues related to the Middle East and Africa. The Centre's functions include observing latest developments, contributing in-depth research and analysis,

organizing and promoting dialogue and debate on political, security, economic, and social aspects of the Middle East and Africa countries, with the focus on relevance for Pakistan. Ms. Amina Khan, Director CMEA, in her introductory remarks underscored the importance of studying different regions and countries in order to better understand their respective challenges and responsibilities. She said that in the case of Pakistan, it is important that research becomes focused on regions that are significant for Pakistan's foreign policy, and also on those that are ignored despite repeated slogans of their high potential, in particular, the Middle East and Africa region.

Ali Javed said that there is a lot of opportunity in the African region that needs to be tapped into. All conferences and seminars should translate into concrete establishment of ties between the two sides. He outlined the shortcomings of the Nairobi trade fair and pointed to countries such as Tunisia and Morocco which have shown interest in establishing commercial links with Pakistan. He also spoke of the importance of celebrating 'Pakistan-Africa Friendship Day', the need for greater facilitation of information between different government departments and expressed his hope that CMEA would deliver in this regard. Zahid Raza said that the Middle East region is of immense im-

portance to Pakistan especially in terms of the huge Pakistani Diaspora which resides there. He outlined the complex interplay within the regional countries of the Middle East which require Pakistan to tread very carefully to safeguard its interests. In this regard, he hoped that CMEA could provide quality input and constructive engagements which would help shape Pakistan's foreign policy in this region - at an individual country level as well as Middle East as an entity. Earlier, in his welcome remarks, the Director General ISSI, Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry stated that the Government of Pakistan is working on establishing ties with the African countries as a top priority. For-

eign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi is very keen in this respect. This in itself symbolizes the importance of the African region has for Pakistan. He hoped that CMEA would deliver on this front and work closely with the government in this regard. In his concluding remarks, Chairman BOG, ISSI, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood highlighted how over the years Pakistan has helped African countries especially during their period of decolonization. The African continent is one which is increasing in importance. He said that CMEA should develop greater linkage with African community in Pakistan and keep them abreast of all developments pertaining to Pak-African relations.

4 children injured

PESHAWAR: Four children of a family died when roof of a house suddenly collapsed in Malakand district. Police said Saturday that the tragic incident occurred at Wartair in Dargai where four children sustained critical injuries due to roof collapsed incident. Member Provincial Assembly, Pir Musavir Khan and Assistant Commissioner Dargai, Mohibullah Yousafzai visited the house of the victims family and expressed sympathies with their parents. They assured that the victims family would be compensated soon after processing their case on emergency basis. - APP

Downward spiral

THE annual report for 2019 compiled by the US Commission for International Religious Freedom has said that the most alarming deterioration in conditions of religious freedom has taken place in India. The USCIRF has recommended that India be declared a country of particular concern. This would be for the first time since 2004 that this status has been recommended for India. The status is advised most often when governments engage in or tolerate "systematic, ongoing egregious violations". The report also recommends other countries to the State Department for designation in the same category, including Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. This report should come as a shock to India as a country which prides itself on its democratic values and its secular standing, as set up by its founders. The secularism has of course disappeared. The report states that most shocking among the reasons for pulling India down to the status of countries which most openly violate religious freedoms was the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, which potentially exposes millions of Muslims to detention, deportation and statelessness. The Act fast-tracked citizenship for newcomers into India who belonged to six religions, but excludes Muslims. The report also notes that there have been increasing violations of human rights directed against Muslims while India is also charged with using torture or degrading punishments without charges, causing the disappearance of persons through abduction and other blatant denials of basic human rights including the right to life, liberty or security. Nations which fall into the category of countries of particular concern are subject to further actions including economic sanctions by the US unless Washington grants a national interest waiver as it does for Pakistan. While Pakistan is also described as a country of special concern, the report notes that it has undertaken positive steps such as the opening of the Kartarpur Corridor for Sikhs, the opening of the country's first Sikh university, the reopening of a Hindu temple and the acquittal of Aasia Bibi, who had been imprisoned on charges of blasphemy. It also states that Pakistan would be willing to engage in dialogue with the committee on how it could improve conditions. Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has also written a letter to the OIC and other international organizations warning about the possibility of a pogrom similar to the one that occurred in Gujarat in 2002 if current conditions in India continue. In 2002, when Modi was in power in Gujarat, almost 1,000 people were killed in a spate of massacres, 790 of them Muslims. Pakistan has also cited numerous incidents of hate-based crimes against Indian Muslims as a cause of concern, pointing out that they were in fact blamed for spreading Covid-19 in the country. Kuwait has become the first Gulf country to take note of Indian violence against its Muslim minority.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti

