



Islamabad POST

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Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

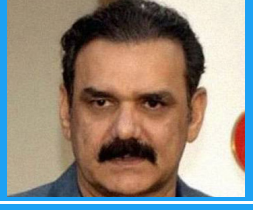
Price Rs. 20

Syria: we will continue to do our part: Josep Borrell

Indonesian embassy to hold media webinar



Work on M 8 top priority, says Asim Bajwa



Briefs

Uzma Kardar expelled from PTI

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Standing Committee on Accountability and Discipline of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has expelled its Member of Provincial Assembly (MPA) in Punjab, Uzma Kardar, over violation of party discipline. The ruling political party released a notification which stated that the basic membership of Uzma Kardar, a Punjab MPA on Reserved Seat, has been ended by the PTI standing committee on accountability and discipline over violating the party regulations. The notification read that she had been issued a show-cause notice earlier on June 15 over submitting her response regarding 'audio clips' besides appearing before the sub-committee on June 17.

Shehbaz recovers from coronavirus

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif, who had earlier tested positive for the Covid-19 coronavirus in June, has recovered and tested negative on Sunday, confirmed Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) spokesperson Marriyum Aurangzeb on Sunday. The PML-N spokesperson in a Tweet said that Shehbaz Sharif has tested negative for coronavirus, but doctors have advised PML-N president to get his anti-bodies tests done for three weeks. She added that doctors have asked the Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly, Shehbaz Sharif to adhere to strict precautions until the results of the anti-body tests come out.

Beware of rainfall, urban flooding

DNA

KARACHI: The port city expected to receive rainfall with thunderstorm on Monday as Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has also warned of urban flooding during the upcoming wet spell. The city authorities facing an uphill task to clear the drains ahead of the rainy spell. Power utility, K-electric, has yet to complete earthing of electricity poles ahead of the rainfall. It is to be mentioned here that around 49 people had died by electrocution in heavy rainfall in Karachi last year. A westerly wave is expected to reach the city on Monday.

Afghan peace process under serious threat

If Trump loses his presidency in November this year, then the situation will be different in Afghanistan, Cold war may rise again

Exclusive

NEHAL MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: The February 29th Afghan peace agreement is under a serious threat following the emergence of CIA's report which alleged Russia to have paid Taliban for the deaths of American soldiers in Afghanistan. This is not just an allegation but the first step to sabotage the peace agreement between Taliban and the United States, sources said. This issue came under discussion when Afghan Taliban leader Mulla Baradar and United States' Secretary of State Mike Pompeo held telephonic talks last week. Taliban dismissed these allegations and stated that they are committed to the peace agreement as long as it stands, and that they will plan no attacks on the outgoing American

NATO asks Taliban to decrease violence

DNA

KABUL: The NATO called on the Taliban group to decrease violence as the country is going towards an intra-Afghan peace dialogue. NATO Senior Civilian Representative to Afghanistan, Stefano Pontecorvo in a video message published on his twitter account has said that the Taliban violence has to go down as it creates an issue for the ongoing peace efforts. "Taliban violence has to go down, it is simply unacceptable and it is creating an issue, a problem for getting to the peace talks", Stefano said in a twitter message.

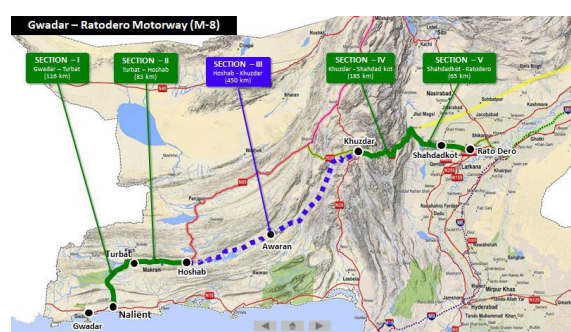
soldiers. Meanwhile, the sources report that the peace process is under severe threat from Afghan spy agency NDS, Indian RAW and the CIA. There have been a lot of terrorist attacks in the past and there will be in the future, even Zalmay Khalilzad sees the threats to the peace agreement. Sources from Afghan Taliban also rate these allegations and keeping the United States' president blindfolded from CIA's report, as a threat to the peace process. The primary function of American bases in Afghanistan lately has been to spy on China and Russia. And if Trump loses his presidency in November this year, then the situation will be different in Afghanistan, Cold war may rise again. Pakistan's economic strength and the future of CPEC depends heavily on the peace process in Afghanistan.

Work on M 8 top priority, says Bajwa

CDWP approval had already been obtained for 146 KMs-cost Rs.26 billion-Hoshab to Awaran project

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Chairman CPEC Authority Lt. Gen @ Asim Saleem Bajwa has said that work on M-8 is to commence as top priority. In a Tweet on Sunday Bajwa said the CDWP approval had already been obtained for 146 KMs-cost Rs.26 billion-Hoshab to Awaran project. This road in remote districts of Kech/Awaran is a beacon of light for impoverished South Balochistan and will definitely change lives of people living there, he added. It may be mentioned here that work on most of the CPEC projects had already been re-started. The authorities have vowed to make for delays caused by COVID 19.



ICBC emerges as biggest foreign bank

ISLAMABAD: Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) has recently emerged as biggest foreign bank in Pakistan with advanced asset size and profitability, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Sunday. According to this year's list of 1000 World's top banks released by the renowned British magazine, comparing with all banks in Pakistan, including domestic banks, ICBC ranks 13th in total assets. ICBC holds three branch banks in Islamabad, Karachi, and Lahore. Meanwhile, ICBC is an important cooperative financial institution in the construction of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). "From being among a clutch of evenly sized Asian emerging markets in 2000, [China] now has capital resources three times the size of Japan's," analyzed The Banker. Due to the impacts brought by COVID-19, banks around the world has been hindered severely in 2020. China's banking sector is also facing the challenges. — DNA



LONDON: High Commissioner of Pakistan to UK Nafees Zakria with MP Jonathan Lord at the Shah Jahan Mosque in working. — DNA

Asif Zardari may head to USA

NEHAL MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Former President and Co Chairperson of Pakistan People's Party Asif Ali Zardari is all set to travel America for his treatment, his party sources told. Sources claimed that Zardari personally wants his treatment to continue in America. His lawyer Farooq Naik has been told to make all legal arrangements. The party will approach Interior Ministry through an application to remove Zardari's name from the exit control list (ECL). If Interior ministry dismisses the application, then the relevant court will be approached. In this contrast, the party has also got the copy of High court's verdict which allowed Nawaz Sharif to travel abroad for treatment last year. The former president have also transferred all his property and belonging to his children. The legal necessities have been completed to transfer the properties.

WHO reports record single-day cases

DNA

WASHINGTON: Over 212,000 new coronavirus cases were reported globally by the World Health Organization - the highest single-day increase since the start of the pandemic. WHO said that it was discontinuing its trials of the malaria drug hydroxychloroquine and combination HIV drug lopinavir/ritonavir in hospitalised patients with COVID-19 after the medications failed to reduce mortality. Mexico has reported 523 more coronavirus deaths, pushing its

tally to 30,366 and overtaking France to become the fifth-highest in the world. Worldwide cases have reached 11.23 million while 6.04 million patients have recovered, according to the latest Johns Hopkins University tally. The number of deaths worldwide hit more than 530,000. Pakistan has confirmed 93 deaths in a single day by novel coronavirus as the number of positive cases has surged to 228,474. The nationwide tally of fatalities has jumped to 4,712. According to the latest figures by the National Command and Operation Center

(NCO) 3,191 persons have been tested positive for COVID-19 in 24 hours. Sindh has become the worst-hit province by the pandemic in terms of cases followed by Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad. Till now 92,306 coronavirus cases have been confirmed in Sindh, 81,317 in Punjab, 27,843 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 10,766 in Balochistan, 13,409 in Islamabad, 1,545 in Gilgit-Baltistan and 1,288 in Azad Kashmir. Patients are under treatment at quarantine centers of 462 hospitals where 7,295 beds are available.

Indonesian embassy to hold media webinar



STAFF REPROT

ISLAMABAD: The Indonesia embassy in Islamabad is to hold a media webinar on Wednesday July 8. Iwan S. Amri, Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia, will grace the meeting as the chair and Denny Tri Basuki, Counselor at the Embassy, will be the host on the occasion.

A embassy communiqué said that they highly valued warm ties with the friends in Pakistani media and acknowledged the role they have been playing in promoting the goodwill between the people of the two countries. Therefore, the prime objective of this meeting is to maintain our cordial relations and to discuss in light manner the COVID-19 pandemic socioeconomic impacts on the society. It will also be a good opportunity to share and discuss thoughts about how friendly countries could help each other in the scope of bilateral trade and economic cooperation to stimulate economic activity and job creation in these testing times of global economic recession, the communiqué further said.

Bilawal fears curbs on autonomy

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhatto Zardari lashed out at the government, saying that the space for provincial autonomy was being limited in Pakistan. Terming July 5, 1977 as the darkest day in the history of Pakistan, the PPP chairman in his video message said that democracy in the country was still in its infancy period. Bilawal said that the PPP is marking today as a 'black day' as on July 5, 1977, the constitution was suspended, democracy was wrapped up and the elected prime minister, Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhatto, was removed," the PPP leader said. He said that the PPP has made and will continue to make, sacrifices for the constitution and democracy.. Bilawal criticised the present government, complaining that the ground for implementation of provincial autonomy is deliberately being shrunk by authorities.

Inside...

