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CPEC has boosted Pakistan economy, says Zhao Lijian

Shehbaz Sharif warns against media curbs

Sindh govt did not release genuine report: Shibli



Briefs

President pays tribute to Kargil heroes

STAFF REPORT
ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi has paid rich tribute to all the martyrs including Captain Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed, Nishan-e-Haider and Havaladar Lalak Jan Shaheed, Nishan-e-Haider. He said today is the day to remember our heroes, who laid down their lives in the defense of their motherland. The President said that the entire nation presents salute to their brave sons. He also prayed for higher ranks of the martyrs.

Pak offers condolences to Turkey

STAFF REPORT
ISLAMABAD: The government and people of Pakistan would like to convey their heartfelt condolences to the government and people of Turkey on the loss of lives and injuries to many as a result of explosion at the fireworks factory in the Sakarya province. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan expressed these condolences on Tuesday. The Ministry spokesperson said, our thoughts and prayers are with the victims of this tragedy and their families. We also pray for the quickest recovery of the injured. As always we share the pain of our Turkish brothers and sisters and stand by them in this hour of grief.

Arshad Malik appointed as PIA CEO

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Federal cabinet on Tuesday has approved the appointment of Air Marshal Arshad Malik as Chief Executive of the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA). The federal cabinet meeting presided over by Prime Minister Imran Khan appointed Air Marshal Arshad Malik as the PIA chief executive for another three years. Now, even after he retires from the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) on July 12, Air Marshal Arshad Malik will serve as PIA chief executive for another three years. The cabinet meeting was also briefed on the issue of fake degrees. It was informed during the meeting that such pilots have been grounded cabinet directed to complete the probe into the suspicious degrees of the pilots as soon as possible.

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CPEC has boosted Pak economy

CPEC followed principles of joint consultations, cooperation and shared benefits. The flagship project was aimed to promote shared development of China and Pakistan: Zhao Lijian

DNA

BEIJING: China on Tuesday appreciated Prime Minister Imran Khan remarks about China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and said that it had boosted Pakistan economic and social development, people wellbeing and regional connectivity. "We agree with Prime Minister Imran Khan comments on the CPEC. There has been a major progress and it has boosted Pakistan economic and social development, peo-

ple wellbeing and regional connectivity," Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian said during his regular briefing held here. PM Khan has recently remarked that the CPEC would take Pakistan on the path of rapid progress and development as its economic future was related to the completion of various energy and infrastructure projects. Zhao Lijian said the CPEC followed principles of joint consultations, cooperation and shared benefits. As the CPEC important pilot program of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the flagship project was aimed to promote shared development of China and Pakistan, he added. The spokesperson said, six years since it was launched, there had been major progress and it had boosted Pakistan economic and social development, people wellbeing and regional connectivity. "China will firmly support the CPEC development and work together with Pakistan to implement our leaders consensus," he added.

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Sindh govt did not release genuine report

Federal Information Minister says Kargil heroes paid homage on martyrdom anniversary

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Shibli Faraz has said the PTI government has come to power to take forward the country and rid it of elements doing politics for vested interests. Addressing a news conference in Islamabad (Tuesday) along with Minister for Maritime Affairs Ali Zaidi, he said these are the elements who pushed the country backward and patronized the gangs. In his remarks, Ali Zaidi said the aim of present government is to put the country on the right track. He said the Sindh government has not released the genuine report of JIT on



Uzair Baloch. He said the original JIT report carrying the signatures of its members on every page except the representative of Sindh government carries six names of PPP leaders who patronized Uzair Baloch. He said the report released by the provincial government does not mention as to on whose instructions

Pakistan, China laud Kabul, Taliban efforts

Three sides agreed to enhance cooperation

ISLAMABAD: The 3rd round China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Vice Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue was held via video link. Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Luo Zhaoxui, Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister Mirwais Nab and Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood co-chaired the dialogue. According to a press statement issued by the office of Foreign Office spokesperson, the three sides conducted in-depth discussions and reached consensus on cooperation against COVID-19, the Afghan peace and reconciliation process, and trilateral cooperation. – DNA

'Ali Zaidi has no official documents'

No such documents were given to the Sindh govt

KARACHI: Spokesperson of Sindh government Murtaza Wahab has criticized Ali zaidi and said that he has lied as he has no official documents. Spokesperson of Sindh government Murtaza Wahab has termed the press conference of government ministers a waste of time. He said that we have fulfilled our promise by issuing Joint Investigation Team (JIT) reports. Responding to the press conference of Federal Ministers Ali Zaidi and Shibli Faraz, he asked that who those people are giving these documents to the Federal Minister of Maritime Affairs. – DNA

COVID-19: Pak engineer lauds Chinese govt efforts

"However, I think this policy is 100 percent correct. It effectively controlled the spread of the virus and ensured that everyone was in a safe state. I think that is what it means to fight the epidemic," said Khan

DNA

BEIJING: A Pakistani engineer living in China lauded the Chinese government's efforts to curb COVID-19, setting a model before the World as how to deal with the pandemic. "I am very impressed by the efforts shown by the Chinese government during the pandemic. No country has been able to attach the same importance to the life of every ordinary person," said Rafiq Khan, a Pakistani who witnessed the COVID-19 pandemic in China. Rafiq Khan, an engineer, has been working at CRRC Zhuzhou Locomotive Co., Ltd. (ZELC) in Hunan

Province, China since 2017. When recalling the fight against the pandemic, Khan thinks that the measures taken by the Chinese government are particularly useful. "Nevertheless, it is not perfect in the eyes of the western; however, it is not what their media reported," Khan told Gwadar Pro. "I think it is safer to stay in China than in the other countries," he added. Khan said Zhuzhou City was closed in January. At the beginning, people were particularly uncomfortable with the situation, because they could not go anywhere they wanted. The restaurants they often dined at to were closed down. They even could not visit their friends as usual.



"However, I think this policy is 100 percent correct. It effectively controlled the spread of the virus and ensured that everyone was in a safe state. I think that is what it means to fight the epidemic," said



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan chair meeting of the Federal Cabinet. – DNA

A PIA's New York hotel not being privatised

SHAHEEN QURESHI

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan International Airlines' (PIA) Roosevelt Hotel, located in New York, is not being privatised, a federal law officer informed the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday. IHC Justice Amir Farooq was hearing a petition against the reported government plans to privatise the national flag carrier's asset in the heart of global commercial and tourism hub. The deputy attorney general stated before the judge that Roosevelt Hotel is not being privatised. The chief justice asked him whether he wanted to submit a written response to the petition, to which he replied that he needed some time to seek instructions in this regard from the government.

'PTI has an anti-education agenda'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Tuesday alleged that the agenda of the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is anti-education. The PPP chairman took to the social media website Twitter and said that the ruling party's consistent assault on Higher Education Commission (HEC) funding is having very real consequences at a time medical universities are at the front-line battling Covid-19. He said that the PTI has cut HEC funding in last budget and refused to significantly raise funding in this year's budget. Bilawal went on to say that the cut in the funding of the HEC would lead to the increase in the students' fees while the staff salaries will be cut and eventually some universities will be forced to shut. Further lashing out at the PTL, the PPP chairman said that the ruling party should be ashamed on its anti-education agenda, adding that they haven't even bothered to support medical universities and teaching hospitals during a global pandemic.

WHO glad Pakistan viruses cases dropping

Pakistan's smart lockdown was imposed on June 17, when there were 160,118 cases in the country. Around that time, between 4,000 to 5,000 cases were being reported daily

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The World Health Organisation has appreciated Pakistan's effort to control the spread of coronavirus. "WHO is glad to see that cases in Pakistan have been in decline since early June and we appreciate your strong surveillance efforts

to fight the pandemic," said WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus in a Twitter post. Pakistan's smart lockdown was imposed on June 17, when there were 160,118 cases in the country. Around that time, between 4,000 to 5,000 cases were being reported daily. As of July 6, the COVID-19 tally stands at 234,509 and

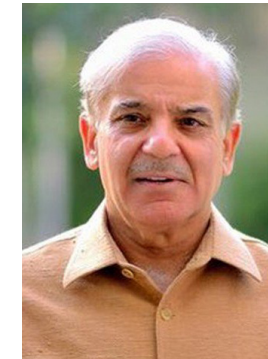
close to 3,000 new cases are being reported on a daily basis. On June 6, 2,691 new cases were recorded. Due to country's current situation, the UK and European Union have not allowed Pakistanis to enter. Prime Minister Imran Khan has asked the WHO to look into travel restrictions for Pakistan and other low-income countries.

Shehbaz Sharif warns against media curbs

He accused the government of having journalists it did not like, sacked from their jobs

ADNAN YOUSAF

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly, Shehbaz Sharif, called on Speaker Asad Qaiser to form a parliamentary committee to probe the atrocities being committed against media institutions in Pakistan. The PML-N president penned a letter to Qaiser on Tuesday, highlighting the blatant violation of the law, Constitution and democracy in Pakistan due to which journalists in the country were being targeted. Referring to the increasing curbs on freedom of speech and censorship in the country, Shehbaz wrote that this is "an urgent and important matter" and was related to the 'unusual restrictions' imposed on the media. "To add pressure on the media, a strategy has been formulated to ban the publication of columnists," said Shehbaz. He accused the govern-



ment of having journalists it did not like, sacked from their jobs. He added that the lawyers' community, Pakistan Bar Council's Executive Committee and other foreign journalist organisations have labelled the government's policy as "vengeful". "The Constitution of Pakistan recognises freedom of expression, access to information as a fundamental right," Shehbaz told Speaker Qaiser. Highlighting the importance of freedom of expression, he stressed that media was the fourth pillar in democracy.

Rain kills 9 in Karachi

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: At least nine people were killed and several others injured due to rain in the metropolis as torrential rains wreaked havoc, bringing with it hours-long power outages in multiple neighbourhoods despite claims by the K-Electric that it had made improvements in its system ahead of the thunderstorm. A woman and children were among those killed during the rain in the city, rescue officials confirmed. Three died as the roof of a house in Ibrahim Hyderi collapsed, while a three-year-old girl died when a wall fell in Malir's Shamsi Society, officials said. Another woman was electrocuted to death in Liaquatabad, while a child died the same way in Mominabad, Orangi Town. Several others were injured and one person died when a pole-mounted transformer (PMT) fell in Ibrahim Hyderi, a spokesperson for the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) said. Two children died when the roof of a house in Ibrahim Hyderi while one other woman was killed when the roof of a house collapsed in Liaquatabad. Another person died from electrocution at his home in Kaemari.