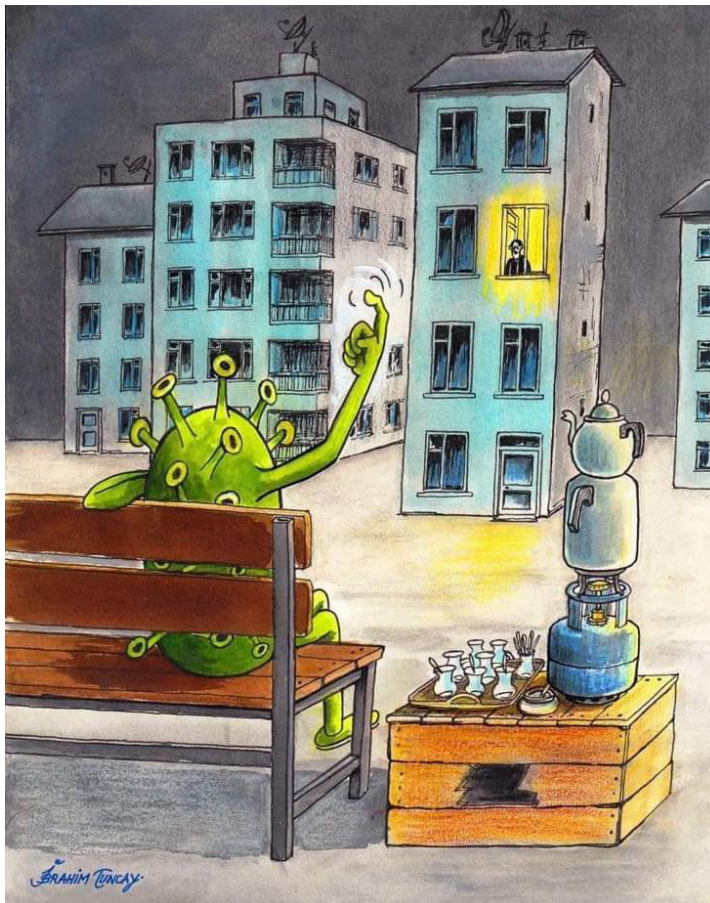
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Vol: 01 Issue: 36

Email: dailyispost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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