MAS manages 20000 emergencies in two years In Lahore — Page 02

COVID-19: ILO to convene session on Pakistan request — Page 03

ICCI chief urges govt to consider opening of marriage halls — Page 04

Turkish Cyprus announces guidelines for visitors — Page 06

EU-funded UNDP initiative in Yemen wins awards — Page 07

18th Amend can be improved with a review: President Alvi — Page 08

German envoy advocates cycling in Pakistan

Bernhard also shared his pride-ride, his grandfather's 80-year old bicycle, which he owns and said "Whenever possible I take my bike to go to Foreign Ministry, located not that far from the German Embassy

ISLAMABAD: German Ambassador Bernhard Schlagheck advocating the adoption of cycling habit in Pakistan said the practice has diversified health and financial advantages for individuals in particular and a country's environment at large. "The habit of cycling provides an excellent opportunity to clear mind and thoughts, besides its other healthy and nature friendly benefits" the envoy who is in love with cycling shared his feelings in an exclusive interview with state-run media Sunday. He said the reasons behind advocating to build the bike-habit here in Pakistan was certainly his love for

cycling and its long lasting positive impacts on humans' lives and it can also drive green development on earth. Bernhard said, "I think there is a lot to be gained from a good bike ride. It's also environmental-friendly and zero-carbon emission transport as well as a great practical and almost cost-free mode of conveyance. On a query to how we can establish a bike-culture in Pakistan, he said, "I'm always somewhat skeptical about notions like bike-culture. I do not really think we need a bike-culture in Pakistan, but an appreciation of what is already here — so that a bike is not merely considered as a minus to



a motorbike or a car, but valuable in itself." It also encourages strong human connectivity as people on automobiles do not interact with each other on roads, he added. To another question whether cycling can offer

a solution to urban transport and traffic chaos, the envoy said, it was a long term perspective but certainly reducing private fossil fuel driven transport within cities to contest constant traffic gridlocks and environmental haz-

ards it must be one of the near term targets of contemporary urban planning. Schlagheck, stressing upon youth to adopt practical sport activities, said the COVID-19 pandemic has enhanced the significance of the cycling as the exercise helps build strong immune system which was imperative to fight against viral diseases and seasonal epidemics. The ambassador also gave some expert tips for cyclists in hot summer and said, long distance pedaling be avoided and short to moderate trips were recommended in full sun light. "Sufficient intakes of nutrients and fluids to the body

before and after cycling was a must to avoid season's wrath" he stressed. Commenting on the riding conditions here for the cyclists, he said, "I can hardly speak for the rest of the country since I am cycling basically only in Islamabad. Here, I think, the conditions are sufficiently good though, as with most things, there may be room for improvement." It was pleasing to know, he said, that the ICT administration and the Commissioner's office were engaged in setting up dedicated cycling lanes in Islamabad which was a promising and welcome development. Continued on Page 06

Civilian injured along LoC

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A civilian sustained injuries after Indian troops resorted to unprovoked firing in Battal Sector along the Line of Control (LoC). According to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), a 22-years-old civilian got injured due to Indian unprovoked ceasefire violation targeting civil population using mortars and heavy weapons. ISPR further said that Pak Army troops responded effectively to the Indian firing.

Briefs**'Pakistan will continue supporting Kashmiris'**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Shehryar Afridi, Chairman Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir, Saturday called on Sardar Masood Khan, President Azad Jammu and Kashmir at Kashmir House. On the occasion, the President congratulated him on assuming his responsibility.

During the interaction, the two leaders discussed the latest situation in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, genesis of the Kashmir issue and its international dynamics. President Masood Khan while apprising the Chairman of Indian Occupied Kashmir said that the situation in the territory is deteriorating rapidly. He said that extra judicial killings of Kashmiris are being carried out every day under the guise of cordon and search operations. "Killings, arbitrary arrests, maiming and sexual violence is rampant," he said. The President said that under the New Domicile Rules, the Indian government has opened the flood gates for Hindu settlers from all over India. Just recently, 25,000 non-State residents were issued domiciles. He added that these steps have deprived the local Kashmiris of their livelihood, right to acquisition of property and educational seats reserved exclusively for their children.

Govt's mega agri package lauded

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former President ICCI Shahid Rasheed Butt on Saturday said the farming community is in crisis, therefore, the government has decided to implement Rs56.6 billion agriculture package which is a laudable move.

Implementation of the package announced in May will provide relief to millions of farmers in the wake of locust attacks, pandemic, and lockdown. He said that the government should take steps to frustrate unholy designs of hoarders to create an artificial shortage of fertilizer to avoid crop failure and food security issues. Shahid Rasheed Butt said that government has decided to give a subsidy of Rs37 billion to farmers to help them buy fertilizer which will help strengthen the agriculture sector. He said that the government should allocate Rs20 billion for quality seed and good pesticides while taxes should be reduced on locally-manufactured and imported agricultural machinery so that their price can be reduced in the local market. Affordable agriculture loans should be issued to genuine farmers while those having small holdings should be preferred, he said, adding that wastage of agricultural loans is rampant which can be controlled by allocating quota for every province.

Ministers term CPEC a game-changer

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan and Minister for Science and Technology Chaudhry Fawad Hussain Sunday termed that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) a game-changer for the entire region which would bring economic revolution in Pakistan, particularly in Balochistan.

The partnership in the form of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor will prove to be a historical milestone in the Pak-China bilateral relations, both the ministers said while speaking to a Radio Pakistan's Current Affairs Programme.

Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan said from the beginning the Prime Minister Imran Khan has been supporting the game changer project CPEC and was determined to take this great initiative to its logical end. The mega project would not only benefit China and Pakistan but the entire region, he said, adding, this project also be a gateway to European markets for trade activities.



ISLAMABAD: Youngsters jumping and bathing in water channel of Rawal Dam in Federal Capital. – APP

ICCI chief urges govt to consider opening of marriage halls

To combat the spread of COVID-19 pandemic, restaurants, marquees and wedding halls in Islamabad were closed in the 2nd week of March 2020 on a short notice due to which thousands of workers have lost their jobs while these businesses were now facing extreme financial crisis: Ahmed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has urged the government to allow restaurants, marquees and wedding halls in Islamabad to reopen their business activities. He said that due to long lockdown, these businesses were on the verge of collapse.

He said that to combat the spread of COVID-19 pandemic, restaurants, marquees and wedding halls in Islamabad were closed in the

2nd week of March 2020 on a short notice due to which thousands of workers have lost their jobs while these businesses were now facing extreme financial crisis.

He said that Hamza Shafaqat, Deputy Commissioner Islamabad was doing a great job in controlling COVID-19 pandemic in Islamabad, however, he added that he should also take up the issue of opening these businesses with higher authorities. Muhammad Ahmed Waheed said that restaurants, marquees and wedding halls were playing important role in generating economic activities as busi-



ness of many other sectors was linked with this industry.

However, due to closure of restaurants, marquees and wedding halls, many other allied businesses including meat, poultry, jewelers, bridal clothing, florist, furniture, crockery suppliers, tent services, waiter suppliers, wedding bands, valet staff, lighting and generator suppliers were also suffering losses. He said that despite closure, these businesses have to make routine expenditures including payment of rent, wages of staff and utility bills due to lockdown, but keeping them closed was add-

ing to their financial problems. He said that when other businesses have been opened with SOPs, restaurants, marquees and wedding halls should also be reopened as their owners were ready to operate their businesses in compliance with laid out SOPs.

He said that these businesses were also contributing towards tax revenue and government would also lose tax revenue by keeping them closed. He further urged the government to allow restaurants, marquees and wedding halls to pay their utility bills in 3-4 monthly instalments.

PAF C-130 Aircraft carries dead bodies of Sikhs

Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force in his message has said that he is grieved at the loss of precious lives in the tragic accident

DNA

PESHAWAR: On the instructions of Government of Pakistan, a PAF C-130 aircraft carried dead bodies of Sikh Yatrees landed at PAF Base Peshawar. The dead bodies of 21 Sikh Yatrees and a driver, who died in a dreadful collision between a coaster and train near Sheikhupura, were airlifted from PAF Base, Lahore last night. The relatives of the deceased had gathered at the PAF

base Peshawar to receive the dead bodies. 11 males, 10 females and a four year child died in the accident, while 05 injured are under treatment at the hospital. Meanwhile, Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force in his message has said that he is grieved at the loss of precious lives in the tragic accident. He also expressed heartfelt condolences with the bereaved families who lost their dear ones and also prayed for the early recovery of the injured.

**SBP proposed to slash interest rate to 5%**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Friends of Business and Economic Reforms president Kashif Anwar on Sunday lauded the recent move of the central bank to slash interest rate by another one percent, recommending it to curtail it 5 percent gradually, besides directing the commercial banks to implement the government's soft loaning for the revival of small and medium sized industry in its true spirit.

In an open letter, written to the State Bank of Pakistan governor Reza Baqir, he asked to restrict the commercial banks to adjust KIBOR on monthly basis instead of quarterly basis so that the benefit of huge reduction of key policy rate could be passed to the businesses, as they have still being charged markup of over 12 percent. He hailed the central bank to reduce discount rate by 100 basis points to 7 percent in an unscheduled meeting of monetary policy committee which has so far dropped the key interest rate by 6.25 percent from 13.25 percent since March 17, 2020.

PIAF asks govt to withdraw anti-industry decision

ISLAMABAD: As more than 65% percent record jump in fuel prices have pushed up the weekly inflation the Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front has asked the government to withdraw the anti-industry decision, warning the authorities that inflation above 6 percent could hurt economic growth and only a careful policy would keep it in control.

In a joint statement, with senior vice chairman Nasir Hameed and vice chairman Javed Siddiqi, Mian Nauman Kabir said that oil prices and inflation are closely connected in a cause-and-effect relationship.

As fuel rates move up, inflation, which is the measure of general price trends throughout the economy, follows in the same direction upward. On the other hand, if the rates of fuel fall, inflationary pressures start to drop. In the start of this year, oil prices collapsed amid the COVID-19 pandemic and economic slowdown. OPEC and its allies agreed to historic production cuts to stabilize prices, but they dropped to over 16 years low.

Referring the data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), PIAF chairman Mian Nauman Kabir said that the Sensitive Price Indicator based weekly inflation for the week, for the combined consumption group, witnessed an increase of 2.29% compared to the previous week, mainly due to the increase in fuel prices in the country. The SPI inflation for the combined consumption group was recorded at 132.32 points compared to 129.36 points registered in the previous week. In the same way, as compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI inflation for the combined consumption group in the week witnessed an increase of 9.77 per cent. Mian Nauman called for putting the economy on a balanced and sustainable growth trajectory, addressing the underlying structural vulnerabilities, as low export growth, limited foreign exchange reserves, documentation of economy and higher food inflation are still major challenges to the economy. – DNA

Package for private educators, students urged

Participants suggest a permanent platform of stakeholders to improve PEIRA efficiency

FIAZ CHAUDHRY

ISLAMABAD: Participants of the webinar on private education system in the covid-19 era urged the government to urgently response to the needful in the state of emergency by allocating funds for the relief to deserving parents, small and medium sized schools. They said governments world over have given special packages to the students but our government is putting all the resources to defense budget, and ignoring health and education sectors.

