

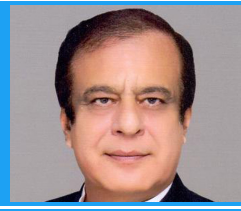


Islamabad POST

Tuesday, June 30, 2020

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

Army chief lauds guards for prompt response
Azerbaijan envoy condemns attack on PSX
Shibli strongly condemns Karachi attack


Briefs

PM Imran condemns PSX attack

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan condemned the terrorist attack on the Pakistan Stock Exchange on Monday, saying the whole nation was proud of the soldiers who bravely fought militants off to avert massive casualties. "Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan condemns the terrorist attack on the Karachi Stock Exchange. The security forces bravely fought the enemy and thwarted the attack," PTT's Shahbaz Gill said in a tweet. Gill added the whole nation was proud of its brave soldiers. "I have extended my heartfelt condolences to the families of the martyrs and pray for the recovery of the injured."

Japanese Ambassador condemns attack



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan H.E. Mr. MATSUDA Kuninori has strongly condemned the militants' attack on Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) compound in Karachi on Monday morning that has killed and injured numbers of innocent people. Ambassador MATSUDA, while grieving the loss of innocent human lives in the tragic incident, has expressed his profound condolences and sympathies with the families of the victims and prayed for the early recovery of those who sustained injuries. "My thoughts and prayers for the families of the victims of this gruesome incident. Terrorism is condemnable in all its forms and manifestations", said Ambassador MATSUDA in his condolence message. The Ambassador termed the militants' attack on PSX, the center of economic activity in Pakistan, a very unfortunate incident at a time when Pakistan was moving fast towards strengthening peace, stability and a secure environment for carrying out business activities in the country. The Ambassador further stated that the Government of Japan is committed to continuing to support the Government of Pakistan and its security forces to combat terrorism.

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Eight killed in PSX attack

The attackers, armed with grenades and automatic rifles, launched the attack a little before 10am and attempted to enter the PSX compound

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: At least eight people have been killed after gunmen stormed the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) in the southern city of Karachi, firing indiscriminately as they entered the building complex, rescue officials say. Armed militants had arrived at the PSX compound in a sedan and attempted to enter it from the parking ground side, according to initial reports and eyewitness statements. They were seen shouldering backpacks and carrying automatic weaponry in an amateur video captured by an eyewitness. The attackers, armed with grenades and automatic rifles, launched the attack

a little before 10am and attempted to enter the PSX compound. The equipment, arms and ammunition recovered from them indicated that they had come prepared for a long siege. After failing to enter the compound, the militants launched a gun and grenade attack and attempted to storm the building while opening indiscriminate fire. They were engaged by security personnel posted and failed to make headway amidst heavy exchange of fire. Police said all four 'terrorists' who attacked the busy Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) around 10am on Monday morning had been killed by security personnel, they were killed near the entrance gates, before they

could enter the building, with two security guards and a police sub-inspector laying down their lives while repelling the attempt to storm the busiest building on Karachi's I.I. Chundrigar Road, also known as Pakistan's Wall Street. Hospital sources said seven dead bodies and two injured persons were brought to them for medical attention. SSP City Muqaddas Haider had earlier said seven injured persons had been shifted to Civil Hospital Karachi for medical treatment. "An unfortunate incident took place at the Pakistan Stock Exchange," said Abid Ali Habib, director Pakistan Stock Exchange. "They made their way from our parking area and opened fire on everyone."

Exports crucial for Pak economic growth: WB

The country recorded \$1.39 billion in merchandise exports in May 2020, showing 34 percent drop with respect to the same period in 2019

DNA

LAHORE: The World Bank has said that Pakistan is not immune to the economic shock caused by the coronavirus and its exports have been hit hard, as the country recorded \$1.39 billion in merchandise exports in May 2020, showing 34 percent drop with respect to the same period in 2019. The World Bank Senior Economist Gonzalo Varela, in an online interaction session with the members of APBF, observed that every crisis presents an opportunity, whereas the COVID-19 provided the world and Pakistan an opportunity to initiate the structural reforms in institutions. The All Pakistan Business Forum had arranged this meeting with him to discuss

the current economic situation of Pakistan and recommended some key steps with a view to revive and sustain the economic growth in post-corona slowdown. The World Bank Senior Economist said that the short-term global trade prospects don't offer room for optimism as experts forecast contractions in exports in the months ahead. At such a time, exports are crucial to Pakistan's recovery because they are labor-intensive and provide plenty of good jobs for Pakistanis. He suggested the need for protecting the exporters through smart export promotion, whereas structured reforms were going to be crucial for recovery. APBF President Syed Maaz Mahmood, on this

occasion, appreciated the debt relief measures taken by the G20 countries, IMF and the World Bank for the developing countries including Pakistan. He urged the multilateral development partners, including WB, to play their due role by investing in social sector rather than mega development projects only, which would help in bringing the focus of member governments back to social sector development. While noting that the Covid-19 pandemic has posed unprecedented health and economic challenges, he underlined that a global recession might become worse than the Great Depression. A global pandemic cannot be contained without strong, coordinated and well-crafted global response, he stressed.

Bilawal for levying more taxes on wealthy

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari Monday called for imposing more taxes on rich people instead of presenting a tax-free budget for socioeconomic development of the country. Addressing in the National Assembly here, the PPP chairman criticized the government for increasing petroleum products' prices saying that only poor would be affected by the decision. He said the already high inflation would get boost due to increase in petroleum prices therefore the decision must be reversed. With respect to making public the report

about issuing bogus licenses to pilots, Bilawal said he did not support fake degrees but the issue could have been handled in such a way that Pakistan's negative image across the globe could have been avoided. He also criticized the aviation authorities for putting all responsibility of plane crash in Karachi on the deceased pilots saying it was unjustified as they were not alive to respond to the allegations. He also rejected the allegation of political appointments in PIA. Bilawal also condemned terrorist attack on Karachi Stock Exchange and said that due to unemployment, issues of law and order were emerging again in the city. – APP



KARACHI: Policemen gather around the body of an assailant outside the Pakistan Stock Exchange building after a terrorist attack. – APP

Army chief lauds guards

"With the support of our resilient nation, we will foil all efforts of enemies aimed at destabilizing the hard earned peace achieved through sacrifices of our martyrs"

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa paid glowing tributes to security guards of Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX), who sacrificed their lives as first responders vigilantly checking the terrorists entry to PSX foiling a major terrorist incident. Appreciating Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) for their operational readiness, COAS lauded prompt, effective and integrated response of Pakistan Rangers and Sindh police, eliminating terrorists in shortest possible time.