Hunger pangs

A Recent report released by UN agencies and scores of other organizations working with them have stated that three million people around the world have faced a food crisis since October 2018, and 135 million are currently food insecure. The slightest change in the circumstances of those who are food insecure could push them towards crisis. The Covid-19 pandemic is precisely such an event. We have already seen the degree to which it is exacerbating hunger and poverty around the world, including in our own country as people are laid off from work due to industry closures and lockdowns. The wider question of course is why we have allowed for so long so many people to live in such precarious circumstances. There is more than enough food in the world. Currently, fields of grain in the US are razed to prevent an overabundance of the commodity while other items that exist in plentiful supply are simply dumped rather than redistributed. There has been no effort to balance the overabundance of food in some parts of the world and the severe shortage of it in others. Currently, ten nations in the Middle East, South Asia and Southeast Asia contain 43 million people who are acutely food insecure. These nations include Pakistan. In many ways, this is shameful. Pakistan is a country, like others in South Asia, with abundant agricultural resources and acres of fertile land. Its inability to provide for its people lies with policies devised by successive governments rather than the kind of natural calamity that affects Sub-Saharan Africa and other parts of the world. In Pakistan, the provinces of Sindh and Balochistan record rural poverty of up to 50 percent. Studies in these provinces have shown that the majority of women of childbearing age and many children suffer severe deficiencies of vitamins and minerals, including iron. Multiple pregnancies and traditions which lead to girls and women receiving less food than boys and men contribute to this. Even today, in the 21st century, we have failed to change these realities. The drought-like conditions experienced in Sindh and Balochistan over the past decade have aggravated food insecurity and made it harder for people to grow crops. This has added to the disaster already being faced. In areas like Tharpakar, the lack of water and long spells without rain makes agriculture impossible and deprives livestock of the plants they graze on, leading to the death of these animals which are vital to the survival of people. In our highly scientific and technological age, no one should be going hungry. The extent of global hunger is terrifying. It has been created partially as a result of politics and is worsened by conflict and other manmade crises. The world must work together to resolve the problem, understand that every human being, no matter where he or she lives is equally important, and find a way to ensure food is available for the entire population sustained by Earth.

China's endeavors to bring economic stability amid COVID-19

Sardar Ameer Jehanzeb



China has provided a large number of anti-epidemic materials to international organizations and more than 100 countries. This shows the importance of China to the international community in times of crisis. China has already extended its regional cooperation to North East Asia and South East Asia, and further making effort to build cordial relations with Europe and US

CHINA is likely to take more aggressive steps to support the growth after its economy shrank by 6.8 per cent in the first quarter 2020, to counter the impact of the coronavirus. After its first contraction, since quarterly records began in 1992, the official rate of unemployment in China has also fallen in the months of January and February. Many economists believe that real job losses are more in pipeline. However, China had prioritized its domestic demands, encouraging consumer and increasing its public spending. They are also interested to issue special government bonds. It also urged the central bank to use tools, including interest rate cuts, and to support growth. Although economists were divided on how deep the contraction would be. Retail sales, a key part of consumer spending, had not recovered nearly as much as was hoped. Scarred from the shutdown, with real fears over long-term unemployment and income, people are not spending money. And once the disposable income has collapsed, a huge problem for a V-shaped recovery is expected, but experts are looking at a U-shaped recovery where a prolonged period of stagnation after the downturn is followed by an eventual return to growth as global demand resumes. Can China provide helicopter money? "It all means that consumer confidence will take more time to heal. The decline in individual income, the rise of unemployment, the closure of many companies

and self-employed businesses will all weigh on the total demand over a longer period of time. The economy can be quick to pause, but slow in getting back to normal. Beijing is likely to abandon its economic growth targets and focus on people to keep their jobs. There are external challenges that it can do little about due to a temporary pause in the current restrictive trade requirements. With large parts of the world now in coronavirus containment, the exporters are frozen out of their marketplaces. The experts are now expecting that Chinese exports will drop much even in the second quarter. This severe recession is likely to follow in the Eurozone and American economies. Although stability is the foremost priority for China, they must ensure that there's no rebound of this epidemic. Precautionary measures will be long-lasting and include mandatory coronavirus testing for vulnerable people and voluntary tests. The collapse in external demand and the weak service sector recovery means Beijing must embark on a broad infrastructure and property stimulus. Labour-intensive construction is the only means to absorb the sharp spike in unemployed workers. China's effective handling of the COVID-19 crisis will provide not only its own stability but also give strength to the global economy amid economic disruptions. However, international economists expect that

China's impact on global economy is unlikely to recover in short term. Yet it has the world's most complete manufacture supporting and ecological system, huge financing capability; it has large number of high-grade workers, and growing scientific and technical ability. It has the basis for the global positioning for the future to come. China has provided a large number of anti-epidemic materials to international organizations and more than 100 countries. This shows the importance of China to the international community in times of crisis. China has already extended its regional cooperation to North East Asia and South East Asia, and further making effort to build cordial relations with Europe and US. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is the true living example to provide its support internationally and CPEC particularly for Pakistan. At present, the Chinese government has provided multiple batches of material assistance, dispatched medical experts to Pakistan, and convened video conferences to share China's experience in the prevention to control the treatment of COVID-19. It had extended full support to Pakistan against COVID-19, which our government has admired. The Pakistani side is willing to continue to cooperate closely with China and constantly deepen their all-weather strategic partnership of cooperation during the fight against the pandemic.

