



Islamabad POST

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Boris Johnson announces inequality review

FM dismayed over India becoming UNSC member

Air Chief pays tribute to PAF war veteran



Briefs

PM to chair cabinet meeting

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan will chair a meeting of the federal cabinet in Islamabad on Tuesday. The cabinet meeting, which will be chaired by PM Imran Khan, will discuss the five-point agenda.

According to the agenda of the meeting, the federal cabinet will discuss the political and economic situation of the country. The meeting will endorse the decisions taken by the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) in June 10. Sources said the approval for the establishment of the Covid-19 fund under State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) is also included in the cabinet agenda. The cabinet meeting will approve the further amendments in the Children Act. The federal cabinet meeting will also discuss the situation arising out of the novel coronavirus in the country. The federal cabinet in its last meeting had formally agreed upon the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) suggestion to privatise the mega-firm. The federal cabinet decided to go ahead with the privatization and provide a golden handshake to its employees.

Confirmed cases soar to 144,478

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The number of confirmed coronavirus cases in Pakistan has jumped to 144,478 after detection of record 5,248 new infections in past 24 hours. According to the latest data released by the National Command and Operation Center, the death toll from COVID-19 in the country has reached 2,729 with 97 more virus-related deaths reported in the last 24 hours. According to NCOC, 53,805 cases have been detected in Sindh, 54,138 in Punjab, 18,013 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 8,177 in Balochistan, 8,569 in Islamabad, 647 in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and 1,129 in Gilgit Baltistan.

A total of 5,248 new cases were detected when 29,085 new tests were conducted during this period. The number of people defeating the deadly virus has reached 53,721, while 88,028 are still battling the deadly virus. Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar had said on Sunday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government intends to enhance the daily coronavirus testing capacity to 100,000 by next month.

Punjab to lockdown hotspots

Areas will be locked down for at least two weeks and the decision to lift off lockdown will be taken after observing the results: Yasmin

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Health Dr Yasmin Rashid on Monday said the government has decided to completely seal off some areas of Lahore for two weeks due to rapid increase in coronavirus cases. Addressing a news conference in Lahore, the provincial health minister said provincial administration has decided to impose complete lockdown in virus hotspots to contain the spread of coronavirus in the provincial capital. "Some areas including Shahdara, Gulberg, Mozang, Walled city, Shad Bagh, Harbans Pura, Nishitar Town, Allama Iqbal Town will be locked down completely from Tuesday midnight," she added. Yasmin Rashid further said that areas will be locked

down for at least two weeks and the decision to lift off lockdown will be taken after observing the results. "Pharmacies and stores will remain open in these areas," added Punjab health minister. Dr Yasmin Rashid urged the people to follow the government's announced standard operating procedures to stop the spread of the virus. Earlier on June 13, the prime minister while addressing a presser during his visit to Lahore, said that the virus was spreading at a rapid pace. He stressed upon the masses to strictly implement the standard operating procedures (SOPs) aimed at minimizing spread of COVID-19 pandemic in the country. While expressing displeasure over the implementation status of SOPs in Lahore, Prime Minister Imran Khan ordered to further

tighten the implementation of the COVID-19 standard operating procedures (SOPs) in the provincial capital.

It is pertinent to mention here that the number of confirmed coronavirus cases in Pakistan has jumped to 144,478 after the detection of record 5,248 new infections in past 24 hours. According to the latest data released by the National Command and Operation Center, the death toll from COVID-19 in the country has reached 2,729 with 97 more virus-related deaths reported in the last 24 hours.

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Palestine envoy grieved over demise of Saif

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Palestine Ahmed Rabie has expressed heartfelt grief over the demise of Saif Azam. In his message he said It is with great sadness that I learned of the passing of legendary Eagle of the sky- Group Captain (R) Saiful Azam, (1941 - 14 June 2020) "On behalf of all Palestinians, I send our deepest condolences to his family in Pakistan and in Bangladesh. Our hero Saiful Azam, who exits this realm doesn't truly leave! In our memories, in our minds, he still exists. He was an outstanding Hero and he was a true patriot in every respect. He served as a fighter pilot with the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) 1960- 1971. And with



Bangladesh Air Force (BAF) 1971- 1979. He has flown for four air forces (Pakistan, Jordan, Iraq and Bangladesh).As of 2012 he holds the record for shooting down more Zionest Israeli's aircraft than any other, total 4 aircrafts. At 2001 US government rewarded him as he was awarded with highest military awards, like Sitara-e-Jurat from Pakistan and others'.

PM directs NDMA to ensure availability of medicines

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Monday taking notice of the shortage of medicine and injections for COVID-19 patients directed the Chairman National Disaster Management Authority to ensure their availability and easy access. Chairing a review meeting on situation of coronavirus, the prime minister said proper treatment and following of standard operating procedures (SOPs)

could help control the spread of the disease. The meeting was attended by Interior Minister Ijaz Shah, Planning Minister Asad Umer, Information Minister Senator Shibli Faraz, Minister for Industries and Production Hammad Azhar, Adviser on Finance Dr Abdul Hafeez Sheikh, Special Assistant on Information Lt Gen (retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa, Focal Person on COVID-19

Dr Faisal Sultan, Chairman NDMA Gen Muhammad Afzal and senior officials. The prime minister expressed satisfaction over the availability of protective gear and Personal Protective Kits as per requirement in fighting coronavirus. As the government took necessary measures to control the pandemic, he said the supportive role of public was equally important. - APP



CHICAGO: A special PIA Chartered flight left for Islamabad from Chicago today, This was the sixth PIA flight to facilitate Pakistanis stranded in the US. CG Chicago. - DNA

China virus clustre grows

BEIJING: China reported dozens of new coronavirus cases for the second consecutive day on Monday as a growing cluster of infections stoked fears of a second wave, while more borders were opened in Europe ahead of the summer holiday season.

Streams of people queued in a stadium as mass testing was carried out in Beijing, the capital of the country where the disease emerged late last year. The pandemic is gathering pace in Latin America, and Iran and India have reported worrying increases in deaths and infections - adding to concern over challenges the world will face in the long fight against COVID-19. But for the moment news has been better in Europe, which has mostly seen caseloads fall steadily in recent weeks. Many countries are further lifting painful lockdowns that have saved lives, but have also devastated economies and wearied confined populations.

Rupee falls against dollar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The exchange rate of Pakistani rupee lost 61 paisas against US dollar in the interbank on Monday to close at Rs 164.85 compared to the last closing of Rs 164.24.

However, according to Forex Association of Pakistan, the buying and selling rates of Dollar in open market were recorded at Rs 164.5 and Rs 165.25 respectively. The State Bank of Pakistan reported that in interbank, the price of Euro depreciated by 27 paisas to close at Rs 185.55 against the last day's trading of Rs 185.82. The Japanese yen remained stable at Rs 1.53 whereas a decrease of 27 paisas was witnessed in the exchange rate of British Pound which was traded at Rs 206.72 as compared to its last closing of Rs 206.99.

