



Islamabad POST

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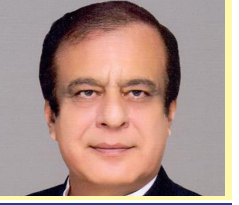
Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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CPEC entails huge benefits for Pakistan: says Aisha Farooqi

Businessmen resent 6 bank holidays

Protection of right priority of govt: Shibli



CPEC entails huge benefits for Pakistan: FO

We have reiterated many times that our total public debt relating to CPEC projects is less than even 10% of the total debt. Moreover, the public debt obtained from China has a maturity period of 20 years and the interest is 2.34 percent.

ANSAR M BHATTI
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China are 'All-Weather Strategic Co-operative Partners'. We are engaged in prompting peace, development and stability in the region based on the principles of mutual respect, mutual benefit, win-win cooperation and shared development. Our ties are based on deep mutual trust and understanding, said spokesperson of Ministry of Pakistan Foreign Affairs Aisha Farooqi on Friday.

The statement comes in the wake of Alice Wells tirade against China in which she tried to give an impression as if Chinese friendship has not been helpful for Pakistan. The Chinese embassy on Thursday refuted all her claims terming them baseless and unfounded. The Foreign Office Spokesperson further said economic development and long-term prosperity of the people was our government's

top priority. CPEC, a flagship project of BRI, is a transformational project contributing positively and transparently to Pakistan's national development. Pakistan believes that regional economic connectivity will provide a critical stimulus for creating broad-based growth across the region, she further said, "We have reiterated many times that our total public debt relating to CPEC projects is less than even 10% of the total

debt. Moreover, the public debt obtained from China has a maturity period of 20 years and the interest is 2.34 percent. If grants are included, the interest value slides down to about two percent. The claims made by some of the commentators and public officials on Pakistan's debt obligations relating to CPEC are contrary to facts". It is reiterated that CPEC, a long-term project, has helped address development gaps in energy, infrastructure, industrialization, and job creation.



KARACHI: A view of damages near the spot as a Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) passenger flight PK-303 carrying 91 passengers and eight crew members crashed near the Jinnah International Airport just before landing. —APP

Diplomats grieved over crash

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Diplomats have expressed deep sense of grief and sorrow over the tragic plane crash in Karachi. Ambassadors of the Netherlands, Denmark and Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Morocco in their messages expressed condolences to families to those who lost lives in the crash. Ardi Braken the former Dutch ambassador to Pakistan and currently DHM in Indonesia also expressed her over the sad incident. Likewise, ambassadors of European Union Androulla Kaminara and Ambassador of Atif Mashal also expressed condolences. Atif Mashal said "I would express my condolences to the Pakistani government and nation on the sad news of the airplane crash in Karachi".

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani in his message also expressed sorrow over the tragic incident and offered heartfelt condolences. The United States on Friday thanked Pakistan for its donation of protective gear and surgical masks to support the fight against coronavirus. U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in a tweet appreciated Pakistan's goodwill donation of sur-

PIA plane crashes before landing

Crashed occurred due to technical fault at 14:30 hours; President, PM, Army Chief, Air Chief and others saddened over the tragedy

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: A Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) plane more than hundred passengers onboard crashed in a residential area while landing at Jinnah International Airport in Karachi. 99 passengers and 8 crew members were on board. According to sources, flight PK-8303 took off from Lahore Allama Iqbal International Airport and crashed in Model Colony area in Malir, approximately 4 kilometers away

from the airport. Images aired on television showed the Pakistan International Airlines flight had smashed into a residential area, with clouds of thick black smoke billowing from the site. It was an Airbus 320 which has capacity to carry around 180 passengers, however, number of passengers were kept at 50% capacity limit to ensure social distancing measures. Zafar Saud President Punjab Bank along with his five directors was also on the same ill fate flight. Following the Pakistan In-

ternational Airlines plane crash this afternoon on May 22th in Model Colony, Karachi, MATSUDA Kuninori, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, has expressed profound grief and sorrow over the tragic incident and deeply condoled the loss of precious lives and damage caused to the properties. Ambassador of Germany and other dignitaries also expressed grief. Various heads of states and foreign ministers also talked to their Pakistani colleagues and offered heartfelt condolences.

US thanks Pakistan for medical supplies

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The United States on Friday thanked Pakistan for its donation of protective gear and surgical masks to support the fight against coronavirus. U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in a tweet appreciated Pakistan's goodwill donation of sur-

gical masks and protective suits to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). "This delivery is a symbol of Pak-US solidarity in the fight against COVID-19," he said. He termed it a "partnership for prosperity of the two countries". U.S. diplomat Alice Wells in her tweet also expressed gratitude to

Pakistan for the goodwill donation. "Our countries' health partnership and coordinated response will help defeat this virus, and rebuild our prosperity," she said. The consignment of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) from Pakistan via a C-130 flight from Islamabad landed at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland on Wednesday.

Briefs
Record 2,603 new COVID-19 cases

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan saw its highest rise in death and the number of COVID-19 cases reported on Thursday with 50 deaths and 2,603 new confirmed cases across the country. The emergence of 2,603 new cases across the country takes the nation-wide tally to almost 50,700 cases. More than 1000 people have died from the virus so far. As for patients under treatment from COVID-19, there are about 11,561 patients in hospitals across the country out of which 372 are said to be in a critical condition. The number of coronavirus patients in Sindh have increased from 18,455, to 19,924. An estimated 18,455 cases have been reported from Punjab, 7155 cases in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and 3,074 cases have emerged in Balochistan till date. — APP

Family pardons Jamal Khashoggi's killers

DNA

RIYADH: Salah Khashoggi, the son of the murdered Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, says that the family has pardoned his father's killers. Salah Khashoggi issued a statement on his Twitter handle, saying that the family has decided to pardon those who murdered their father. "On this virtuous night of this holy month, we recall the say of God Al-



mighty in his holy book: "The repayment of bad actions, is one equivalent to it, But whoever par-

dons and makes reconciliation, his reward lies with God. He does not love the unjust." "Thus, we, sons of the martyr Jamal Khashoggi, announce that we forgive those who killed our father — May he rest in peace — for the sake of God Almighty, hopefully seeking reward with the Almighty," the statement read. Khashoggi was killed in a rogue operation carried out at the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul, Turkey, on Oct. 2, 2018.