Syndrome of free-riding in international climate agreements

Mariam Javed Asghar

Nationalist or non-cooperative policies are more befitting when the impacts don't spill over national borders but tackling a global problem, such as climate change these policies yield no-good. Current pandemic is a grim reminder of how global forces respects no boundaries. COVID-19 has numerous carriers who have transmitted this disease from one continent to other and it could have been avoided by confining the very first patient to its host country but all nations have only one atmosphere, the damage posed by one nation can be catastrophic for all and it cannot be confined to the borders of the responsible. Concepts from game theory explain the potential for international climate treaties in which actors have incentives to make themselves better off at the expense of other parties-beggar-thy-neighbor policies-consequently, all parties are worse off

FAR distant theoretical possibility of climate change has now become an imminent threat. It is one of the major environmental challenge nations are facing today. From irregular weather patterns to frequent droughts, recurrent floods, rising sea levels and wildfires, the impacts of climate change are global in scope and unprecedented in scale. Between 2009 to 2019, natural disasters cost world \$2.98 trillion, making it the costliest decade on record. But why climate is changing? How humans are aggravating the situation? As we homo-sapiens are the part of this environment since the day we made earth our home, so, what's new which is facilitating this change? Climate is not something that changes overnight, rather it is average weather that occurs over longtime frames, let's say 30 years, so which anthropogenic agents are contributing to climate change? Well, that's unprecedented rise in greenhouse gas emissions. Greenhouse gases occur naturally; these gases actually make earth livable by keeping some of sun warmth from reflecting back into space. The quantity of greenhouse gases was moderate; what humans have done so far is to disturb that very moderate quantity and it is now unparalleled in three million years. Our activities of daily living from charging a cellphone to flying in the air emit greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide. One of the major greenhouse gas is carbon dioxide which is accelerating climate change at an alarming rate. Greenhouse gases contribute to climate change irrespective of their origin as we all have only one atmosphere so, it's a global problem and a common concern to mankind, hence it calls for global response. In 1992, United Nations recognized climate change as a serious issue, since then negotiations among nations have produced notable accords including Kyoto Protocol and Paris agreement. But the problem is that both these key agreements; 1997 Kyoto Protocol and 2015 Paris Agreement have relied on voluntary arrangements which encourage free-riding and that undermines agreements. Kyoto Protocol is the world's only legally binding treaty to reduce greenhouse gas emissions but ironically it covers only 18% of global carbon emissions because the biggest emitters are not the part of Kyoto Protocol. United States with its love of global military presence (which makes US military biggest polluter in the world), with its largest, most dynamic economy along with the

love of big cars, big houses, blasting air conditioners has contributed more than any other country to atmospheric carbon dioxide which is scorching the planet. And United States has walked away from the two key accords Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement with a simple pretext; it's not in the economic interests of United States. Kyoto Protocol exempted more than 100 developing countries including China and India and interestingly after 21 years in 2018 according to Global Carbon Atlas report (2018), China was leading the list of biggest carbon emitters followed by United States and India. However, China and India are part of Paris Agreement and in fact, China is legitimately interested in leading the world in deployment and investment in renewable energy. The People's Republic is currently the world's largest producer of wind and solar energy and the largest investor in green energy projects. Five of the world's six largest solar manufacturing companies can be found in China, as well as the world's largest wind turbine manufacturer. Apparently, China has seized the opportunity and turn this situation in its favor, which is benefiting for both; the country and the world. Nationalist or non-cooperative policies are more befitting when the impacts don't spill over national borders but tackling a global problem, such as climate change these policies yield no-good. Current pandemic is a grim reminder of how global forces respects no boundaries. COVID-19 has numerous carriers who have transmitted this disease from one continent to other and it could have been avoided by confining the very first patient to its host country but all nations have only one atmosphere, the damage posed by one nation can be catastrophic for all and it cannot be confined to the borders of the responsible. Concepts from game theory explain the potential for international climate treaties in which actors have incentives to make themselves better off at the expense of other parties-beggar-thy-neighbor policies-consequently, all parties are worse off. In international climate change agreements there are incentives for free-riding, parties receive the benefits without contributing to the cost; countries have incentives to rely on the emissions reduction of other countries without making any efforts at home. Fully decarbonizing the economy will require not only completely transforming the global energy infrastructure, at a cost of many trillions of dollars, but also retrofitting all of the world's buildings, remaking the planet's