The representatives of the private schools mentioned no relief is given to private schools of any tier except the bank loans at discounted rates after pledging the school assets. Only some of the top tier school could benefit from this scheme. What about the low-fee schools housed in rented houses in lower-middle class areas? Development Communications

Network (Devcom-Pakistan) and DTNTV jointly organized the webinar on 'Private Schools: Challenges and Responsibilities' on Saturday. About 100 participants showed off including parents, teachers, school management and reps of the private schools' association and civil society to make the webinar a big success.

Senator Sitara Ayaz and Deputy Mayor Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad Zeeshan Naqvi and Zafar Iqbal, Deputy Director of the Private Educational Institutions Regulatory Authority (PEIRA) were among the guest speakers. Devcom-Pakistan and DTNTV Director Munir Ahmed conducted the webinar.

Speaking on the occasion, Senator Sitara Ayaz urged the regulatory authority to take stakeholders on board for consolidated recommendations for the government act upon in letter and spirit to provide relief to the students and parents, and also to the schools

where necessary in the state of Covid-19 emergency. We all are going through a miserable phase where we need the government support besides shouldering each other. Despite hue and cry we see no plan of action so far. Zeeshan Naqvi, Deputy Mayor MCI, said their organization is available for any possible support the private schools need to facilitate the students and parent at large. He urged the PEIRA to form a permanent forum including parent, civil society reps and other stakeholders for regular interaction to improve the private education in federal capital at least.

Devcom-Pakistan Director Munir Ahmed said the PEIRA is much weaker in communicating with those who approach the concerned officers. Citing his own experience, he said the PEIRA chairperson could not respond to an email and dozens of calls in four days. This is ironic that even the women leadership in the

government sector is equally irresponsible to citizens contrary to the worldwide practices.

He said PEIRA needs to improve its communication of policies and implementation mechanisms that are quite poor. Unfortunately, positive impact of the policies and actions is hardly seen on ground where as parent are arrested in miseries in a wish to get quality education for their children. Congested premises, mediocre teachers, heavy fees, no play grounds and grooming and many money-minting tactics are the major issues need to be addressed sooner that later. Zafar Iqbal briefed about the scope and mandate of the PEIRA and mentioned that a set of recommendations were prepared and submitted to the ministry of federal education. The recommendations include relief package for all types of schools, teachers and students. A national conference, he said, is expected on July 8 to review the emergency situation and

post-covid-19 scenario for the private education system beside the public educational institutions.

Rabia Amin said many schools have no discount policy even anyone of three children of a single parent. Books, notebooks, and uniforms all are provided by the schools but at very high prices without any check by the regulatory authority.

Chief Patron of the Private Schools Association Dr Ifrahim Satti said private schools are catering 40 million students, and most of them are low-fee schools that are facing financial crunch. Without any relief package, more than 20 per cent schools would shutdown their doors that would create another problem while 50 million children are already out of school.

Among others who spoke on the occasion included Rehana Jahangir, Dr Waqar Maqsood, Mr Khattak, Dr Anas, Tariq Jawed, Najeeb, Farzin Khan, Hafsa Khan, and Sarah Pirzada.

LoC violations hurdle for economic growth

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) President Mian Anjum Nisar on Saturday raised serious concerns over continuing human rights abuses and curfew in Indian Held Kashmir for a long time, saying successive ceasefire violations along the Line of Control by the Indian Forces is a serious threat to regional trade and economic prosperity, especially at a time when the whole world economies are highlighting gloomy forecasts.

He urged the United Nations to accord serious attention to blatant violation of human rights in IHK, constituting a high powered human rights committee to visit the valley to see and report the facts.

"These egregious violations of international law reflect consistent Indian attempts to escalate the situation along the LoC and are a threat to bilateral trade and regional peace. He added that by raising tensions along the LoC and the Working Boundary, India cannot divert attention from the grave human rights situation in the Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Pandemic, financial crisis effect poor masses

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Saturday said the entire burden of pandemic and financial crisis has been shifted on the poor masses which has added to their problems. Many countries have increased taxes on rich to tackle coronavirus-related losses but here masses are being made to pay, it said. Masses are paying Rs45 tax on every liter of petrol which must be reduced immediately, said Dr. Murtagh Mughal, President PEW and Convener FPCCI Central Standing Committee on Insurance. He said that devaluation and inflation are two tools to boost revenue but it remained counterproductive during the last two years despite forty percent erosion in the exchange rate and imposing new taxes of Rs1000 billion.

The devaluation has not helped boost exports but taxes masses in a way which has compromised their buying power beyond their capacity. Interest rates were kept high to attract hot money which benefited foreign investors at the cost of the local economy while bonds worth Rs121 billion were issued on high interest rates a day before interest rates were slashed by one percent which is amazing, he said. The completion of Peshawar metro has become a dream despite a 100 percent hike in the cost of the project while the outcome of inquiries against sugar, wheat, IPPs, medicine price etc. have also become a dream which may never come true. The tariff of electricity is being hiked across the country after Karachi which will jolt the economy while another gas price hike is also on the cards which will unleash a new wave of inflation, he warned.

Compensation for Dhok Malyar incident victims

DNA

ATTOCK: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistanis Syed Zulfiqar Abbas Bokhari on Saturday announced that the bereaved families of six persons who died while cleaning a well at Dhok Malyar of Fatehjang Tehsil, would be given financial compensation with jobs to their two children. The SAPM visited Dhok Malyar to condole with the families of victims, including three real brothers. He was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Attock Ali Anan Qamar.

Sympathising with the families, Zulfiqar Bokhari said the death of six male members was a great loss for the families.

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Avoidable tragedies

It should be a matter of grave concern that accidents involving Pakistan Railways have become a regular occurrence in Pakistan. In the latest tragedy, at least 22 people have been killed when the Lahore-bound Shah Hussain Express train crashed into a passenger coaster near Sheikhpura in Punjab. The deceased were mainly Sikh pilgrims belonging to the same family who had been to their sacred shrines in Nankana Sahib and were on their way home to Peshawar when they met the tragedy. According to reports, there were 30 passengers on the ill-fated coaster of which 14 men and eight women died instantly and the remaining were injured. As in many previous accidents, this one also occurred at an unattended level crossing which the driver of the van tried to cross. Again as is usual practice, the railways management suspended the divisional engineer and a committee has been set up with three senior officers to investigate the accident.

Though it is easy to blame the driver for the accident – as in the case of an unattended level crossing, the driver should have carefully seen the railway tracks – we must ask why so many level crossings remain unattended in the country. The railways authorities normally put the responsibility on the driver by saying that there was a board warning the drivers. Here there are two points: one, there should not be any unattended crossings in the first place; and if there are, the Pakistan Railways is responsible for them, full stop. And the second is: how many of our drivers are literate to be able to read such boards installed by the railways? The latest figure of the literacy rate in Pakistan is no more than 60 percent, and that too many independent educationists deem to be not more than 50 percent. This recent tragedy is just one in a series of accidents that we have witnessed in the past two years. Just four months ago at another unattended level crossing near Rohri in Sindh a train smashed a passenger bus in which at least 20 people were killed. Then there was a horrible Tezgam fire tragedy in October 2019 in which at least 75 passengers were burned to death and nearly 50 sustained burn injuries near Rahim Yar Khan in Punjab. According to the available data, over 100 train-related accidents took place in just the past one year. In addition, there have been over 110 incidents of engine failures while the trains were carrying passengers since the beginning of this year. Normally, in most such cases various officers are suspended who get restored after some time. Pakistan Railways needs a primary overhaul and just suspensions will not help. There is an urgent need for new planning on how to revamp the railways. In the past two years the railways minister has been launching new trains, and mostly issuing political statements, but there has not been any work on an operational strategy to be implemented. What the present government needs is better experienced and qualified teams. Someone must take responsibility and the chief duty of the railways ministry should be to find ways to make the extensive railway system of the country safer by looking at faulty signals, unmanned gates, tracks which have not been repaired for years and the engines and bogies themselves. The railways provides transport to millions of people, especially the less privileged for whom it is the main means of transport.



Inflation hike

Look at the inflation trends in the country for the past fiscal year from July 2019 to June 2020 shows that inflation was never below eight percent. According to the latest data on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the inflation rate has soared to 8.6 percent year-on-year in June. The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS)'s latest report says that the prices of chicken, eggs, flour, tomatoes, and vegetables increased in June. If you look at the recently concluded fiscal year, you find the second and third quarters from October 2019 to March 2020 showing the highest inflation, touching nearly 15 percent in January this year. While inflation remained at over 12 percent for the months of October, November and February, we see a gradual but not substantial decline in it even after the Covid-19 pandemic hit us.

In the last quarter of FY 2019-20, inflation consistently floated at over eight percent. It is noteworthy that the CPI on new base (2015-16) comprises urban and rural CPIs in which the urban CPI covers 35 cities and 356 consumer items; the rural CPI covers 27 rural centres and 244 consumer items. According to this calculation, Pakistan witnessed the highest inflation in 12 years since the restoration of democracy in the country in 2008. That means the two previous governments led by the PPP and the PML-N managed to control inflation with effective economic and financial management. Interestingly, just last month, the State Bank of Pakistan released its data showing that Pakistan's inflation for 2020 was the highest in the world. But, the very next day the SBP retracted its statement by saying that there was an erroneous point conveyed in its inflation monitor.

Even if it was not the highest, it has remained one of the highest inflation rates in the world and that is disappointing to say the least. Even after Covid-19 slowed down demand in the market, the inflation rate still hovered around eight percent. And with the recent increase in petrol prices, there appears to be no hope of further reduction in inflation for common people; rather in all likelihood the petrol price hike of nearly 25 percent last week will have an inflationary impact on other goods and necessities in the coming months. Average inflation, which was nearly 11 percent in the last fiscal year, did show a decline in the last quarter due to declining demand in the market hampered by the coronavirus. With the pandemic still raging on and millions of people losing their livelihoods, it is imperative that the government strive to contain inflation, otherwise it will have a debilitating effect on people who are already under tremendous strain.