Turkey provides aid to Uzbekistan

DNA

TASHKENT: Turkey has provided aid to Uzbekistan. The humanitarian aid party of 50 Turkish-made artificial lung ventilation (IVL) devices. The issue of obtaining artificial lung ventilation devices manufactured in Turkey for the needs of Uzbekistan was worked out free of charge by the Embassy of Uzbeki-

stan in Ankara. The head of the main department of international relations of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Turkey, Professor Selami Kilic, emphasized that although Turkey had not yet fully provided for its own needs for such devices, it, as a fraternal country, provided the corresponding batch of medical equipment to Uzbekistan. "The prototype of the

ventilator was developed jointly by engineers from four large Turkish companies — Arçelik, ASELSAN, Baykar Makine and Biosys," he said. — The first 100 ventilation devices were transferred to the citywide hospital in the Bashaksehir district of Istanbul. Serial production and testing of these machines has been established at the Arçelik factory in Istanbul.

Chinese embassy terms Alice Wells remarks as baseless

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD= The Chinese Embassy in Pakistan has taken note of the irresponsible remarks once again by Mrs. Alice Wells on the China-Pakistan relations and the CPEC. Her speech is totally baseless, just a repetition of her same old tune. This is yet another doomed attempt to defame Sino-Pak relations and the CPEC. We are firmly opposed to it. For the past 69 years, our two countries have established and consolidated an all-weather friendship. We respect each other and support each other. We cooperate for common prosperity. We work together to promote regional peace

and stability. In the current fight against COVID-19, China and Pakistan stand together and China donated medical equipment and materials of more than \$55 million to Pakistan. We take Pakistan as an equal partner and never asked Pakistan to "do more". We support Pakistan's own model of development and never intervene its domestic affairs. We highlight Pakistan's responsible role in regional affairs and never exert pressure. The CPEC is an important cooperation project between the Governments of China and Pakistan. It has always adhered to the principles of mutual benefit, win-win cooperation, openness and transpar-

ency. The planning and implementation of the projects are carried out by the two sides through thorough consultations based on equality and scientific study. The Chinese companies under the CPEC are all leading companies in their respective sectors and operate in full compliance with local laws and regulations. Since its implementation, the CPEC has brought \$25 billion in direct investment and created more than 75,000 jobs for Pakistan. China has been the major source of FDI for Pakistan in the past five consecutive years. While according to the BOI, the FDI from the USA to Pakistan was a

bit over \$1 billion between 2012 and 2019. Since the COVID-19 outbreak, there is ZERO infection on CPEC projects due to strict measures taken by the both sides. The Chinese companies have not suspended construction nor have they laid-off a single local staff. The CPEC projects have secured local employment and kept contributing to Pakistan's economy. The energy projects are generating 1/3 of the electricity for Pakistan now. The Phase II of KKH is almost ready for traffic. The integrated test and commissioning for the Lahore Orange Line have been successfully completed. The construction of the new airport in Gwadar

entered into the second phase. Gwadar has become an economic hub for Baluchistan. All Chinese companies working for the CPEC have generously donated medical assistance to Pakistan in the current difficult situation. Over 20,000 Pakistani students are studying in China on scholarships provided by the Chinese government and Universities. In the next stage of the CPEC, both sides will strengthen the cooperation on health care, industrial development, agriculture and education. The CPEC will give new impetus to Pakistan's economic revival even in the post COVID-19 period. China knows the impact of the COVID-19 on Pakistan's economy and

is sparing no effort to help Pakistan address the challenge. According to the State Bank of Pakistan, its debt from multilateral institutions amounts to about 47% of its total external debt, while loans from the CPEC is only \$5.8 billion, 5.22% of the Pakistan's total debt. It has no pressure on Pakistan at all. Recently, the G20 members adopted a Debt Service Suspension Initiative for the Poorest Countries. China supported Pakistan to be included and is ready to provide relief. China will never force Pakistan to pay back the debts and China's loans have no strings attached. We have no intention to comment on the Pakistan-US relations, but we hope the USA can show basic respect to the choice by China and Pakistan.

Mullah Baradar issues warning

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Deputy Political Chief of Taliban Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar has warned that a further delay in implementing the U.S.-Taliban peace deal could further harm the 'harmful' peace process. Suhail Shaheen, a spokesperson for the political office of Taliban in Qatar, said Mullah Baradar warned regarding the consequences of the delay in implementing the peace deal, during a meeting with the U.S. envoy for Afghan peace, Zalmay Khalilzad. According to Shaheen, Mullah Baradar emphasized on the release of prisoners to pave the way for the launch of intra-Afghan talks.

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Briefs

NDMA sends PPEs to provinces

ISLAMABAD: National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) started dispatching sixth consignment of medical and Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) to the provinces including Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). The dispatches of sixth tranche of safety equipment would be completed before Eid-ul-Fitr, said a news release. Sharing the details of the sixth consignment sent to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan province on Friday morning, he said 15,750 N-95 masks, 31,500 protective suits, 1,05,833 face masks, 5,525 surgical gloves, 1,015 face shields, 31,000 shoes cover, 630 protective gloves have been dispatched to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

About the details of PPEs sent to Balochistan hospitals in the fresh tranche, he said, 7,350 N-95 masks, 49,000 face masks, 7,300 protective suits, 2,450 surgical gloves, 9,800 shoes cover, 294 safety goggles and 490 face shields has been transported to the province. — APP

PM to take corrupts on task

ISLAMABAD :State Minister for Parliamentary affairs Ali Muhammad Khan Thursday said it had been Prime Minister Imran Khan's stance from the day one to take corrupt elements on task across the board. Talking to a private news channel, he said the prime minister was committed to put the country on the right track so that he had become the prime minister and not for doing the politics only. The minister said brother of Khusro Bakhtiar's name was included in the forensic report on wheat and sugar crisis.