Beijing: zero cases for first time since new outbreak

BEIJING: Beijing on Tuesday reported zero new coronavirus cases for the first time since the emergence of a cluster in the Chinese capital in June that prompted fears of a domestic second wave. A total of 335 people have been infected since a cluster emerged at the city's massive Xinfadi wholesale market in early June. Beijing's health commission said on Tuesday it detected only one asymptomatic case the previous day, which China does not include in its confirmed cases counts. While Chinese authorities are still investigating the cause of the latest outbreak, the virus was detected on chopping boards used to handle imported salmon at Xinfadi market. – APP

Briefs

IHC seeks record pertaining to ban on PUBG

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court (IHC) Tuesday sought record from Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) till next Monday pertaining to ban on PUBG game in Pakistan. Justice Aamer Farooq conducted the hearing on the petition filed by a private company controlling PUBG game in Pakistan. During the course of proceedings, the bench said it would view that whether the PTA had heard the company in accordance of law before banning the game. The legal procedure needed to be followed in the matter, Justice Farooq said. The petitioner's lawyer said his client's company would appear before the PTA on July 9, to discuss the matter. After this, the court adjourned the hearing of the case till next date. — APP

Court summons Nawaz through ad

ISLAMABAD: An Accountability Court on Tuesday summoned former prime minister Nawaz Sharif in the Toshakhana vehicles reference case through an advertisement till August 17. AC-III Judge Asghar Khan's court has started the process to declare Nawaz Sharif as an absconder due to his continuous disappearance. The court observed that Nawaz Sharif was deliberately avoiding his appearance in the case. The court gave last opportunity to the accused to submit his answer in the case. The trial court also sent bailable arrest warrant for former president Asif Ali Zardari in the Toshakhana case. The bailable arrest warrant can be availed submitting Rs 50,000 surety bonds. The court said if Asif Zardari would not come to the court with one guarantor, then he should be arrested and presented before the court. — APP

Fire at plastic godown in Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI: Plastic and related items worth thousands of rupees were burnt to ashes when a massive fire broke out at a plastic godown in the area of Khyban-e-Sir Syed on Tuesday evening, a spokesman of Rescue 1122 informed. On receiving information, at least 8 fire vehicles and 30 rescuers reached at the spot and controlled the blaze after hectic efforts. Workers who were in the unit, managed to rush out as soon as the fire broke out, no loss of life was reported. The reason behind the fire could not be ascertained immediately, spokesman said. — APP

NDMA to install 2,500 oxygen beds

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has planned to complete the installation of 2,500 oxygen aided beds in across country hospitals by July 31. A spokesman of NDMA said the provision of more oxygen beds were part of the plan to enhance the capacity of Intensive Care Units (ICU) of the country wide hospitals. He said from out of a total of 2,500 beds, the fixture of some 1,434 oxygen supported beds had already been completed at different hospitals. While the task of fitting the rest of 1,066 such beds having all modern facilities for COVID-19 patients would be accomplished by July 31. The project includes provision of ICU beds, oxygen piping and cylinders to facilitate the COVID patients. These beds would have all required facilities including ventilators, Bi-PAP, nasal cannula and pulse oximeters. — APP

Pandemic carries long term economic repercussions: Sanjrani

United Kingdom has provided huge assistance to Pakistan for social sector development. He also thanked the government and parliament of UK for adopting stance on Kashmir issue

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani has said that Covid-19 pandemic carries long term economic repercussions for global economies specially the developing world and more coordinated efforts are required to overcome the diseases on one hand and work together for economies to flourish. He expressed these views in a meeting with British High Commissioner Dr. Christian Turner in Islamabad on Tuesday. He said that developed as well the developing world is faced with similar challenge, however, the developing countries lack infrastructure and resources to effectively flatten the covid 19 curve. Chairman Senate observed that the virus is spreading in Pakistan, however, government is making all out efforts to bring the deadly disease under control through lockdown, testing, tracing and quarantine. Sanjrani also expressed deep condolences on behalf of the Parliament for the loss of human lives due to



corona virus. Regarding bilateral relations, the Senate Chairman expressed satisfaction that both sides enjoy good relations at different level and there was need to further enhance mutual collaboration in different sectors in-

cluding frequent parliamentary exchanges and other high level visits. He said that Pakistan highly values its bilateral ties with United Kingdom and we desire to further expand our relations in different sectors. Sadiq Sanjrani said

that enhanced parliamentary linkages and institutional collaboration would help in building consensus on many issues. Senate Chairman stated that Baluchistan and specially Gwadar offering abundant opportunities for

investment as Gwadar is being regarded as future of regional development. He further said that United Kingdom has provided huge assistance to Pakistan for social sector development. He also thanked the government and parliament of

UK for adopting stance on Kashmir issue. The newly appointed High Commissioner thanked Chairman Senate for his candid views on bilateral relations. He also emphasized the need to further strengthen mutual cooperation.

AIOU transforming from manual to automation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) adopted new information and communication technology and transforming all its operations from manual into digital soon. Director Admissions of the University, Mian Muhammad Riaz has informed that keeping in view the prevailing situation in the country created by COVID 19 epidemic, the Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Zia-ul Qayyum has directed all administrative, servicing and academic departments to adopt Information and Communication Technology (ICT) at most and help the students to

continue their studies. Students should be encouraged and helped in maintaining social distancing by adoption of new ICT in all activities related to assignment dispatching, interaction with tutors and participating in course workshops. On the other hand, students of all postgraduate programmes offered in Spring 2020 semester including BS, B.ED, PGD, MA/MSc and M. Ed have also been advised to use the Learning Management System (LMS) for dispatching their course assignments to their respective tutors, he added. The Director said students of Autumn 2019 have already been issued passwords and log-in details,

while the process of dispatching LMS login, password, and user ID to the postgraduate students of Spring 2020 semester is in full swing these days. He said the vice chancellor has facilitated the students by granting permission to make collective submission of all the assignments on or before the deadline for the submission of last assignment i.e., October 15, 2020 in case tutor information is not provided within the stipulated time period. It is to mention here that Professor Dr. Zia-ul Qayyum has recently initiated a paradigm shift from manual to automation in learning, teaching, administrative and all other operations of the AIOU.

Token tax asked to pay at E-sahulat centres

ISLAMABAD: The Excise and Taxation department has asked the Islamabad registered vehicle owners to pay their token tax at any National Database and Registration Authority's (Nadra) e-sahulat centres across the country to avoid long queues amid COVID-19. The motorists can avail the opportunity after getting their name registered on City Islamabad app, developed by National Information Technology Board (NITB) for the federal capital dwellers to pro-

vide them public services of local administration department through online. The visitor would show the code at the e-sahulat center, received on the app so the payment could be done. The system was connected with all e-sahulat centre of National Database and Registration Authority, said Director Excise Bilal Azam while talking to APP on Tuesday. To a query, he said there would be no gathering as there were multiple e-sahulat centres working

across the country. The department was also considering direct online payment methods to pay vehicle token fee, registration and transfer fee through integrating credit cards, bank accounts and other payment methods, he said while responding to another query and hoped that the things would be done soon. Meanwhile, the federal capital citizens have complained about the issues being faced while visiting e-sahulat centres and using the app. — APP

Farewell for FBR chief

ISLAMABAD: A special Board-in-Council meeting was held in the honour of outgoing Chairperson Nausheen Javaid Amjad. The meeting was attended by Acting Chairman Muhammad Javed Ghani and all members of FBR who appreciated the services of Nausheen Javaid Amjad as Member and Chairperson FBR, said a press release issued by FBR here on Tuesday. The Acting Chairman Muhammad Javed Ghani presented a shield to the outgoing Chairperson and expressed warm wishes on her future responsibilities. — APP

ICCI's webinar on E-Commerce for members

FIJAZ CHAUDHARY

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) organized a webinar on "The Magic Moment of Successful E-Commerce" to sensitize its members about promoting businesses by using e-commerce platforms. The objective of the session was to help SMEs take a high-level holistic view of the digital transformation around traditional commerce. ICCI has planned to hold a series of webinars on e-commerce and it was the first session of the series. ICCI would hold webinar series on other topics including panel discussions on marketplaces, e-commerce success stories, logistics and online payments to educate its members about fostering businesses by utilizing e-commerce tools. Badar Khushnood, Co-founder and Vice President of Growth at Bramerz gave a detailed presentation to the participants about the potential of e-commerce for business promotion. He informed the participants about the global trends and what was happening in Pakistan around e-commerce and what initiatives were being taken by the government to promote e-commerce. The session provided SMEs an overview of what an e-commerce business looked like and sensitized them that e-commerce was

not just setting up a website using free tools. SMEs were asked to re-engineer all other business processes to make the "magic moment of a successful e-commerce" transaction to happen in real time. Ms. Amina Malik, Convener, ICCI Women Entrepreneurship Sub-Committee played the role of Moderator in the webinar. Addressing the webinar, Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that e-commerce was now billions dollar market and government should formulate conducive policies for promoting e-commerce in Pakistan. He said that e-commerce offered tremendous opportunities to SMEs for business promotion, expansion of customer base and entering new product markets. He said that in many countries, SMEs were achieving impressive growth by adopting e-commerce platforms and SMEs in Pakistan should also focus on this tool to promote businesses. He said that adoption of e-commerce would bring multiple benefits to SMEs as it would reduce cost of doing business for them and provide them access to global markets. Muhammad Ahmed Waheed said that in Pakistan, SMEs were using the Internet for a variety of commercial and production-related purposes, but on average they had a limited understanding of the full range of benefits of e-commerce.

Wheat crisis intensified in city areas

DNA

ATTOCK: Wheat crops in Hazro, Pindi Gheb, Jand, Fateh Jang and surrounding areas were completely destroyed due to heavy rains during the wheat season. The crops that have been harvested are not edible. Some of the traders who were issued orders for the demarcation of the district, procured wheat from different parts of the Punjab through their own means, which was also provided to them after paying a heavy price.

Rector IIUI visits exhibition 'Ghilaf-e-Kaaba'

ISLAMABAD: A delegation headed by Prof Dr Masoom Yasinza, Rector International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI) here on Tuesday visited the exhibition 'Ghilaf-e-Kaaba' and other Islamic relics. Other than the Rector, the delegation included President IIUI, Dr. Aqdas Naveed Malik, IIUI Vice-Presidents, Dr. Nabi Bux Jamani, Dr. Farkhanda Zia, Dr. Tahir Khalily Directors General Dr. Zia ul Haq, Dr. Tahir Mehmood and senior faculty member at Department of Media and Communication Studies Professor Dr. Zafar Iqbal, said a press release. Speaking on the occasion, the IIUI Rector said the exhibition was as source of spiritual calmness. He hailed the efforts of the organizers. He said the exhibition offered a unique opportunity to the people, to see the 'Ghilaf-e-Kaaba' and other Islamic relics, while remaining in Pakistan. — APP

Bike-lifter gang leader arrested; bikes recovered

RAWALPINDI: In a crackdown against criminal elements, R.A.Bazar police have arrested ringleader of Nido bike-lifter gang and recovered seven stolen motorcycles from his possession. According to a police spokesman, R.A.Bazar police busted Nido gang by arresting its ringleader named Naveed alias Nido. He said that the Police team constituted under the supervision of SHO R.A.Bazar conducted a raid and arrested the accused. As per preliminary police record, the criminals were also involved in other crimes, he added. He stated that other members and facilitators of the bike lifters would also be arrested following preliminary investigations with the detainee culprits. — APP

WPC keen to work together on key issues

ISLAMABAD: Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) are keen to work together on key issues for the larger interest and benefit of vulnerable groups of our society. Secretary WPC Munaza Hassan said in a statement that WPC would work to enable women parliamentarians to optimally perform substantive and effective roles in the development of our nation. Munaza Hassan said that WPC would reinforce its partnership with provincial women's caucuses to work together as representatives of these women to further strengthen our alliances with national and provincial women commissions, as well as civil society and key ministries and departments to achieve our mandate. — APP

CII to make temple construction decision

The petitioner, identified as Khushnood Khan, said that there are three temples in the twin cities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The construction of a temple in Islamabad has been halted and the case has been sent to the Council of Islamic Ideology, the Islamabad High Court was informed on Tuesday. The court was hearing a petition filed against the construction of the temple in Islamabad. The verdict has been reserved. Deputy Attorney General Khalid Mehmood Raja appeared in court and said that the construction work has been halted. The petitioner, identified as Khushnood Khan, said that there are three temples in the twin cities. He re-

marked that there is already a temple in Saidpur village in Islamabad and the government should renovate it rather than constructing a new one. The groundbreaking ceremony of the Shri Krishna temple was performed on June 23. The temple spread over four kanals is meant to include a crematorium, visitor accommodation, a community hall and parking space. The plan was reportedly approved in 2017 by the PML-N government but the construction kept being delayed. The construction, however, was challenged by many religious hardliners. Since the news of its construction was shared, the site has been attacked and vandalised four times.