FM dismayed over India becoming UNSC member

India had been ignoring the resolutions of UNSC on Kashmir for a long, giving way to an unending oppression on Kashmiris by denying their right to self-determination: Qureshi

A.M.BHARTI

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi on Monday said India becoming the non-permanent member of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) was 'not a moment of rejoice, but concern' as the country blatantly rejected resolutions of the prestigious forum, particularly on Kashmir.

Talking to reporters here, the Foreign Minister said India had been ignoring the resolutions of UNSC on Kashmir for a long, giving way to an unending oppression on Kashmiris by denying their right to self-determination. "Heavens will not fall if India becomes a UNSC mem-

ber," he said, adding that Pakistan had also served at the same position previously for seven times. Qureshi said Pakistan was making efforts for its membership at UNSC and had already initiated the process. He said Pakistan always remained ready to comply with the UNSC resolutions and recalled writing letters to the UNSC Secretary General updating him of the brutalities going on in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. He also mentioned sending letters to Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) highlighting atrocities of Indian occupational forces against innocent Kashmiris. He pointed out that the people of Kashmir did not

accept India's August 5th illegal annexation of the Valley as the government continued its illegal search operations even during the COVID-19 pandemic situation. Also the controversial Citizenship Amendment Act has targetted the minorities, particularly the Muslims, he added. The Foreign Minister asked India to have guts to allow him an open debate in Occupied Kashmir and see itself the clear picture of Kashmiris' support to Pakistan. Qureshi said majority of India's neighbouring countries including Pakistan, China, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka were not safe from its nefarious and hegemonic designs.

Pakistan's exports to Afghanistan decrease

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's exports of goods and services to Afghanistan witnessed decrease of 21.87 percent during the first ten months of financial year (2019-20) compared to the corresponding period of last year, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported.

The overall exports to Afghanistan were recorded at \$808.644 million during July-April (2019-20) against exports of \$985.572 million during July-April (2018-19), showing negative growth of 21.87 percent, SBP data revealed. Overall Pakistan's exports to other countries witnessed decrease of 2.40 percent in ten months,

from \$20.134 billion to \$19.649 billion, the SBP data revealed.

On the other hand, the imports from Afghanistan into the country during the period were recorded at \$115.747 million against \$149.322 million last year, showing decrease of 22.48 percent in first ten months of this year. The overall imports into the country decreased by 16.93 percent, from \$43.447 billion to \$36.090 billion, according to the data.

Based on the trade figures, the trade of goods and services with Afghanistan witnessed decrease of 17.13 percent in surplus during first ten months of ongoing fiscal year as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

Federal govt to launch three new projects

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The federal government will launch three new projects in Balochistan to ensure smooth supply of water to its dwellers. "In addition to the ongoing projects, the government will initiate three more projects with the cost of Rs 2,530 million to address water shortage in the province, said the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) 2020-21.

According to the budget document, the government has allocated Rs 2,000 million to carry out the expansion of Kachhi Canal Project, which would eventually overcome the shortfall of water especially in the harvesting season at district Dera Bugti. An amount of Rs 22,921 million was the estimated cost of the said project.

CCP Issues Show Cause Notice

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has issued a Show Cause Notice to S.M. Food Makers Limited for deceptively copying the trademark/trade dress of various products of Hilal Foods, thus prima facie violating of Section 10 of the Competition Act.

Hilal Foods sent a formal complaint that S.M. Food Makers was fraudulently copying the packaging of its famous confectionary items.

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Over 10557 violations of health guidelines recorded across country

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Beijing hybrid wheat can take Pakistan through the food crisis: report

Dr. Arif, the expert of The University of Agriculture Peshawar, said that importing Beijing hybrid wheat can economize vast cropland for other agricultural products. "It's very necessary and meaningful for food security in the nation," he said

DNA

ISLAMABAD: "These years, Beijing hybrid wheat from China has showed an increasing prominence in Pakistan," the R&D Director of Guard Agri. Co Ltd., Dr. Rasheed said. Wheat is the most important grain crop for Pakistan, its cultivated acreage is about 21.42 million acres and accounts for

44% of the country's total arable land, says a report published by Gwadar Pro on Monday.

However, the yield of wheat only reaches 2,700 kg per hectare. In comparison, the yield of Beijing hybrid wheat can reach 6,000 kg per hectare. According to Dr. Zhang Shengquan, an expert of Beijing Academy of Agriculture and Forestry Sciences, Beijing hybrid

wheat is an efficient solution to Pakistan's wheat shortage.

Beijing hybrid wheat has outstanding drought resistance and barren tolerance, which is exactly suitable for the soil and climate in Pakistan. Dr. Zhang said, "In addition, Beijing hybrid wheat is tenacious enough to have a good harvest even under a loose management with low input."

Beijing hybrid wheat is harvested in June. "Since 2012 Pakistan started to import Beijing hybrid wheat, the rate of increasing production has exceeded 50%," he said. Through a long-term research and experiment, over 120 hybridized combinations and more than 230 pilot projects, comparing with domestic breed, Beijing hybrid wheat has created a 24.4% average

increase of yield. Dr. Arif, the expert of The University of Agriculture Peshawar, said that importing Beijing hybrid wheat can economize vast cropland for other agricultural products. "It's very necessary and meaningful for food security in the nation," he said.

According to the global Food Crisis Report 2020 jointly released by the Food and Agriculture Organiza-

tion (FAO) and the World Food Program (WFP), drought conditions and locust plague have caused severe food shortages in Pakistan. In response, Dr. Zhang said, "In order to support Pakistan to overcome the food crisis, we will accelerate promoting Beijing hybrid wheat in the nation. The cooperation on agriculture is a considerable part under CPEC project," the report added.

Briefs

Action against pharma mafia demanded

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Coronavirus is driving the black market for medical equipment, medicines, and protective masks as profiteers have adapted quickly to the benefit of the pandemic, a business leader said Monday. A black market for the plasma of COVID-19 patients has emerged in Pakistan which is unfortunate, said Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President of the Pakistan Economic Watch and Convener FPCCI Central Standing Committee on Insurance. He said that the government should take note of the thriving black market amid the health crisis which is flourishing by exploiting the poor patients. Agents of the mafia can be seen in many hospitals offering plasma of the people who have recovered from the disease for hundreds of thousands of rupees which is highly unethical, he added. The black market emerged after successful trials in which coronavirus patients were injected with the blood of those who have recovered. Dr. Murtaza Mughal noted that if a considerable number of those who recovered from coronavirus donate there will be no black marketing but it is not the case.