"With the support of our resilient nation, we will foil all efforts of enemies aimed at destabilizing the hard earned peace achieved through sacrifices of our martyrs".

Australian envoy slams PXS attack

"My deep condolences to the families and friends of the victims and I wish a speedy recovery for those injured"

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Dr Geoffrey Shaw Hig, h Commissioner of Australia has condemned attack on Pakistan Stock Exchange. In this Tweet the high commissioner said he strongly condemned the attack on the Karachi Stock Exchange. "My deep condolences to the families and friends of the victims and I wish a speedy recovery for those injured".

UAE suspends flights from Pakistan

The General Authority of CA has announced the suspension of passenger reception on all flights and transit coming from Pakistan

DNA

DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates (UAE) announced the suspension of all arrival and transfer flights from Pakistan starting today (Monday) until the establishment of a special lab to conduct COVID-19 tests for all incoming passengers, according to an official statement.

"The General Authority of Civil Aviation has announced the suspension of passenger reception on all flights and transit coming from Pakistan until the completion of the establishment of a special laboratory to conduct tests for the new coronavirus COVID-19 for all arrivals to the state as a precautionary measure to ensure the health and safety

of all arrivals, as of Monday corresponding to June 29, 2020," the statement released on the Emirates News Agency read. "The General Authority of Civil Aviation called on all travelers affected by the decision to follow-up and communicate with their airlines to amend and reschedule their flights," the statement added.

Azerbaijan envoy condemns attack on Exchange

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada has condemned cowardly attack on Pakistan Stock Exchange. In his Tweet on Monday the ambassador said, he was saddened to know the security guards and a police sub-inspector laid down their lives foiling this terrorist attack at the Pakistan Stock Exchange. He prayed that Almighty Allah may grant courage to the bereaved families to bear this loss.

PTI standing with ideology of Khan

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Foreign Affairs Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Monday said that all the members of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf expressed confidence on the policies of Prime Minister Imran Khan and stand with his ideology. Speaking in the National Assembly, he said, "All the members of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf and its allies are present in the Parliament. All the members of the PTI are standing with the ideology of Imran Khan."

He said that Prime Minister Imran Khan will not resign

as he was enjoying the confidence of the house. "People of the country have given mandate to Imran Khan and he will not resign on the demand of anyone," he added. Qureshi also disagreed with the demand of the opposition that Imran Khan should not take notice on any issue and said, "Imran Khan will take notice as he has come to take notice". He also informed the National Assembly that no COVID-19 positive members of the Parliament were invited to attend the proceedings of the house for the passage of the finance bill. – APP

NA passes Finance Bill 2020-21

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly on Monday passed the Finance Bill 2020-21, giving the go-ahead to the budgetary proposals for the upcoming financial year. The bill was moved by Minister for Industries and Production Hammad Azhar. Speaking in the National Assembly, Minister for Industries and Production Hammad Azhar said the government presented a tax-free budget and it envisages relief measures not only for the construction sector but also for the promotion of mobile phone manufacturing and electric vehicles. He said it is the first time that the annual development plan carries the biggest allocations for Balochistan and Sindh. The Minister clarified that the government has not increased the sales tax or petroleum development levy on petroleum products. He said fuel prices have been increased keeping in view the upward trend in the international oil market. "Mafias in oil, sugar and flour will be brought to justice," he added. Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said the people of Pakistan have given mandate to Prime Minister Imran Khan and he will not resign. He said Prime Minister Imran Khan enjoys the confidence of the house.

Worldwide death toll crosses 500,000

DNA

NEW YORK: More than 500,000 confirmed deaths of the coronavirus (COVID-19) have been reported worldwide. A reported tally from John Hopkins University researchers said the death toll had topped 500,000 due to the coronavirus. About 1 in 4 of those deaths – or more than 125,000 – have been reported in the United States. The country with the second-highest death toll is Brazil with more than 57,000 deaths reported.

China's vaccine gets positive conversion rate

DNA

ISLAMABAD: All people administered with the inactivated COVID-19 vaccine on different intervals and by various dosages have induced neutralizing antibodies, with 100 percent positive conversion rates, said China National Pharmaceutical Group (Sinopharm). According to Sinopharm, the data was unveiled at the meeting for the blind review and the unblinding of the Phase I and II clinical trials results of inactivated

COVID-19 vaccine held synchronously in China's Beijing and Henan Province, Gwadar Pro reported on Monday. The inactivated vaccine was jointly researched and developed by Beijing-based National Vaccine and Serum Institute of China National Biotech Group (CNBG), a subsidiary of CNBG, and National Institute for Virus Disease Control and Prevention, the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Sinopharm said the findings are another important



data of CNBG's clinical research of inactivated COVID-19 vaccine after the unblinding of Wuhan Institute of Biological Products affiliated to CNBG showed

on June 16, 2020. On June 23, a Commencement Ceremony for the Phase III clinical trial of CNBG's inactivated COVID-19 vaccine was held in

China's Beijing and Wuhan, and Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates respectively. This is a key step for international cooperation on COVID-19 vaccine. Meanwhile, CNBG has been pushing ahead the construction of production facility for high class biosecurity at a wartime speed. CNBG's National Vaccine and Serum Institute completed China's first and also the sole production facility for high class biosecurity on April 15, 2020. After its' putting into use, the annual output of COVID-19 vaccine will reach

120 million doses. It is learnt that the coronavirus vaccine may appear on the market at the end of 2020 or the beginning of 2021, according to China's State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission. China National Pharmaceutical Group Co., Ltd. (Sinopharm), a large healthcare group, has a full chain in the industry covering R&D, manufacturing, logistics and distribution, retail chains, healthcare, engineering services, exhibitions and conferences, international business and financial services.