ISLAMABAD: A flower selling boy asking mercy from the passing-by vehicle driver. — DNA

Briefs

Trade deficit shrinks 27.11% in FY20

ISLAMABAD: The country's trade deficit witnessed significant reduction during the fiscal year 2019-20 and declined by 27.11% as compared to the previous year. The Country's deficit during July-June (2019-20) stood at \$23.183 billion against the deficit of \$31.805 billion during July-June (2018-19), according to the latest data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). During the period under review country's exports registered about 6.84% decrease, by going down from \$22.958 billion last year to \$21.387 billion during the current year whereas the imports declined from \$54.763 billion to \$44.570 billion, showing sharp decline of 18.61%. Meanwhile, on year-on-year basis, the exports from the country decreased by 6.52% during June 2020 as against the exports same month of last year. The exports during June 2020 were recorded at \$1.592 billion against the exports of \$1.703 billion in June 2019. The imports also witnessed sharp decline of 14.66% during the month as these declined from \$4.353 billion in June 2019 to \$3.715 billion in June 2020. On month-on-month basis, the exports from the country increased by 14.04 percent in June 2020 when compared to the exports of \$1.396 billion in May 2020. Likewise, the imports into the country also increased by 29.76% in June 2020 when compared to the imports of \$2.863 billion in May. — APP

Orders issued to complete development schemes

DNA

ATTOCK: Before the abolition of local bodies, under the supervision of former chairperson District Council Attock Iman Tahir, orders were issued to finally complete the development schemes approved in the public interest in various union councils of Attock district last year. Immediate orders for implementation of development schemes were a source of joy and happiness among the people of the district. Former Chairman Ms. Eman Tahir has said on this occasion that those who have failed in politics and come to power through illegal means do not miss the opportunity to dig. She said that these public welfare projects have failed. The political elements have failed miserably in carrying out their nefarious intentions to bring the proud and principled people of Attock district to their senses. Intending to be trapped in the mire of deprivation for the fulfillment of false and negative goals, she said that Allah Almighty will surely serve those who serve with sincerity, humility and sincere spirit of public interest. Former Chairperson Ms. Eman Tahir Expressing deep sorrow and grief over the sudden death of six members of the same family in Maliar, he prayed for the forgiveness of the deceased and for the bereaved to bear this trauma.

Theater Wallay opens The Farm

ISLAMABAD: Art group Theatre wallay has opened their space called The Farm for art activities with strict SOPs after being shut down for three months due to COVID-19. According to management, a limited number of people, maximum 20 visitors will be allowed with proper implementation of social distancing and standard operating procedures (SOPs). Pre-registration will be mandatory for attending the events while all performances will be held in outdoor courtyard space keeping physical distance and WHO suggested guidelines. No one will be allowed to enter the space without masks which need to be worn all the time while any group of more than 4 people will not be allowed the entry. A maximum of 20 visitors will be allowed for any particular activity or performance and sanitizers and hand-washing stations will be provided and encouraged. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Members of traders community holding a demonstration for opening of restaurants in Islamabad. — DNA

'India uses pandemic to advance its colonial agenda in Kashmir'

Speakers at a Webinar organized by Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR) said that the Narendra Modi led fascist government has shamelessly used Covid-19 pandemic as an excuse to extend its illegal lockdown in Kashmir

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Speakers at a Webinar organized by Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR) in collaboration with World Muslim Congress (WMC) on the sidelines of 43rd session of the UN Human Rights Council has said that the Narendra Modi led fascist government has shamelessly used Covid-19 pandemic as an excuse to extend its illegal lockdown in Kashmir besides intensifying its brutal atrocities against the Kashmiris in the

disputed territory. The webinar titled "Freedom of Expression during Pandemic" was attended and addressed by British parliamentarian Mr. Khalil Mehmood, the UK's shadow minister Mr. Sulman Alyas Khan, Human rights activists from South Africa Ms. Claire Biddwell, Mr. Hassan Ashraf UK, veteran Human rights activists from Lebanon Lyndia Cannon, Syed Faiz Naqashbandi APHC and others. Whereas the event was moderated by Adv. Parvez Ahmed Shah. Referring to the present

precarious situation the speakers of the webinar said that Kashmiris stuck in a dual lockdown for last several months have been facing worst human rights violations at the hands of the Indian occupation authorities, which they said have used pandemic an excuse to suppress the voice of dissent in the region. About the shortage of PPEs, corona testing kits and lack of other necessary health equipment in hospitals in Kashmir they said that during this pandemic of epic proportions India

has criminally ignored the region's health sector. Citing a media report they said that during the pandemic there was severe shortage of doctors, paramedics as well as the health equipment in the hospitals. Kashmir they said was deliberately despite the fast spreading coronavirus in the region. In Kashmir they pointed out that there was 1 doctor for every 69000 Kashmiris and 1 ventilator for every 80000 Kashmiris to treat during this pandemic. Regarding India's nefarious designs to change Kash-

mir's demographic composition they said that Article 49 subclass 6 of the 4th Geneva Convention clearly states that the occupation powers cannot alter or change the status or the demographics of the Kashmir area. Any such attempt by the Indian government they said, would amount to war crimes under article 146 and 147 of the 4th Geneva Convention. Expressing their anguish over the world's inaction on Kashmir they said that it was quite unfortunate that many world govern-

ments chose to stay quiet and silent on the abysmal situation in the region. This criminal silence on the part of influential governments they said was a tacit support to Modi's actions in IoK. Regarding the USA president issued Donald Trump's offer to mediate the issue of Kashmir between Pakistan and India they said that it was a golden opportunity to seek a peaceful solution but India that has a history of blocking every move aimed at seeking a solution to Kashmir problem yet again declined the offer.

Qazi Faez video case; accused sent to jail

FIA prosecutor pleaded for more physical remand of Iftikharuddin which the court rejected

ISLAMABAD: An Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) in Islamabad Tuesday rejected the FIA's plea to extend physical remand of accused in a case of threatening a Supreme Court judge Qazi Faez Isa and institution of judiciary through a video that went viral on social media. The ATC judge Raja Jawad Abbas Hassan sent the accused Agha Iftikharuddin to jail on judicial remand after expiry of his seven days physical remand. However the court extended the physical remand of another accused Akbar Ali in the matter for two days. During the proceedings, FIA prosecutor pleaded for more physical remand of Iftikharuddin which the court rejected. — APP

Rs 150 billion disbursed among lockdown affectees

ISLAMABAD: Ehsaas Emergency Cash Programme has so far disbursed an amount of over Rs. 149.972 billion among over 12,391,886 lockdown affectees under different categories. The programme was initiated to disburse cash amount of Rs. 12,000 among those affected from the Coronavirus lockdown. The payment process under different categories of the programme was continued across the country. According to the cash update received on July 07, a total of over Rs. 67.191 billion has been disbursed among over 5,550,608 deserving families in Punjab so far while around Rs. 44.917 billion has been disbursed among 3,724,411 families in Sindh. Over Rs. 25.909 billion has been disbursed among more than 2,134,087 beneficiaries in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while over Rs. 7,607 billion has been disbursed among 626,163 persons in Balochistan. An amount of Rs 0.787 billion has been disbursed among more than 65,207 beneficiaries in Islamabad. — APP

Akmal's appeal set to be heard on July 13

DNA

LAHORE: The suspension is the latest in Umar Akmal's infamous alliance with controversy. The suspension is the latest in Umar Akmal's infamous alliance with controversy. © Getty Umar Akmal's appeal against his three-year ban will be heard on July 13, the Pakistan Cricket Board revealed via a release on Monday (July 6). The hearing was scheduled for June 11 but had to be pushed forward owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. Akmal was slapped with the ban for failing twice to report corrupt approaches ahead of the 2020 edition of the Pakistan Super League. Akmal was provisionally suspended on February 17, 2020, and withdrawn from PSL 2020, before being formally charged by the PCB for breaches of Article 2.4.4 "Failing to disclose to the PCB Vigilance and Security Department (without unnecessary delay) full details of any approaches or invitations received by the Participant to engage in Corrupt Conduct under this Anti-Corruption Code".

Civil Defence volunteers continue tackling COVID-19

RAWALPINDI: The Civil Defence volunteers were actively engaged at grassroots level in various roles and capacities to assist the local administration in implementing the measures to contain the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). District Officer Civil Defense Rawalpindi, Talib Hussain said that all the volunteers were conducting nonstop door-to-door awareness campaign on daily basis to aware the people for the prevention of Corona and

to ensure implementation of prescribed guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) issued by district government to combat further spread of COVID-19 pandemic. The Civil Defence personnel are also supplementing the local administration in conducting surveillance of suspected and confirmed COVID-19 cases besides working for distribution of edible among the destitute people. They have been working as rapid response teams, he added. — APP



RAWALPINDI: A nomad girl standing beside her camel waiting for customers to sell milk in the outskirts of the city. — APP

NIC report on "Impact of COVID-19 on Pakistani Startups"

It stated that COVID-19 is the worst human tragedy to have struck the world in decades, affecting millions of people across the globe. The pandemic not only has serious implications for people's health but is also significantly affecting businesses and the economy

ISLAMABAD: The National Incubation Center (NIC) has launched report entitled 'Impact of COVID-19 on Pakistani Startups and The Way Forward' here on Tuesday. According to the report, as startups across the world struggle to sustain themselves during the COVID-19 pandemic, Pakistan is no less impacted. Many businesses have come to a grinding halt, some have even shut down, while most are struggling to minimize costs and keep cash in reserve. Report reveals that prior to COVID, sector-wise breakdown of total early stage deals revealed that E-Commerce, Health-Tech and Ed-Tech were the most popular sectors to attract investments. As the pandemic continues to spread,

and the world continues to practice social distancing, and the vast majority of countries are in lockdown; small businesses, startups, and entrepreneurs are one of the most vulnerable economic groups to be directly affected by the situation. The rising economic uncertainty is posing a significant threat to startups across the globe, making it imperative for governments and relevant stakeholder organizations to move quickly, and help sustain small businesses. It stated that COVID-19 is the worst human tragedy to have struck the world in decades, affecting millions of people across the globe. The pandemic not only has serious implications for people's health but is also significantly affecting businesses and

the economy. The effects of the pandemic are and will continue to reshape the global operating environment for years to come. According to survey results, 28% of startups claim that with termsheets about to be signed, investors are backing off, while 22% of startups have reported delays in transfer of funds (with signed term-sheets). The overall decline in investments, if continues over the months, would have serious consequences for many startups, with almost 90% of startups reporting cash runway for 6 months or less. Only 10% startups report cash runway for more than 6 months, with only 3% reporting runway for more than a year. Where there has been an overall decline in investments (with 32%

startups reporting reduced investments), yet local and international VCs are expressing interest in certain verticals, which are expected to grow, as the world transitions to the new normal. Extend your runway Startups need to avoid putting themselves in a position of needing to raise capital during an extended downturn, and reduce future financing risk. Report suggested that seek possible fund raising opportunities While there are greater chances of investors shying away from investments, yet many are considering this an opportunity to get good deals. It added that be realistic in terms of expectations regarding valuation, and average ticket size of investment, as size of an investment round may be limited

and look for possible referrals for reaching out and connecting to potential investors. Report further added that strategize, and communicate your long-term plans to investors, be honest in sharing the pandemic effects on your startup, with investors. Provide a clear picture of company's liquidity and cash flow position, with details on how you are managing your liquidity in the short-term. Be clear on, and communicate your long-term plans for growth, rather than a short-term COVID response strategy. Focus on R and D Startups having 3-12 months of cash runway should shift focus to product development, improve internal processes, and stay connected to customers, it stated. — APP