Rs 13.976 million fine imposed in KP: PMRU

DNA

PESHAWAR, Jun 15 (dna):The district governments of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in crackdowns against violators of COVID-19 related Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) imposed Rs 13.976 million fine on 44,183 individuals and sealed 5,415 units from June 3 to June 14. According to a report issued here by Performance Management and Reforms Unit (PMRU), Office of Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa regarding action taken for enforcement of COVID-19 SOPs, a total 264,557 inspections were carried out by district administrations. It said that a total 64126 inspections of shops were carried out where 29265 individuals were fined with Rs 4.4 million while 2861 shops were sealed and 18031 warnings were issued. Similarly, 28,495 markets were inspected where 1107 individuals were fined with Rs Rs 1.1 million and 76 markets were sealed due to violations of COVID-19 SOPs.

134,445 persons provided financial assistance

RAWALPINDI: As many as 134,445 persons have received Rs 12,000 each cash here in Rawalpindi district under Ehsaas Emergency Cash programme launched by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government on the directives of the Prime Minister Imran Khan to provide financial assistance to the deserving families. According to a district administration spokesman, the administration has provided cash amounting to over one billion and 320 million rupees to 134,445 persons in the district under the programme. He said, 26 centers were set up for Rawalpindi district including tehsil Gujjar Khan, Taxila, Murree, Kahuta, Kallar Syedan and Kotli Sattian. He said, the poor families received cash from 26 points in Rawalpindi district while the cash was disbursed among the deserving families affected by the lockdown. - APP



ABBOTTABAD: German aid for Afghan children being distributed in Abbottabad. - DNA

Afghan women leaders seek tech assistance in e-commerce

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan, to consolidate its positive overtures towards Afghanistan, has appointed former Ambassador Mohammad Sadiq as Pakistan's special envoy to Kabul, a completely new office, to what the government describes will play an effective role in strengthening ties between the two nations. Sadiq is respected on both sides and has very cordial relations across the border, as well. So, we can say, things are very much moving in the right direction, stated Mehnaaz Akbar Aziz, Member of the Parliament, Pakistan, while speaking to distinguished Pak-Afghan delegates, in a virtual cross-border women's dialogue on "Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19 on Women in Pakistan and Afghanistan". The dialogue was organized

by Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), as part of its Pakistan-Afghanistan Track 1.5/II diplomacy - Beyond Boundaries. Mehnaaz also shared another encouraging news regarding Afghan President Ghani, who recently said that Afghanistan now has "the closest alignment" with Pakistan on the peace process and he also hoped that it would translate into cooperation in other areas as well. Though, she was of the opinion that additionally appointing a woman co-ambassador or deputy ambassador would be a tangible gain. This would help in resolving women related issues across the border in a swift manner. Commenting on the global pandemic, she said that for COVID-19 approaches to be responsive and to address the gendered impact, women must be at the center of COVID-19 recovery efforts. This starts with women's equal



representation and participation in decision-making. She also suggested formulation of a Pak-Afghan working group on COVID-19. Shinkai Karokhail, senior Afghan politician and rights activist, stated that COVID-19's impact has doubled or tripled women's responsibilities in Afghanistan and it will slow down the access of girls to education even more. It is feared that because of the economic impact of COVID-19, fam-

ilies will further prioritize educating boys rather than girls, while the number of out of school children is feared to increase - especially the number of girls. Online learning is better than nothing, but it has created a digital divide. People who have access to these devices can benefit, but the majority of the students in rural areas do not have access to computers or TVs and internet. The pandemic also added

to the miseries of Afghan women, often working in informal sector. Now, they are at verge of losing their jobs; a large number of which are widows. Besides that, these women also face physical and psychological abuse. She also recommended that a mechanism be devised for Afghan women entrepreneurs to learn from Pakistani business women the techniques of e-commerce. Moreover, she added that

the COVID-19 crisis represents an opportunity to empower women as key leaders and decision makers to respond effectively and to build longer-term resilience and social cohesion of communities. Lack of diversity and failing to leverage women's expertise and talent in decision-making can limit an effective response. Earlier, Intiaz Gul, Executive Director CRSS, while welcoming the delegates stated that adding the women component in Beyond Boundaries is good way of building on what CRSS has been doing since 2015. He opined that while the politics remains toxic and most of the leaders keep clinging to the baggage of history, we at the civil society should at least try to detach from official narratives. Instead, we should mine on positives, to generate significant goodwill and resolve bilateral issues together, in a positive environment, he added.

HEC alerts students about fake news on education

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has alerted students and faculty members about false information being circulated through WhatsApp and social media forums. Students are advised to verify HEC-related information from its website www.hec.gov.pk. HEC has clarified that contrary to some news report, the HEC website has not been hacked. The fake information consists simply of crude photoshop images designed by some persons pushing anti-education agendas and circulated by them through their WhatsApp and social media links. These images pretend to be screenshots of the HEC website, but are just manipulations of other downloaded content from the website.

They pertain to a variety of topics, but their common aim is to advocate a lowering of educational standards in Pakistan, e.g., by canceling exams, canceling all educational activities including online education, or disrupting admissions or scholarship processes. While there have been cyberattacks on the HEC website, which appear have originated from servers outside the country, HEC technical teams have been working round the clock to ward off these attacks. Students, academic and research community as well as public, availing or inquiring about HEC programmes and services, are requested to exercise vigilance and trust no other resource except the HEC website, and authentic social media pages that are linked to it.

'Lockdown tightened for protection of human lives'

DNA

MUZAFFARABAD: Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) President Sardar Masood Khan has urged the social organizations to come forward and address the financial problems erupted out of the outbreak of coronavirus pandemic and ensuing lockdown in the liberated territory. "The social organizations besides helping the needy people, should also play their role to create awareness among them about the preventive measures so that the pandemic is responded jointly and effectively," he asserted. He made these remarks while talking to a five-member delegation of a social welfare organization 'Be The Merciful' (BTM) which called on him here on Monday. The delegation led by BTM Chairperson, Sumaira Farrukh was consisted of President BTM Azad Kashmir chapter Areeba Ilyas, Secretary General Anna Munir, Vice President Basit Naqvi and member of Board of Directors Faizan Riasat Masih. The state president said that the test put by the coronavirus pandemic has necessitated all segments of the society to jointly respond to it with coordinated efforts. The masses, he added, also need to be sensitized about the preventive measures.

AIOU to hold academic workshops Online in view

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has decided to hold academic workshops (semester Spring 2020) at Post-Graduate-level through the use of new technology, in view of prevailing crisis (COVID-19). According to Director Admissions, the University has activated Learning Management System, by launching 'Aaghi LMS Portal'. Through this Portal, the teachers of the University's main Campus will hold Online learning interaction with their students across

the country. For this purpose, all the enrolled students for the semester were being informed about the Login password, through SMS. The relevant information about the LMS has also been provided at the University's Website. As per the new arrangements, the students will be required to upload their academic assignment on the Aaghi portal. However, the University will hold academic workshop as per the old traditional practices for the students of the far-flung regions. The Online academic arrangements have been made in line with the gov-

ernment's policy and the instructions of the Higher Education Commission (HEC). Meanwhile, the AIOU is also in process of digitalizing its entire management system including admission, examination, finance and academic activities, in line with the vision and the initiatives of Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum. The decision of holding Online learning practices is also in accordance with concept of new learning platform or 21st century Virtual classroom that is supported with text, voice and video for interaction between tutor and students.