Replying to a question, he said all cabinet members had insisted during the cabinet meeting that responsible for crisis of wheat and sugar should be punished. — APP

Emirates sets industry-leading safety standard

DNA

DUBAI UAE Emirates has unveiled multi-faceted measures for employee and customer care at every step of the travel journey, redefining safety and hygiene standards on board and on the ground. The new measures took effect today, with the resumption of regularly scheduled passenger flights to nine destinations.

"Emirates is implementing a comprehensive set of measures at every step of the traveller's journey, to enhance the sanitisation of all touchpoints, and ensure the health and safety of our customers and employees. The risk of catching an infection on an aircraft is already very low, but we have spared no effort in reviewing and redesigning every step, from check-in to disembarkation. Every measure implemented is an additional reduction in risk, and taken altogether, our aim is really to make flying as safe as possible.

"We are working with all the stakeholders in Dubai - including the airport, immigration, health and aviation authorities to implement such measures, and we will continue to review and consult expert advice for any development and changes. We are all aware that we have to adapt to different practices during this pandemic in our day to day activities.

All these measures, in combination with the proactive pandemic management strategies that the UAE has taken, show the seriousness with which we are taking the health and safety of our local and global communities and will give confidence to the public," said Adel Al Redha, Emirates' Chief Operating Officer.

Govt to launch protected area initiative: Aslam

MUNIR FAISAL

ATTOCK: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Climate Change Malik Amin Aslam has said that the Federal Government would soon launch a major protected area initiative across Pakistan as part of its 'Green Stimulus' drive for conserving nature and providing 'green' jobs.

The Ministry of Climate Change (MoCC) in that regard would establish six model national protected parks in all the provinces, including Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan at the cost of Rs 2,400 million.

Malik Amin Aslam said the national parks as part of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government's billion Tree Tsunami Programme, would be properly managed to help preserve ecological habitats and wildlife with focus on eco-tourism and nature conservation. He said the PTI government under the vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan wanted to protect the nature and the indigenous wildlife of the country for future generations. A new authority 'National Parks Service for Pakistan' would be established for the upkeep of the parks.

He said the protected national park in Punjab would locate at Kheri Murat, Fatehjang Tehsil of Attock district spread over an area of 8,740 acres. Its boundaries would touch nine villages in the north, eight in the south, Kheri Murat village and Rawalpindi in the east, and the hills close to Gali Jageer village in the west.



SARGODHA: President of GAAC Dr. R. EROS and DIRECTOR GAAC Mohammad Alim SHAHAB distributing relief goods and food items among the needy people in the wake of Coronavirus. DNA. —

Sherry opposes decision to use the COVID-19 fund for interest payment

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad, May 21, 2020: Questioning PTI government's decision to allow diverting Rs10 billion from the coronavirus relief funds to pay interest on loans taken to retire circular debt, PPP Parliamentary Leader in Senate, Senator Sherry Rehman asked, "Has the government managed to curb the spread of COVID-19 that we don't need

this money anymore and now it is being used to pay interest?" "People were asked to donate their hard-earned money for this cause but now suddenly the government has decided to use it elsewhere. It is the government's responsibility to pay off the interest and is not fair on people that their money is being misused like this. This is an extremely irresponsible decision and it is apparent that the federal leadership lacks seriousness and is not able to effectively deal with the existential crisis," she added.

She questioned, "Why was the Parliament not involved in this decision? This money does not belong to any party and instead of helping the provinces fight this pandemic, this money is being used to pay off interest. What happened to the transparency which the ruling party is always talking about? Why were the provinces not taken in confidence? When the country needs to unify more than ever, the ruling party is doing everything to intensify political polarisation in the country." "It's quite an outrage that money given for covid relief is being used up for plugging the governance holes in the growing circular debt. They have no policy or plan for managing or reducing that either," she added.

Why were the provinces not taken in confidence? When the country needs to unify more than ever, the ruling party is doing everything to intensify political polarisation in the country." "It's quite an outrage that money given for covid relief is being used up for plugging the governance holes in the growing circular debt. They have no policy or plan for managing or reducing that either," she added.

Business environment for services sector urged

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Government is working to finalize SME policy to improve the regulatory environment for small businesses including services sector in Pakistan. Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA), in this regard, has sought an e-commerce policy as it's essential to develop online market place. Helping SMEs to use IT tools for increasing their productivity and supporting women-led enterprises in the services sector, are some of the key features of the proposed policy. Shehryar Tahir, Head of External Relations at SMEDA, shared this with the audience at online policy dialogue 'improving regulatory environment for businesses in the services sector - budget proposals from

services sector businesses' organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here on Thursday.

Earlier, Dr Vaqar Ahmed, Joint Executive Director, SDPI, informed the participants that the services sector has contracted by 0.59% during fiscal year 2019-20. Several sub-sectors including wholesale and retail trade; transport, storage, and communication have faced negative growth rate due to sluggish demand and post-Covid19 outlook. The fall in the national per capita income of over 6% in dollar terms during FY20 also implies reduced purchasing power of consumers of services, he added.

He added further that post-Covid19 recovery in the services sector is also expected to be slow given reduced levels of investment.

PC Hotel Bahria Town to open soon in Rawalpindi

FIAZ CHAUDHRY

ISLAMABAD: To complement the lifestyle of the upscale suburb of Rawalpindi with high-end hospitality, Hashoo Group has signed a Memorandum of Understanding between Pakistan Services Limited and AAA Associates to open a Pearl-Continental Hotel in Bahria Town Phase 8, Rawalpindi.

Speaking about this new hotel, Hashoo Group Hospitality Division, Chief Operating Officer Mr. Haseeb Gardezi highlighted the significant economic growth and employment opportunities that the opening of the brand-new five-star hotel will bring in the area. Mr. Gardezi said, "We are pleased to partner with AAA Associates to make a landmark entrance with our Pearl-Continental brand in the heart of Bahria Town".