Syria: we will continue to do our part

Josep Borrell



The Brussels Conference on the Future of Syria and the Region, held on 30 June, was the most important event this year to address the most critical needs generated by the Syria crisis. A unique occasion to show our support, both political and financial, for Syria's civil society of course but also for Syria's neighbours and their people particularly in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. They have shown extraordinary solidarity towards the 5.6 million Syrians who found refuge outside their country

In the almost ten years since civil war began in Syria, I have followed closely its appalling developments and the horrors that the Syrian people have gone through. I come from a country that went through a civil war and perfectly know how it divides and destroys a society. More than 12 million Syrians, half of the pre-war population, had to flee their homes. Over half a million have lost their lives. An entire generation of Syrian children has only known war. As Europeans, we have collectively been unable to stop these massacres at the gates of our continent. When we pursue our efforts to build a stronger Common Foreign and Security Policy for the EU, I often think of Syria and what we could have done there.

But that's the past. Today's Syria is far from being fixed; on the contrary, it is heading in fact towards lasting instability. Its economy is in freefall, a result of chronic mismanagement by the regime, wide spread corruption and the banking crisis in Lebanon – formerly Syria's financial gateway. The consequences of the global coronavirus crisis are making the already dire living conditions of the Syrians, even worse. They really have endured enough – and they all deserve so much better. First and foremost a perspective towards a better, dignified, more peaceful future. It is our duty as Europeans, it is my duty, to do everything we can to help achieve this.

The Brussels Conference on the Future of Syria and the Region, held on 30 June, was the most important event this year to address the most critical needs generated by the Syria crisis. A unique occasion to show our support, both political and financial, for Syria's civil society of course but also for Syria's neighbours and their people particularly in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. They have shown extraordinary solidarity towards the 5.6 million Syrians who found refuge outside their country.

Despite the coronavirus, despite the risk of "donor fatigue" that applies to any long-running conflict, thanks to the continued mobilization of the international community and of our co-chair the United Nations, we raised additional 6.9 billion.

I know that is not enough; it can probably never be enough, seen from the eyes of people having endured ten years of war. Still, we are proud of this result, and particularly that nearly three quarters of these funds come from the EU and its member states.

For me, one of the most enlightening moments of the Conference was my direct exchange with members of Syria's civil society. Syria's civil society was close to non-existent ten years ago. It grew at lightning speed during the conflict, delivering services to people, advocating for the rights and the needs of the Syrians.

The commitment of Syria's civil society and non-governmental organizations, their determination to build a better country so that they have not gone through ten years of hell for nothing, is a lesson of dignity.

I spoke to women and men who have lost family members; who still have loved ones missing or detained in unknown circumstances. One quarter of the Syrians have a missing among their close friends or relatives and wonder every day what has become of them. That is one of the many ways in which the Syrian society has been broken, and is still held hostage.

Despite the odds, I left my exchange with them with a certain sense of hope, or at least with a chunk of their impressive determination. They hold the key to their country's future: they can build a better Syria.

But the aims of the Brussels Conferences went far beyond a mere donor conference. We also put the political spotlight on Syria. This is not just about the EU: Europe as a whole, Syria's neighbours, the Gulf, the whole international community from Brazil to Japan, from Canada to Australia reaffirmed its unequivocal support for the efforts of the UN to broker intra-Syria talks and work towards a lasting political solution to the conflict.

I opened the conference by saying that the country is not doing better. In fact, things are getting worse than they have ever been during the war. I know that the regime and its supporters blame

Western sanctions. As we have now said many times, EU sanctions have nothing to do with the actual difficulties inside Syria. The truth is that Syria continues to undergo an organised economic exploitation, at the hands of the very people who blame us.

Our sanctions are precisely targeted at these individuals and at economic entities under their control. They were put in place since 2011, as the consequence of potential war crimes and crimes against humanity, which must be accounted for. They are designed not to impede the delivery of humanitarian and medical assistance: we have never placed Syria under any kind of embargo. On the contrary, it is mostly thanks to international assistance that healthcare, food or education can still be delivered to people in need inside Syria.

I know also that full and complete reconciliation is not only possible but also extremely rewarding. And we Europeans are ready to do more to help. In fact we would much prefer to spend money helping to reconstruct Syria than supporting people in desperate situations. However, reconstruction is not simply about rebuilding infrastructure and housing. It is about restoring Syria's social fabric, rebuilding trust and creating conditions that will prevent the recurrence of violence. It requires minimal conditions in terms of governance, public accountability, and representativeness of the governing authorities. Syria currently fulfils none of these criteria. We are ready to play our part in Syria's reconstruction and reconciliation, as soon as a genuine political transition is firmly underway.

The future of Syria is for the Syrians to decide. The political negotiations on Syria's future must be Syrian-owned and Syrian-led. How Syria will look like a year from now will depend on the commitment of the regime to the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 2254. Not for our benefit, not for theirs or their supporters', but for the benefit of all Syrians.

The writer is Foreign Policy chief of European Union.

How mountains shape the oceans

Ehtisham Amer

USA is looking for powerful nations to contain China. Japan and Australia fit nicely in this alliance. USA wanted to enhance the potency of the alliance. Indian military's defeat in the mountains of Ladakh would certainly force a rethink of American strategic designs in the region and would surely degrade Indian position and utility in the American eyes. Instead of bringing power to the alliance, India has proved to be a strategic liability for the alliance. An India, which can't defend its territorial integrity in a limited skirmish with China would surely pull the Quad alliance into an unnecessary showdown with China

This piece is not about the environment or ecosystem. Sometimes headings can be misleading. So, you always do not buy a book by looking at its cover. There is a well-documented body of evidence on meteorology and environment which covers the essentials of the ecosystem working. One wants to use this metaphor for a more pressing geostrategic tussle occurring in our proximity. China is the largest country when it comes to the world population. It is a pretty big geographically to accommodate the largest population and is doing perfectly fine to feed its people. So, there is, apparently, no need for it to expand by some 40 or 80 square kilometers in some of the most inhospitable terrains on the planet. I mean to refer to Ladakh and areas adjoining Tibet plateau. If land grab is not what China is looking at or aiming for, then what is the explanation of the recent Sino-India military standoff? Well, what the Indian media tells us that China is all set to alter LAC (Line of Actual Control) unilaterally and against the mutually agreed border protocols. There is, however, more to it than meets the eye.

All countries use militaries to further their political aims and goals. Military is used as a force of last resort when all other means fail. As Clausewitz had famously put it that "war is an extension of policies through other means". Lenin replaced the word "other" with violent means. China has been rising economically in the last three decades and has made every attempt to avoid conflicts. It has settled all its border disputes with its neighbours amicably except India due to the Indian stubbornness. When a country is strategically focused on rising to superpower status peacefully, why would it choose to divert the energies of its leaders and state towards a distant, unwelcoming tract of land? Answer to it lies in what India has been doing in down south, the Indian Ocean region. India has been steadily moving close to the USA and American-led political and military alliances. Quadrilateral Alliance, envisaged in 2007 is composed of

USA, Australia, Japan and India. It is not a military alliance per se but contains all the necessary ingredients to become one, whenever needed. India has been conducting joint naval exercises with the USA since the turn of the century named Exercise Malabar. Recently, these exercises have added Japan and Australia as newer members.

Joint training with friends is perfect and most countries have some type of joint training with friendly countries. It allows militaries to learn from each other's experience and uniqueness. But when joint trainings are conducted with a professed aim of "containing" another country, this turns threatening. Quad, as is referred to in diplomatic circles, is an alliance to contain China in the Indian and Pacific oceans. It is envisaged to expand its membership in nearly all countries in the Chinese neighbourhood like Vietnam, Thailand, and few Central Asian States. Indian motivation to join the Quad is to be taken a serious player in regional and global security architecture. This is a legitimate aim for any country as long as it can bear the cost.

For USA, this is a perfect arrangement as the Quad provides for low-cost solutions to containing China. This arrangement also allows for the growth of the American defence industry at the expense of member states. Friendship has never been more profitable. But while India kept playing on the American tunes, it forgot that to be taken seriously at a global level, one has to mend its relations with neighbours. Unfortunately, India's self-professed rise has had a strong shade of coerciveness towards its neighbours. Without going in detail, currently all borders of India are hot, as militaries like to describe it, except the tiny Himalayan state of Bhutan.

The fruits of India's economic rise have not reached the masses and India still has the largest population with no access to toilets and drinking water. Indian farmers shame their leaders by committing the highest number of suicides in the world. That's not how a shining and rising country looks like. India has a strategically advantageous location and has been

projecting this fondly. Its islands of Andaman and Nicobar guard the entrance to Indian Ocean from Pacific Ocean and overlooks sea lines of communications of China. India also has islands of Lakshadweep in the Arabian Sea that guard the sea lanes towards the Mediterranean and Persian Gulf.

Indian leadership has been keen to project itself as a potential counter to China. India's China rivalry is a product of India's overambitiousness and does not have any historical baggage as is the case with Pakistan. India is pegged to the idea of Akhand Bharat which is not only illusory but mythical. China does not have any similar mythical claims and is commanding global respect due to its economical and industrial rise. Galwan Valley debacle and loss of territory in various areas of the Indo-China border in the month of May-June 2020 is a serious blow to the global standing of India. It has many facets to highlight later. Let's deal with the most haunting of India's strategic fall from grace.

USA is looking for powerful nations to contain China. Japan and Australia fit nicely in this alliance. USA wanted to enhance the potency of the alliance. Indian military's defeat in the mountains of Ladakh would certainly force a rethink of American strategic designs in the region and would surely degrade Indian position and utility in the American eyes. Instead of bringing power to the alliance, India has proved to be a strategic liability for the alliance. An India, which can't defend its territorial integrity in a limited skirmish with China would surely pull the Quad alliance into an unnecessary showdown with China. USA would not like India to decide the future of American regional posture.

India was perfectly gaining weight and importance in the global community but its unilateral and illegal annexation of Kashmir in August 2019 has landed it into a strategic quicksand. The Galwan Valley debacle is the proverbial first drop of the rain of misery and setbacks and a bad omen.

The writer is security analyst based in Islamabad

Briefs

England Windies opener a new frontier for cricket

LONDON: It will be Test cricket but not as we've known it when England face the West Indies in the opening match of a "bio-secure" series at Southampton starting on Wednesday. With the coronavirus pandemic having brought the world game to a halt in March, there were fears this three-Test campaign might also fall victim to COVID-19.