NDMA to carry out antiseptic spray

Noori
waterfall
claims
another life

IESCO
power
suspension
programme

According to IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 07:00am to 11:00am, Behakri, Industrial, AOWHS, Mansoor Shaheed, Islamabad Feed Mill, HPT-1, HPT-3, HPT-2, Basali, Pind Jatha, VVIP, PAF, Caklala, MES, Rehmatabad-I, Sector-IV, APHS, Model Town, Kashi Gul, Mix Industry, Kohstan Enclave, Industrial Estate, Ghazi Koha-I, Fazal Ahmed Shaheed, Choa Khalsa, CM Pak Zong, Behari Enclave, Rehara, Ahmedabad, Ghariar, Kayani Road, Abul Bakar, Bari, Eid Gah, Bagh Sardaran, Kahana-II, Alnoor Ciy, Islam Pura, Faziya, Waheed Abad, Barma, Bari Imam feeders, 05:00am to 12:00noon, Kaka Khail Ward No-8, Sandal feeders, 04:15am to 11:00am, Sakho, Bangali, Ramban, Nashan Haider, CK Khan, Doulta, Adhi, Bher Kalyal, Karanb Kaskal feeders, and surrounding areas. — APP



Farmers have always been the backbone of our country and PTI government is striving to strengthen them through innovative and solid measures, he mentioned

He said that Pakistan has joined the ranks of countries that make ventilators themselves. He said that ventilators are a very complex machine, not every country is capable of making them, Pakistan's engineers have done a great job. He also said that in next 15 days 75000 Kits would also be prepared. — APP

Price Control Magistrates inspect markets

In this regard, Additional Assistant Commissioner-II Akasha Kiran inspected various markets, private clinics and shops in Havelian Tehsil and issued awareness and instructions to the citizens on precautionary measures. — **APP**

IRSA releases
300,500
cusecs water

The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1215.45 feet, which was 175.45 feet higher than its dead level of 1040 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 53,400 cusecs and 20,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 166,500, 171,800 and 47,100 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River a total of 79,200 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 32,500 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala. — APP

Parliament attack case hearing adjourned

The associate of senior counsel Babar Awan appeared before the court and requested for adjournment, which the court accepted and granted the same. During the previous hearing, the court had ordered the prosecution for producing a brief report about the roles of the alleged accused in the matter. — APP

Residents asked to use water judiciously to avoid shortage

The RCB nowadays, is also trying to meet the water demand through its 60 tube-wells, he added. — **APP**

Expert calls for raising public awareness on Thalassemia

He said Thalassemia is an inherited blood disorder characterized by decreased production of hemoglobin and thus needs regular blood transfusion from a healthy person. — **APP**

ICT promotes
animal
sacrifices
through apps

"We are also considering for not allowing cattle markets for buying sacrificial animals as the gathering for animal purchase could be a disaster," he added. "If the mobility of people could not be contained on this occasion then the situation may be worse like we faced after Eid-ul-Fitr," the DC warned.

President ICCI calls on DC Islamabad

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Information Technology Board, Mr. Hamza Shafqat said that the Government of Punjab was providing a helping hand to the ICT industry by addressing the key issues of business confidence. He said that the Government of Punjab had greatly helped in addressing the issues of the ICT industry.

HEC: Not ranked universities for online readiness

A total of 42,392 faculty members have received training in how to provide online education; this represents 86.7 per cent of the 48,851 faculty members who have started teaching online since the start of the pandemic

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission has clarified that it has neither evaluated universities nor issued any ranking for their online readiness. A section of the press has published news reports issued by different universities, which are contrary to this fact. HEC has asked universities to self-report their readiness, and this self-reporting has been shared with the public.

The purpose of making this information available online is to help universities improve their performance, rather than rank various universities. The percentage figure associ-



ated with various universities refers simply to the quantum of the information they have submitted by the due date. It is not a comparison or reflection of the quality of their online

Similarly, 127 out of 138 universities have reported that they have started providing their

The newspapers are also requested to verify such information from HEC before publishing it.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Vol: 01 Issue: 84

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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

Mental setback

PAKISTAN'S healthcare system has for long ignored those suffering from mental health issues, with families also in too many cases attempting to disguise depression, severe emotional disturbances, schizophrenia or other challenges because of the social stigma attached to them. The fact that Pakistan's 114 medical colleges only place one optional question on psychiatry on their final exam paper means that only a very small amount of the 14,000 doctors who graduate each year will have even a basic knowledge of mental health problems and how to identify or handle them. According to official figures, Pakistan currently has at least 50 million patients suffering mental health disorders while there is only one psychiatrist for even 100,000 people in the country.

The ratio of expert medical care available is even lower for adolescents and children – a population extremely badly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Pediatric experts in the UK have recently warned that the impact on their mental health is so alarming, given weeks of forced isolation coupled with fear and a breakdown in routine, that they have sought some reopening of schools to enable children and young people to return to something that resembles normal life for them.

The WHO has already expressed concern about the 3.9 billion people under lockdown around the world in terms of their mental health. The organization also warns that in Pakistan the situation is aggravated by the lack of experts available to people facing isolation, the stigma, the inability to share feelings because of this stigma and that women and girls may be especially affected because they are unable to express their thoughts within families and are potentially cut off from friends or neighbours who could be a source of support. The increase in domestic violence has also been recorded around the world and obviously harms women facing it emotionally, mentally and physically, with few channels they can turn to for help.

Women are also among the first within any workforce to be deprived of jobs and therefore finances and emotional wellbeing. The issue has largely been ignored. The Sindh government has set up a helpline for those who require support on mental health issues following the pandemic. This helpline, according to reports, is receiving an extremely large volume of phone calls such as similar helplines which exist around the world.

The established practices through which people cope with the death of a loved one have also broken down. In many cases, those who have died as a result of Covid-19 are buried in the presence of a few immediate family members, sometimes asked to wear PPE gear and accompanied by local administrative officials or graveyard managers dressed in a similar fashion. These factors add to the desperation created by isolation and fear and end up building a dangerous mental health situation. It has been taken too little note of in a country that lacks sufficient expert care in the first place. What is needed more than anything is a system to ensure that those who are in a vulnerable state of mind get the help they need, without any stigma attached to it.