NCHD to contribute in 'Clean, Green Pakistan'

ISLAMABAD: The National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) Director General Hassan Baig has directed its team to devise a strategy for plantation of saplings across the country to contribute in "Clean and Green Pakistan". In a statement here on Monday, he said that NCHD had the capacity to plant 36,000,000 in a year. He said the NCHD had a strong infrastructure at grass roots level covering 114 districts all over the country. Hassan Baig stressed upon the need for adopting vibrant and viable approaches involving all the stakeholders including NGOs, INGOs and donors in this noble cause. - APP

Education department starts distribution of free text books

MUNIR FAISAL

ATTOCK: Education department Attock has started distribution of Free Text Books (FTBs) to students and this task would be completed with in a week. CEO education Attock Javed Iqbal Awan said that across the district there were more than 1200 schools where thousand of students were studying. He said for the distribution of FTBs, necessary instructions have been given to head teachers and teachers who were ensuring distribution of books keeping in view coronavirus SOPs. CEO said that on daily basis the students of only one class are being called to schools and given FTBs. Replying to a question, CEO said that summer vacation task was also being given beside giving FTBs to the students. He said that in the prevailing situation parents must play their role and ensure regular study of their children.

Value-added marble can capture int'l market

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has abundantly rich reserves of high-quality marble stones in the mountainous regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Sindh, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan with exotic appearances, immense decorative colors and functional value of cooling in hot weather. Marble is a material used in prestige architecture and interior designing of buildings. Pakistan has excellent variety and colors of marble including white-limestone, yellow-sandstone, Indus-goldstone, black, blue and white granite, dark-green, green, light green white, multi-green, golden and pink-onyx, brown, grey and camel-colors marble. Similarly, the variety of sand stone and Boti sena are unique marble stones found in the country.

The stones after extraction from the mountains are transported to different small and large scale processing units throughout the country. After the raw material is processed and refined in the shape of blocks and slabs of specific size by cutting, polishing and inlay-designing. The product gets ready for sale and marketing purposes in local as well as in the international markets. According to a report of Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), Pakistan is estimated to have marble and onyx reserves of more than 300 billion tonnes while granite reserves are estimated as 1,000 billion tonnes. The marble and onyx reserves exist largely in Mohmand Agency, Chitral, Buner, Swat, Parachinar,

Gilgit, Hunza, Swabi, Bajour, Mardan, Waziristan, Azad Kashmir, Lasbela, Chagai and Khuzdar. The biggest onyx reserves are in Chagai while the report lists Gilgit, Dir, Chitral, Swabi, Kohistan, Nagarparker, Chagai, Mansehra, Malakand and Swat had rich deposits of granite. Similarly, Malakand and Mardan also have rich reserves of grey and camel marble stones. The marble stones are also found in the newly merged districts of KP: Orakzai and Kurram which have some of the unique designs making them prominent faces of the marble industry in the country. The white marble of Pakistan due to its distinguished quality of heat resistance is used in buildings to keep them cooler in hot weather. - APP

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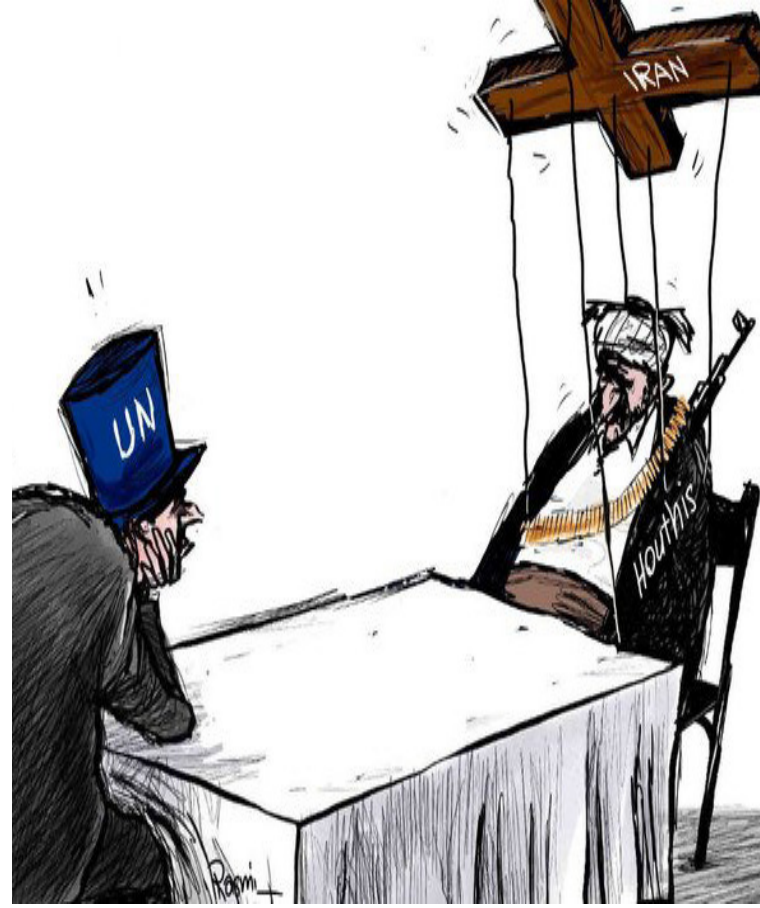
Trump vs the ICC

AS if US President Trump's plate was not already full, he is adding more to his credit, or rather discredit. He has signed an executive order sanctioning members of the International Criminal Court (ICC). This move is highly provocative and is being condemned by international organizations working for human rights and freedom of expression and movement. The court staff is involved in the probe but now President Trump has targeted not only the investigators but also their families by blocking their access to assets held in US financial institutions. They will also not be allowed to visit America. Not only President Trump but his top members of administration have also been using fairly strong language against the ICC. The argument made by the Trump administration is that the ICC officials are seeking to prosecute defenders of freedoms, and that's why the US cannot allow the ICC to come to the US "to shop, travel, and otherwise enjoy American freedoms."

This is an attempt to pressure lawyers into dropping the investigation of US military and intelligence personnel. The probe is likely to investigate the treatment of detainees in Afghanistan and Europe from 2003 to 2004. A parallel aspect is also related to another equally important probe likely to open an investigation into Israel's policies toward the Palestinian territories. It is noteworthy that Palestine has requested the ICC officially to investigate war crimes by Israelis during the 2014 Gaza war. The probe may also deal with the question of Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

The Afghan and Palestinian probes appear to have enraged Pompeo and Trump alike. According to the Trump administration, the ICC poses a threat to Israel. This sanction on the ICC was not entirely unexpected as Pompeo had already promised to "exact consequences" on the ICC if it didn't lay off Israel. These steps by the Trump administration are going to have a more pernicious effect on international justice and human rights.