The Chairman of AAA Associates Mr. Fawad Bashir and Managing Director, Lt. Col. Retd. Shahzad Ali Kiani added: "We are honoured to contribute to a society where we see vast opportunities and a promising future with one-of-a-kind lifestyle". He also added that "Pearl-Continental Hotel will be a part of AAA Octa Multipurpose development in the business district of Bahria Town Phase 8".



Within the development of the five-star hotel will feature a minimum of 120 rooms and suites, a variety of fine-dining multi-cuisine restaurants, a spa and fitness center, activity areas for children, as well as meeting rooms and large event spaces. The hotel will be a part of the multi-purpose AAA Octa Building, which not only will be one of the tallest buildings of Punjab but will also feature a theme-based mall, office spaces.

Indian brutalities at peak

ISLAMABAD: Narendra Modi-led fascist BJP government has crossed all limits of brutalities, making the lives of the people of the territory a living hell, in Indian Occupied Kashmir.

An analytical report released by the Research Section of Kashmir Media Service, Friday, said that killings, arrests, cordon and search operations, use of brute force and destruction of houses by Indian troops and police had become a norm in the occupied territory. It said that the fresh wave of violence and atrocities by the Indian forces had increased the miseries of innocent Kashmiri's who were already suffering immensely due to over 9 months long siege and military lockdown imposed by India. —APP

Business community resents 6 bank holidays

SHAHEEN QURESHI

ISLAMABAD: After two months of lockdown, businesses have been reopened and with the advent of Eid, business activities have picked up sharply. However, banks have been closed for 6 days including on Friday due to which, business community was facing great problems in keeping cash in safe custody. Therefore, Governor State Bank of Pakistan should order for an inquiry as to why the banks have been closed for 6 consecutive days in Pakistan. This demand was made by Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President, Islamabad Chamber



of Commerce and Industry in a statement. Muhammad Ahmed Waheed further said that due to Eid, the trend of shopping in the markets was showing its peak as billions of rupees were being spent on doing daily shopping. Under these circumstances, how would the business community keep its cash received from sales in safe condition due

to the closure of banks and if they keep cash with themselves, there was a danger of theft and robbery, he said. He said it was not a wise decision to keep the banks closed for 6 consecutive days and if any untoward incident happened to traders, SBP will be held responsible.

ICCI President appealed to the Adviser on Finance Dr. Hafeez Sheikh to investigate the matter as to who ordered to keep the banks closed in the country for six days, especially at a time when Pakistan's economy was suffering badly due to Covid-19 pandemic as our country could not afford to keep banks closed in these crucial times.

Shrines reopen for devotees

ISLAMABAD: The Auqaf Department has reopened the shrine of Hazrat Syed Ali Bin Usman Al-Hajveri also known as Hazrat Data Gunj Bakhsh for devotees.

According to a private news channel, of all shrines under the Auqaf Department, the shrine of Hazrat Data Gunj Bakhsh has been opened initially. After the notification, other shrines will be reopened later. After reopening of the shrine, a large number of devotees paid respect to the great saint. —APP

NCOC meeting continues amid Eid holidays

ISLAMABAD :National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) Friday held its high level meeting amid Eid holidays as the entire country observed vacations from May 22-27 for celebrating Eidul Fitr. The NCOC meeting, headed by Minister for Planning Development Reforms and Special Initiatives, Asad Umar, through video link discussed the matter pertaining to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) compliance on Jumma tul Widda, Eid prayers and crowded places during Eid shopping. The Forum emphasized that the general public should realize its responsibility to observe

social distancing, wearing mask, maintaining six feet distance, avoid shaking hands and embracing each other on the occasion of Eidul Fitr.

It also advised to completely follow the safety guidelines and SOPs in overcrowded places, travelling through public transport and trains. Speaking on the occasion, Asad Umar said, this Eid was going to be different from the previous ones as the people should keep social distancing while sharing Eid greeting.

He said philanthropists should facilitate and provide assistance to the poor masses affected due to the lockdown.

NDMA sends PPEs to provinces

ISLAMABAD :Capital Development Authority (CDA) has served notices to the owners of three development projects in Zone-IV on unauthorized constructions in violation of Islamabad Zoning Regulations. Notices have been issued by Building Control II Division. These projects were being executed without obtaining approval of CDA. Initially, owners of these premises were directed to stop construction and solicit approval of their buildings from the authority, an official said.

However, now due to non compliance, show cause notices have been issued. The owners have been directed to submit reply within given time frame. In case of unsatisfactory reply or non compliance, he said, strict action would be taken. —APP

COVID-19: WHO probe

The demand for a global investigation into the spread of the novel coronavirus is gaining momentum. The 73th session of the World Health Assembly (WHA) in Geneva has discussed the issue and the head of the WHO has declared that the global body will look into the lessons of the covid-19 pandemic. The WHO director-general has also promised that he would initiate an independent evaluation to review experiences gained and lessons learned so that global preparedness for such pandemics can be improved and the world is able to respond in a better way if any such crises strike again. On the other hand, China has also supported a comprehensive review of the global response to the covid-19 pandemic. China has suggested that the WHO be leading such a probe, but that should be done once the virus that caused the disease is brought under control. This has been proposed by none other than Chinese President Xi Jinping himself on Monday 18 while addressing the WHA in a video speech.

Australia and the European Union have also called for a review of the origin and spread of the novel coronavirus. Lately, international support for such investigations has been mounting as the virus has claimed over 0.325 million people worldwide and the ultimate death toll by the end of this year is projected to be around a million or so. Earlier, a draft resolution was backed by the WHO's 62 countries which sought to identify scientific 'events' that could have contributed to the spread of the novel coronavirus and the consequent covid-19 pandemic. Australia and the EU, among others, have called for an evaluation into how animal and food-related sources could lead to the spread of the deadly pandemic. The main challenge is to delve deep into the origin of the virus. Initially, China had opposed such calls for investigating this matter from the US, but now the president of China has signaled his willingness to an impartial review.