Healthcare concerns

ACCORDING to a World Bank global health expert, Monique Vledder, head of the secretariat at the bank's Global Financing Facility, the challenge posed by Covid-19 has also translated into children missing vaccinations, women forced to give birth without medical help and the pandemic disrupting the chain of lifesaving medicines like antibiotics and others needed to treat newborns and mothers. The situation is said to be particularly grave in Sub Saharan Africa where the impact of Covid-19 on the health of women and children is severe. Many of the countries in this region already have poor healthcare systems and the GFF monthly survey in 36 countries shows that the coronavirus has had a severe impact on the health services available to women and children in 19 of these.

Fears about Covid-19 and lockdown measures have also led to health teams not reaching patients. Essential drugs have also vanished because of disruptions in the chain of supply. Countries which had reported disruptions in services due to Covid-19 almost doubled from 10 in April to 19 in June and 22 nations have reported that fewer people are receiving healthcare. In Liberia, Ghana and other countries, parents are scared to take their children into clinics for vaccinations while lactating mothers are choosing to postpone antenatal care and routine immunisation because of Covid-19 fears.

The declining rate of vaccinations among children is a major concern for those engaged in primary care in these countries, as is the number of babies being born without the availability of medical care. The GFF has estimated that up to 26 million women will lose access to contraception in 36 countries, leading to nearly eight million unintended pregnancies. This is not a situation we are entirely unfamiliar with. While few studies exist, lady health workers and lady health visitors who provide the main portion of care to women and children in rural areas will undoubtedly be handicapped by travel restrictions, and also the fear of visiting households where Covid may exist.

This is also true of the recipients. Many major hospitals are turning away all patients except those suffering from Covid, with the Lady Reading Hospital in Peshawar shutting down its giant maternity unit, leaving women with few options to choose to deliver their babies.

The worst affected has been the polio programme in the country. It is for this and many other associated issues that we need to double down and flatten the curve of Covid-19 as fast and as safely as we can. We cannot go on like this forever, and hope and pray for a miracle to fix it all.

This pandemic needs to be tackled with as much energy as is possible. Otherwise, we are in danger of losing people to other diseases as well, in the absence of proper healthcare systems.

Sikhs Intensify Khalistan Movement for Independence

Sajjad Shaukat



Gopal Singh claimed that Khalistan is the basic right if Sikh nation and Sikhs will now create Khalistan at any cost. Referring to the promise of Gandhi made with Sikhs in 1947 for Khalistan, which was never fulfilled by cunning Hindu rulers, he said that now Sikhs nation has complete awareness and at present New Delhi is in panic

INDIA which, apparently, claims to be the largest democracy, acting upon the principles of liberalism and secularism has broken all the records of mistreatment of religious minorities by acceleration of violence, genocide and massacre, perpetrated on various ethnic and religious groups. Since Narendra Modi, the leader of the ruling party BJP became the Indian Prime Minister, he started implementing ideology of Hindutva ((Hindu Nationalism)). Under his regime, persecution of religious minorities such as Christians and particularly Muslims and Sikhs, including even of lower cast-Hindus have been intensified by the extremist Hindus. In this regard, in its annual report of 2017, Human Rights Watch which conducted investigative work in 2016 pointed out Indian government's failure to control growing attacks on Dalits and religious minorities-Sikh community.

The report elaborated, "Authorities continue to use sedition and criminal defamation laws to prosecute citizens who criticize government officials or oppose state policies.

In rare cases in 2016, police were held accountable for abuses. In April, 47 policemen were sentenced to life in prison for involvement in the killing of 11 Sikhs in 1991 in the Pilibhit district of Uttar Pradesh state. Despite calls for repeal of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, soldiers continue to have immunity from prosecution when deployed in areas of internal conflict."

According to the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom's report: "Religious tolerance deteriorated and religious freedom violations increased in India...Minority communities, especially Christians, Muslims, and Sikhs experienced numerous incidents of intimidation, harassment, and violence, largely at the hands of Hindu nationalist groups...these actions, coupled with perceived crackdowns on groups or individuals critical of the Indian government, have many concerned that the rights to freedom of speech and freedom of association are being increasingly curtailed."

However, the Sikhs are fighting for a separate homeland since 1947, but the movement attained impetus by the efforts of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, which in 1984 resulted in most brutal operation against a highly sacred Sikh religious place-the Golden Temple complex (Harmandir Sahib) in Amritsar, Punjab, which resulted in killings of thousands of Sikhs.

In this respect, Indian Army led by General Kuldeep Singh Brar, supported by troops and armoured vehicles had broken all records of the state terrorism and extra-judicial killings through the barbaric Operation Blue Star which occurred between 3-8 June 1984, ordered by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to control over the Harmandir Sahib complex.

In this context, in their book, "The Sikh Struggle", Ramnarain Kumar and George Sieberer writes, "The army killed every Sikh who could be found inside the temple-complex. They were hauled out of rooms, brought to corridors on the circumference of the temple and with their hands tied behind their back, were shot in cold blood. Among the victims were many old men, women and children...However, all visitors were locked up in rooms for two days without any food, water, or electricity and were starved to death. Besides, the Harmandir Sahib remained under the army control for many months". The brutality of the Operation was not confined to the Harmandir Sahib. Indian armed forces simultaneously attacked 40 other historical gurdwaras all over East Punjab. When Sikhs in other states came to know about the desecration of the Harmandir

Sahib and massacre of their brethren, they quickly left for Punjab. New Delhi tried to stop them before they could reach Punjab. Many Sikhs were assassinated on the way and many others were arrested. In the same year of November, two dedicated Sikhs named Beant Singh and Satwant Singh who were posted at Premier Indira Gandhi's residence in New Delhi, assassinated her. Then Hindu riots erupted in the capital and other cities in which more than 15,000 Sikhs were murdered in broad daylight by the supporters of Indira Gandhi, while police watched silently so as to provide the Hindus with free hand to massacre Sikhs.

Nevertheless, the attack on the Harmandir Sahib and genocide of Sikhs accelerated the liberation movement for Khalistan, as Bhindranwale became a folk hero.