But, with the West Indies agreeing to go ahead despite Britain's virus death toll of over 44,000 being the highest in Europe, the series is set to mark cricket's return from lockdown instead.

However, a number of anti-virus measures mean next week's match will look like few others in 143 years of Test-match history. For a start, both sides will be staying at on-site hotels at Southampton's Ageas Bowl and Old Trafford in Manchester - the venue for the second and third Tests - in a series originally scheduled for elsewhere in England in June. - APP

De Kock: S. African cricketer of the year

JOHANNESBURG: Limited-overs captain Quinton de Kock was on Saturday named South Africa's men's cricketer of the year for the second time. The left-handed De Kock, 27, was comfortably South Africa's best batsman in a year in which the national team won only one out of seven series across all formats.

Wicketkeeper-batsman De Kock was South Africa's leading run-scorer in five out of seven series and was the team's top scorer in nine out of 27 innings. But he said his highlight of the year was leading the one-day team to a 3-0 series win against Australia, the only series in which he did not play a prominent individual role.

De Kock was also named his country's Test cricketer of the year and the players' player of the year. Fast bowler Lungi Ngidi was the one-day international and Twenty20 international player of the year. - APP

Mexico becomes fifth-hardest hit country in pandemic

MEXICO CITY: Mexico's death toll from the new coronavirus rose to 30,366 Saturday, propelling it past France to become the country with the fifth-highest number of fatalities in the global pandemic, according to the health ministry. "As of today, 30,366 people who had tested positive for COVID-19 in the laboratory have died," Jose Luis Alomia, national director of the Department of Epidemiology of the Ministry of Health, told a press conference. The US remains the hardest-hit country in the world, followed by Brazil, Britain and Italy, according to an AFP tally of official figures. - APP

Iran reports record one day virus death toll

TEHRAN: Iranian health authorities on Sunday announced 163 new deaths due to the COVID-19 disease, the country's highest official one-day toll since the outbreak began in February. The previous record of 162 deaths was announced on Monday in the Islamic republic, which has been battling the Middle East's deadliest outbreak of the novel coronavirus. The new deaths bring the total toll in Iran to 11,571, health ministry spokeswoman Sima Sadat Lari said on state television. "In the past 24 hours, 2,560 people have tested positive for coronavirus, bringing the total number of infections to 240,438," Lari added. - APP



LONDON: Pakistani players getting ready for a practice match. - DNA

Turkish Cyprus announces guidelines for visitors

Students studying at the universities and equivalent schools in the TRNC will spend their quarantine period in dormitories designated by the administrations of their universities and will not be subject to any fee for quarantine

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The elements contained in the announcement made by the Ministry of Finance regarding the entry of non-TRNC citizens who have

residency, work or student permits into the TRNC are as follows, says website of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, in Islamabad. Non-TRNC citizens with residency, work or student permits, who enter

the TRNC will be subject to a mandatory 14-day quarantine; The cost of 14-day quarantine will be 4 thousand and 400 TL per person and will include boarding, accommodation as well as the PCR test that will be performed at

the end of the quarantine; The fee for the quarantine must be deposited into the TC Ziraat Bank account numbers listed below and a receipt of payment must be obtained; Subsequently, applications together with the receipt of

the payment as well as relevant documents (residency, work and student permits, foreign ID) must be submitted to the nearest TRNC Embassy / Representative Office/ Consulate by e-mail or WhatsApp numbers listed below;

Students studying at the universities and equivalent schools in the TRNC will spend their quarantine period in dormitories designated by the administrations of their universities and will not be subject to any fee for quarantine.

Pak secures top slot in Asia in IJF Fit Platform

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has occupied top slot in Asia and second in the world in the International Judo Federation's (IJF) Fit Platform, developed to motivate athletes across the world to remain fit during the ongoing lockdown period. The world game's governing body had launched the programme on May 22 in view of the prevailing situation. The platform offers an elite challenge, a test of resistance to judokas against elite athletes, their friends as well as against themselves.

As per ranking table Pakistan's 12 athletes took part in the programme and amassed a total of 33 Judo Fit points to stand at the top in Asia. Japan, from where 29 participants chipped in, finished second with 29 points, while India remained third with its 12 participants collecting 24 points. Overall in the world ranking, Mexico remained at the top as its 12 participants took 47 points. Pakistan, Japan and India finished second, third and fourth respectively. The programme involved various exercises of 60-second duration including kick ups, alligator jumps, reverse pushups, press ups, handstand press, uchikomis with elastic, pick up challenge, judo pushups, getup squats, sliding rock climbers, burpee and hold the judogi hang.

Meanwhile, Pakistan Judo Federation (PJF) has expressed satisfaction at Pakistan judokas fitness level stating that the way they were following workout plans was appreciable. "We've instructed all our affiliated units to ask their athletes participate in the IJF platform and show to the world what they can do. Juokas from our some units including Pakistan Army, Pakistan Navy, Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa took active part in the programme. We forwarded videos of their workouts to IJF, which highly appreciated their endeavours to keep themselves fit during these trying times," Masood Ahmed, vice president of PJF told APP on Sunday. - DNA

Beijing reports two new local corona cases

BEIJING: The Chinese capital reported two new locally transmitted COVID-19 cases on Saturday, marking the seventh consecutive day the city has seen a single-digit increase in cases, Beijing municipal health commission said on Sunday. The two new cases were both registered in Fengtai District. The infection total has risen to 334 since June 11, when the first case from the Xinfadi market cluster was detected. According to the municipal health commission, one

more patient recovered on Saturday, taking the total recoveries to 10, the commission said. As many as 29 asymptomatic people are currently under medical observation in the Chinese capital. Meanwhile, a total of eight new COVID-19 cases were reported on the Chinese mainland on Saturday including six from overseas, and two local transmissions in Beijing. There were no new deaths, the Chinese health authorities added. - APP

Man United put five past Bournemouth

DNA

MANCHESTER: Mason Greenwood scored twice in the Premier League for the first time as Manchester United came from behind to beat Bournemouth 5-2 and increase the Cherries' relegation worries. Greenwood, 18, equalised for the hosts after Junior Stanislas' shock 15th-minute opener before scoring United's fourth with a superb effort after half-time when he took on Diego Rico on the edge of the area and cut a right-footed

shot back across goal into the far corner. Marcus Rashford had put United 2-1 in front from the penalty spot and Anthony Martial then increased the advantage with a brilliant curling effort into the top corner just before the break. In an action-packed game, Joshua King pulled one back for Bournemouth with a penalty four minutes after the interval, but Eddie Howe's men crumbled to an eighth successive away defeat after Arnaut Danjuma had what would have been an equaliser disallowed for offside.

AFP, SAAF organizes online course

Veeramani Chidambaram, senior lecturer & Ria Lumintuarso, Director Area Development Centre, Jakarta, Indonesia delivered lectures

ISLAMABAD: Over 300 coaches and sports professionals are attending a three-day online seminar on Strength & Conditioning being organized by the Athletics Federation of Pakistan (AFP) and South Asian Athletic Federation (SAAF). On Sunday (the second day of the course) coaches and sports professionals from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Iran, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka took part in the seminar, said a press release issued here. Veeramani Chidambaram, senior lecturer from Singapore and Ria Lumintuarso, Director Area Development Centre, Jakarta, Indonesia delivered lectures on the second day's session. At the end of session, General Secretary of Afghanistan Athletic Federation, Rowina Amiri paid vote of thanks to the lecturers and organizers. The seminar will conclude on Monday. - APP

Kabaddi association elects new office bearers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Kabaddi Association (IKA) on Saturday elected its new office bearers for the term of next four years, as Mohammad Kamran Adil, Rao Mohammad Faisal and Haji Mohammad Sharif were unanimously elected as Chairman, President and General Secretary of IKA. House met at a local hotel that was also attended Secretary, Pakistan Kabaddi Federation (PKF) Rana Mohammad Sarwar while Mohammad Rizwan was present in the meeting as representative of Pakistan Olympic Association (POA). On this occasion, Rao Faisal thanked the House to him elect unopposed President and assured the house that all



possible steps would be taken for the promotion of Kabaddi in the federal capital.

Names of office bearers: Mohammad Kamran Adil (Chairman), Rao Mohammad Faisal (President),

Haji Mohammad Shareef (Secretary), Farhat Abbas Kazmi (Vice President), Chaudhary Mohammad

Sultan (Treasurer), Arslan Bablo and Mohammad Shahid Iqbal (Members of Executive Committee).

Dozens dead in Japan as heavy rain causes flood

TOKYO: About 34 people are either confirmed or feared dead - including 14 at a nursing home - after torrential rain in Japan triggered massive floods and mudslides, authorities said Sunday. Rescuers were searching for 14 others still missing after floods hit the Kumamoto region on the southwestern island of Kyushu, destroying houses, sweeping away vehicles and causing bridges to collapse. The regional government confirmed 18 people had died, while another 16 were declared in a state of

"cardio-respiratory arrest" - a term often used in Japan before a doctor officially certifies death. Fourteen of those feared dead were at a nursing home inundated when local rivers broke their banks. Emergency services rescued 50 people from the facility. "Tables and sofas were floating around and you could not move," an official, who helped lead rescue efforts at the home where his wheelchair-bound elderly mother was among the victims, told private TV network JNN. Japan almost always suf-

fers from flooding during its rainy season but rescue and evacuation efforts this year have been further complicated by the coronavirus outbreak. Authorities at emergency shelters made evacuees wash their hands, wear masks and maintain social distance to avoid the virus adding to the problems. "We will do our utmost to prevent the spread of the infection and make the lives of those who had to flee their home as comfortable as possible," Disaster Management Minister Ryota

Takeda told reporters after visiting a gymnasium in Hitoyoshi city where 600 residents are sheltering. At a cabinet-level meeting in Tokyo on the disaster, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe pledged financial support, while warning residents in Kumamoto to brace for more rain. "As we speak, more than 40,000 personnel from police, fire, coast guard and Self-Defence troops are conducting search and rescue operations which will continue through the night," Abe said. - APP

German envoy advocates cycling in Pakistan

From Page 01

He also praised the Federal Government and Special Assistant to the prime minister Sayed Zulfikar Abbas Bukhari for taking special interest in promoting environmental-friendly mobility models in Islamabad and elsewhere in Pakistan. "This realization and initiatives are certainly going to help enhance number of pedalers across the country" he hoped. Replying to a question about how to motivate the people for cycling, the ambassador said, pol-

iticians had a particular responsibility here to create awareness among masses about the benefits of bicycling. The government and public administration's hands should be strengthened to encourage people to adopt such activities for health reasons at least. The envoy also pointed out limitation of using a bicycle as an official routine transportation mode, the idea pleaded in Pakistan's social media and said, "If the President of Pakistan is receiving you for submitting Ambassadorial creden-

tials, you would not appear at the President House on a bike, would you? There are also security aspects to be considered. And courtesy and hygiene require you won't enter Parliament or Ministries with sweating body. So, it's a matter of prudent consideration." Bernhard also shared his pride-ride, his grandfather's 80-year old bicycle, which he owns and said "Whenever possible I take my bike to go to Foreign Ministry, located not that far from the German Embassy. It's always

both a bit cumbersome and funny to convince the MFA guards to let me in, but we usually share a good laugh and they used to inquire about my bicycle which is indeed quite old, whether it is from Pakistan and where I bought it. In fact, it's from Germany. I have been owning this treasure for almost 40 years and used it in Moscow, Rome, Africa, and now in Islamabad. I think it's great piece to link with my biography and responsibilities here as German Ambassador to Pakistan.