It can hardly be questioned that Israeli soldiers in Palestine and US forces in Afghanistan have at different times harmed and mistreated the local people who are seeking justice from the ICC. Preventing this access to justice is likely to launch a judicial world conflict as the ICC is a permanent intergovernmental body located in The Hague, the Netherlands. Since its establishment in 2002, 123 countries have ratified the ICC, but the US is not one of them, though it did sign onto it. This American unilateralism not to allow prosecution of Israeli and US soldiers, while they violate their legal obligations, is deplorable. All such attempts to obstruct the prosecutor's independence anywhere in the world, both nationally and internationally, must be resisted.



Revamping Railways

PAKISTAN Railways needs our attention for at least two recent developments. First was the expression of dismay over the performance of Pakistan Railways by the Supreme Court of Pakistan; and second is the allocation of Rs40 billion to it by the government in the just-announced budget.

The apex court has directed the railways authorities to submit a report within a month, informing the court about reforms and retrenchment of its employees. A two-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Gulzar Ahmed heard the petition by the employees of railways for their regularization.

The court has also ordered that immediate reforms be introduced in the organization even if it requires retrenchment of thousands of employees who are found to be deadwood.

There can hardly be two opinions about the need for a near-complete overhaul of Pakistan Railways. It has thousands of temporary employees, and successive governments kept hiring employees in contravention of established rules and thus have burdened the organization with excessive staff that in most cases is good for nothing.

There is a recurring issue of tragic accidents that result in loss of lives and damaged or destroyed locomotives (engines) and bogies (carriages). As a result of repeated accidents, the Railways has had to pay huge compensation amounts and spend a lot of resources on repair and rehabilitation of tracks and trains. There are non-operational engines and bogies that need to be either discarded or dismantled as the bill of their repairs goes into billions.

To top it all, there is rampant corruption and no independent inquiry report into accidents and corruption has been made public. To reverse the trend, the government has allocated Rs40 billion to Pakistan Railways and Rs24 billion for an upgrade of the existing ML-1 (Mainline one).

The government also plans to establish a dry port near Havelian under the CPEC project. In addition, 17 new uplift projects are stipulated during 2020-21. Though the budget allocates that much for the Railways, the disappointing aspect is that apart from new schemes, no reform plan has been prepared as yet. When the new minister for railways took charge nearly two years back, there was a flurry of activity about starting new trains from various cities. Many of these new trains were launched with old bogies and engines.

Then there were accidents nearly every other month but no concrete steps have been taken to revamp the railways. Now since the Supreme Court has ordered a report within a month, one can hope that something positive comes out of it. Otherwise just allocation announcements are not going to help much.

The Incredible India?

Askari Raza Malik



Modi has arbitrarily changed the special status of Kashmir, an established disputed territory. He has taken over nine million Kashmiris hostages for the last almost one year. He is killing the Kashmiri youth at will. The Indian army continues to leisurely indulge in ceasefire violations across the LoC and international borders. It is well aware that the bombing and shelling create little impact on the Pakistan military

IT was on an Indian national day that the boys and girls of Indian origin of a high school in the US had staged a show. The theme, 'The Incredible India' was true reflection of the Indian media, pretentious, boastful, frivolous and tedious. The amusement was writ large on the faces of the audience. The uncanny smiles said it all. The unsuspecting innocent kids had made a laughingstock of themselves mimicking their native media craze. They did not realize that the audience was not all Indian. India is unique in many ways, from its proud heritage, architecture, pre-Modi philosophical pluralism, glamour and amazing natural beauty to miles and miles of roads littered with human defecation on daily basis. Its number of illiterates and poor, each, exceeds the entire population of Pakistan. It is ranked number one in the world for rapes. Two hundred million untouchables are lesser humans and for its oppression of the minorities, India is being graded worst in human rights violations. Modi can go berserk. Anyone in his place, an uneducated, uncouth petty tea vendor without a worthwhile background, social or political, catapulted to the highest position in the most populous democracy in the world could have gone off his rocker. Only an exception would keep his sanity intact. But then what went wrong with everyone else in this gigantic mass of land and living beings, the land of intellectuals, writers, philosophers and humanists, exceptional men and women, who have done India proud. Why are all the existing big names not up in arms in this defining and most consequential time in Indian history? Why the great have been outdone by a pigmy? Why the fascist narrative of a bigoted reactionary has overshadowed the grand vision of Gandhi and Nehru? Pakistanis would shiver at the prospect of handing over their country to a fanatic like him. How can a billion and a half Indians afford a peaceful night sleep with Modi at the helm of affairs?

There is a popular saying in Pashto which means that the biggest masochist makes the biggest sadist. Only a Modi biographer could tell the miseries poor boy Modi might have gone through before being picked up by the RSS goons. There is a lot hidden behind his inhuman behaviour. Only a good Indian psycho analyst might be able to fathom the dark side of his life.

The founding fathers of India had the vision to realize that a lasting edifice of the Indian Union could only be built on the concept of secularism. A large and heterogeneous population, a strong caste system and variety of colour and creed had never allowed India to remain united in the recent and distant past. Fascism and racism are the ideologies that must lead India to fragmentation. Modi's one-point agenda to marginalize the minorities beginning with the largest minority, the Muslims, has lost focus on many core national issues. In form, substance and methods he is a Nazi to the hilt.

The biggest damage Modi has done to India is to politicize its military. Its institutional esteem is at stake. The DGMO of any army is a highly regarded professional. He plans and conducts operations. His statements ought to be pragmatic, based on cold-blooded military logic. When the Indian DGMO appears again and again on the media, telling lies about the Indian surgical strikes and Pakistani intrusions into Indian territory to please his saber-rattling political bosses with no evidence to show on the ground, he loses respect. An Indian army chief making as preposterous a claim as his ability to take on China and Pakistan together, only makes professionals across the world laugh out loud.

Modi has arbitrarily changed the special status of Kashmir, an established disputed territory. He has taken over nine million Kashmiris hostages for the last almost one year. He is killing the Kashmiri youth at will. The Indian army continues to leisurely indulge in ceasefire violations across the LoC and international borders. It is well aware

that the bombing and shelling create little impact on the Pakistan military. They kill only the civilians, men, women and children. Safoora Zargar, a woman journalist is in prison for speaking against Modi's atrocities. She is pregnant with accompanying complications. The Hindu judge rules that she must suffer for inciting dissent. The Human Rights organizations all over the world write in frustration and pain. The world should wait, the history tells until a Hitler strikes.