Irrespective of any spats between America and China, a comprehensive evaluation of the origin of the virus and the global response to the pandemic will surely help the world community in its learning and response methods. But China is still insisting that any such probe be initiated only when the pandemic is under control. It should be left to the professional and scientific community to decide about the best time for such a probe. There are two conflicting opinions on this issue: one is for an immediate inquiry and the other is hinting that at this moment all efforts be directed towards containing the virus. Whether the probe is done right now or at a later stage, fairness and objectivity should be held supreme, without which we may never know the correct answers, and an entire exercise may result in furthering blame on each other.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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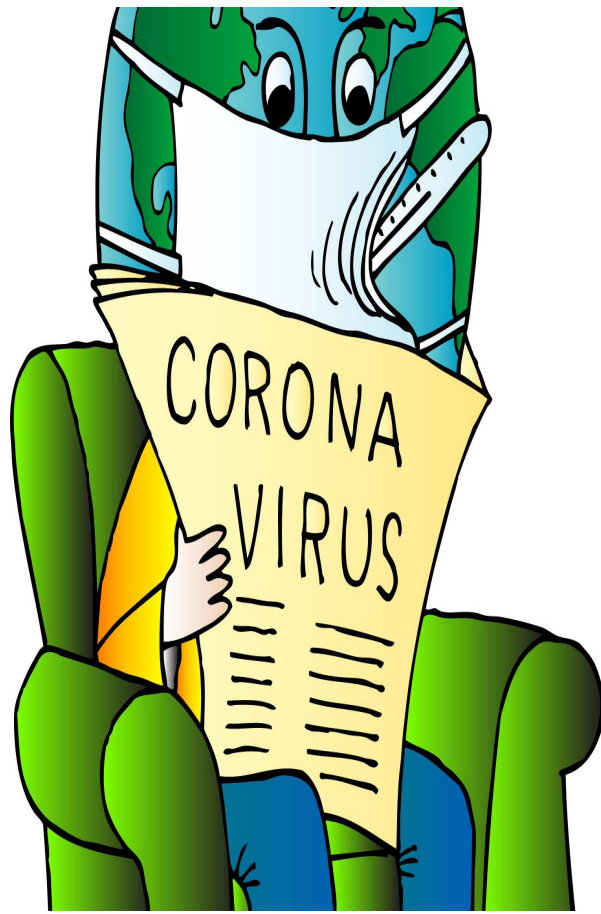
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PM's WEF address

In his video-link address to the World Economic Forum (WEF), Prime Minister Imran Khan has rightly highlighted the importance of a global response to defeat the novel coronavirus. He termed Covid-19 a challenge for the entire world, in which the affected countries have become insular and have started looking inside rather than making coordinated efforts. The PM's concerns in this regard are entirely justified as the world as a global village must be working in tandem and all countries must share their expertise and support each other. He also underscored that several developing countries 'do not possess the fiscal space' to deal with the economic fallout from the coronavirus outbreak. The PM mentioned that the G20 countries were working on a debt-relief initiative and urged rich countries for debt relief to all developing countries that need such support.

While the PM's call for concerted efforts is timely and his pleas for debt relief are also not out of place, there are certain points that all developing countries, including Pakistan, must keep in mind before expecting debt relief and asking the world to help them. The first is why so many developing countries such as Pakistan need the relief to begin with. As the PM himself explained, fiscal space is needed to divert resources to healthcare and the environment, and especially healthcare systems in 'direct line of fire of this pandemic'. In fact, most of those countries which are in dire need have been squandering their own precious resources without scruples. Economic mismanagement and financial irregularities are the name of the game, and no matter which political party or non-civilian regime is in power, unproductive expenses keep rising. When their health systems are already in tatters and developing countries have been spending peanuts on social welfare, they can hardly justify their pleas for help. The PM in his address also informed the audience that he had spoken to the leaders of Egypt, Ethiopia, and Nigeria, who are facing similar economic issues. If Pakistan stands in the same queue with these countries, they must have very many similarities in their economic history of financial mismanagement and political governance. Just look at the past 50 years of these countries and you see repeated military dictatorships, toppling of democratic governments, excessive expenditure in non-development and unproductive heads, and finally lack of social cohesion resulting in prolonged disturbances and severe law-and-order situations. In all these countries, as the PM pointed out, people are facing 'stark poverty' and starvation. This poverty and starvation is not simply the result of three to five months of Covid-19. This is the cumulative outcome of the past three to five decades of misplaced priorities and wrong policies, from defence and development policies to domestic and economic ones. Need we say more?

The question of Palestine; from vocal to practical support

Syed Mohammad Ali Hosseini



Following the illegal acts of Britain during the trusteeship period, in 1948 the Zionist regime was recognized by the United States and later by other countries such as the former Soviet Union, whereas the people of the territory of Palestine were never consulted about their fate.

regime were contrary to international law. According to Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, Britain had no sovereignty over Palestine and should have allowed the exercise of the right to self-determination, namely holding a free referendum with the participation of all inhabitants of Palestine. Not only this important didn't happen, but maximum pressures like subjugation of opponents, enforced displacement the Palestinian intellectuals, evacuation of indigenous Palestinians from their homeland and many other ferocious actions occurred against them.

Negligence of the then big powers to the Islamic countries demands for resistance to and cease of immigrations coincided with violence against people of Palestine and lead to conflicts in the area. During this asymmetric conflict, the occupier was endowed with highest military technology and arsenals while people of Palestine just had some stones in their hands to throw. People of Palestine were losing both their land and entity and Zionists were reaching both power and lands by usurpation.

Lack of comprehensive solutions: From that time, some proposals were offered to the UN to whitewash heinous crimes perpetrated by expansionist Zionists in Palestine; also different resolutions were issued to orally condemn the Zionist regime atrocities in international and regional organizations that none of them lead to a breakthrough for the sake of oppressed people of Palestine.

Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) that the philosophy of its establishment in 25 September 1969 (following the criminal arson of Al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied Jerusalem) was to support Palestine, has so far miserably failed to liberate the long-persecuted Palestinians from the yoke of imperial Zionist regime due to its members divisions and negative role of interventionists.