IESCO issues power suspension schedule

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Tuesday issued power suspension programme for Wednesday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to IESCO Spokesperson, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 04:00 am to 10:00 pm, 132KV Chakri-Chakwal Circuit., 132KV GSS Gujar Khan, Jatli, Padsahang, Chakwal, Bhagwal, Talagang, D.S Bilawal, Pak Lafrage Cement, D.G. Khan C/Factory, Chakri, Dandot, Dandot C/F, C.S.Shah, Noorpur Sethi and Bestway C/Factory. 07:00 am to 12:00 noon, Behkri feeder, 07:00 am to 11:00 am, CM Pak Zong, Behria Enclave, PHA, Azad Shaheed, Rehara, Ahmedabad, Islam Pura, Kot Dhamaik, Lakho Road, Officer Colony and Chakra feeders, 07:00 am to 01:00 am, Nogazi, Fazaia feeders and surrounding areas. — APP

Bathing in Havelian waterfalls banned

ABBOTTABAD: Deputy Commissioner, Muhammad Mughes Sanaulah on Tuesday imposed a ban under Section-144/6 on bathing in Sajikot and Abrela Berry waterfalls in Havelian till further order and with immediate effect. A directive in this regard said several people have lost their lives due to bathing in waters of these cascades and to avert further loss to human lives ban has been imposed on bathing at these places. The directive further said that violators of this ban would face legal action. — APP

Illegal car showrooms sealed

DNA

ATTOCK: National Highways and Motorways Police (NHMP) in a crackdown sealed many illegal showrooms and impounded the vehicles in taxila on GT road. The operation was led by DSP Motorway police Nadeem Gul Shah, accompanied by Admin Officer Abbas Raza, Ops Officer Nasir Hussain Gillani and Ops Officer Muhammad Iqbal Astori. During the operation one hotel and ten illegal showrooms were sealed, while a large number of vehicles were impounded and heavy fines were imposed.

Five gamblers arrested

DNA

ATTOCK: Five gamblers were booked besides recovering bet money amounting Rs 25,500, Motorcycle, Cell phones and others from their possession and arrested during raids at their gambling dens in Sader Police attack. Spokesman of police informed that in a crackdown against the anti social elements Sader Police station got information that some people were busy in playing gambling in the area during course of action police arrested the Five gamblers identified as Raheel, Nawazish, Shahid Iqbal, Khadem and Rafique besides recovering Rs 25,500, Three Motorcycles worth Rs 1,20,000, Six Mobile phones worth Rs 56,000 were Confiscated.

Baldia reality

A Joint Investigation Team report has found that the Baldia Town factory fire of September 2012 was not an accident or an act of murder but a case of 'planned terrorism'. The JIT, comprising officials from top security agencies including the CIA, police, Rangers and the FIA, has said in its 27-page report that the incident showed police connivance in protecting those responsible and that this is a pattern seen over and over again in the country.

The report has named two members of the MQM as being responsible for beginning the inferno which killed 260 workers at the factory and injured others after factory workers refused to pay an amount of Rs200 million demanded as extortion or 'bhatta'.

The JIT report has said that the previous FIR filed in the case should be scrapped and a new one lodged by the state under sections of the PPC and the Anti-Terrorism Act. The report has also demanded that members of the party it has found primarily responsible for the incident should be extradited and brought home if they are in other countries and placed on the ECL if they are still in Pakistan. It has also sought compensation for the owners of the factory who were initially blamed by the police for setting the building on fire.

The report notes that the police appeared to be protecting those truly responsible for the mass killing of innocent people and that to ensure these persons are brought to justice, it is important to provide protection to witnesses of the incident. The failure to prove cases before courts has been a reason for culprits of major crimes getting away over and over again in the past. Witnesses are often too afraid to testify because of possible consequences in the absence of protection. What is most significant about the JIT report is its finding that many persons tried to influence the process of investigation in order to benefit specific people. This is disturbing. The fire was an act of extreme violence and inhumanity against persons in no way involved in the matter. It was one of the most heinous tragedies to happen in Pakistan, or anywhere else for that matter. The 'bhatta' rackets in Karachi are well known and have been the bane of the business community for years. We can only hope that the JIT report will help bring this unholy business to an end and eradicate the political elements behind it. It should also lead to an investigation into the failure of the police to avoid pressure and to crumble under it by submitting a report which suited particular persons. The police investigation model that we have been following needs a thorough review; just blaming the police is not going to work, unless the government allocates appropriate amounts for police training, labs and forensic expertise development.

The power of the mafias that run Karachi is well known. We hope this report can lead to action against those responsible for the brutal act of mass murder and perhaps dissuade others from carrying out similar crimes in the future. Only in this can there be hope for Karachi and its people.

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A scholar's resignation

THE detailed resignation letter by Dr Pervez Hoodbhoy, a distinguished professor at the Forman Christian College University in Lahore for the past eight years and one of the top scientists in the country, gives us an insight into why our system of higher education is in such a terrible state. Dr Hoodbhoy, who resigned from the university after being issued a one year, non-renewable contract this year, has blamed petty rivalries within the university as the reason for his exit.

If anyone deserves to be called a public intellectual with a conscience in Pakistan, it has to be Pervez Hoodbhoy. At the age of 70, he is still full of energy and imparts his ideas and knowledge to audiences and students with an academic zeal not normally seen in a country such as Pakistan. He is one of the few distinguished professors of Pakistan who are respected and well-known in other countries too. He has been a proponent of freedom of speech and has delivered lectures, written articles and books to promote a scientific attitude in Pakistani society.

It is utterly unbelievable that his contract at the FCC University was cut short on the flimsy accusation that he lacks the academic credentials and seriousness to teach. His three-year contract was reduced to just one-year and that too with a proviso that it would be non-renewable. Perhaps the university had the rather naive notion that he would accept this to secure at least one year's employment. They failed to realize that securing a one-year contract would be the least of his priorities. They also failed to understand Dr Hoodbhoy's record of standing up for injustices in society, be it against academics, ethnic or religious minority groups, or students.

If professors that hold influence within an institution are capable of acting against a man of the calibre of Dr Hoodbhoy, then we must question where we stand in terms of academics. Clearly personal factors including rivalry is enough for the dismissal of a person whose immense knowledge in both the sciences and humanities would obviously benefit his students.

One wonders whether those behind such a misguided and petty attempt to remove Hoodbhoy from the university even realised the backlash this would have and how badly it would tarnish the image of the university both nationally and internationally. Dr Hoodbhoy is one of the most prominent academics in Pakistan and treating him thus will have raised serious questions about the academic integrity of the university and its management. This case is perhaps the biggest indictment of the state of higher education in Pakistan – something Dr Hoodbhoy has been writing about for years.

The Invisible Justice

Askari Raza Malik



An official servant is required to declare his property along with that of his wife and children. This is repeated time and again during his service. It is to ensure that all changes in the family's wealth status are regularly accounted for. As the head of the family, he is answerable for the riches accumulated by him or any other member of his family. It appears that the rule does not apply to the honourable judiciary

JUSTICE is the jugular vein of a society. It must exist with all its sinews and made visible with all its transparency. If justice delayed is justice denied, justice invisible is justice wasted, faded away into oblivion. Nebulous concepts like 'justice at your doorsteps', clutter the rhetoric. Across-the-board justice remains a dream unfulfilled. Unfortunately, the present system of justice in Pakistan has largely failed to deliver.

The Caliph enters the supreme court along with the petitioner. The Chief Justice rises from his seat to pay respect to the most powerful ruler of his time. The Caliph sacks the judge. A judge who makes distinction between a caliph and an ordinary citizen is incapable of delivering justice. The same Caliph when challenged by an old woman in the famous 'Chadder and shirt episode', he on the spot provided evidence to clarify his position. The history proudly recorded the message for the posterity. The Caliph is as accountable as his subjects. Another true Caliph loses his case against a Jew citizen because his son's evidence is not admissible in the law. He does not employ his goons to attack the supreme court to prove that the chief executive was always right. That was the State of Madina we aspire for.

An official servant is required to declare his property along with that of his wife and children. This is repeated time and again during his service. It is to ensure that all changes in the family's wealth status are regularly accounted for. As the head of the family, he is answerable for the riches accumulated by him or any other member of his family. It appears that the rule does not apply to the honourable judiciary. If so, the anomaly needs to be removed immediately like the irksome extension of the military chiefs.

In the past the rulers applied a simple yardstick to judge the conduct of the government servants. If over a period of time an official had accumulated more wealth than his means

justified, he was punished for corruption. In Pakistan, this criterion, though often talked about, seems to have little value. Here the children of a three-time prime minister become billionaires without having earned a penny of their own. The father instead of being grilled to furnish the money-trails facilitated by law to abscond abroad.

In the promotion board when a member's relative comes up for consideration, he leaves the room. It is not just a matter of protocol. It is intended to establish the credibility and transparency of the board. When the going gets tough, merit becomes a sine qua non. Injustice does not hurt an individual. God compensates him. But every act of injustice, small or big creates a corresponding hole in the ship of the nation. The Prophet (PBUH) had warned that nations stronger and richer than us were destroyed because they were not just.

In Pakistan the son of a serving chief justice is repeatedly accused of a number of irregularities from out of turn promotions to outright corruption until the case becomes too obvious to ignore. The chief justice, who 'portrayed himself as an honest broker' in a corruption ridden Pakistan, despite being cautioned to the contrary chooses to chair the bench appointed to decide his son's case. The son is proved innocent. The conscience of the father also remains clear. Happy ending.

A provincial high court assembles on the weekend to grant bail to Shahbaz Sharif. It was not the first time that a court was held on a holiday, the court contended. It must be normal for the courts to work on the weekends to attend to similar compelling urgencies. His elder brother was allowed by the court to instantly proceed abroad for treatment that has yet to commence. Who will get him back? The court had done its part of the job. The ball is now in the government's court.

On social media a picture gone recently viral shows the images of those fortunate Pakistan-

is who had justice delivered practically on their doorstep. This includes the royals of Sharif dynasty, PML-N stalwarts like Rana Sanaullah and many holy figures from Sindh. Good luck to them. The barbaric drama staged in Model Town Lahore can wait. No Chief Justice has ever taken a suomoto notice of this brutality. It has been perhaps left for God to punish the culprits.

The handling of the latest case of Justice Isa by the Supreme Court did not do much to boost public confidence in the judicial system they have known to be full of faults. The presidential reference was quashed which according to the defender was based on melafide intentions. This contention of the defender was never discussed, proved or rejected. However, the reference was set aside as the defender had wished. At the same time the showcausenotice issued by the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) to Justice Faiz Isa was also quashed. According to senior legal analysts, the court exceeded its limit by interfering in the functioning of SJC. It was a prerogative of the SJC to admit or dismiss the reference. A justice was as much accountable as an ordinary citizen, we were told but not exactly. He was not responsible for the wealth accumulated by his family. He had the right to make a thrilling entry into the courtroom and seek to defend his family.

The Court had the patience to stop the government lawyer in his tracks to accommodate the intruding justice. The poor mortals can hardly hide their shock. The courts should be and are completely free. The Constitution must, however, clearly define inter-institutional functional boundaries. Without this balance we will live in perpetual confusion.

The Supreme Court, in keeping with its best traditions, must have also done justice in all the episodes alluded to above. Unfortunately, the justice has remained invisible.

