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Government revamping institutions for good governance: Shibli

Germany stands by Pakistan, says Amb. Bernhard

Children given wrong polio vaccine in GB



Briefs

Germany stands by Pakistan: envoy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: German Ambassador Bernhard Schlagheck on has said that the Germany stood by Pakistan in its fight against the deadly coronavirus. Appreciating the government's efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19 pandemic, Bernhard told APP that the German Red Cross had helped the Pakistan Red Cross set up a corona awareness helpline and an isolation center in Karachi. It was heartening that some 775 corona patients had so far recovered at the isolation center being supervised by the German Red Cross, he added.

74 more die, 2,521 test positive

DNA

ISLAMABAD: As many as 2,521 new coronavirus cases and 74 deaths were reported in the country over the past 24 hours, taking the national tally of cases to 248,872 and fatalities to 5,197. According to the National Command and Operation Centre, 2,521 new cases were detected after 24,211 tests were conducted in the previous 24 hours. 86,975 COVID-19 patients are undergoing treatment while 156,700 patients have recuperated from the disease. 15,626,38 tests have been conducted across the country so far.

Govt to enhance easy loan facility

SAIFULLAH



ISLAMABAD: The Advisor to the Prime Minister on Finance, Abdul Hafeez Shaikh has said that the government has decided to take further measures to enhance easy loan facility so that maximum number of deserving people are benefited. Talking to media persons in Islamabad, he said the basic purpose of the Think Tank on Economy is to consider the measures for bringing improvements in the country's economy. The Advisor said the Think Tank has also discussed implementation of incentives provided to the construction industry by the PM.

Govt revamping institutions, says Shibli Faraz

Govt is firmly committed to provide relief and basic facilities to the masses and taking appropriate steps particularly in the prevailing situation due to pandemic

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Shibli Faraz said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government, under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan, is revamping the institutions. He added the incumbent government was also striving for improving the system and resolving the issues of common people. Shibli Faraz said people have given mandate to Prime Minister Imran Khan for strict accountability of corrupts and plunderers. He said that previous governments of PML-N and Pakistan Peoples' Party only raised slogans for welfare and development of poorer segments of society, but the PTI government is taking practical and concrete steps in this regard. Shibli Faraz said the present government is firmly committed to provide relief and basic facilities

to the masses and taking appropriate steps particularly in the prevailing situation due to Coronavirus pandemic. Replying to a question, he said Prime Minister Imran Khan's concept of smart lockdown has been acknowledged by the world countries as well. The Minister said the government established 129 laboratories across country to diagnose the patients of coronavirus. Speaking on the occasion, Chairman Naya Pakistan Housing Authority retired Lieutenant General Anwar Ali Haider said government is committed to start construction activity at a large scale. He said government has eased the procedures involved in obtaining NoCs and maps to facilitate the investors in construction industry. He said fixed tax regime has been introduced for builders and land developers and the tax has been reduced by 90 per cent.

- Picture on Back Page

Pakistan can benefit from French expertise

France is one of the most advance agricultural country of Europe. It is a European leader accounting for 22% of the EU's total agriculture output

MUBASHAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Pakistan to France Moin ul Haque has said that Pakistan can learn from French modern farming methods and agricultural best practices to increase its agriculture output, livestock yield and bring value addition to its dairy sector. This was stated by him during his day long visit to various fresh produce, livestock and dairy farms in Burgundy region of France to specifically study the successful experience of small scale and family based farming in a rural setting.



During the visit arranged by Mr. Alain Recreux, the former honorary investment Counsellor of Pakistan in France and an agricultural expert, the Ambassador met with the local farmers, livestock breeders and members of local chamber of agriculture and livestock. He was also briefed by the local Mayor about forestation and tree plantation projects.

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Kashmiris' observe martyrs day

On the 13th July 1931, the troops of Dogra Maharaja had killed 22 Kashmiris

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Kashmiris on both sides of the Line of Control and world over will observe Kashmir Martyrs Day tomorrow to pay homage to martyrs of July 13, 1931. In occupied Kashmir, the All Parties Hurriyat Conference has appealed to the Kashmiri people mark it by a complete strike in the territory. On the 13th July 1931, the troops of Dogra Maharaja had killed 22 Kashmiris, one after the other, outside the Central Jail in Srinagar during the court proceedings against one Abdul Qadeer who had asked the Kashmiri people to defy

the Dogra rule. The APHC spokesman in a statement issued in Srinagar said that on 13th July 1931, when it was time for Namaz-e-Zuhr, a young man, started the call for prayer (Azaan) but was shot dead by the Maharaja's soldiers. Thus, 22 youth sacrificed their lives till the completion of Azaan. The spokesman said the aim of the strike call is to stress the urgent need for a peaceful and just solution to the Kashmir dispute and to end the cycle of oppression against the Hurriyat leaders and the Kashmiri people. He also appealed for a march towards the Mazar-e-Shuhada, Naqshband Sahib in Srinagar on the day where the martyrs of 1931 are buried.