The defeat of proposed plans and ratified resolutions that supposedly wanted to bringing peace and stability for the Palestine, paved the ground for the Zionist regime to first occupy and then annex Gaza Strip and the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) that resulted in great exodus of Palestinians to other countries. Unsuccessful attempts of the UN in defending the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for self-determination, national independence, sovereignty, and returning their homeland, forced the Palestinians to resort to first and Second Intifada. From the struggle inception till today, Palestinians are yearning for international support for their need to at least oppose Zionist settlements and Zionist actions in changing the status of Jerusalem, and they are also longing for their right for realization of other internationally recognized legitimate, inalienable rights enshrined in international conventions like ICCPR (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) and ICESCR (International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights).

From the time that Palestine question referred

to multilateral organizations till now, Islamic countries rendered some efforts to push these organizations towards full realization of Palestinian rights but due to US obliterations most of the UN decisions and resolutions came fanatically in favor of Zionists and with minimum attention to Palestinian rights. Putting aside the unjust and one-sided approaches in most of UN initiatives (From Human Rights Commission to Human Rights Council and from UN Security Council to the subsidiary bodies of General Assembly), even these minimum rights of Palestinians faced considerable impediment to reach tangible results.

These facts show that avaricious Zionists and their supporters were not even ready to grant minimum advantages to Palestinians in the above mentioned efforts. History is a good witness of the fact that how US locked Human Rights Commission because this organization was seriously condemning the brutal activities of Zionist regime in Palestinian lands. As the UN went weaker in helping the Palestinians and western countries more blind on brutalities, Zionist regime utilized further savage in violating the rights of these defenseless people. The atrocities even went severe by seeing the full support of US behind its bully approaches and infringement of internationally recognized rules and procedures. What more deteriorated the situation for Palestinians was the passive gesture of some Arab states towards new agendas leading sweeping the question of Palestine under the rug of betrayal. One of the recent efforts for sweeping the issue was the doom Trump so-called peace plan entitled "Deal of the Century" that not only doesn't have any landscape for prosperity and stability for Palestinians but makes Zionist regime more vigorous to claim new territories for annexation. No different looking at the Deal as a "smokescreen" for annexation or "slap of the century"; this plan won't bring any amelioration for the already struggle stricken situation. A glance at Islamic Republic of Iran reaction to the Question of Palestine

On August 7, 1979, the founder of Islamic Revolution in Iran and the then Supreme leader, Imam Khomeini, declared the last Friday of the holy month of Ramadan each year as Quds Day, in which Muslims worldwide would unite in solidarity against Zionist regime and in support of the Palestinians and declared the "liberation" of Jerusalem/Al-Quds a religious duty to all Muslims.

Besides this symbolic collective movement, Iran spared no efforts to comprehensively support Palestinian resistance against suppression and plunder. The main support of Iran was a spiritual one and comprises a wide range of issues from helping the Palestinian voices to be heard in multilateral forums to enforce the

rights-seeking spirit of these people. These kind of supports made people of Palestine more confident to fulfill their rights for self-defense that is well acclaimed in article 51 of the UN charter.

Considering the inefficiency and oppressive nature of previously suggested plans for the question of Palestine, Iran presents a precise and well measured plan entitled "National Referendum in Palestine" to the UN for the salvage of the issue. In this plan, Iran clearly proposes a platform that provides the grounds for the true and original people of Palestine to exercise their right to self-determination.

According to this initiative, that is in full compliance with United Nations Charter and rules of international law, particularly international humanitarian law and human rights, all the authentic people of Palestine including the followers of all religions (including Muslims, Christians and Jews) who inhabited in Palestine before the issuance of the Balfour Declaration will hold a national referendum and establish a political system by majority that will decide on the status of the non-indigenous residents of Palestine. The main requirement of this initiative, is the return of indigenous Palestinians refugee to their homeland; something that is both the request of people of Palestine and UN resolutions.

As mentioned before, Iran spared no effort to support Palestine and incurred many costs and loses during this path. During past decades Iran has suffered a lot from US unilateral sanctions, it's illegal act of defamation and designation of Iranian defensive unit (Al-Quds Force) and terror of Iranian high ranking military officials like "Shahid Al Quds" Brigadier General Qassem Soleimani who within the context of international rules was supporting the oppressed peoples in the region and standing against terrorism, oppression and occupation. In spite of these sacrifices and hardness, the vigilant nation of Iran beside other observant consciences around the world are still firmly standing for the goal of independent, sovereign and free Palestine.

Conclusion:

It is a source of grave concern that after seven decades, the question of Palestine is still unresolved and the international community has failed to settle this chronic complicated crisis. Considering the inattention and inefficiency of the UN in helping the Palestinians to gain their rights, Islamic Ummah should according to their Islamic mandate, consolidate and take firm stance against cunning expansionist Zionist regime that has nothing except massacre, terror, destruction, violation to Islamic sanctities and so forth for our region.

In support of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif and resonating with Imam Khomeini, we also today, like the previous years, consecrate the last Friday of the holy month of Ramadan as Al-Quds Day and proclaim the global solidarity of Muslims in support of the legitimate rights of the Muslim people of Palestine.

The writer is the Ambassador of Islamic Republic of Iran. The Article is written on the occasion of Quds week

PALESTINE was among former Ottoman territories placed under UK administration by the League of Nations in 1922. The British Mandate incorporated the "Balfour Declaration" of 1917, expressing support for "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people". During the Mandate, from 1922 to 1947, large-scale Jewish immigration, mainly from Eastern Europe took place, the numbers swelling in the 1930s with the Nazi persecution. Benefiting from false and inapplicable slogans like "A land without a people for a people without a land", and US absolute support, these large migrations, coinciding with plunder of Palestinian properties and infringement of their essential rights by the occupiers, finally resulted in the establishment of the Zionist regime.