— Maj Gen @Askari Raza Malik is author of 'Pakistan in Search of a Messiah'

Suicidal Deaths and Mental Health Concerns

Daniyal Talat

Suicide is the act of intentional hostility against oneself. As per the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, suicide is the 10th leading main reason of death in the United States, with roughly 47,000 American citizens taking their lives annually. World Health Organization (WHO) reported that annually about 800,000 people are dying of suicides. Additionally, there are still more than 20 suicide attempts one for each suicidal death. Total suicide rates within males are significantly greater than those of females, varying around 1.5% however much more in the developing countries to 3.5%

WORLD is rapidly progressing; innovations are greatly strengthening, and livelihood is being made as easy as possible. As the human generation efficiently communicates with one another, they as well jeopardize one another's life. Whether it is through face to face interaction or by cyber connectivity, people are fighting with their own race; trying to win the war against each other and mark their superiority. Generally, human mind works as the set of faculties of thought which include psychological components like conscious awareness, inventiveness, expectation, reasoning, judgement, cognition as well as social - intellectual elements like empathy.

When an individual lacks in achieving one of these, they start developing imbalances inside their brains, which in fact create mishaps not only for oneself but for others as well. Not just the technologies and advancements but also the current situation is bringing a lot in plate. Human uncertainty continues to expand due to quarantine isolation, safe distance not just with those around us but also with family and loved ones is causing immense impacts on individual's life. Covid-19 virus leaves devastating impacts on mental health. Not only does Covid-19 acti-

vate anxiety, stress, depression, sleep deprivation / chronic fatigue or panic attacks, but that also promotes anorexia, metabolic syndrome, irrational fear, or even massive obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) or much worse suicidal tendencies.

Suicide is the act of intentional hostility against oneself. As per the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, suicide is the 10th leading main reason of death in the United States, with roughly 47,000 American citizens taking their lives annually. World Health Organization (WHO) reported that annually about 800,000 people are dying of suicides. Additionally, there are still more than 20 suicide attempts one for each suicidal death.

Total suicide rates within males are significantly greater than those of females, varying around 1.5% however much more in the developing countries to 3.5%. Suicide is usually the most frequent among those above age 70; nevertheless, under certain countries where people around 15 to 30 years of age have been at the greater danger.

Under recent circumstances, suicide is taken as the great escape from the miseries of real world. Usually, there is no particular reason someone wants to commit suicide, but numerous aspects

such as psychological problems, could perhaps trigger the possibility of suicidal ideation. Commonly depression is said to be the main reason for individuals to commit or attempt suicide; especially students within the age group 15-24 years. A recent study published in an international journal found a high prevalence of suicidal ideation among adolescent students, suggesting almost 60% possess suicidal thoughts, which demonstrates that there is a need to maintain infrastructural-level mental health support services for students. Suicidal deaths among renowned personalities circulate on social media which proves that mental health should be taken seriously. Suicide news of Robin Williams (Hollywood Actor) in 2014, Jiah Khan (Indian Actress) in 2015, Avicii (American Singer) in 2018, Goo Hara (K-Pop Singer) in 2019, and most recently Sushant Singh Rajput's (Indian actor) death few days ago should encourage masses to consider mental health a priority. Queries remain though, how far long will it take to control suicidal acts? When will mental health be given the same importance as physical health? How many more lives have to suffer in order to make the realization that suicide is not the answer? When will it be enough?

Briefs

Sao Paulo allows bars, restaurants to reopen

SAO PAULO: Bars and restaurants in Brazil's economic hub Sao Paulo reopened on Monday after more than 100 days of partial lockdown over the coronavirus. Brazil's most populous city, with more than 12 million inhabitants, has accumulated more than 140,000 coronavirus infections and 7,600 deaths, including 618 in the last week, according to official figures.

Establishments can open for up to six hours with no more than 40 percent capacity, while respecting hygiene and social distancing measures. They must use digital menus or signs. This new phase of economic reopening comes as Brazil's virus infection rate shows no sign of abating, although Sao Paulo mayor Bruno Covas said otherwise.

"The most acute phase is over therefore it is time to start reopening economic activity," said Covas, who added that intensive care capacity in the city was below 60 percent. Rio de Janeiro allowed bars, restaurants and gyms to reopen last Thursday, also with certain restrictions. Brazil is the second worst affected country in the world by the coronavirus after the United States, with close to 65,000 deaths and more than 1.6 million infections. — APP

UK newspaper publisher to cut 550 jobs

LONDON: Reach, publisher of UK newspapers Daily Mirror and Daily Express, plans to axe about 550 jobs as the coronavirus forces readers online and slashes advertising revenues, it said Tuesday. "Structural change in the media sector has accelerated during the pandemic and this has resulted in increased adoption of our digital products," Reach chief executive Jim Mullen said in a statement. "However, due to reduced advertising demand, we have not seen commensurate increases in digital revenue." Reach said the company plans a reduction in headcount of about 550 staff, or 12 percent of its workforce — as it looks to make annual cost savings of £35 million (\$43 million). — APP

Dubai reopens doors to tourists

DUBAI: With a "welcome" passport sticker and coronavirus tests on arrival, Dubai reopens its doors to international visitors Tuesday in the hope of reviving its tourism industry after a nearly four-month closure. But businesses are mainly betting on those already living in the gleaming desert city to energise its ailing economy and serve as a test run before wary foreign holidaymakers return. "A warm welcome to your second home," says the sticker applied to passports at Dubai airport, where employees wear hazmat suits and vending machines offer personal protective equipment. The reopening comes even as the number of COVID-19 cases in the United Arab Emirates climbs to 52,068 included 324 deaths, with millions of foreign workers living in cramped accommodation particularly hard hit. — APP

CPEC has boosted Pak economy

From Page 01

He said the Chinese side would work for promoting infrastructure development and also promote people livelihood, industries and agriculture cooperation and turn this corridor into a demonstration project of high quality Belt and Road Initiative development to promote benefits to the two peoples and countries. According to reports, in the last 10 days, Pakistan has signed agreements with the Chinese companies that would produce 1800 MW clean and cheap electricity in the country. These projects are likely to help generating over 8,000 employment opportunities.



BAKU: Azerbaijan athletes taking part in a cycling competition. — DNA

Pakistan's Test tour of England to kick-off on August 5

It has taken significant effort and expertise to allow us to reach a position where cricket is now ready and able to return to the field of play from the elite level to recreational cricket

DNA

SOUTHAMPTON: ECB, meanwhile, continues to hold talks with Cricket Australia to reschedule their limited-overs series at some stage during the summer. ECB, meanwhile, continues to hold talks with Cricket Australia to reschedule their limited-overs series at some stage during the summer. Pakistan's tour of England will kick-off on August 5 with three Tests, the England and Wales Cricket Board confirmed on Monday (July 6). Before the Tests, England will play three ODIs against Ireland on July 30, August 1, and 4 respectively in Southampton. Pakistan will start their Test series at Old Trafford but the second and third Test, scheduled to start on August 13 and 21 respectively, will be played in Southampton. The series will be followed by three T20Is at Old Trafford scheduled for August 28, 30 and September 1.

ECB, meanwhile, continues to

hold talks with Cricket Australia to reschedule their limited-overs series at some stage during the summer. The tri-series between England Women, India and South Africa will also be rescheduled.

"Confirmation of these matches against Ireland and Pakistan is another important step for our game as we begin to safely stage international cricket again, but also to minimise the impact the Covid-19

pandemic has had and will continue to have, on cricket at all levels," ECB Chief Executive Officer, Tom Harrison, said.

"It has taken significant effort and expertise to allow us to reach a po-

sition where cricket is now ready and able to return to the field of play from the elite level to recreational cricket.

"We owe a significant debt of gratitude to the players, staff and administrators of the Cricket West Indies, Cricket Ireland, and the Pakistan Cricket Board for their willingness and co-operation to get international cricket back up and running and allow these matches to be staged.

"Sports fans across the world will benefit as international cricket returns to our screens while it will also provide much-needed financial aid at all levels of cricket in England and Wales as we aim to withstand the challenges in front of us. It must be reiterated that there is still much work for the ECB and the cricket network to do as we try to plot a path through this pandemic."

Pakistan have already arrived in England on June 28 and are undergoing 14 days of quarantine. They are in Worcester but will move to Derbyshire on July 13 to start their preparation for the first Test.



Trudeau cancels US visit marking trade deal

"Despite recent discussions about Canada's possible participation, the Prime Minister will be in Ottawa this week to hold scheduled cabinet meetings and take part in a long-planned meeting of parliament," his office said

MONTREAL: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will not visit Washington this week to celebrate a new North American trade pact with his US and Mexican counterparts Donald Trump and Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, his office Monday.

"Despite recent discussions about Canada's possible participation, the Prime Minister will be in Ottawa this week to hold scheduled cabinet meetings and take part in a long-planned meeting of parliament," his office said.

The Mexican president

had earlier said on Twitter that Trudeau would not be attending the event on Wednesday, but said that he had agreed to visit Mexico "as soon as possible." The trip to Washington will be Lopez Obrador's first official overseas visit, and he will meet Trump on Wednesday.

On Friday, Trudeau hinted that he was in two minds about the visit in part because of concerns about the US reimposing tariffs on Canadian aluminium.

Another cause for concern for the Canadian leader was "the health situation and

the coronavirus" which is still sweeping through all three countries, with the US the worst-hit country in the world with 2.8 million cases diagnosed by Monday, and more than 130,000 deaths. The new trade pact, known as the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or USMCA, came into effect last Wednesday, when the borders between the three countries were partially closed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

It replaced the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA, which came into effect in 1994. — APP

Lloris - Son clash 'beautiful': Mourinho

DNA

LONDON: Tottenham manager Jose Mourinho says the half-time clash between goalkeeper Hugo Lloris and forward Son Heung-min was "beautiful" and "something needed for the team to grow up". Captain Lloris ran over and shoved Son in the back before the players went down the tunnel, with the pair having to be separated by their team-mates. But they embraced at full-time after a 1-0 Premier League win over Everton. Lloris said there was "no problem" after Monday's match. "It just belongs to the changing room - outside you can say whatever you want. What happened between me and Sonny is part of football sometimes," added Lloris.

Brian Lara terms England favorites

DNA

LONDON: West Indies must try and win the Tests against England in four days because they cannot last five days, says legendary batsman Brian Lara. The three-Test series starts on Wednesday at Southampton. The tourists have a strong fast bowling line-up but their batsmen average only 23.59 in 19 Tests since their most recent tour of England in 2017.

"They have to be able to pounce immediately," said Lara, "England are not beaten very easily at home and are overwhelming favourites." Lara, who scored a record 11,953 runs for West Indies in 131 Tests, said the series would depend on how quickly they can adapt to English conditions. "They have to hit the road running and stamp their authority on England," said the 51-year-old.

"I don't think they can last five days, so they have to take these games in four days. They have to establish a lead and keep it." The opening Test at Southamp-



ton and the second and third at Old Trafford will be played in a bio-secure environment and behind closed doors because of the coronavirus pandemic. West Indies have been in the UK since 9 June to prepare for the series. "It's going to be a series that's watched all around the world and everybody is hoping to see a competitive series," said Lara, who scored 34 Test centuries. "It would mean a lot to all West Indians if they could win. If they play good cricket on the first day of the Test series, show they have the mettle to perform against England, that's the key."