Bayern win record 20th German cup

Lewandowski's two goals - which took the Poland international to 51 in 44 games this season for Bayern - were both brilliant

DNA

MUNICH: Robert Lewandowski passed 50 goals for the season as Bayern Munich beat Bayer Leverkusen to win a record 20th German Cup and 13th domestic double.

David Alaba's free-kick put them ahead and Serge Gnabry added a second, before Lewandowski's long-range shot was fumbled in by Lukas Hradecky. Sven Bender's header gave Leverkusen hope but Lewandowski's delicate dink put the result beyond doubt. Kai Havertz scored a penalty with the last kick for Leverkusen.

Bayern Munich have set a new club record of 26 games unbeaten, only drawing once in that run since December. Their run of 17 straight wins is also a Bayern record. They were deserved winners at the empty Olympic Stadium in Berlin. Leverkusen had them on the ropes for about 20 minutes after making it 3-1, but Bayern saw it out. Lewandowski's two goals - which took the Poland international to 51 in 44 games this season for Bayern - were both brilliant.

For the first, he controlled a long Manuel Neuer kick before shooting from at least 30 yards, with the goalkeeper spilling his shot over the line. His second, which ended Leverkusen's hopes, was a wonderful chip over Hradecky.

Briefs

Portugal slams UK's quarantine decision

DNA

LISBON: The Portuguese government has denounced the British government's decision not to lift quarantine for people traveling from mainland Portugal as "absurd" and "senseless," saying the UK has seven times more coronavirus cases than it does.

Augusto Santos Silva, the country's Minister of Foreign Affairs, said Portugal was "very disappointed" to have been excluded from a list of countries from which travelers will be exempt from spending two weeks in isolation after arriving in England. The exemption list, which was published by the UK government on Friday and will come into effect on July 10, includes 59 states and 14 British Overseas Territories.

Speaking to media on Friday, Santos Silva said: "We are very disappointed with this decision of the British authorities. We think it's senseless and unfair. It's quite absurd."

Satellite-carrying rocket 'lost' after launch

WELLINGTON: A commercial rocket carrying seven satellites was "lost" after take-off Sunday from a New Zealand launch pad, the owner Rocket Lab said.

"We lost the flight late into the mission," Peter Beck, Rocket Lab's founder and chief executive, tweeted. "I am incredibly sorry that we failed to deliver our customers' satellites today. Rest assured we will find the issue, correct it and be back on the pad soon." Rocket Lab lists itself as a US company with headquarters at a wholly-owned New Zealand subsidiary and specialises in delivering small satellites to low Earth orbit. — APP

Trump orders creation of 'national heroes' garden

DNA

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has ordered the creation of a "National Garden of American Heroes" to defend what he calls "our great national story" against those who vandalise statues. His executive order gives a new task force 60 days to present plans, including a location, for the garden.

He insists the new statues must be lifelike, "not abstract or modernist". A number of US statues have been pulled down since the police killing of an unarmed black man, George Floyd in May. Monuments linked to the slave-owning Confederacy during the Civil War in America have been especially targeted in the nationwide protests ignited by the death of Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota, after a white police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes.

EU-funded UNDP initiative in Yemen wins awards

UNDP Yemen is our first ever winner for energy in a humanitarian setting and we were especially inspired by the empowered role the women have in the ownership of the community microgrids," says Harriet Lamb, CEO of Ashden

DNA

BRUSSELS: A United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Yemen project that addresses solar power needs and provides solutions and hope for three frontline conflict communities has been announced as the winner of the acclaimed Ashden Awards for Humanitarian Energy.

"UNDP Yemen is our first ever winner for energy in a humanitarian setting and we were especially inspired by the empowered role the women have in the ownership

of the community microgrids," says Harriet Lamb, CEO of Ashden UNDP Yemen has been recognized as one of the world's most practical and scalable low carbon innovators and was among 11 winners selected from over 200 global applications in the areas of creating resilience, green growth, and fairer societies.

As part of a UNDP-managed joint project, the Enhanced Rural Resilience in Yemen (ERRY), the initiative addresses two major issues for the communities of Hajjah and Lahj: access to affordable and sustainable energy and providing sustainable



income to Yemen's most vulnerable population, women and youth. Cutting the cost of energy by 65 per cent, UNDP has worked with

the women and youth to train, develop and manage micro-grid businesses to help electrify their communities one home and business at a time.

"Community-owned solar microgrids are an ideal low carbon energy solution in any circumstance but is even more powerful given the conflict and ongoing hardship in Yemen," says Harriet Lamb, CEO of Ashden.

The project has helped 2,100 people gain access to disposable income and 10,000 people with access to sustainable energy. In a country where women do not

enjoy equal status, especially in the realm of work, this not only provides them with an opportunity to provide their families with food, shelter, medicine and other vital supplies, it allows them to have a voice in community decision making and to gain community respect. Rural women launching their own business is a remarkably rare undertaking in the country.

"The project was not easy to get off the ground," says Project Lead, Eman Hadi. "We went through a lot to establish this project because of the perspective Yemenis have on working women," she indicated.

Indian aggression halts \$37b potential trade: APBF

DNA

LAHORE: The All Pakistan Business Forum President Syed Maaz Mahmood has urged the international community to accord serious attention to the violation of human rights in Occupied Kashmir, as consistent Indian attempts to escalate the situation along the LoC is a major hurdle to exploit the two countries' bilateral trade potential of \$37 billion and prosperity of the subcontinent. Since August 2019, the formal trade between the two countries, estimated at \$2 billion through formal channels and also tilted in favour of India, was suspended only because of India, which revoked Jammu & Kashmir's special status.

Turkish defence minister, military chief visit Libya

Hulusi Akar and Yasar Guler hold talks with Fayez al-Sarraj, head of UN-recognised government in Tripoli

DNA

ANKARA: Libya's United Nations-recognised government based in Tripoli has said Turkey's defence minister and military chief have visited the war-torn Libyan capital. It is the second visit in weeks by a minister from Turkey, the main international backer of the Government of National Accord (GNA).

Defence Minister Hulusi Akar and Chief of General Staff Yasar Guler discussed "military and security cooperation" with the head of the GNA, Fayez al-Sarraj, and military officials, the GNA said.



According to the Turkish state media, Akar reiterated in the meeting Tur-

key's support for Libyan people to ensure they live "comfortably, happier and

more confidently". "I want you to know that we are with you today

and tomorrow, and will do whatever it requires for our Libyan brothers under the instructions of our president," Akar said.

Akar and Guler also went to the Defence Security Cooperation and Training Assistance Advisory Command, which was created within the scope of a military cooperation agreement signed last year between Turkey and Libya. The two met Turkish and Libyan soldiers.

"Turkish support [for the GNA] continues in the areas of military and security cooperation," said Salah Namrush, GNA's deputy defence minister, in a statement.

Hong Kong man accused of 'terrorism'

DOHA: A man carrying a "Liberate Hong Kong" sign as he drove a motorcycle into police at a protest against the territory's Chinese rulers has become the first person to be charged with inciting secession and "terrorism" under a new national security law. Beijing imposed the legislation on the former British territory earlier this week despite protests from Hong Kong residents and Western nations. Critics say the law - which punishes crimes of secession, subversion, "terrorism" and collusion with foreign forces with up to life in prison - is aimed at crushing dissent and a long-running campaign for greater democracy in the major financial hub. Police say 23-year-old Tong Ying-kit rammed into and injured some officers at an illegal protest on Wednesday. A video online showed a motorbike knocking over several officers on a narrow street before the driver falls over and is arrested.

Tong, who was hospitalised after the incident, was charged less than 24 hours after the city government said the slogan he was carrying - "Liberate Hong Kong, revolution of our times" - connotes secession or subversion under the new law. The rallying cry appears on placards, T-shirts, and post-it notes stuck to walls around Hong Kong. — DNA

Huawei and GIK join hands

FIAZ CHAUDHRY

ISLAMABAD: Through the medium of a remote virtual event, Huawei Pakistan and the Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology (GIK) formalized their industry-academia partnership. Both parties took part in an official signing ceremony, with the event solidifying the creation of a four year BS degree in Artificial Intelligence partnered by Huawei.

laboration, GIK, with Huawei's support, has designed the curriculum, theory, and lab courses. GIK will be authorized to use Huawei AI learning resources under the qualified instructors who will be enabled through the "Train the Trainer" program. Through this process, it is planned that the students will learn theory, gain practical experience with a global outlook, have their Huawei career certifications, and be granted ample job opportunities.