Following the illegal acts of Britain during the trusteeship period, in 1948 the Zionist regime was recognized by the United States and later by other countries such as the former Soviet Union, whereas the people of the territory of Palestine were never consulted about their fate. In fact, the Zionist regime was established without allowing the native population of the territory of Palestine to exercise their right to self-determination. The measures that led to the formation of the Zionist

The Corona Economics: a detailed analysis

Muhammad Armaghan Faisal

The government might also issue state bonds or Shariah sovereign bonds to reduce the money supply. If necessary, they can inject the money generated from the bonds back into the market. Over \$5.4 billion worth of funds have been set aside to directly help the villages fight the virus

AVERAGELY, a Pakistani makes around Rs 21,000 per month. This minute amount is viable to cause hardships for households across Pakistan, even without economic fallout. The Coronavirus has caused an already fragile system to take a nosedive. The virus is not just bound to kill thousands and lay off millions of workers; the true aftershocks of this tremor are still immeasurable at such an early stage. But we can take a look at nations across the world and analyze their economic response to help the citizens of their country. This will allow us to come up with a strategy with the highest probability of success. One thing to note is that there is no perfect strategy; each strategy will involve some sacrifice, but some strategies are certainly better than others. The best strategy will involve lower interest rates, well-tailored fiscal policies on the local level, and some introspection.

First, we can take a look at the United States, which has responded with a huge stimulus package to keep the economy running and maintain its competitive edge against China. The US has already sent out \$1,200 stimulus cheques to every citizen over the age of 16. Its Central Bank, known as the Federal Reserve Bank, has taken on an ambitious strategy

to input money into the market. It has also temporarily reduced the Federal Funds rate to 0. The Federal Funds Rate is the interest rate at which banks can take out loans from other banks. The low rate means banks will not hesitate to take out loans from other banks since it would not cost them much in interest, thus stimulating the market

Since the Coronavirus cases in the United States differ state to state, there is no one policy fit all for the 50 states. That is why a chunk of the fiscal policy has been left for the local and state governments to implement and execute, with the help of the federal government. These local fiscal policies would include tax benefits for small businesses, favorable business loans amid other various policies. The state of Pennsylvania, for example, is trying to set aside roughly \$10 million worth of funds to help boost local volunteer organizations in fighting the virus. One country that can be deemed similar to Pakistan outside of the subcontinent is Indonesia with its massive 268 million majority Muslim population. The World Bank has projected that Indonesia's economic growth will slow down to 2.1 percent and millions could slip into poverty as the country tries to fight the virus. The Government of Indonesia has

cut corporate taxes to 22 percent from the previous 25. The state budget deficit has also been eased to allow the states to borrow more if necessary. The government might also issue state bonds or Shariah sovereign bonds to reduce the money supply. If necessary, they can inject the money generated from the bonds back into the market. Over \$5.4 billion worth of funds have been set aside to directly help the villages fight the virus.

No doubt, Pakistan will come out of this crisis stronger than ever if the important actions can be taken on time. These policy changes over a short period of time will allow the market watchers to collect data on how economic behaviour is influenced. This can be very effective in future and really help the government hamper down on price instability or the bottlenecks within the country that have been hindering the economy for decades. Alarm bells should be going off in heads of policymakers and even opportunistic businessmen as the world tries to diversify its manufacturing capacity and moves away from China as a sole producer. Could the next destination be Pakistan?

(Armaghan is the Managerial Economics student at George Mason University Virginia)

Briefs

652 cops deputed on Eid in Attock

DNA

ATTOCK: Attock police have chalked out a comprehensive plan for security during Eidul Fitr under which 1652 officials would perform duty around worship places during Eid prayers. Police have also finalized a comprehensive security and patrolling plan on the eve of Eid-ul-Fitr besides augmenting security at public and worship places and important buildings to thwart any untoward incident. As per the plan, police would guard as many as 346 worship places for Eid prayers including 322 Mosques and Imambargahs and 24 open places to provide security to worshippers. The security plan has been chalked out in collaboration with district administration and other law enforcement agencies and elaborated measures were planned for security outside all Mosques and Imambargahs and exit and entry points of the district.

China moves to tighten grip on Hong Kong

BEIJING :China moved Friday to quash Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement by unveiling plans for a new security law at the start of its annual parliamentary session that also laid bare the "immense" economic challenges caused by the coronavirus. The 3,000-member National People's Congress (NPC) began with a minute of silence for China's victims of the coronavirus before Premier Li Keqiang delivered his annual version of the US president's "state of the union" address. "At present, the epidemic has not yet come to an end, while the tasks we face in promoting development are immense," Li told mask-wearing delegates in Beijing's cavernous Great Hall of the People, while also touting China's success in suppressing the contagion.-APP

Judges grieved over plane crash

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Gulzar Ahmed and other Judges of Supreme Court have expressed deep sorrow and grief over tragic incident of PIA Aircraft crash in Karachi on Friday. They have extended their heartfelt condolences and sincere sympathies to members of the bereaved families who lost their lives in the tragic incident. They prayed to Almighty Allah to shower His blessings upon the departed souls and give patience to the bereaved families to bear this irreparable loss with equanimity (Ameen).-APP



WASHINGTON: A group photo of Pakistan Ambassador Dr. Asad Khan with officials while handing over PPEs to US officials. DNA

Chinese embassy gives donation for Afghanistan refugees

The food packages will be distributed among deserving Afghan Refugees in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan and Punjab.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of China in Islamabad has donated 8,000 food packages for distribution among most vulnerable Afghan refugees, especially those who have been adversely affected due to current COVID-19 pandemic. In this regard,

a ceremony was held in Embassy of China and participated by Minister for States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) Sahibzada Muhammad Mehboob Sultan, Director General (Afghanistan) Foreign Office, Ambassador of China in Pakistan Yao Jing, Ambassador of Afghanistan Shakrullah Atif Mashal

and other dignitaries, said a press release issued here on Friday. The assistance has been made under China-Pakistan-Afghanistan Trilateral Cooperation. Earlier, the China Ambassador also donated 1500 food packages which were distributed among Afghan Refugees in the start of

Holy month of Ramazan. The food assistance has been donated on the request of Minister for SAFRON Sahibzada Muhammad Mehboob Sultan that shows a gesture of brotherhood and solidarity with Afghan brothers in this difficult time. The food packages will be distributed among deserving

Afghan Refugees in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan and Punjab. The Minister for SAFRON appreciated the efforts and assistance of the Chinese Ambassador for Afghan Refugees with a note that cooperation and assistance towards the Afghan Refugees would continue in future as well and gen-

erous and selfless service in this regard with this Ministry and the Afghan refugees would always be remembered. Afghan Ambassador also thanked the Chinese counterpart for extending generosity towards Afghan Refugees that will help them to cope with daily life in the lockdown situation.