Tensions mount high in Premier League relegation battle

"Games are running out. If we're going to stay in the division, we're going to have to start picking up points," Bournemouth winger Junior Stanislas said. "We'll have no excuses. We can't keep talking. It's time for action. "There's no reason why from now until the end of the season we can't pick points up"

DNA

LONDON: Tensions are high as the fight to avoid relegation heads towards a dramatic conclusion in the English Premier League with only a few games left to go. With just five games left, rock bottom Norwich are seven points from safety and are sliding towards the Championship. Bournemouth and Aston Villa, who currently fill the remaining two places in the relegation zone, are locked in a four-team battle for survival with fellow strugglers Watford and West Ham. Here's a closer look at the teams scrapping to preserve their top-flight status:

Bournemouth

Thrashed 5-2 at Manchester United on Saturday, Eddie Howe's side are in free-fall after an eight-game winless run featuring five successive defeats.

The second bottom Cherries, one point from safety, face Tottenham, Leicester and Manchester City in their next three games. That sequence that will surely determine whether Bournemouth can extend their five-season stay in the top-flight for another year. Bournemouth's lack of goals has been a huge part of their downfall, with the starting line-up at Old Trafford managing just eight between them so far this season. "Games are running out. If we're going to stay in the division, we're going to have to start picking up points," Bournemouth winger Junior Stanislas said. "We'll have no excuses. We can't keep talking. It's time for action. "There's no reason why from now until the end of the season we can't pick points up."

Aston Villa

A wretched run of nine matches without a win has left third bottom Villa one

point from safety. Dubious pre-season investment in several underwhelming signings have left Villa relying on captain Jack Grealish to inspire their survival bid. But Dean Smith's side have lost three of their five games since the restart and still have to face Manchester United and Arsenal before a potential final-day shootout with West Ham. They could count themselves unfortunate not to have secured what would have been a point at Anfield in Sunday's 2-0 defeat against champions Liverpool. That obdurate display of ferred hope that Villa could still avoid an immediate return to the Championship, but Smith knows they will have to be more ruthless to achieve that aim. "I don't want to be a valiant loser, we're scrapping for points," Smith said. "To out-shoot Liverpool at home at Anfield, in terms of efforts on goal,

it's excellent, but we need to take our opportunities. We never found the quality in the final third they did." Watford Saturday's 3-0 drubbing at Chelsea condemned Watford to a third consecutive loss, leaving them perilously positioned one point above the bottom three. Nigel Pearson's fourth bottom team have not won just their stunning 3-0 success against Liverpool on February 29. After five years in the top-flight, the Hornets, who face Manchester City and Arsenal in their last two games, could find their fate settled by Tuesday's home clash with Norwich and a visit to West Ham on July 17. "The important thing is we understand our situation, that we don't fear it," said Pearson, whose men have managed just two goals in their last five games. "We need to show fighting spirit, and we also need to have the ability to still make good decisions."

West Ham

Sitting four clear of the relegation zone in 16th place, West Ham are in the best position to stay up thanks to their surprise 3-2 win over Chelsea last week. Twice blowing the lead in Sunday's 2-2 draw at Newcastle was a setback in their survival bid, but David Moyes' side have control of their own destiny. West Ham have now lost 24 points from winning positions in the Premier League this season, more than any other side. But with games against Norwich, Watford and Aston Villa to come, their forward Michail Antonio is confident of beating the drop. "The mindset for our next few games is that we want three points from each of them, and that's what we believe we can get," said Antonio, whose club have not been in the Championship since 2012. "Now we've managed to show our attacking form and we are scoring goals, we need to shore up our back as well."

Suicide rate in Indian army increases

ISLAMABAD: Two Indian soldiers committed suicide and an officer was killed by his colleague in two different areas of the territory. According to Kashmir Media Service Indian paramilitary Sashstra Seema Bal (SSB) man committed suicide after killing his colleague ASI Sandeep Kuma in Kulgam district.

"Constable Hemant lost the cool and fired with his IN-SAS rifle on the ASI killing him on the spot and in the meantime he shot himself. Both were dead at the spot", a police officer said. A senior police officer confirmed the incident and said that investigation had been launched to ascertain the reasons.

In another incident, an Indian army soldier of 226 Field Unit shot himself dead with his service rifle at Boniyar Uri in Baramulla district. Meanwhile, an Indian Border Security Force man died of COVID-19 at BSF Sector Headquarters in Panthachowk in Srinagar. — APP

Mourinho claims 200th PL win

DNA

LONDON: Manager Jose Mourinho brought up his 200th Premier League victory as Tottenham edged past Everton. A tepid contest threatened to boil over as the teams left the pitch at half-time when Spurs skipper Lloris ran over and shoved Son in the back.

The South Korea forward tried to react but was pushed down the tunnel by his team-mates, with others having to hold back France World Cup-winning keeper Lloris.

But the pair put their differences aside at full-time as they shared a warm hug before leaving the pitch.

The half-time clash was the flash-point of a largely uneventful affair which was settled by Michael Keane's own goal, the ball deflecting in off the Everton defender from Giovanni Lo Celso's strike.

The Toffees barely threatened in a poor attacking display and substitute Anthony Gordon's long-range strike, which was straight at Lloris, their only shot of note.

The win keeps alive Tottenham's hopes of playing European football next season. They move up to eighth, four points behind sixth-placed Wolves, while Everton stay in 11th.

Briefs

International students must leave US if classes are online

DNA

WASHINGTON: The Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) branch of the Department of Homeland Security issued new rules for exchange students Monday that could present challenges for universities and schools amid the continuing coronavirus pandemic. The "Department of State will not issue visas to students enrolled in schools and/or programs that are fully online for the fall semester nor will U.S. Customs and Border Protection permit these students to enter the United States", ICE's highly anticipated new rules said. Students already in the US whose programmes have switched to online-only instruction must "depart the country or take other measures, such as transferring to a school with in-person instruction to remain in lawful status", the rules continued. "If not, they may face immigration consequences including, but not limited to, the initiation of removal proceedings."

UK sanctions Saudis, Russians under new powers

DNA

LONDON: The United Kingdom imposed economic sanctions on dozens of individuals and organisations from Russia, Saudi Arabia, Myanmar, and North Korea under new British powers to punish human-rights offenders. Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said the sanctions targeted those behind "some of the notorious human rights violations in recent years", and were aimed at stopping the laundering of "blood money". The UK's first sanctions will target 25 Russian nationals it said were involved in the mistreatment and death of lawyer Sergei Magnitsky, and 20 Saudi nationals held responsible for the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, the foreign ministry said. "Today this government ... sends a very clear message on behalf of the British people that those with blood on their hands - the thugs and despots, the henchmen and dictators - will not be free to waltz into this country to buy up property on the King's Road, to do their Christmas shopping in Knightsbridge, or frankly to siphon dirty money through British banks or other financial institutions," said Raab.

Tik Tok halts operations in Hong Kong

DNA

HONG KONG: Chinese social media app Tik Tok has revealed on Tuesday that it is stopping operations in Hong Kong owing to a new security law in the region, as other technology companies stop processing government requests for user data in the region. The short form video app owned by China-based ByteDance has made the decision to exit the region following China's establishment of a sweeping new national security law for the semi-autonomous city. "In light of recent events, we've decided to stop operations of the Tik Tok app in Hong Kong," a Tik Tok spokesman said in response to a Reuters question about its commitment to the market. Tik Tok has also said previously that it would not comply with any requests made by the Chinese government to censor content or for access to Tik Tok's user data, nor has it ever been asked to do so. The Hong Kong region is a small, loss-making market for the company, one source familiar with the matter said. Last August, Tik Tok reported it had attracted 150,000 users in Hong Kong. Globally, Tik Tok has been downloaded more than 2 billion times through the Apple and Google app stores after the first quarter this year, according to analytics firm Sensor Tower.



NAMIBIA: China has donated COVID-19 related supplies worth about 2.35 mln USD to Namibia to assist the country in fighting the virus, an official from the Chinese Embassy in Namibi. – DNA

US 'looking at' banning TikTok and other Chinese apps

Washington's top diplomat added that people should only download the app "if you want your private information in the hands of the Chinese Communist Party"

DNA

WASHINGTON: The United States is "looking at" banning Chinese social media apps, including TikTok, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said. Pompeo suggested the possible move during an interview with Fox News' Laura Ingraham, adding that "we're taking this very seriously." Pompeo was asked by Ingraham whether the United States should be considering

a ban on Chinese social media apps, "especially TikTok." "With respect to Chinese apps on people's cell phones, I can assure you the United States will get this one right too, Laura," he said. "I don't want to get out in front of the President [Donald Trump], but it's something we're looking at." Washington's top diplomat added that people should only download the app "if you want your private information in the hands of the Chinese Communist Party."

"TikTok is led by an American CEO, with hundreds of employees and key leaders across safety, security, product, and public policy here in the US," a TikTok spokesperson said in a statement following Pompeo's comments. "We have no higher priority than promoting a safe and secure app experience for our users. We have never provided user data to the Chinese government, nor would we do so if asked." Pompeo's remarks come

during a time of heightened tensions between the United States and China, which have spilled over into several arenas including national security, trade and technology. TikTok - which is owned entirely outside of China, and that none of that data is subject to Chinese law. US user data is stored in the United States, with a backup in Singapore, according to TikTok. A spokesperson for the company told CNN Business in May that it

thinks the national security concerns are "unfounded." The app has exploded in popularity in the United States and other western countries, becoming the first Chinese social media platform to gain significant traction with users outside of its home country. It was downloaded 315 million times in the first three months of this year, more quarterly downloads than any other app in history, according to analytics company Sensor Tower.

operates separately from ByteDance. It says its data centers are located outside of China, and that none of that data is subject to Chinese law. US user data is stored in the United States, with a backup in Singapore, according to TikTok. A spokesperson for the company told CNN Business in May that it

Russia asks mining giant to pay \$2 bln

MOSCOW: Russia's state environmental watchdog said Monday that metals giant Norilsk Nickel should pay an unprecedented \$2 billion in damages over a huge Arctic fuel spill. Rosprirodnadzor said it had sent a request for "voluntary compensation" to a subsidiary of Norilsk Nickel, NTEK, estimating the damage to Arctic subsoil and water resources at 147.8 billion rubles (\$2.05 billion). Norilsk Nickel's Moscow-listed shares fell by nearly 5 percent Monday evening. Controlled by Russia's richest man Vladimir Potanin, the company is the world's largest producer of nickel and palladium. The amount of the fine is equal to a third of its net profit in 2019. A Norilsk Nickel spokeswoman said the company had not yet received the papers from Rosprirodnadzor. Aluminium producer Rusal, which owns 28 percent in Norilsk Nickel, said it found the size of the fine "unexpected" and "unprecedented," adding it hoped a board meeting would be convened urgently to discuss the matter. "We are sure that shareholders will be able to jointly find a solution in this difficult situation," a Rusal spokeswoman said in a statement.

Samsung profit jumps 23 percent

DNA

HONG KONG: Samsung (SSNLF), the world's largest smartphone maker, predicts its profit jumped more than 20% last quarter, suggesting that the company has managed to withstand the fallout from the coronavirus pandemic. The South Korean conglomerate said on Tuesday that it expects to make an operating profit of roughly 8.1 trillion won (\$6.8 billion) for the three months that ended in June. That's up nearly 23% from the same period a year ago. The estimates also beat roughly 2% profit slump that analysts polled by data provider Refinitiv had predicted. Samsung said it expects sales will fall about 7% to 52 trillion won (\$43.6 billion). Analysts polled by Refinitiv had predicted 51.4 trillion in sales (\$43 billion). Shares in Samsung opened up 1.5% in Seoul, before paring back those gains. The stock was last trading down about 1.5%. Samsung said the estimates "include a one-time gain related to the display business." It did not otherwise elaborate on earnings, but will report full results for the second quarter at the end of this month. Samsung - which supplies key parts like display panels and chips for companies such as Apple (AAPL) and Huawei - is among the first of the big tech companies to report earnings for the quarter, and its full report will be viewed as a bell weather for how tech giants are withstanding the pandemic.