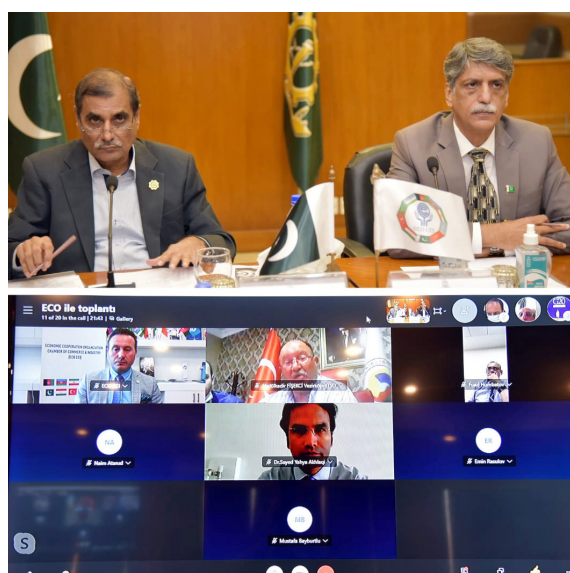


The program is the first such partnership and serves as a milestone in an already successful four-year-long partnership that started with the establishment of the Huawei ICT Academy at GIK in 2016. GIK is known throughout the country as a prestigious institution for studies in engineering, and Huawei Technologies leads the world in the ICT industry. In the nature of this col-

The event was attended by leading figures within both Huawei and GIK like Mr. Farid Rahman, President GIK Board of Governors and SOPREST, Mr. Jehangir Bashir, Rector GIK, Mr. Shakil Durrani, Executive Director, SOPREST, Mr. Mark Meng, CEO Huawei Pakistan and Mr. SpaceLee, VP Huawei Middle East, along with other esteemed members from both sides.

Minimize transaction costs is the real challenge of trade facilitation

The Specialized Committee Meeting of Trade Facilitation of ECO Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ECO-CCI) was held via video link and attended by representatives of the Chambers of Commerce & Industry of member countries



DNA

KARACHI: The Specialized Committee Meeting of Trade Facilitation of ECO Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ECO-CCI) was held via video link and at-

tended by representatives of the Chambers of Commerce & Industry of member countries including Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kyrgyz Republic, Turkey, Uzbekistan and Pakistan and ECO Secretariat. The meeting was pre-

sided over by Mr. Amjad Rafi, Chairman National Committee of ECO-CCI (Pakistan Chapter) and Chairman Specialized Committee of Trade Facilitation and Shaikh Sultan Rehman, Vice President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) also attended the meeting from Pakistan.

While chairing the meeting, Mr. Amjad Rafi Chairman stated that the real challenge of trade facilitation is to minimize transaction costs and the complexity of international trade for businesses, without compromising efficient and effective levels of collection of customs revenues and other border controls. He also highlighted the pandemic situation and measures taken by the Government to minimize the risk for trade and industry. He also discussed in details the issues related to region-

al cooperation, trade cost, ECO visa sticker scheme, intra-ECO investment, exchange of knowledge, tariff rationalization, implementation of ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA), ECO Trade Fair, ECO exhibition, technological transformation, joint ventures, promotion of barter trade and opening of border gates, implementation of ECO trade transit agreement etc. Shaikh Sultan Rehman, Vice President FPCCI emphasized on promotion of intraregional trade and investment among the ECO countries.

He pointed out that intra ECO trade is very low: 7-8 percent while the Intra-regional trade of other trading blocs is more than 50 percent; for example in EU it is 55% and 58% in NAFTA. Dr. Syed Yahya Akhlaq, Deputy Secretary General ECO Secretariat also updated the status of implementation of ECOTA.

WHO halts hydroxy-chloroquine trials

DNA

GENEVA: The World Health Organisation (WHO) has said it was discontinuing its trials of the hydroxychloroquine and combination HIV drug lopinavir/ritonavir in hospitalised patients with COVID-19 after the medicines failed to reduce mortality.

The setback came as the WHO also reported more than 200,000 new cases globally of the disease for the first time in a single day.

"These interim trial results show that hydroxychloroquine and lopinavir/ritonavir produce little or no reduction in the mortality of hospitalised COVID-19 patients when compared to standard of care. Solidarity trial investigators will interrupt the trials with immediate effect," the WHO said in a statement, referring to large multicountry trials that the agency is leading.

New tourist zone being opened in Baku, Azerbaijan

DNA

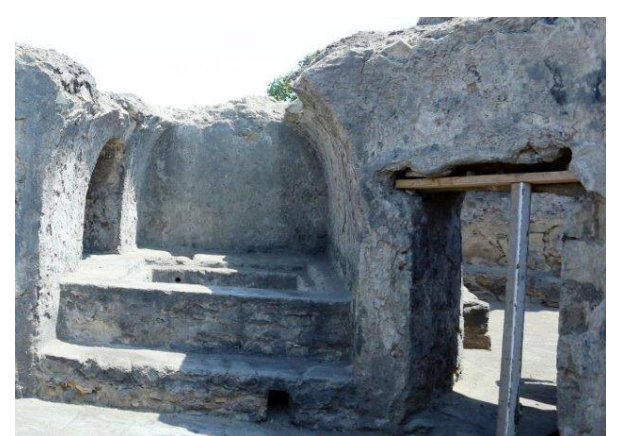
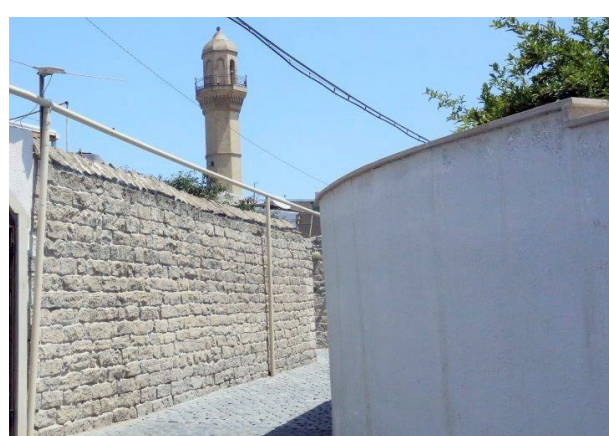
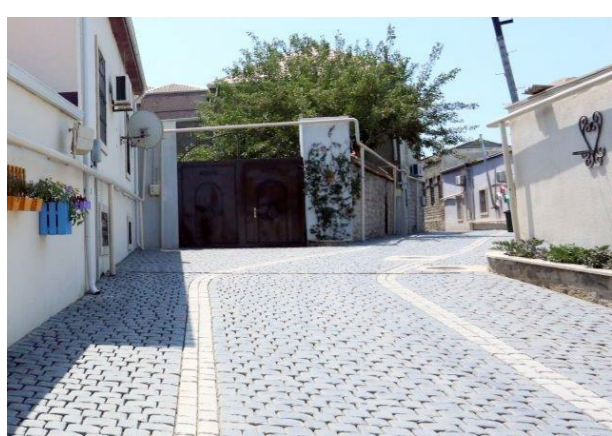
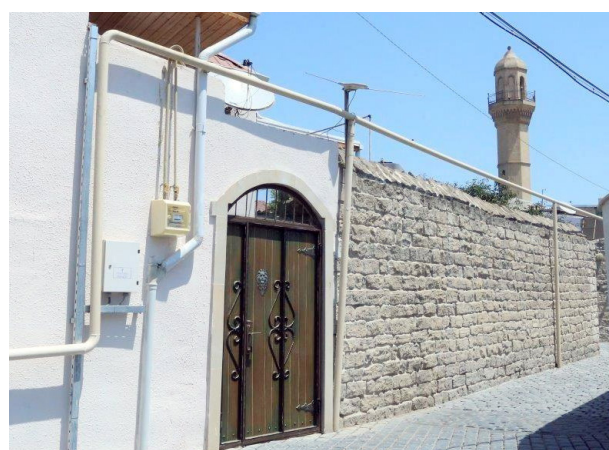
BAKU: The Small and Medium Business Development Agency of Azerbaijan intends to cooperate with the State Tourism Agency and Baku Maintenance Service LLC to turn Baku's Balakhani village into a new tourist zone.

Chairman of the Board of the Agency Orkhan Mammadov, Director of the State Tourism Agency Fuad Naghiyev and director of Baku Maintenance Service LLC Binnatali Gasimov got acquainted with the improvement work carried out in Balakhani on July 3, the tourist opportunities of the village. They also discussed upcoming measures in the framework of cooperation.

The State Tourism Agency will provide the necessary support for the creation of the center, and the Small and Medium Business Development Agency will promote the creation of new business entities for providing services and trade, and implementing business initiatives in this field. Baku Maintenance Service LLC will expand improvement measures in this village.

As a tourist attraction, Balakhani village will serve both for local and foreign tourists. This will create additional opportunities for local residents.

Balakhani village is rich in historical and cultural monuments. The village has also opportunities for developing the entrepreneurship. It is possible to create about 100 small job places in the village. It is also proposed to develop a concept paper in order to effectively organize activities to turn Balakhani into a touristic zone. Courtesy Trend news.



Briefs

UN urged to prevent Houthi oil 'disaster'

DNA

AL-MUKALLA: Yemen's government has urged the UN Security Council to intervene to prevent a derelict tanker from leaking more than a million barrels of oil into the Red Sea. The FSO Safer has been moored 7 km off the coast of Yemen since 1988. The vessel fell into the hands of Iran-backed Houthi militias in March 2015, when they took control of the coast around the port city of Hodeidah. The Houthis have refused for more than 5 years to allow international engineers to board the Safer to carry out essential repairs, and as the vessel's condition deteriorates there are fears that the 1.4 million barrels of oil it contains will start to seep out. An oil leak from the Safer's tanks would be "one of the biggest environmental disasters in the region and the world," Yemen's Foreign Minister Mohammed Al-Hadrami told Christoph Heugens, Germany's permanent representative at the UN and president of the Security Council.

New UAE govt structure unfurled

DNA

ABU DHABI: The new UAE government structure approved and announced by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai has been revealed. Sheikh Mohammed started the announcement saying, "Brothers and sisters, after consulting with my brother Mohamed bin Zayed, may God preserve him, who blessed the new structure of the government and directed to use all resources to preserve our gains ... and accelerate the development process in our country..." He added that UAE would be "canceling 50% of government service centers and converting them to digital platforms within two years while merging about 50% of federal agencies with each other or within ministries creating new government ministerial positions".

Lockdown ordered for 200,000 in Spain

DNA

MADRID: Authorities ordered a new lockdown for 200,000 people in Lleida province of northeastern Spain on Saturday due to outbreaks of Covid-19 there, the first confinement order since the nation's state of emergency was lifted on June 21. "We've decided to implement perimeter controls around Segri (county) in response to data that confirm significant growth in the number of Covid-19 cases," Catalan regional president Quim Torra announced at a press conference. The confinement started at midday Saturday and includes the provincial capital of Lleida. It will be enforced by 24 police checkpoints around the county's perimeter, preventing movement in and out, except for work or to care for people with special needs, two Catalan government spokesmen told CNN.