agricultural practices, and revolutionizing transportation systems and free-riding in international climate agreements provide this lucrative opportunity to save the cost of eco-friendly technologies and to avoid slowing-carbon intensive-economy, so, its persuading enough not to participate in such agreements. That is the reason that states have negotiated such agreements that are voluntary and promote free-riding and this free-riding lies at the heart of the failure to deal with climate change. Given the monumental scale of the coming climate change crisis, anything short of prioritized mobilization of major players in international system would be futile. To build a resilient planet, climate treaties should undergo a change from voluntary agreement to one with maximum incentives to participate. Successful international agreements function as a club of nations and nations can overcome this syndrome of free-riding by adopting a club like model rather than Kyoto-Paris model. As the members of clubs enjoy certain incentives and adhere the rules and regulations, similarly, members of climate club would agree to undertake harmonized emission reductions designed to meet a climate objective and nonparticipants or those who won't adhere the rules and goals of the club can be subject to penalties by other members. A more fruitful rule could be pricing carbon, a price on carbon helps shift the burden for the damage back to those who are responsible for it, and who can reduce it. Instead of dictating who should reduce emissions where and how, a carbon price gives an economic signal and polluters decide for themselves whether to discontinue their polluting activity, reduce emissions, or continue polluting and pay for it. One international agreement won't be able to fix carbon price for all countries because of diverse nature or institutional settings of all states, but there should be a firm policy on pricing carbon, states can decide themselves what price suits them best domestically. States can actually earn from carbon taxes, pricing carbon can clean the environment as well as it can expand the size of national exchequer. Climate change is a trillion-dollar problem and it requires trillion-dollar solution, a radical proposal that negates previous traditional climate agreements is prerequisite and climate club is the best hope for effective coordination and coalition of nations to decarbonize this planet and to penalize those who are responsible.

Briefs

Punjab to conduct 6,000 virus tests

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar has said 6,000 people will be tested everyday for the novel coronavirus from Sunday. While addressing a news conference on Saturday, CM Buzdar said the testing capacity has been increased after the number of BSL-3 labs have been risen to eight. It took Rs620 million to make them operational. The BSL-3 lab is a containment laboratory designed for work with Risk Group 2 and 3 of microorganisms that pose an increased risk of aerosol spread, according to the WHO. Speaking about the protest of coronavirus patients at the Lahore's Expo Field Hospital, the chief minister assured that he's looking into the matter. The protesters had complained that the services being provided at the facility were inadequate and not up to basic health standards. "An inquiry has been ordered on the complaint of the passengers who are being kept there," the chief minister said. "In the coming days, we will also recommend the federal government to approve declaring homes of some COVID-19 patients quarantine centres."

UK virus toll rises 739

LONDON: Britain's overall death toll from the coronavirus outbreak rose by 739 to 27,510 on Friday, as new data indicated that people in disadvantaged areas were worse hit. The increase came as Health Secretary Matt Hancock announced the country had met its goal of achieving 100,000 tests a day by the end of April. A total of 122,347 tests were achieved on Thursday, he told a daily briefing about the government's response to the pandemic, calling the increase an "incredible achievement". "The testing capacity that we've built together will help every single person in this country," he said. "Testing is crucial to suppress the virus."