Melbourne back under lockdown

DNA

MELBOURNE: The Australian city of Melbourne is going back into Stage 3 lockdown for six weeks as it struggles with a spike in coronavirus cases, announced Victoria State Premier Daniel Andrews today. The lockdown will start at 11:59 p.m. Wednesday local time. People will be only allowed to leave their homes to buy food, go to work, receive or give care, and do exercise, Andrews said. Elsewhere in Victoria state, the region of Mitchell Shire will also be locked down for six weeks. Businesses such as restaurants that had reopened will now be forced to close again, the premier said. "We know we're on the cusp of something very very bad if we don't get on top of this," said Andrews. "The alternative though is to pretend that its over, just as I think some Victorians have been doing." Since Saturday, 3,000 residents in nine public housing towers in Melbourne have been under "hard lockdown", meaning they cannot leave at all. All residents are now being tested, with meals and other necessities provided by the government.

Easypaisa now free for Zong 4G users

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Easypaisa, Pakistan's leading provider of digital financial services is expanding accessibility by offering free app usage for Zong 4G customers. Customers can make air-time purchases, money transfers, bill payments and a wide variety of other services through the Easypaisa App on a Zong 4G internet connection without consuming any data volume (MBs). This zero data usage is aimed at providing customers with enhanced convenience as well as the ability to perform necessary financial transactions without any restrictions. Easypaisa is Pakistan's most widely used mobile payments solution which offers a diverse range of services which continue to expand every day. Zong 4G, Pakistan's No.1 data &

communication network provides one of the highest quality data services and accessing Easypaisa through Zong 4G's data network will provide greater convenience and improved accessibility to users. The ability to access and use Easypaisa for free through Zong 4G internet will not only pave the way for more people to use the app but also allow them to perform transactions when they are out of data MBs. Commenting on the development, M. Mudassar Aqil, President & CEO Telenor Microfinance Bank / Easypaisa said; "A key element for enabling adoption of digital financial services is to provide innovative and convenient solutions for customers through collaboration and technology. "Our partnership with Zong 4G, one of the leading data service providers in the country, is another step

towards creating a digital ecosystem that benefits Pakistan". Commenting on the partnership Zong 4G's official Spokesperson said, "As a leading telecom operator, Zong 4G has always stepped forward to introduce innovative products and services for its customers across the country. As a result of this collaboration, our customers will be able to access and use Easypaisa free of cost through Zong 4G's internet." The COVID-19 pandemic has given digital payments a sudden boost with people opting for digital channels to conduct their financial transactions keeping in view the social distancing requirements. Easypaisa enables its customers to maintain accounts, make essential transfers, shop online and avail discounts as well as cash-backs along with a host of other features directly through its App.

FB, Google halt services for Hong Kong authorities



DNA

LONDON: Some of the world's major internet and social media platforms said Monday they will stop processing requests for user data made by Hong Kong law enforcement authorities while they carry out an assessment of a controversial security law imposed by China on the city. Facebook and its messaging service WhatsApp said in statements Monday that they would "pause" the review of information requests from the Hong Kong government "pending further assessment of the impact of the National Security Law, including formal human rights due diligence and consultations with human rights experts." Facebook (FB) said the company believes "freedom of expression is a fundamental human right and support the right of people to ex-

press themselves without fear for their safety or other repercussions." Twitter (TWTR) confirmed to media that it has also paused all requests from Hong Kong authorities for user data and information while it reviews the law. "Like many public interest organizations, civil society leaders and entities, and industry peers, we have grave concerns regarding both the developing process and the full intention of this law," the spokesperson said. A Google spokesperson told media that when the law took effect, they "paused production on any new data requests from Hong Kong authorities, and we'll continue to review the details of the new law." Popular video conferencing platform Zoom (ZM) followed suit on Tuesday, saying in a statement that it will pause processing data requests from and related to the Hong Kong government.

Austrian Airline swaps planes for trains

DNA

VIENNA: Austria's flagship airline is replacing one of its flights with a more frequent train service, in order to meet the environmental criteria of its recent government bailout. The company will no longer fly between capital city Vienna and Salzburg, operating a rail service instead. As part of its recent 600 million (\$680m) government aid package, the airline is required to cut its domestic

emissions by 50% by 2050 and to end flights where there is a direct train connection to the airport that takes "considerably less than three hours." From July 20, there will be up to 31 direct train services a day between the Vienna International Airport and Salzburg's central station, up from three rail connections per day, the airline said. "Vienna Airport can be reached by train from Salzburg in well under three hours and without changing trains," said airline CEO Alexis von

Hoensbroech in a statement. "This is why our AIRail offer is a good and more environmentally friendly alternative to flying." "AIRail" is a terrestrial service in partnership with the country's national rail operator ÖBB. Vienna and Salzburg sit 184 miles apart and a flight between them took just 45 minutes. But when accounting for time spent in each airport, the total traveling time would often be longer than the 2 hour and 49 minute train journey.

50 feared dead in Japan floods

YATSUSHIRO: Emergency services in western Japan were "racing against time" on Tuesday to rescue people stranded by devastating floods and landslides, with at least 50 feared dead and more torrential rain forecast. Japan's Meteorological Agency issued its highest emergency warning level for heavy rain and landslides over vast swathes of the southwestern Kyushu island, with downpours expected until Thursday. – APP

FPCCI welcomes Pak-China Pattan project

FPCCI president hopes River Jhelum project won't be delayed, to be completed within time

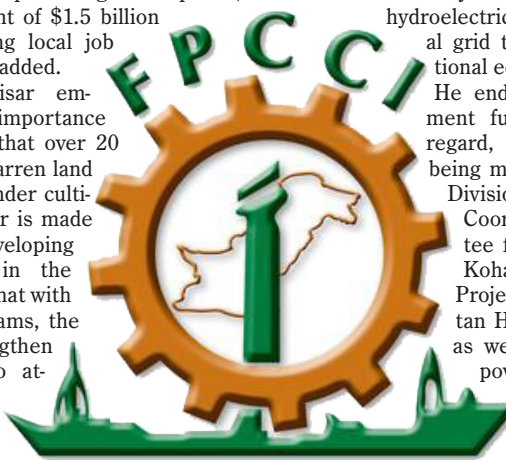
DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry president Mian Anjum Nisar has welcomed the Pak-China agreement for construction of Azad Pattan Hydel Power Project of 700MW of electricity, as part of the CPEC, suggesting the government to also include more hydropower projects in its plan, as the country cannot afford to rely on costly and anti-environment fossil fuels. "FPCCI is hopeful that the project, located on River Jhelum, will be completed within its time frame in 2026 and will not be delayed like several other hydro power projects in the country," he stated. It's a good news for the public in general and business community in particular, as

the new project would enable the country to move towards cheaper and greener power, inviting investment of \$1.5 billion besides generating local job opportunities, he added. Mian Anjum Nisar emphasized the importance of dams, stating that over 20 million acres of barren land can be brought under cultivation if the water is made available by developing water storages in the country. He said that with construction of dams, the country can strengthen its agriculture to attain food security and cope with the fast growing

needs of water in domestic and industrial sectors besides injecting sizeable low-cost hydroelectricity into the national grid to stabilize the national economy. He endorsed the government future plan in this regard, as a summary is being moved by the Power Division to the Economic Coordination Committee for the approval of Kohala Hydropower Project, and Azad Pattan Hydropower Project as well as Mahi Hydropower project, all on Jhelum River, which would prove to be a

milestone in the country's development and prosperity. He also called for speedy work of other power projects including Shargthang, Hanzal, Chilas, Naltar and Hassanabad Hunza, besides early construction of Kalabagh Dam which is the most suitable project for the national economy as it would produce cheap and sufficient electricity. FPCCI President, referring to the factors behind the current scenario of water and hydropower sectors in the country, observed that the situation can be improved by putting a robust development mechanism in place and exercising prompt decision making. All stakeholders including the business community are ready to play their due role to implement the National Water Policy for water, food and energy security of the country, he said.



Briefs

LHC extends Shehbaz bail till July 16

DNA

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Tuesday extended interim bail of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) president and Opposition Leader in the National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif in assets case until July 16. Headed by Justice Sardar Ahmed Naeem, a two-judge bench of the high court heard the bail petition. "Why didn't Shehbaz Sharif show up if his Covid-19 test report came back negative," questioned the bench. Sharif's lawyer told the judges that as per health experts, a coronavirus patient is declared as having recovered from the disease after his two test reports come back negative. He added the PML-N leader is not completely fit. The court approved the PML-N leader's plea for exemption from personal appearance. During the previous hearing, the court had directed Shehbaz Sharif to get himself tested for the novel coronavirus from the Institute of Public Health. NAB lawyer had told the judges that the accused was to take a COVID-19 test on June 25 but he had not done so yet. He will keep asking the court for more time this way, he added.

ATC indicts Uzair Baloch in kidnap, murder case

DNA

KARACHI: An anti-terrorism court in Karachi on Tuesday indicted Uzair Baloch, the kingpin of the infamous criminal gang in Lyari, in a case related to the kidnapping and murder of a trader. Hearing the case at Central Jail, Karachi, the ATC judge framed charges against the accused who denied having any role in the abduction and murder of Abdul Samad and opted to contest the charges. Jail authorities produced him in the courtroom with his head covered and both hands cuffed amid tight security. The court issued notices to the investigation officer and witnesses to turn up at next hearing for deposition. According to the charge-sheet, the trader was taken captive by Uzair and his accomplices who demanded Rs1 million as protection money for his safe release. They murdered the abductee despite payment of Rs70,000 ransom. Uzair Baloch's brother Zubair Baloch has also been behind bars in the case. Earlier, Joint Investigation Report (JIR) of Lyari Crime Lord Uzair Baloch unveiled by Sindh government revealed that the accused had involved in the killing of 198 people and several heinous crimes.

Turkey threatens 'response' if EU imposes sanctions

DNA

ANKARA: Turkey will respond if the European Union imposes further sanctions on Ankara, Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on Monday after meeting the EU's top diplomat. France's foreign minister said last week EU ministers would discuss Turkey on July 13 and said new sanctions on Ankara could be considered in addition to steps taken over Turkey's drilling in the Cyprus economic zone. "If the EU takes additional decisions against Turkey, we will have to respond to this," Cavusoglu told a news conference with EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell in Turkey's capital. "We want to work with the EU ... [but] if the EU takes additional decisions against Turkey, we will be forced to reciprocate. The situation will become more tense and this will serve no one. Our expectation is for the EU not to be a party to the problem but to be a part of the solution," said Cavusoglu.

Fake licences' comment in best interest of country: Minister

PIA's loss in 2018 was four billion rupees which was reduced to one billion due to the policies of current government. However, the loss now stands at six billion because of suspension of international flight operations during covid-19 pandemic

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Rejecting the impression that his statement was irresponsible or before time Federal Minister for Aviation Ghulam Sarwar Khan has said that his recent comments regarding fake licenses of pilots in Pakistan was in best interest of the country and institutions. Talking to VoA during a special interview with Ali Furqan Sarwar Khan said that some circles was criticizing his statement regarding fake licenses without any reason. He refuted that his statement regarding fake licenses created any crisis or caused damage to Pakistan International Airline (PIA) as international flights operations are already suspended due to Covid-19.

He termed the suspension of flight operations as an opportunity for Pakistan to fix the problems in PIA.