To maintain its control over the Harmandir Sahib, another attack was launched on the Temple in 1987, called 'Operation Black Thunder'. That time only Sikh resistance which was natural outcome of the tragedy was the main target. Afterwards, 'Operation Woodrose' and 'Operation Black Thunder-II' were conducted against the Sikh community, which also assassinated them extra-judicially.

After these barbaric operations, Sikhs organised themselves into an armed power in order to fight the Indian state terrorism. Many Sikhs left India to escape religious persecution. Sikhs have spread out all over the world to keep the movement of Khalistan alive.

It is of particular attention that New Delhi and Indian intelligence agency RAW is trying to create division between the Sikh community-platforms in the USA, UK, Canada, Australia and Pakistan etc. In this context, a deliberate campaign has been launched to ban or disallow Indian diplomats or officials' entry to gurdwaras for misusing them for their ulterior motives so as to divide the Sikh community.

Gopal Singh Chawla leader of the Khalistan movement for independence has announced that "Peace for Sikhs" has stepped up registration process for the Khalistan referendum 2020. He has asked the other Sikh leaders to resign and join the movement and revealed that 11000 to 13000 Sikh leaders have already left Indian Army without any benefits and joined Khalistan movement—have reiterated that from now onward Sikhs will not fight for India. He pointed out that the Sikhs leaders have realized that Indian military leadership always post Sikh outfits on borders to meet any operation confrontation and it is either Sikhs or low caste Hindus lay their lives for India, from now onward Sikhs will only lay their lives for Khalistan.

Gopal Singh also stated that Modi government is facing a fearful sit in the wake of thousands of

Sikhs registering for Referendum 2020 and the India Army is in dire problems regarding the resignation of Sikhs at a time when Indian Army is in a fix in Ladakh after facing defeat and humiliation at the hands of Chinese.

Gopal Singh claimed that Khalistan is the basic right if Sikh nation and Sikhs will now create Khalistan at any cost. Referring to the promise of Gandhi made with Sikhs in 1947 for Khalistan, which was never fulfilled by cunning Hindu rulers, he said that now Sikhs nation has complete awareness and at present New Delhi is in panic.

It is mentionable that India, dominated by politicians from the Hindi heartland—Hindutva have been using brutal force ruthlessly against any move to free Assam, Kashmir, Khalistan, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tamil Nadu and Tripura where wars of liberation continue in one form or the other.

These states have witnessed various sorts of India's state terrorism, but, did not stop their struggle. Instead of redressing the grievances of the people, Modi-led Indian regime is depending upon ruthless force to crush the movements of self-determination. Therefore, India's unrealistic counter-insurgency strategy has badly failed.

Notably, Sikhs have intensified Khalistan Movement for Independence, as in the recent years, Sikhs have conducted anti-India demonstrations and rallies in New York, London, Switzerland and Geneva, raising slogans for Khalistan as an independent state.

In fact, the Indian vulnerabilities have been exposed first during the mishandling of Covid-19 and lately by the Chinese attaining Ladakh area as per their claims prior to 1959. India seems to be acting like a rudderless ship destined to sink. The fascist policies of the fundamentalist outfits-BJP and RSS have not only weakened the Indian federation, but also created rift in society and institution. Presently, nothing seems to be going right for New Delhi, as every coming day is bringing bad news for the country.

Nonetheless, Sikhs move of leaving Indian Army will definitely affect other castes and religious communities in the Indian Army. Indian Army due to paucity of resources coupled with complex caste system is already at a low morale—discontented and un-professional military has generated serious concerns for its military leadership. The Indian drastic situation is providing opportunities to weaken its Army and federation in manner which could pave the way for its disintegration.

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Modi's India should be on US's religious freedom blacklist

Sarah C Anderson-Rajarigam



The US needs to realise that Modi's relentless push for imposing a Hindu nationalist agenda will eventually destroy India's social and religious fabric and cause internal strife. This will not only cause immense suffering for Indians of all religions but also negatively affect US' geo-strategic interests in the region

ON June 10, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo released the 2019 International Religious Freedom Report which documents major instances of violations of religious freedom across the world. The report's 27-page chapter on India is a scathing indictment of the sharp decline in religious freedom in the South Asian country under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's watch.

Noting that there have been reports of "religiously motivated killings, assaults, riots, discrimination, vandalism, and actions restricting the right of individuals to practice and speak about their religious beliefs", the report heavily criticises the Indian government's policies and actions that result in the erosion of religious freedoms of India's minority communities.

The report highlights the revocation of Indian-administered Kashmir's autonomy in August, the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in December, undemocratic anti-conversion and anti-beef laws and their gross abuses, and the state's reluctance to hold Hindu vigilante groups to account for their attacks on religious minorities. "Authorities often protected perpetrators from prosecution and filed charges against victims," it notes.

With the report, the United States officially acknowledges the Modi government's crimes against India's religious minorities. But this is not enough. Secretary Pompeo also needs to take policy action to hold India to account. Luckily, he has a list of policy recommendations readily laying on his desk that could help him do just that.

In April, the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), an independent federal body that advises the US president and Congress, released its annual report. In the report, USCIRF called for India to be designated as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) for "engaging in and tolerating systematic, ongoing, and egregious religious freedom violations". The federal body also recommended the imposition of "targeted sanctions" on Indian officials and agencies "responsible for severe violations of religious freedom in India". A CPC designation would confirm India's status as one the world's worst offenders of religious freedom, alongside Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Ara-

bia, North Korea and China. It would amplify international pressure on India to take the necessary precautions to stop religious violence and discrimination. Moreover, it would allow the Trump administration to show that it is serious about countering religious discrimination, even when the perpetrator is an allied government.

The US has long been turning a blind eye to India's failures due to its strong economic and strategic ties to the country - India is not only a major importer of US arms, but it is a key US partner against China in the Indo-Pacific region. But the US's tendency to ignore state-sanctioned rights abuses in India to remain in favour of the Modi government already had disastrous consequences for the country's religious minorities. Confident that he would not receive any pressure from the US, the Modi government instituted national level policies violating religious freedom, especially for Muslims, in the past few years. According to the USCIRF, it also engaged in "hate speech and incitement to violence", allowing anti-minority violence to "continue with impunity".