Iran reports lowest virus cases

TEHRAN: Iran said Saturday there was a "clear drop" in the number of new coronavirus infections as it reported 802 fresh cases, the lowest daily count since March 10. The new cases brought to 96,448 the number recorded in Iran since it announced its first cases in mid-February. "This shows a clear drop in the number of new infections compared to recent weeks, despite our active testing," health ministry spokesman Kianoush Jahanpour said on state television. He added that 77,350 of those hospitalised have since been discharged, claiming it is a "one of the highest recovery percentages in the world." — APP



Pakistan Navy troops distributing ration bags during ongoing lockdown due to corona virus pandemic. — DNA



UN chief's appeal for global ceasefire

UNITED NATIONS: A United Nations (UN) spokesman said Friday that he had not seen any new reports from the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) about ceasefire violations along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir, but reaffirmed that Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' global appeal for a ceasefire also applies to the LoC. "I have not gotten any updates from our colleagues in UNMOGIP on this," spokesman Stephane Dujarric said in response to about the recent firing incidents along the LoC. "But," the spokesman added, "what I can tell you is that the Secretary-General's appeal for global ceasefire is exactly that; it is global and it should be applied everywhere." In an appeal issued on March 23, the UN chief urged warring parties across the world to lay down their weapons in support of the bigger battle against COVID-19: the common enemy that is now threatening all of humankind. But that global appeal does not seem to have an effect on Indian occupation troops who frequently fire across the Line of Control in violation of the ceasefire. Besides protesting to India, Pakistan has also been filing complaints against New Delhi's aggressive acts with UNMOGIP, which observes and reports on ceasefire violations along and across the Line of Control and the working boundary between the South Asian neighbours in Jammu and Kashmir, as well as reports developments that could lead to ceasefire violations. — APP

China Cultural Center in Pak celebrates 5th Anniversary

DNA

ISLAMABAD: China Cultural Center here in recent month (April-2020) marked its fifth anniversary through Online celebrations. In order to fight the epidemic and convey confidence and determination to overcome Covid-19, the Center launched online celebrations on Facebook. According to report carried by Gwadar Pro, the celebrations include visiting five online photo exhibitions, namely, "Our Silk Road", "World Cultural Heritage in China", "The Ancient Silk Road State of Kucha", "Beautiful China", "Celebrating in Harmony and Joy - Chinese Spring Festival Photo Exhibition" and

three documentary series. 5 years ago, Chinese President Xi Jinping, together with Pakistani former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, jointly unveiled China Cultural Center in Pakistan at the Pakistani Prime Minister's Office in Islamabad during his state visit to Pakistan. China Cultural Center in Pakistan officially launched and began its operation ever since. The establishment of the China Cultural Center in Pakistan is an important symbol of the further deepening of bilateral relations between China and Pakistan. The Center's objective is to strengthen cultural exchanges and cooperation between China and Pakistan and enhance mutual understanding and friendship between the two peoples.

Since its establishment in Pakistan, China Cultural Center has actively organized various types of cultural activities i.e., cultural performances, visual arts exhibitions, film festivals, film shows, teaching, training, lectures, seminars and other different cultural activities. China Cultural Center in Pakistan has organized 26 grand exhibitions before such as "China-Pakistan Friendship Photo Exhibition", "Beautiful China Photo Exhibition", "Belt and Road in My Eyes, A Pakistani Students' Poster Competition", attracting more than 20,000 visitors. To celebrate Chinese New Year, more than 30 grand cultural performances such as the "70th Anniversary of the Founding of

the People's Republic of China", "65th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations Between China and Pakistan", and "Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival" gala were given to more than 100,000 audience. Training workshops such as Chinese Martial Arts, Chinese Culinary Art, and Chinese Paper Cutting attracted more than 3,000 people. China Cultural Center has participated in the eighth and ninth Pakistan National Book Festival in Islamabad and displayed Chinese cultural elements by setting up booth, attracting Pakistani people from different walks of life. President Dr. Arif Alvi also visited China Cultural Center's booth and highly praised the