Unfortunately, under the present geopolitical realities, Modi seems to have been caught in a no-win situation. Every Pharaoh must blunder into his Moses. So has Modi. India's sly maneuvers on Indo-China border with the intent of annexing Ladakh, a disputed territory like Kashmir were picked up by China pretty early in the day. According to my favourite, General (ret'd) Tariq Khan, 'China landed five thousand troops in Galwan Valley dominating the only communication link to Indian Daulat Beg Brigade... now totally unsustainable and operationally untenable'. China has by this one move also secured the CPEC project against India's nefarious designs.

If India persists in its folly, it will be repeating 'the Himalayan Blunder' of 1962. Discretion is the best option for India, as it knows like everyone else does that Indian military is mortally scared of the Chinese. I agree with Gen Tariq Khan that India, for face saving, claims that it would be able to resolve the issue bilaterally. Realistically, 'the deed is done' for India. The situation is irreversible. Ladakh is lost with its strategic implications that should be of serious concern to India. This is an end to India's dream of regional leadership and its friends' fallacious hopes for finding a regional match for China. Modi has no one else but himself to blame for leading 'the incredible India' up the garden path.

(Major General @Askari Raza Malik has authored the book 'Pakistan in Search of a Messiah')

Selective Awakening of Consciousness

Ehtisham Amer

State is a responsible actor and it works within legal bounds. There are international conventions that explicitly prescribe how states can fight insurgency. India holds another terrible world record of being home to highest number of active insurgencies in single country. There are currently plus of a dozen active insurgencies in India. So much for Indian democracy! With so many insurgencies, Indian forces should have been the best trained to fight insurgencies. Opposite is however true

GEORGE Floyd died an excruciating death at the hands of his tormentors who were supposedly his protectors. Police officer, who suffocated George to death was filmed by some bystanders and now the whole world is protesting. It was indeed a very gory act by someone

who wears a uniform and takes an oath to protect the civilian life in the discharge of his duties. But this death also highlights one very disturbing fact of the global politics and media affairs. It is that the worth of lives are classified on the colour of skin, sadly. George, a black man, was a minority person in the racially divided American society. Minority can take several forms and the colour of the skin is one of many including ethnicity, faith, etc. Not that one is underplaying the severity of the crime against George, but I am puzzled about the selective reaction of the world.

All human rights violations and the use of brutal force against minorities should be equally condemnable. Isn't it surprising that when a racial minority is treated badly in the richest state of the world, the conscious of the whole world is animated instantly and global protests erupt? But similar reactions are not witnessed when minorities are killed and tortured day in and day out for over 70 years in Indian occupied Kashmir and there is deafening silence. Why is the moral compass of the world so selective in pointing out violations?

Kashmir and Palestine are the oldest military occupations in the world. Ironically, Muslims are suffering the wrath of occupation forces in both cases. These occupations are internationally recognized and condemned by the United Nations and there are tons of evidences and heaps of useless resolutions pointing to global inaction. Both these occupations are brutal, atrocious, and have a genocidal thread in the tactics employed by occupation forces. Sufferings of Muslims in both the cases without rousing the world consciousness is a disturbing phenomenon.

Kashmir is under occupation for 75 years and holds the record for the longest occupation, beating Palestine by a year. Kashmiris rose to demand their right of self-determination, promised by the UN Security Council, in 1988 and have never returned to normal life ever since. India resorted to ruthless application of force to stem the democratic demand of Kashmiris. But Indian brutalities touched a new peak when in August 2019, the Indian government, led by an extremist rightwing party which holds Hinduvta very dear and closer to their heart, imposed the harshest lockdown in human history,

turning Kashmir into a largest open-air prison.

A population of nearly 12 million, Kashmir is occupied by nearly 400,000 Indian security forces imposing one of the most brutal and crippling curfews. One soldier to every 30 residents is very heavy militarization by any standards. And all this was done in the name of amending the constitutional provisions governing Kashmir.

How strange that you amend the constitution through guns and torture and still call yourself a democracy? Amending the constitution is a democratic exercise, taken by elected representatives of people with the consent of the masses. Indian action of August 2019 violates basic democratic logic. If a country has to deploy half a million soldiers in anticipation of street protests against the constitutional amendment, then the very nature of the amendment is undemocratic and against the will of the people.

From August last year to this day, the Sun has risen over 300 times but the long dark night, cast over Kashmir is still staying. Indian occupation has crippled Kashmir's economy before the world even knew Covid-19 and consequent lockdowns. Kashmir is literally cut off from rest of India and the world physically, socially and economically since all means of communication are totally suspended. No telephones, no cellular, no internet at all.

This 11-month-long harsh lockdown has crippled Kashmir economically and wreaked havoc socially and tormented every segment of the population. Sick died due to a lack of medical care and a shortage of essential medicines. Students missed their academic year and have an uncertain future. Kashmir lives on tourism and agriculture. Fruits are the major product of Kashmir. Lockdown forced farmers to see their year-long toil rot in front of their eyes, with the remotest chance of compensation. What would be the mental state of a person who has undergone such traumatic experience? But surely, no one would be concerned since Kashmiris are the sons of the lesser gods.

All violence is bad. State repression in any form is worse. George's death is the latest testimony to the unchecked use of lethal force by law enforcement personnel. All reputable international human

rights watch groups and organizations have accumulated loads of evidence against Indian security forces, with graphic details of atrocities and torture.

IOK holds an exclusive, though disgraceful distinction where rape is used as state policy to suppress democratic dissent. UNHCR, Amnesty International, and innumerable other bodies have collected verifiable evidence of using illegal practices against civilians which include the use of pellet guns and enforced disappearances.

Worst, Indian occupation forces have resorted to collective punishment in Kashmir which is a war crime under 1949 Geneva Conventions.

State is a responsible actor and it works within legal bounds. There are international conventions that explicitly prescribe how states can fight insurgency. India holds another terrible world record of being home to highest number of active insurgencies in single country. There are currently plus of a dozen active insurgencies in India. So much for Indian democracy! With so many insurgencies, Indian forces should have been the best trained to fight insurgencies. Opposite is however true.

Indians have only resorted to the use of maximum force as a favoured tool to fight back insurgents. Indian record of minority rights violation is so awful that USCIRF (United States Commission on International Religious Freedom) has placed India on its watch list for basic rights abuses. That's not how a world expects a responsible state to act. Or, perhaps we are expecting too much from a saffron-clad state. A state which razed and bombed the holiest shrine of Sikhs in the name of fighting few lightly armed Sikh dissidents.

Death of George Floyd has given awakening to the world conscious that all forms of torture and highhandedness by state security apparatus is repulsive and must stop forthwith. Protestors have voted with their feet. Its high time world also pays attention to the oldest and bloodiest occupation on the planet and finds solutions in line with resolutions of the United Nations. Any principle which is true for sacredness of American lives should also be applied with the same spirit for protection of the properties and lives of people of other faiths and ethnicities.