In December, the Modi government passed the CAA, which excludes Muslims from a path to citizenship for religious minorities from its neighbours. Many believe that the government will combine the CAA with the National Register for Citizens (NRC), a headcount that will seek from India's 1.3 billion people proof-of-citizenship documents going back generations, to target India's 200 million Muslims. Millions of bona fide Indians, who do not possess any citizenship documents, will certainly fail the NRC test, as they did in a pilot in Assam state last year. According to the USCIRF, this will put their citizenship status, and all associated rights, "under question". The CAA will provide non-Muslims in this situation "a path to restore their citizenship and avoid detention or deportation", while Muslims will "bear the indignities and consequences of potential statelessness".

In February, several leaders and prominent supporters of Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) incited violence against anti-CAA protesters in New Delhi. More than 50 people died in the resulting pogrom. The USCIRF blamed Delhi Police for "failing to halt attacks and even directly participating" in the violence.

India's Home Affairs Minister Amit Shah, a Modi confidante who was once accused of ordering extrajudicial killings of Muslims, directly supervises Delhi Police. In December, the USCIRF had called on the US Government to sanction Shah, due to his role in the enactment of the CAA.

India's 30 million Christians are also being targeted in Modi's India. "Empowered by anti-conversion laws and the police's complicity," Hindu vigilante mobs target Christians with "campaigns of harassment, social exclusion and violence", according to the USCIRF. Instead of arresting the perpetrators, the police "often arrest the religious minorities who have been attacked".

The US needs to realise that Modi's relentless push for imposing a Hindu nationalist agenda will eventually destroy India's social and religious fabric and cause internal strife. This will not only cause immense suffering for Indians of all religions but also negatively affect US' geo-strategic interests in the region.

A divided, conflict-ridden India cannot be a trusted economic partner to the US or help it control China's growing ambitions. It is thus in Washington's self-interest to press India for greater adherence to religious freedom. In 2016, Modi told the US Congress that just as "the idea that all citizens are created equal is a central pillar of the American constitution", India's "founding fathers, too, shared the same belief and sought individual liberty". India's Constitution is a "holy book" in which "freedom of faith, speech and franchise, and equality of all citizens, regardless of background, are enshrined as fundamental rights," he added. The time has come for Pompeo to remind Modi of this speech.

It is not easy for the authors of this article - who are Indian-born US citizens - to recommend India to be designated as a CPC. But we support the USCIRF's recommendation for such a harsh measure precisely because we love India deeply. We believe only strong pressure from the US, and the wider global community, could save India from the dire consequences of its government's divisive policies, and guarantee that it remains a secular democracy.

– This article was first published by Al Jazeera on 24 June

Briefs

UN warns of
'intensified
fighting' in
Myanmar

DNA

YANGON: The United Nations called for "urgent measures to spare civilians" in Myanmar's conflict-ravaged northwest on Sunday, saying fighting has intensified between the army and insurgents.

The military has been battling the Arakan Army (AA) — a rebel group seeking more autonomy for ethnic Rakhine Buddhists — in Myanmar's Rakhine and Chin states since January last year. Scores of civilians have been killed in the area and tens of thousands displaced. The two sides have traded allegations of abuse. Under lockdown and with an internet blackout across much of the conflict zone, reporting from the area is difficult to verify. The UN expressed concern Sunday over "reports of intensified fighting" in northwest Rakhine state's Rathedaung township. The area is home to more than 10,000 civilians, and local sources report they are either fleeing or are trapped by the ongoing conflict, the UN said.

Indian troops
martyr three
Kashmiri
youth

DNA

SRINAGAR: In occupied Kashmir, Indian troops in their fresh act of state terrorism, martyred three Kashmiri youth in Islamabad district, today (Monday). According to Kashmir Media Service, the youth were killed during a cordon and search operation in Runipora area of the district.

A senior Police officer claimed that three youth were militants who were killed in a gunfight. However, he said, the identity of the slain youth was yet to be ascertained. The operation is going on, he added. The authorities suspended mobile internet services and blocked all exit and entry points of the area.

Iran records
highest
single-day
death toll

TEHRAN: Iran reported on Monday 162 more deaths from the novel coronavirus, the highest single-day toll since the country's outbreak began in February. "This increase in numbers is in fact a reflection of our overall performance, both in terms of reopening and in compliance with health protocols," health ministry spokeswoman Sima Sadat Lari said at a news conference. The previous record daily toll of 158 deaths was reported by health authorities in early April. Official figures have shown an upward trajectory in new confirmed cases since early May, when Iran hit a near two-month low in daily recorded infections. Iran reported its first COVID-19 cases on February 19 and it has since struggled to contain the outbreak, the deadliest in the Middle East. — APP

Trading at
PSX remains
unaffected

DNA

KARACHI: The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) came under a terrorist attack Monday morning, however, the trading remained indifferent to it. BMA Head of Research Faizan Ahmed said that the KSE-100 Index has been moving up. It is an insignificant movement so far but still, it shows that selling did not occur in response to the terrorist attack. Four terrorists attacked the PSX old building and security forces killed all of them. A sub-inspector and two security guards have also reportedly been killed.