Protection of vulnerable segments top priority of govt: Shibli Faraz

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Shibli Faraz said on Friday that despite limited resources, it was priority of the Pakistan Tehrik-i-Insaf government to protect the vulnerable segments of the society during difficult times. He was addressing a cer-

emony organized by Pakistan Bait ul Mal in connection with distribution of ration packages amongst newspaper hawkers. He lauded Pakistan Baitul Mal for taking an active part in provision of relief to poor segments of the society. He said that daily wage earners and the working class were most affected by the lockdown and the



government took several steps to mitigate their sufferings.

The minister said under Ehsaas programme, cash assistance was being provided to the deserving families in the most efficient and transparent manner as rehabilitation of poor and backward classes was Prime Minister Imran Khan's top priority. Shibli Faraz said the services of newspaper hawkers would also be acknowledged and a cash

assistance programme would be launched for them soon. Shibli Faraz said given the services rendered by newspaper hawkers, he has a special respect for this segment of the society. The minister expressed the hope hard times will pass, Pakistan with the grace of Allah Almighty would emerge as a stronger nation.

Protesters subjected to force in Pulwama

DNA

SRINAGAR: Several people were injured when Indian troops and police used brute force during a cordon and search operation in Karimabad area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district. The troops and police laid a siege around Karimabad village after the killing of a policeman in neighbouring village of Prichoo. When the joint team started searches, the locals, mostly boys, hit the streets and staged a protest demonstration. Indian forces' personnel fired pellets and teargas shells to disperse the protesters, injuring several of them.

Morocco prisoners make masks

Casablanca, Morocco, May 22 (AFP/APP):Prisoners in Morocco are doing their bit in the country's fight against the spread of coronavirus - by making thousands of face masks for fellow inmates. "We feel like we are contributing to the collective effort, even if it's from behind prison walls," 40-year-old Khalid, wearing a white coat and a face mask, told AFP during an interview in the presence of prison management. An inmate at Casablanca's Ain Sebaa prison - the kingdom's most crowded jail, with some 8,000 inmates - Khalid leaves his cell every day for the sewing workshop, passing through long corridors that reek of disinfectant. He finishes off the masks while others cut the fabric or pack the protective items into plastic bags for distribution to some 80,000 prisoners across the country. The North African kingdom has officially declared 7,300 coronavirus infections, including 197 deaths.-APP

Modi invoked Nuremberg-like laws, AJK President

MUZAFFARABAD: The Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) President Sardar Masood Khan has said that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi wants to remove every symbol of resistance by imposing Nazi-style laws in order to change the demography of occupied Kashmir but the sacrifices rendered by Junaid Sehrai, Tariq Ahmad

and 12 years old Yasim Ijaz would never go in vain", he added. "India cannot alter the status of the Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir, which disputed territory under UNSC resolution by imposing colonial laws and silencing the voices of dissent," Masood Khan said while reacting on the violent incident in

IOJK. In a statement issued here on Thursday, the AJK president said that blowing up of 17 residential units to killed two youth in Nawakal area of Srinagar reveals rigidity and arrogance of Modi. He warned that if the Indian designs are not frustrated today, it will repeat the same exercise

in Pakistan and Azad Kashmir also. While commenting on the worst Indian brutalities, the AJK president said that the coward Indian Army lacks the courage to fight the Pakistan Army. That is why he maintained that the occupation troops barge into homes of defenceless people and thrash women and children, and if the

youth offer resistance, they are declared mujahids and secessionists and they are either killed or put behind the bars. He said that India has frustrated to realize that the people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir are not ready to accept the actions of 5 August 2019, Hindutva philosophy, unlawful aggression and re-occupation of Kashmir by India.-APP

President Emomali Inspects Temporary Hospitals Built for COVID-19 Patients

DNA

TDUSHANBE: The Founder of Peace and National Unity, Leader of the Nation, President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon has inspected a number of temporary hospitals that were recently built in Dushanbe for treatment of infectious diseases. He was accompanied by the Chairman of Dushanbe, Chairman of National Assembly Rustam Emomali, Prime Minister, Chairman of Republican Commission on Prevention and Fight against COVID-19 Kohir Rasulzoda. The inspection included four temporary and one mobile hospital which can accommodate 3,200 pa-



tients that equipped with necessary medical equipment and medicaments and the project designs of the Dushanbe Infectious Diseases Hospital which will be able to accommodate 1,500 patients once it is built in the metropolitan area of Sino.

During inspection, President Rahmon noted that the assistance of the neighboring Uzbekistan, which included the shipment of 144 special medical containers equipped with ventilators, serves as an outstanding example of mutually beneficial rela-

tions. Following the tour of the hospitals, President Emomali Rahmon held a meeting with Dushanbe healthcare workers regarding the prevention of the spread of infectious diseases in the country and providing prompt and quality service

to patients. The Prime Minister, Chairman of Republican Commission on Prevention and Fight against COVID-19 Kohir Rasulzoda gave a detailed report on the measures taken by so far to prevent and combat this new disease. He also noted that all hospitals have been provided with medications, necessary medical equipment and disinfectants, and the situation is currently under control. In his report, the Minister of Health and Social Protection Jamoliddin Abdullozoda stressed that regional doctors, clinics, hospitals and all health facilities are operating 24 hours a day, in anticipation of patients suspect of

having COVID-19. More than 7,500 doctors and 25,000 mid-level health workers are currently deployed in 85 hospitals. More than 45 million somoni has been allocated from the budget and other organizations to provide hospitals with the required medications, medical supplies and equipment to fight this disease. In order to provide quality services, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Population has established an Intellectual Medical Center, with hotlines serviced by specialists that are ready to assist and consult residents. The hotline can be reached by calling 311 or 511.