More than 160 killed in Ethiopia

ADDIS ABABA: At least 166 people have died during violent demonstrations that roiled Ethiopia in the days following the murder of popular singer Haacaaluu Hundeessa, police said. "In the aftermath of Hachalu's death, 145 civilians and 11 security forces have lost their lives in the unrest in the region," said Girma Gelam, deputy police commissioner of Oromia region, in a statement on the state-affiliated Fana Broadcasting Corporation on Saturday. — DNA

18th Amend can be improved with a review: President Alvi

One must be clear that the coronavirus does not spread from animals. He said that if social gatherings are held during Eid-ul-Azha, then the risk of the spread of the infection will be high

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Arif Alvi has said the 18th amendment which gives power to the provinces, a law and just like any other law, can be reviewed and changed. The president was speaking in an interview to a private news channel where he said that talks between the federal government and provinces have taken place on the issue between the federation and provinces. "Gradually as our economy improves, which is under pressure from the coronavirus as well, an agreement will be reached [between Centre and provinces] on which province should get what slice of the cake," he

added. "When the situation is 'tight', then disagreements on distribution of income take place even in a household or a family." "There are always disagreements and differences between the government and the provinces. These have been there since independence. The 18th amendment is a law and just like any other law, it can be reviewed and changed," he said, adding that the move should be done with harmony. In response to the Sindh government's decision to not collect withholding tax for the Centre, President Alvi said that the strained economy was to blame for the issues between the federal government and provinces. "There has never been a



discussion to shelve the issues of Sindh government," the president said. When asked about the recent sugar and wheat scandals that had come to light, the president said that corruption had always been present in the country. He said that if the incumbent

government had let corruption continue as it been allowed to fester previously, then all the institutions would end up with the same fate as the Pakistan Steel Mills. "Reports of investigations [sugar, wheat] along with reports of the last four

plane crashes had never been presented [before]. The government opened the investigation [into PIA] knowing its cost. I believe those responsible should be removed. Heads should be removed," he added. Responding to a question about reports of pressure on the bureaucracy amid investigations by NAB, President Alvi said there were only five cases against bureaucrats out of the 1,300 cases in total being probe by the anti-graft body. "NAB's laws are satisfactory and those who have an issue with them can file a petition against the Bureau," he said, adding that investigations should be done into the Malam Jabba, Billion Tree, BRT and other plans as well.

When asked why Jahangir Tareen Khan, a senior PTI leader and one of the accused in the sugar scandal had left the country, President Alvi said the government had not sent him abroad. "I think he will come back and defend himself," he said. Talking about the spread of the coronavirus pandemic and precautions needed to stem it spreads as the country gears up to celebrate Eid-ul-Azha, the president said there should be an ijtemai sacrifice. The president said that one must be clear that the coronavirus does not spread from animals. He said that if social gatherings are held during Eid-ul-Azha, then the risk of the spread of the infection will be high.

SCO Varsity plays important role i: Secy Gen

Vladimir Norov said that he is confident that SCO University presidents summed up the member states' consolidated experience in distance learning

DNA

BEIJING: Secretary General, Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Vladimir Norov has said that SCO University plays an important role in training highly qualified professionals for jobs that are of priority interest for the economic and social development of the SCO member states and promoting integration processes in education, science and technologies. "Since its establishment, SCO University has become an efficient platform for promoting cooperation in higher education across the SCO, strengthening inter-university links and honing methods to implement joint multilateral educational projects," he said while attending first meeting of the SCO University Coordinating Council held recently via video conference. Currently, during the coronavirus pandemic, education institutions are partly or completely closed in the majority of the SCO member states and many students are studying remotely. "Closing universities, colleges and schools as well as the emergency shift to online education have caused certain problems that pose a serious challenge to the education system during this crisis. "At the same time, the new format opens up a wide range of opportunities and prospects for changing and improving our education systems. "Distance learning has every chance of making a big breakthrough," the Secretary-General said. Vladimir Norov said that he is confident that SCO University presidents summed up the member states' consolidated experience in distance learning and will develop proposals for the draft SCO member states' cooperation project in this area while SCO University would become a reliable platform for it.



KABUL: Dr. Abdullah Abdullah Chief Executive of Afghanistan in a meeting with Pakistan ambassador, Z. Nasrullah Khan. They discussed the peace process & regional engagements toward a comprehensive settlement. Dr. Abdullah thanked Pakistan ambassador for the official invitation extended to visit Pakistan at an opportune time. — DNA

Pakistan committed to SAARC's objectives: PM

PM Imran congratulated veteran trade leader Iftikhar Ali Malik on assuming the office

DNA

LAHORE: Prime Minister Imran Khan Sunday said Pakistan attaches great importance to South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and remained committed to its principles and objectives of its Charter. In his message, Prime Minister Imran Khan congratulated veteran trade leader Iftikhar Ali Malik assuming the office of President of SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the span of two years and termed his appointment brought laurel for the country. He expressed the hope that Iftikhar Ali Malik is a seasoned veteran trade leader and would utilize his best abilities to bring closer the SAARC member states be-

sides promoting regional trade. He said Pakistan had always strived to make the regional body a vibrant vehicle for mutual cooperation based on the principle of sovereign equality. He said that SAARC had immense potential for strengthening the economies of the member countries and to promote collaboration in various areas of mutual significance. "The organisation needs to work towards achieving economic, cultural and social growth of the region," he said, calling for increased level of connectivity among the SAARC member states for a prosperous region. Iftikhar Malik thanked Prime Minister for his congratulation and conveyed his message to Imran Khan

that he would do his best to promote regional trade and Pakistan had advanced its belief that a secure and peaceful environment in South Asia was crucial for the advancement of region's development and prosperity. He assured that he would play a positive role in further strengthening regional cooperation. He said holding position of President of SAARC CCI meant renewing impetus amongst the member states and therefore was significant. Iftikhar Malik said Pakistan had all resources to become an economic giant but only need is to set directions with zeal, courage and sincerity. He said Pakistan's huge mineral resources could help get rid of the economic ills.

48 doctors in Punjab resign

DNA

LAHORE: As Punjab the worst hit province of Pakistan grapple with coronavirus 48 doctors in Punjab teaching hospitals have resigned. 32 doctors were from Lahore among those 48 who have resigned from their jobs. The Department of Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education has issued a notification of resignation in this regard. The resigning doctors include 14 from Mayo Hospital, 6 from Children's Hospital, 3 from General Hospital, 2 from Services and 2 from Lady Aitchison. Besides, two doctors from Government Nawaz Sharif Yaki Gate Hospital have resigned.

'Beijing hybrid wheat benchmark of Pak-China agri cooperation'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Beijing hybrid wheat promoted in Pakistan was going to become a benchmark project for agricultural cooperation under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), says a report. In the context of Sino-Pak cooperation in the agriculture sector, China's Guard Agri. Company last week sent a letter to Beijing Academy of Agriculture and Forestry Sciences, stating that they are looking for further cooperation particularly on an expanding its planting area in 2020-2021. This project not only benefits Pakistani enterprises but would also alleviate food crisis in the country. "Therefore, we



are enthusiastically seeking cooperation, hoping that China would provide seeds to support the plantation of Beijing hybrid wheat in 2020-2021," the letter said. Dr. Zhang Shengquan, Beijing Academy of Agriculture and Forestry Sciences/ Beijing Hybrid Wheat Engineering and Technology Research Center told Gwadar Pro that this year, China will also support the promotion of Beijing hybrid wheat in

Pakistan, and provide adequate seeds as well. If the experiment goes well, the hybrid wheat will come onto the Pakistani market on a large-scale next year. 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.

Pakistani students join poverty relief program in China

They students travelled to a livestock farm operated by the Chinese government to improve the livelihood of underprivileged people

DNA

HANZHONG (CHINA): Pakistani students joined poverty relief program in China, with the spirit of promoting goodwill between the two brother countries as well as to learn from the Chinese experience for improving the living conditions of low-income group. They along with the other international students shared knowledge on agricultural techniques with local farmers to get maximum output of their hard work for a better life. According to a report published by Gwadar Pro on

Saturday, helping farmers get rid of poverty by agricultural industrialization is an important way of China's poverty relief. Now, China is approaching its target of eliminating absolute poverty by the end of 2020. "Our trip to agriculture fields made us get more understanding of the Chinese government's excellent strategies. "I will try to imply those in my country Pakistan," said Rahat Sharif, a Pakistani student in China, after joining a poverty alleviation program here. Rahat Sharif and Abdul Ghaffar Shar, two Pakistani students, along with other



students of the China's Northwest Agriculture and Forestry University (NWA-FU) made a short research visit to Zhenba County, Shaanxi Province last week.

"This activity is an opportunity for the international students to learn more about China. It is also good for promoting the people-to-people connectivity,"

according to Cheng Shanzhi, the office administrator of CIE in NWA-FU. They used their professional knowledge to help the local farmers improve agricultural production and get rid of poverty soon. They students travelled to a livestock farm operated by the Chinese government to improve the livelihood of underprivileged people. Sharif said, "Life is not easy there but the government has managed to provide them with all the daily necessities. Our visit also has done good for them because members of our team shared some useful safety tips with them to keep the

farm animals healthy and in good conditions." They also visited a local vegetable farm where Sharif gave briefings to the local potato farmers about the potato's cultivation and harvesting. During the talk, the farmers asked him about the management of potato diseases and how to increase the overall production with minimum inputs. Abdul Ghaffar Shar, researching plant nutrition for his doctoral degree, makes a training on tea plant's fertilization and nutrient uptake for workers of a local agricultural company, the report added.

Rangers arrest 3 men

DNA

KARACHI: The Pakistan Rangers, Sindh on Sunday claimed to have arrested three men for their alleged involvement in the murder of a shopkeeper during a robbery bid in Karachi. The suspects had shot dead the shopkeeper when he resisted their attempt to rob him of his cash at a shop in Qasba Colony. One of the suspects, Ashar was arrested from Jamshed Town. Following information provided him, the Rangers arrested the rest. Arsalan alias Kala was taken under arrest in Lines Area while Asghar was arrested in Qasba Colony. They will be turned over to local police for further investigation into the matter.