Aviation Minister Ghulam Sarwar Khan had informed Parliament that out of 860 pilots in Pakistan 262 hold dubious licences. After this statement several Pakistani pilots working in the international airlines were grounded, meanwhile the European Union Air Safety Agency (EASA) has suspended PIA's authorization to operate in EU member states for six months. On May 22 The Karachi-bound flight PK-8303 crashed in Karachi's Model Colony neighbourhood, close to the Jinnah International Airport. The preliminary investigation report of the incident was presented in parliament after a month which held the pilot and the



air-traffic controller (ATC) responsible for the crash. The Minister said that in such incidents the facts were not shared with the nation in the past, saying, "we want to inform masses about what is wrong, and what we are going to fix". He said protection of passengers is our top priority as it will buy goodwill for

the airline as well as the country. Moreover, Sarwar pointed out that there must be some reasons for which PIA encountered five plane-crashes in ten years. Regarding EASA's suspension of PIA operations, the minister said, "It was the outcome of an already ongoing scrutiny which was in process since 2014."

The minister informed that government wanted to restructure the national airline instead of privatize; adding that number of planes of PIA fleet would also be increased from 30 to 45. He said that government had decided to get international certifications for all PIA aircrafts after Karachi crash. He further informed that scrutiny of documents of all PIA staff including pilots was already in process under the supervision of international experts. He said PIA's loss in 2018 was four billion rupees which was reduced to one billion due to the policies of current government. However, the loss now stands at six billion because of suspension of international flight operations during covid-19 pandemic. He further said that Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), which was in profit, had also suffered losses of sixty billion rupees since January 2020. He said, "Reforms are the priority agenda of the government under which two departments of CAA would be separated. Besides, a separate director general for the authority and a supervisor for regulator department will be appointed." Sarwar said that there was no truth in rumors of privatization of Roosevelt Hotel in New York instead the government is planning to operate Roosevelt Hotel in New York on lease or joint venture basis. Answering a question regarding 'Minus-One' talk, the minister said neither Imran Khan nor PTI is going to be minus-ed as Imran Khan is the central leader of PTI who won two seats simultaneously in 2018 elections.

Pak-made drones to help battle locust swarms

DNA

ISLAMABAD: After manufacturing the country's first locally developed ventilators, the National Radio Telecommunication Corporation (NRTC) announced on Tuesday that it has prepared Pakistan-made drones to tackle locust swarms. According to details, the Pakistani engineers have prepared locally made drones for farmers to kill and contain locust swarms in the country. Drones will be used to spray insecticides and pesticides on fields in the country. The NRTC said that 'Made in Pakistan' drones will be available in markets across the country at a very low cost. It is pertinent to mention here that Minister for Science and Technology Fawad Chaudhary had tasked Pakistani engineers to prepare drones. Prime Minister Imran Khan was also briefed by NRTC on Monday about the manufacturing of locally made drones to control locust swarms.

Asad Umar assures full support to RCCI for Rawal Expo



ISLAMABAD: Federal Planning Minister Asad Umar inaugurating virtual Rawal Expo. – DNA

ABID RAZA

RAWALPINDI: A delegation of Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) called on Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Measures Asad Umar in Islamabad. The delegation comprised of President Saboor Malik, group leader and former president So-

hail Altaf, Senior Vice President Noshawan Khalil, Vice President Hamza Sarosh, Chairman Expo Rawal Expo Nasir Mirza and Chairman Regional Trade Khurshid Berlas. The delegation briefed the minister on RCCI Rawal Expo and other activities of the chamber. On this occasion, Federal Minister inaugurated the pre-launch of RCCI Virtual International Rawal

Expo 2020. The minister assured full support from his ministry regarding the expo. He said that through digital platform, domestic and local products can be better advertised. He welcomed the initiative of expo being organized amid Covid-19. The Virtual International Rawal Expo will run from August 7 to August 16. What is special about the virtual platform is that there

is no time limit for participating in the exhibition. Any stall holder or visitor will be able to participate in the exhibition on the online platform at any time in 24 hours. Companies from various sectors including electronics, Pharmaceuticals, garments, engineering, machinery, and food will be able to display their products in the exhibition.

NAB court again defers indictment of Zardari, Talpur

DNA

ISLAMABAD: An accountability court of Islamabad on Tuesday deferred indictment of former president Asif Ali Zardari, his sister Faryal Talpur and other accused in the mega money laundering case against them until July 24. Accountability Judge Azam Khan resumed hearing the reference filed by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) against the PPP co-chairman, his sister, and close aides, Omni Group head Anwar Majeed and Hussain Lawai among other accused. At the start of the hearing,

the bureau's prosecutor requested more time for further investigation before the accused's indictment. Granting his request, the judge deferred their indictment until July 24. The court also approved applications of Zardari and Talpur seeking exemption from personal appearance in today's hearing. Zardari, his sister, and other accused are facing charges of laundering more than Rs35 billion through fake bank accounts. Zardari's close aides Hussain Lawai and Anwar Majeed have also been nominated in the scam. Former president Asif Ali Zardari was released on Dec 13 on the orders of

the Islamabad High Court (IHC) in the fake bank accounts and Park Lane cases on medical grounds – six months after his arrest from his F-8 residence. Farooq H Naek filed a petition in an Islamabad accountability court, saying the indictment should be stopped as the proceedings against Zardari were not legally justified. He said loan defaulting was a matter concerning the State Bank of Pakistan. When someone defaults on a loan, the State Bank governor approves a reference against them and a notice is sent. The loan in question was taken by a company, not Zardari,

argued Naek, who said his client was never issued any notice by the SBP either. The Accountability Court issued notice to NAB on the plea filed by Asif Ali Zardari, to which the NAB prosecutor said that we have received the notice and we are ready to give reply today and urged court to indict all the accused including Asif Zardari. However, Asif Zardari's lawyer said that he needs more time to prepare his arguments. The court decided to postpone indictment of all the accused including former president Asif Zardari and adjourned the hearing till July 14.

Indian troops martyr Kashmiri youth

DNA

SRINAGAR: In occupied Kashmir, Indian troops in their fresh act of state terrorism martyred a Kashmiri youth in Pulwama district, on Tuesday, Kashmir Media reported. The troops martyred the youth during a cordon and search operation in Goosu village of the district. The operation continued till last reports came in. Meanwhile, an Indian army soldier was killed and three others were injured in an attack during the cordon and search operation in Gusso area of Pulwama district.

PIA steward disappears in Canada

ISLAMABAD: A Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flight attendant has disappeared mysteriously after a flight carrying passengers landed in Canada Toronto city. According to details, PIA flight attendant, identified as Yasir, went missing from his hotel, after arriving in Toronto on a PIA flight PK-781 from Islamabad. PIA's Station Manager in Canada has informed Airport authority while PIA administration has taken notice of the disappearance of the flight attendant. "The authorities have launched an investigation into the matter and action will be taken against flight attendant Yasir", the General Manager Flight services said. Back in September 2018, another flight attendant of the PIA namely Fareeha had disappeared mysteriously after a flight carrying passengers landed in Canada's Toronto city. According to PIA spokesperson, air hostess, Fareeha Mukhtar, had boarded the PIA flight PK-789 from Lahore but as soon as it landed in Toronto, she disappeared mysteriously and never boarded the return flight. The air hostess was supposed to return to Lahore on PIA's PK-782 flight on the very day but never boarded the plane despite leaving for the same with her colleagues. The PIA spokesperson had maintained that a missing report was lodged with the Canadian police and authorities were also informed regarding her disappearance. – DNA

Russia will impose counter-sanctions on UK

DNA

MOSCOW: Moscow will apply counter-sanctions against Britain, the Kremlin said Tuesday, after London this week announced a new human rights sanctions regime targeting Russian officials. "We can only regret such unfriendly measures," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters, adding that "obviously the principle of reciprocity will be applied." The 25 Russians included on the sanctions list drawn

up by the UK Foreign Office were included for their alleged involvement in the death of lawyer Sergei Magnitsky. Magnitsky, a tax consultant for British financier William Browder, died in prison of untreated illness in 2009 after accusing Russian officials of tax fraud of \$230 million. Russian officials to be targeted by the sanctions include Alexander Bastrykin, the head of the powerful Investigative Committee that reports directly to President Vladimir Putin.

SOCAR transported over 25 mln. tons of oil to Indonesia

JAKARTA: During 2007-2019, a total of 25.1 mln. tons of crude oil were supplied by SOCAR in the direction of Indonesia; the Ministry of Energy told "APA-Economics". "Note that beginning from 2007, SOCAR has been implementing crude oil supply in the direction of Indonesia." – DNA

Pak, China expand bilateral ties: Amb. Hashmi

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BEIJING: Pakistan Ambassador to China, Naghmana Hashmi has said that Pakistan and China have deepened their all-weather cooperation in recent years and have expanded bilateral ties in diverse fields of cooperation for mutual benefit. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, the relevant departments of our two countries have maintained close coordination to ensure that our bilateral cooperation is not affected. In the past, the two countries have concluded agreements to enhance bilateral cooperation in trade, infrastructure, industrial cooperation, and cultural cooperation and devised various mechanisms for their implementation, she said in an

interview with China Today. She said, "thanks to our bilateral cooperation, Pakistan has succeeded in laying a robust and solid infrastructure network to support its growing economy and overcome festering energy shortages, which had stifled our growth. Both countries now look forward to building upon these gains and extending this cooperation to other unexplored territories," she added.

With Chinese assistance, Pakistani government is working on a wide array of projects for socio-economic uplift for the people of Pakistan. The successful conclusion of the Second Phase of China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement has opened a new channel for multiplying our trade volumes. "We also plan to deepen practical cooperation in



agriculture, forestry, poverty alleviation, tourism, governance, and financial discipline. We are devising policies to attract Chinese entrepreneurs to invest in Pakistan for robust, inclusive, and sustainable growth," she added. During President Arif Alvi's visit to China in March this year, the two sides signed MoUs to establish two sep-

arate joint working groups on agriculture, and science and technology. The two countries also inked several agreements to deepen bilateral cooperation for pest and disease control and combating the coronavirus epidemic. She expressed the confidence that in line with the vision of our leadership and aspirations of our peoples, our future co-

operation in diverse realms of bilateral relations would be dynamic and vibrant, thereby setting a high bar for strong and mutually beneficial inter-state relations. About China fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, she said that China was the first country to face the brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic and the only country in the world to have comprehensively contained the virus. "After its remarkable progress in the fight against the pandemic, China is now playing a commendable role in the global efforts to battle COVID-19," she added. Ambassador Hashmi said, as the primary supplier of COVID-19 relief items, critical medical equipment, and related personal protective equipment for epidemic control and prevention, China's sincerity and pivot-

al role in helping the rest of the world contain the epidemic must be acknowledged and appreciated. More than 180 countries have been ensnared by the COVID-19 pandemic. Pakistan has also been gripped by it with the cases of reported infections and mortality rate rising sharply. As iron-brothers, all-weather strategic partners, and most reliable friends, China's state institutions, leading enterprises, and private individuals responded passionately and made generous donations of an overwhelming number of critical supplies and medical equipment to Pakistan. Besides, China also sent several medical teams to Pakistan to share their expertise and skills with our experts to help them combat the pandemic.

Iran reports record 200 deaths

TEHRAN: Iran announced on Tuesday 200 more deaths from the coronavirus, the most in a single day since the Middle East's deadliest outbreak began in February. The previous record was Sunday's toll of 163 deaths. "Unfortunately in the past 24 hours we have lost 200 of our compatriots, bringing the total number of victims to 11,931," health ministry spokeswoman Sima Sadat Lari said on state television. "The increase in the number of deaths is very painful for all of us," she said, adding that it was "the result of all of our behaviour and actions". Another 2,637 people have tested positive for the virus, taking the total official number of cases to 245,688, Lari said. – APP