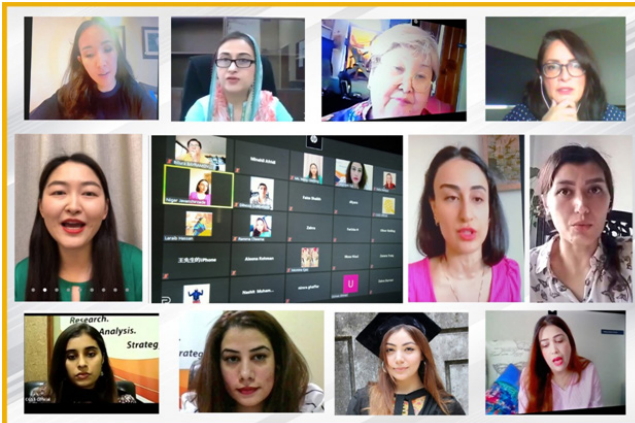
Women playing central role
in combating the pandemic

Major contribution of female healthcare workers, doctors, nurses and paramedics who are serving tirelessly at this crucial time; webinar on "COVID-19 Chronicles: A Women Perspective" organized by Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS)

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad organized a Webinar on "COVID-19 Chronicles: A Women Perspective". The aim of the Webinar was to analyze how COVID-19 is impacting women and to allow the respective authorities to respond effectively to their vulnerabilities. The session was commenced with the opening remarks by Ms. Mehreen Gul, Director CGSS. She welcomed all the speakers and participants to the Webinar. She highlighted the significant role of women in our society and how women have continued to play a constructive role in nation building. Ms. Kaana Aidarkul, Chairperson, Kyrgyz Association of Women

in the Security Sector, Kyrgyz Republic highlighted the situation of women in Kyrgyzstan during COVID-19. She stressed on the central role of women in combating the pandemic by mentioning the address of the Head of UN, António Guterres, "women's leadership and contribution can be used as a central element in ensuring resilience and recovery". Dr Rafia Rafique, Director Institute of Applied Psychology, University of the Punjab, Lahore stated that as the pandemic of COVID-19 continues to spread in Pakistan, it is necessary to recognize immediate and long term psychological needs of women. Ms. Kempirbayeva Dilyara, First secretary, Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan to Pakistan stated that women from one hand carries the cradle and



from the other hand carries the world. She also mentioned how the Kazakh Government is taking different measures to ensure the safety of its citizens and assisting the people to cope with the pandemic.

Ms. Faiza Sheikh, Lawyer in the Jurisdiction of England & Wales, Pakistan stated that women make up more than half of the frontline workers whether it is education or health, women play a central role. She highlighted that contri-

bution of female healthcare workers, doctors, nurses and paramedics who are serving tirelessly at this crucial time.

Ms. NigarJavanshirzade, Project manager "Chamomile" Azerbaijani Diaspora Women's Network, Azerbaijan highlighted ways to help women during COVID-19 lockdown. She asked family members to play an active role in managing the household chores to reduce workload of women. She discussed how the Azerbaijan is assisting its people in reducing tax burden on entrepreneurs, giving financial assistance and providing direct social support to them.

Ms. Wang Qianting, Senior Correspondent, China Media Group, Beijing, China stated that women from service industry have suffered the most. In China, supportive policies have

been introduced by the Government for people who have lost their jobs. Moreover, the Central Government of China is working efficiently for the people who are facing economic challenges. Ms. Dilnoza Odilbekova, Association of Business Women Uzbekistan discussed the impacts of COVID-19 on women in business sector. Ms. Ramma Shahid, Founder Beti, Media & Advocacy Expert, Pakistan stated that during COVID, a lot of women have lost their jobs especially those with smaller businesses. Women are having a hard time so our organization is providing moral and legal support to women who need assistance. The Webinar was attended by 50 participants from a cross section of society and was moderated by Ms. Minahil Afridi, Research Assistant, CGSS.

India hatching plans to oust me:
Nepal PM KP Sharma Oli

The ties between Nepal & India have been steadily deteriorating with the former accusing India of not paying heed to its request for foreign secretary-level talks over the border issue

DNA

KATHMANDU: Nepalese Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has alleged India was hatching plans to oust him from office after his government released a new map for the country which included key Indian territories. Oli while addressing a function on Sunday said, "Plots are being

hatched to topple me for releasing the country's new map and getting it adopted through Parliament." He said that he was making these claims based on intellectual discourse and media reports from New Delhi, and the activities of the Indian embassy in Nepal. "Given the ongoing intellectual discussions, media reports from New Delhi, Embassy's activities and meetings at different hotels

in Kathmandu, it is not very difficult to understand how people are openly active to oust me. But they won't succeed," he stated. This comes just a few weeks after Oli changed Nepal's map to include the areas of Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyadhura as part of its territory, which was followed by a constitutional amendment to adopt the new map in its national emblem on 13 June. The areas

have been historically part of Nepal. "If anyone thinks they can topple me, I would like to remind them that our national unity is not that weak ... I am not for continuing as prime minister for long. But if I quit today, there won't be anyone left to speak for the country ... I have to continue as a prime minister not for myself but for the country's sake and not for today

but for tomorrow," said Oli.

The ties between Nepal and India have been steadily deteriorating with the former accusing India of not paying heed to its request for foreign secretary-level talks over the border issue while the Modi government has maintained that it will talk when the pandemic subsides and that it will "not accept artificial enlargement" of Nepal's territory.

Duda leads in Polish
presidential vote

WARSAW: Conservative incumbent Andrzej Duda has secured pole position in Poland's presidential election and will face Warsaw's liberal mayor in the run-off next month, official results showed Monday. Duda, who is backed by the governing Law and Justice (PiS) party, got 45.24 percent of the ballot with 87 percent of polling stations counted, according to the national election commission. Runner-up Rafal Trzaskowski had 28.92 percent, taking the Civic Platform (PO) party member into round two of the election on July 12. Independent candidate Rafal Holownia came in third with 13.69 percent. None of the other eight candidates topped 10 percent. Turnout was 53.30 percent. The electoral campaign was dominated by concerns over an erosion of democratic rights and bread and butter economic issues. Poland faces its first recession since the end of communism because of the coronavirus pandemic fallout. — APP

Trump retweets video
mentioning 'white power'

DNA

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump retweeted a video showing one of his supporters in Florida shouting "white power" at protesters of his administration, drawing an immediate rebuke from the only Black Republican in the Senate. The video on Twitter, which was later deleted from Trump's feed, shows Trump protesters and supporters shouting profanities at each other. After a protester calls a Trump supporter a racist,

the man responds by raising his fist and shouting "white power."

The slogan is often used by white supremacists. "There's no question that he should not have retweeted it and he should just take it down," US Senator Tim Scott told CNN's "State of the Union" programme. White House spokesman Judd Deere said the president "is a big fan of The Villages. He did not hear the one statement made on the video. What he did see was tremendous enthusiasm from his many supporters."