Briefs

ASEAN-Russia FMs to discuss COVID-19

PHNOM PENH: The foreign ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Russia will hold a special meeting on COVID-19 via video conference on Wednesday, said a Cambodian foreign ministry's statement on Monday. The meeting will be co-chaired by Indonesia as the current Country Coordinator for ASEAN-Russia Dialogue Relations, and the Russian Federation, the statement said. During the meeting, the ASEAN-Russia foreign ministers will exchange views on best practices and lessons learnt in countering the pandemic, discuss ways to enhance cooperation in all areas of mutual interests and strengthen the ASEAN-Russia Strategic Partnership, particularly on public health, it said. This video conference is held amidst a tough and hectic time of unprecedented global challenges of COVID-19 pandemic. — APP

Sweden & Denmark to rescue SAS

STOCKHOLM: Sweden unveiled Monday a plan to recapitalise struggling Scandinavian airline SAS, which said Denmark was also planning to the plan to help it weather the effects of the COVID-19 crisis. Sweden's Industry Minister Ibrahim Baylan said the government was willing to inject up to 5 billion kronor (474 million euros, \$534 million). The project requires approval from lawmakers. SAS said in a statement that the Danish government would also contribute to the recapitalisation but did not provide a figure. In its statement, SAS said it estimates its funding needs some 12.5 billion kronor and plans to provide more details about the recapitalisation and related measures by the end of the month.

ANF arrest two drug pushers

MIANWALI: Anti Narcotics Force arrested two men on the recovery of huge quantity of narcotics from their possession in Mianwali police limits. Police informed on Monday that on a tip-off a team of Anti Narcotics Force stopped a vehicle (ARU-997) near Hamza Zahoor Mills at Multan road and recovered 62 kg hash hidden in various spaces of the vehicle. ANF arrested the two drug pushers — Amir Raza and Imran Haider r/o Sargodha and impounded the vehicle. — APP

Moscow expels two Czech diplomats

MOSCOW: Russia on Monday expelled two Czech diplomats, retaliating over the expulsion of two of its own embassy workers from Prague this month over a fake story about a poison plot. The Russian foreign ministry summoned Czech envoy Vitezslav Pivonka and informed him that "two employees of the Czech Embassy in Moscow are declared personas non-grate" and ordered to leave the country by Wednesday evening, the ministry said. — APP

China to launch last BDS-3 satellite

XICHANG: China plans to launch the last satellite of the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS) on Tuesday to complete the construction of the global constellation. The launch window is set between 10:11 a.m. and 10:50 a.m. (Beijing Time), according to the China Satellite Navigation Office. — APP



LALAMUSA: A squirrel eating water melon. — Khurshid Nadeem

Over 10557 violations of health guidelines recorded across country

Punjab, 4929 violations of safety guidelines were witnessed in different parts of the province and in consequence to that 801 shops and markets were closed, 12 industries sealed and 691 transport vehicles were also fined on violations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) on Monday was told that during last 24 hours more than 10557 violations of health guidelines/instructions observed across Pakistan. According to NCOC, more than 1252 markets and shops, 12 industries and 1148 transport vehicles were cautioned, fined sensitized and sealed. It added that basing on test, trace

and quarantine (TTQ) strategy, Muzaffarabad complete city was locked with 200,000 population, two sectors of Islamabad were also locked with approximately 50,000 population and more than 1200 other lockdowns in different parts of the country. In line with the Prime Minister's instructions for compliance to health guidelines and instructions particularly working places, industrial sector, transport, markets and shops whereas NCOC daily morning situational brief was in progress.

To ensure the implementation of the health guidelines and instructions and preventive measures including wearing of face mask in public as per WHO new guidelines on the subject particular special teams were operating all across the country to ensure that the standard operating procedures (SOPs) were being implemented. The details of violations of health guidelines across Pakistan and enforcement measures as under as in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) 589 Violations were noted

and sealed around 16 shops and markets and 226 Transport vehicles were fined. In Gilgit Baltistan (GB), around 128 violations were noted whereas 28 markets and shops were sealed and 30 transport vehicles were fined. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), around 3878 violations were noticed whereas in consequence 222 shops and markets were sealed, 193 transport vehicles fined and 1157 individuals were also fined on the violating the SOPs.

In Punjab, 4929 violations of safety guidelines were witnessed in different parts of the province and in consequence to that 801 shops and markets were closed, 12 industries sealed and 691 transport vehicles were also fined on violations. In Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), as many as 21 violations of SOPs and safety guidelines were noted where in its consequence one hotel, 7 shops, 8 transport vehicles and 4 individuals were arrested on flouting the safety and health guidelines.

Air Chief pays tribute to PAF war veteran

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Group Captain (Retd) Saif-ul-Azam, Sitara-i-Jura'at, veteran of 1965 Indo-Pak war, breathed his last in Bangladesh after prolonged illness. Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force (PAF) Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan has expressed heartfelt grief on the sad demise of the great war veteran, said a PAF press release. While paying tribute to Group Captain (Retd) Saif ul Azam, the Air Chief acknowledged his heroic



deeds during the 1965 Indo-Pak and 1967 Arab-Israeli wars. Air Chief further added that he was an exceptional fighter pilot who would always be remembered for his valour and professionalism. Group Captain (Retd) Saif-ul-Azam was born in Pabna District, East Bengal in 1941. He was commissioned as a fighter Pilot in October, 1960. During 1965 war, he served in No 17 Squadron at PAF Base Sargodha. Apart from inflicting heavy damage to Indian forces in 12 ground-attack missions, Azam also had one IAF aircraft kill to his credit as well. For his valour and devotion to duty in 1965 war, he was awarded with "Sitara-i-Jura'at". Group Captain Saif ul Azam also attained global repute when he shot down three Israeli aircraft during 1967 Arab-Israel war.

'Anti-locust operation carried out over 1.5 mln acres'

ISLAMABAD: The anti-locust operations had carried out in 6,230 square kilometers approximately 1,539,000 acres across 40 affected districts of the country to eradicate the pests attack and to save agriculture land from its harmful impacts. More than 1,228 joint teams took part in the anti-locusts operation in 40 districts of the country, according to details released by the National Locust Control Center(NLCC) on Monday. The joint teams of the

Ministry of National Food Security, provincial departments of agriculture and Pakistan Army conducting a comprehensive survey and control operation against locusts in different districts of the country and so far 70.11 million acres have been surveyed. In Punjab Province, about 202,000 acres had surveyed during last 24 hours and more than 2,800 people and 272 vehicles took part in this exercise. So far, under anti-locust drive the survey was completed

over an area of 10.5 million acres and operation completed over 307,000 acres. Meanwhile, in Sindh Province survey was conducted over 120,093 acres, where as the locust presence was confirmed in three districts and anti-locust operation was carried out on 235.53 acres. More than 31 vehicles and 382 peoples participated in this campaign. In Sindh, the survey was completed on 10.9 million acres, where as the control operation was carried out over an area of 97,853.7 acres. — APP