friendship between China and Pakistan. These two National Book Festivals attracted more than 500,000 visitors. With collaboration of different universities and educational institutions, China Cultural Center also organized a series of "Happy Chinese New Year" activities, gave lectures on "Traditional Chinese Medicine", "Belt and Road" and "Chinese-Western Art Exchange" and other relevant topics to effectively provide interactional exchange between students and teachers of universities. The "China Film Festival and Film Conference" held in August 2019 opened a new chapter in the exchange and cooperation between film industry of China and Pakistan.

427 more virus cases diagnosed in Sindh: CM

DNA

KARACHI: The number of confirmed coronavirus cases in Sindh have soared to 7102 with 427 new patients, Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah said on Saturday. "We conducted 3259 tests yesterday and 427 of them found positive," chief minister of Sindh said in a statement. From fresh 427 positive cases diagnosed in the province, 376 were reported in Karachi, he said. Four new cases have been reported at Ghotki and Khairpur districts, and Six each from Hyderabad and Larkana, Sindh chief minister said. Moreover, six cases reported from Shaheed Benazirabad, five from Sukkur, two from Sanghar and one case each from Thatta and Sujawal districts, the chief minister said. Sindh has overall conducted 61020 tests of novel coronavirus disease with 7102 positive cases, Shah said. Today 46 patients of the disease have recovered and returned to home as overall tally of recovered patients have so far reached to 1341 in Sindh, which is 19 percent of total cases, the chief minister said. Four more patients of the virus died today and overall death toll of the disease in the province has reached to 122, Murad Ali Shah said. In Sindh 5639 patients have been under treatment, 4390 of them at homes and 733 patients at centres and 516 have been admitted at hospitals, Shah further said.

WHO says virus 'natural in origin'

GENEVA: The World Health Organization reiterated Friday that the new coronavirus was of natural origin after US President Donald Trump claimed he had seen evidence it originated in a Chinese lab. Scientists believe the killer virus jumped from animals to humans, emerging in China late last year, possibly from a market in Wuhan selling exotic animals for meat. Trump claimed Thursday that he had seen proof that the Wuhan Institute of Virology was actually the source of the outbreak, although he refused to give details. Asked about Trump's claim during a virtual press conference, WHO emergencies chief Michael Ryan stressed that the UN health agency had "listened again and again to numerous scientists who have looked at the sequences" of the virus. "We are assured that this virus is natural in origin," he said, reiterating a stance the UN agency has expressed previously. — APP

PM wishes speedy recovery for his Russian PM

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan Saturday wished speedy recovery and good health for Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin, who was yesterday diagnosed positive with Covid 19. The prime minister also expressed solidarity with the Russian leadership in battling the challenge of coronavirus. The prime minister posted, "Wishing PM of Russia Mikhail Mishustin a speedy recovery and good health.

Amends to NAB Ord to take time: Sh Rashid

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Railways Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmad has said that bringing amendments to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Ordinance and changes in the 18th Constitutional Amendment will take time. Addressing a press conference at the Railways Headquarters here on Saturday, he said that NAB would be made a strong active institution after Eidul Fitr. "NAB to become a 'Tarzan' after Eid, and it will work

at all sides," he said. He said that talks with the opposition for amendments to the NAB Ordinance and the 18th Amendment were in progress; however, he added, it would be a joke [with the country] if the demands of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) were accepted. He said that the draft of amendments to the NAB Ordinance, available to various people, was a fake document, adding that nothing was made public in this regard so far.

Sh Rashid said that he was against amendments or alterations to the NAB Ordinance or the 18th Amendment. He said that Prime Minister Imran Khan had introduced a professional team in the Ministry of Information, adding that Shibli Faraz would play on the screen as the information minister while Asim Salim Bajwa would act behind the screen as an adviser to the prime minister. He said that Indian Muslims were facing atrocities at the hands of the Indian government and looking towards Imran Khan.