Arab ministers
call for
collective
action

DNA

DUBAI: The council of Arab ministers of social affairs has urged regional governments and organizations to help vulnerable groups fight COVID-19, including Palestinians.

The ministers issued on Sunday a statement calling for collective action to help Palestinian authorities in the face of the pandemic — as they are already embattled with internal conflicts. They highlighted the importance of tending to vulnerable communities in the region, including internally displaced people (IDPs) and refugees, state-run KUNA has reported. The council also said emphasized the need to share information about national programs that help day laborers, low-income families, and the unemployed during the pandemic. In the same video conference, the ministers discussed the importance of implementing the Arab strategic framework to eradicate poverty, which was adopted in the fourth Arab development summit held in Beirut last year.

Protest against Israel's
proposed annexation

DNA

BRUSSELS: Hundreds of people on Sunday demonstrated in the Belgian capital against a proposed occupation of the Palestinian territories by Israel. The protest was organised by the Association Belgo-Palestinienne (ABP). An estimated 400 people took part in the demonstration, which was attended by a large number of Belgian youth as well as young Jewish people. Protesters held large numbers of Palestinian flags and anti-Israel placards. Members of the ABP ad-

ressed the demonstrators, saying Israel's expansionist intentions regarding Palestine were never secret and so is the case with West Bank. "We Palestinians will continue to fight against it, even if the world's largest power continues to support Israel," they vowed. The highlight of the demonstration was the participation of Jewish youth who had brought their own banners in support of Palestine. Some 1,080 members of the European Parliament, from 25 European countries, earlier this week had rejected Israel's proposed occupation of the Palestinian territories and called for an end

to it. The lawmakers had raised "serious concerns" about the proposals and called for "commensurate consequences". "We are deeply concerned about US President Donald Trump's proposal for peace between the Palestinians and Israel, which gives Israel the right to integrate the West Bank into Israel." The European lawmakers called upon the leaderships to take an initiative and play their part in preventing such an occupation as it would not only make Palestinian sovereignty meaningless but also undermine the idea of lasting peace in the region through a two-state solution.

British-Pakistani doctor's
licence suspended

DNA

LONDON (DNA): The UK's General Medical Council (GMC) has suspended the medical practice license of a British-Pakistani doctor who claimed that coronavirus was a conspiracy to control the world. The GMC, which maintains the official list of medical

practitioners in the UK, has changed Dr Iqbal Adil's reference number to suspend him on its website. "This person has been suspended from the Medical Register and may not practise as a doctor in the UK," the website states. It adds that he was neither on the General Practitioner (GP) register nor the Specialist one.

"This doctor is not subject to revalidation [as] only doctors holding full registration with a licence to practise are subject to revalidation." Having graduated from Bahauddin Zakaria University in 1986, Dr Adil worked in the UK as a specialist in colorectal and emergency surgery and laparoscopy.

FPCCI demands withdrawal of oil price hike

The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) President Anjum Nisar says it is good that govt took issue of oil supply chain disruption as serious and tried best to address matter

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry President Mian Anjum Nisar has urged the government to withdraw the decision of hike in prices of petroleum products, as the move might wipe up relief of markup rate cut announced for the industry recently. In a statement issued here on Monday, the chief of apex body of all Chambers & Trade Associations called for taking strict action against

companies for not providing the petroleum products at lower prices, instead of surrendering before such elements in the larger interest of the country. "It is good that the government took the ongoing issue of oil supply chain disruption as serious and tried its best to address the matter, which led to serious shortage in many parts of the country, but abrupt hike in prices of petroleum is not the right solution," he argued. Mian Anjum Nisar said that the step has taken the trade and industry by surprise because it was out of sched-



ule and was not prompted by any summary moved by the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority, which is the legal procedure. He argued that

that 6.25% drop in interest rate in recent days have started to cut cost of production and bolster the debt repayment ability but the

sudden decision of unprecedented jump in oil products' prices will fade away the all relief announced by the central bank earlier for the business community. He said that the price of crude oil in the world market is still around \$42 per barrel and as per calculations the ex-refinery price of petrol is worked out at around Rs45 per litre but the government increased the rate of petrol to more than Rs.100 per liter, which is great injustice. Alongside this, LPG also saw an increase in its price for the second time

this week, with a total increase of Rs15. Why is the government reversing its decisions? The economy is already in a precarious situation, this constant back and forth will only increase volatility, when we ought to be heading for stability, he added. Mian Anjum Nisar said that there is no denying the fact that oil rates have been on the rise in the international market now, but the government instead of passing on this surge to the public, can reduce the number of taxes on petroleum products as the fuel is the engine of growth.

Shibli
condemns
Karachi
attack

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz on Monday strongly condemned the attack on Pakistan Stock Exchange in Karachi.

In a tweet, the minister said those who target the country's economy and development would fail in their nefarious designs. Those who put their lives on the line to save the lives of the people and thwarted the attack are real heroes of the nation, he said. Shibli paid tributes to the martyred security personnel, expressed deep grief and sorrow over the loss of lives with bereaved families and prayed for speedy recovery of the injured. — APP

China locks
down 400,000
people

DNA

HEBEI: China has reinstated a strict lockdown near Beijing, affecting around 400,000 people, after a small surge in cases. The restrictions have come into force in Anxin county in Hebei province near the capital.

After the pandemic emerged in China at the end of last year, the country has managed to get new infections to a consistently low level. To avoid a second wave, even small surges are taken very seriously by the country's health authorities.

Australia:
highest single
day cases
in 2 months

ANKARA: Australia on Monday reported 78 new coronavirus cases, the highest single-day rise since April, health authorities said. Of the new infections, 75 were reported from Melbourne's suburban hot-spots, ABC News said quoting local authorities. "Obviously we are concerned by the increasing number and the upward trend and are monitoring the situation very closely," Health Minister Jenny Mikakos said. South Australia state also recorded three new imported cases, all of them travellers returning to Australia from India. According to the Health Ministry, Australia has reported more than 7,686 cases with 104 deaths while 6,993 patients have recovered. The country eased coronavirus restrictions in May gradually after new infections in the country remained low. On March 28, the country recorded 468 cases, the highest daily figure since the start of the outbreak. — APP