UN rights council agrees debate on racism

GENEVA: The UN's top rights body Monday agreed to a request from African countries to urgently debate racism and police brutality this week following unrest in the US and beyond over George Floyd's death. As the 43rd session of the UN Human Rights Council resumed after breaking in March over the coronavirus pandemic, council president Elisabeth Tichy-Fisslberger's suggestion to hold the debate on Wednesday afternoon was met with no objections from any of the 47 council members, and passed by consensus. — APP

League football returns to Spain

DNA

MADRID: The Spanish La Liga resumed this weekend with all the teams coming back into action. Earlier in March, the football season was suspended with immediate effect after whole country was put on a lockdown following the fast spread of deadly novel coronavirus. After more than 2 months of lockdown, the government issued instructions to reopen various sectors. La Liga was also given the green light to resume its season subject to the precautionary measures and SOPs. This weekend saw the club football teams in Spain along with other European countries return to football fields after more than two months. The league leaders FC Barcelona recorded a comprehensive win over Mallorca with their star captain Lionel Messi being the player of the match. Messi announced his return in a scintillating fashion by scoring one and assisting another two in an easy 4-0 away win to grab all three points. This win saw their points crossing the 60 mark as they stand top of the table with 61 points. Their rivals Real Madrid are not far behind as their 3-1 win over Eibar took their points tally at 59. Other results included Atletico Madrid coming even with athletic Bilbao in a fit display of football that ended 1-1.

BP to take up to \$17.5bn hit on virus

LONDON: British energy giant BP said Monday that it will take a hit of up to \$17.5 billion in the second quarter as "sustained" coronavirus fallout ravages global oil demand. The company, fresh from outlining plans to axe almost 10,000 jobs on COVID-19 fall-out, said in a statement that it will suffer a negative impact of between \$13 billion and \$17.5 billion (11.4 billion euros and 15.3 billion euros) in non-cash impairments and write-offs.

Punjab Governor greets Iftikhar Malik

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Punjab Governor Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar Monday congratulated veteran business leader Iftikhar Ali Malik for becoming president of the SAARC CCI for two years term and hoped that he will continue to exploit his potentials for the promotion of trade and industry in South Asia. Governor Punjab Ch Muhammad Sarwar extended

his felicitation to Iftikhar Ali Malik by telephone and expressed his hope that Iftikhar Ali Malik would utilize his best abilities to bring closer the SAARC member states besides promoting regional trade. Sarwar said there is also dire need of extending cooperation at maximum level among the member states and steps should be taken to defeat the deadly Coronavirus collectively besides chalking out a long-term economic recovery plan for the region.

Boris Johnson announces inequality review

"It is time for a cross-governmental commission to look at all aspects of inequality — in employment, in health outcomes, in academic and all other walks of life," he wrote in the Daily Telegraph newspaper

LONDON: Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Monday announced a government review into "all aspects of inequality" following a wave of anti-racism protests in Britain, but was accused of using it to delay real action. Johnson said there had been "huge progress" in tackling racism "but there is much more that we need to do, and we will". "It is time for a cross-governmental commission to

look at all aspects of inequality — in employment, in health outcomes, in academic and all other walks of life," he wrote in the Daily Telegraph newspaper. Britain has been rocked by protests against racial discrimination, some of them violent, following the death of George Floyd, an unarmed black man, as he was arrested by police in the United States. In a broadcast interview,



Johnson said he wanted to "change the narrative so we stop the sense of victimisation and discrimination". "We stop the discrimination, we stamp out racism,

and we start to have a real sense of expectation of success." But David Lammy, justice spokesman for the main opposition Labour party, said the lack of detail about the new review suggested it "was written on the back of a fag (cigarette) packet yesterday to assuage the Black Lives Matter protest". He said the government should focus on implementing the recommendations of

numerous reviews already completed, including one by Lammy himself about discrimination in criminal justice. "Get on with the action, legislate, move!" he urged Johnson in an interview with BBC radio. "Black people aren't playing victims, as Boris indicates, they are protesting precisely because the time for review is over and the time for action is now."

Another COVID-19 death in IOK

ISLAMABAD: In Indian occupied Kashmir, a 76-year-old man, who had tested positive for COVID-19, died at a hospital on Sunday evening, taking the number of fatalities due to the deadly virus in the territory to 61. According to Kashmir Media Service, the man from Zaina Kadal area of Srinagar, with a travel history of Saudi Arabia, died at Bemina Hospital. He was a known case of hypertension, diabetes and chronic kidney disease and had a travel history to Saudi Arabia. His samples were taken at Srinagar airport on May 29 which later tested positive. Dr Farooq A Jan at the Bemina Hospital said that he had severe Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS) and his condition deteriorated in the evening which caused his death due to cardiorespiratory arrest. With this fatality, the death toll due to the novel coronavirus has risen in occupied Kashmir to 61, 53 in the Kashmir Valley, seven in Jammu division and one in Ladakh region. So far Srinagar district with fifteen deaths due to the virus has the highest fatalities, followed by eleven in Baramulla, eight in Kulgam, five each in Shopian and Islamabad, four each in Kupwara and Jammu, two each in Budgam and Pulwama while one death each has been reported in Bandipora, Doda, Rajouri, Udhampur and Leh. — APP

Iran urges IAEA to avoid untrue decisions

TEHRAN: Iran's Foreign Ministry on Monday urged the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to avoid unconstructive decisions regarding Iran's nuclear program. In his weekly press conference, Abbas Mousavi, the ministry's spokesman, said the IAEA should not base its decisions on the claims and allegations of the Israeli intelligence service. "We urge the agency to be realistic and pose its questions on a legal basis," Mousavi noted. "If they make an unconstructive decision, Iran will show a proportionate reaction," he said. "We hope the results of the (IAEA) meeting would be constructive for regional peace and stability." Mikhail Ulyanov, Russia's permanent representative to the Vienna-based international organization, said on Sunday that Iran was expected to be the focus of the virtual meeting of the IAEA's Board of Governors on Monday. Kazem Gharib Abadi, Iran's ambassador to IAEA, said earlier that the IAEA's most recent report has proved continuation of its verification activities in Iran. The report also shows a suspension of Tehran's commitment to the 2015 international nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Gharib Abadi was quoted as saying by Tehran Times daily on Sunday. — APP

Indonesia finds more than 100,000 hoaxes on COVID-19

BEIJING: The following are the updates on the global fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Indonesia's National COVID-19 Task Force has found more than one hundred thousand fake news related to the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) circulating in the public across the archipelagic nation, an official of the task force said on Monday. The number of fake news having been found was 137,829, according to Darmawan Sutawijaya, a police officer currently serving as the task force's law enforcement and security officer. The Torrance Police Department has been looking for a 56-year old California resident called Lena Hernandez after her multiple anti-Asian hate speeches and actions. — APP