No fiddling with 18th Amend: speakers

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Participants of an online discussion on the emerging controversy on the 18th Amendment in the Constitution of Pakistan termed the statements of some politicians and ministers as undue fiddling with the unanimous national consensus. It would be like opening up the Pandora's Box again just to undermine the provincial autonomy. Government or some state institutions, whoever is behind the lobbying campaign against the 18th Amendment, should not insult the collective national agreement of all the political, religious and nationalist parties that were present than in the parliament. However, change may be made to develop and improve the mechanisms of deliverance of social services and resources to the grassroots level and to strengthen the system of local governments.

Devcom-Pakistan (Development Communications Network) organized its weekly online discussion on Saturday. Some prominent politicians and civil society representatives including Mehrun Nisa, Tahir Hanfi, Hanif Sabir, Haares Munir and Umme Nasim expressed their opinion on the consequences of fiddling with the 18th Amendment. Introducing the topic, Director Devcom-Pakistan Munir Ahmed said the 18th Amendment in the Constitution was a historic decision of all the parties present in both houses of the parliament in April 2010. It was second historic consensus after the unanimous decision of all parties to adopt the 1973 Constitution. The 18th Amendment not only gave autonomy to the provinces but also wiped off the dictatorial changes. We need to respect the decision of elected parliament that represents 220 million people rather than going for the whims

and wishes of some influential. There is a dire need to promote federalism by strengthening the federating units to reach out to the grassroots. Former Chairman Senate Mian Raza Rabbani said: "Some non-political elements are intentionally trying to develop a chaotic move through the government that would flout up divide between the Centre and provinces. The state is not interested in the actual provincial autonomy given in the 18th Amendment. It is not the government behind the emerging move because it lacks political vision and brain on the essence of the 18th amendment. However, some pro-state elements are more interested to repeal or just rollback it to curb provincial autonomy; particularly they want to change the composition of National Finance Commission (NFC) award by cutting the share of the provinces. The consequences of fiddling with the most important part of the

constitution would be disastrous for the national integrity. Rabbani believed that the state wants its complete authority and command over the federating units with strong Centre having dictatorial command over all the resources and Units than strengthening the federation. The same approach had already separated major part of the country - the East Pakistan in 1971. He said Pakistan was facing several dissenting elements and separation movements when a fair National Finance Commission award was constituted under the 18th Amendment by taking on board all the nationalists and dissenting elements too. The federalism won on the table resulting more tranquility and harmony for political cohesiveness as 102 clauses of the constitution were amended including 58 (2-B) - the President of Pakistan's prerogative to dissolve elected assemblies at his own will. Over the last ten years, we have

seen decline in the dissenting elements and the nationalists are taking part of the mainstream politics; democracy is taking its roots in the public, a democratic system is evolving, and some tolerance is emerging in the citizens. Apparently some elements are pointing their fingers on the deliverance of education and health that could be improved by pushing the Inter-provincial Coordination Committee. The government should convene regular meetings of the Committee and the meetings of Council of Common Interests (CCI) that shall actually take place after every 90 days to review the progress on the common agenda of the Centre and provinces. Mian Raza Rabbani believes that the defined mechanisms should be implemented in letter and spirit and if there are some lacunas in the implementation, the opposition would cooperate in the best interest of democracy and cit-

izens. No move against the 18th amendment would be tolerated rather resented strongly. The state should realize that strong provinces would not only wipe off the deprivations of the citizens but also turned to be a strong backbone of the Centre. Senator Sitara Ayaz said nothing could be said until the government brings anything in black and white in the parliament. The proponents of change in the said amendment have no idea what exactly they want. Seemingly they are trying to drive out the attention of the masses from the present crises that government has failed to cope with. The Centre has also failed to comply with its own obligations under the 18th Amendment. NFC award is the bone of contention while payments of royalties to the provinces are yet not on the agenda of the Islamabad. Some practical changes can be made in the amendment but cannot be reversed at all.