FAISALABAD: A view of dark clouds hovering over the city. - APP

Four terrorists killed

4 soldiers embrace shahadat in exchange of fire

DNA

RAWALPINDI: 4 terrorists were killed during an IBO in Vezhda Sar, 8 kms South West of Boya, Miranshah, North Waziristan District. sanitisation force conducted operation against terrorists' hideout in Vezhda Sar this morning. As soon as the troops cordoned off the area, terrorist opened fire. All dug out terrorists were shot down by security forces. In exchange of fire, 4 soldiers embraced shahadat. Later the Area cleared by sanitisation force. Shaheeds include; Sepoy Muhammad Ismail Khan, Sepoy Muhammad Shahbaz Yasin, Sepoy Raja Waheed Ahmed and Sepoy Muhammad Rizwan Khan.

Sino-Pakistan health corridor important

Frequent online meetings between the two sides are very important. Chinese experts can train Pakistani doctors in order to better combat the pandemic

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Under severe situation of COVID-19 outbreak, cooperation between Pakistan and China in healthcare sector plays an important role in providing timely support to the affected people to get recovered, Gwadar Pro reported on Saturday. "Health Corridor will create a great image of China as till now China has only invested in energy sector in Pakistan and a lot can be done in Medical Education and Medical Tourism," said Dr Muhammad Shahbaz who had initiated the conception of Health Corridor in 2017. Later, cooperation between Chinese and Pakistani institutes was initiated leading to the realization of the

healthcare goals. Health Corridor establishes telemedicine, virtual classrooms. Meanwhile, this healthcare project focused on sharing medical data and experience, doctors training. In addition, several mechanisms were built, such as Belt & Road Health Fund, Belt & Road Medical Force (BRMF), Silk Road Higher Medical Education forum (SRHMEF) and connectivity via Medical Tourism (BRM). As a surgeon and PhD scholar at Shandong University, and having spent more than a decade in China as a medical student, he hopes that the CPEC will also bring about healthcare facilities and infrastructure cooperation in Pakistan and China. "I have re-named it the CPHC - the China Pakistan Health Corridor or simply 'The Health Corridor,'" he said. He highly praised the actions and measures that Chinese government taken to cope with pandemic. "COVID-19 pandemic has brought huge opportunity for the BRI countries specially China and Pakistan for better cooperation. Frequent online meetings between the two sides are very important. Chinese experts can train Pakistani doctors in order to better combat the pandemic. Data sharing is very important. Pakistani hospitals should be digitalized. Big Data centres can be established in top 20 hospitals in the first stage, tracking and keeping record of patients will be easy in this way. Telemedicine joint sessions can be held frequently," he added.

PTI to move NAB against Sindh govt

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan-Tehreek e-Insaf (PTI) leaders Firdous Shamim Naqvi and Haleem Adil on Sunday have decided to move National Accountability Bureau (NAB) against Sindh government. Holding a press conference, Firdous Shamim Naqvi said that PTI has always tried to expose mismanagement of the provincial government. Those involved in corruption have no place in PTI, they stated. Meanwhile, Haleem Adil revealed that 52 percent bribe is being taken for doing any work in the province. No truth in the matter pertaining to 256 acres land as record is available, he added.

Children given wrong polio vaccine in GB

The way the federal govt treats Sindh is not even done to an international agency: Murad

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: Chief Minister (CM) Sindh has accused that the children of Gilgit-Baltistan were given wrong polio vaccine and demanded an investigation into the matter. Addressing a press conference in Karachi, he said that the polio spread in Gilgit-Baltistan last year was due to the wrong vaccine. Two cases were also reported in Karachi even though we had eradicated the polio virus in 2018. Who is involved in the drug scandal should be investigated by the media and also to find out that who has been importing the vaccine, he said. CM Sindh Murad Ali Shah said that the way the

federal government treats Sindh is not even done to an international agency. He said that we have been criticized for talking about the rights of the provinces. There was no consultation on the locust issue. He said that K-Electric was a failure of the federal government. K-Electric's board does not include the provincial government. CM said that the provincial government should also be included in K-Electric Shares and Board. K-Electric's solution is with the federal government. Not only K-Electric but also Hesco and SEPCO are also facing issues, he added. He demanded to include members of Sindh government in the board of K-Electric.

Trump finally wears mask in public



DNA

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has worn a mask in public for the first time since the start of the coronavirus pandemic. The president was visiting the Walter Reed military hospital outside Washington, where he met wounded soldiers and health care workers. "I've never been against masks but I do believe they have a time and a place," he said as he left the White House. He has previously said that he would not wear a mask and mocked Democratic rival Joe Biden for doing so.

Khunjrab linked with Islamabad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting, Lt. Gen (retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa said on Sunday that the new optical fibre cable had been operationalised from Khunjrab to Islamabad. In a tweet, Asim Bajwa who is also Chairman China Pakistan Economic Corridor Authority, informed that the next phase of the cable would be laid from Islamabad to Karachi and Islamabad to Gwadar as part of digital highway plan. The project of laying optical fibre cable from China border to Gwadar is being executed under CPEC.

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Smart lockdown move yielded positive results

The prime minister was the first one to advocate for smart lockdowns. Countries around the world, Umar said, have realized that it is simply unsustainable to shut entire nations. "The only way is to identify high-density hotspots and target them accordingly

DNA / STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's decision to impose smart or selective lockdowns in hotspot areas is yielding desired results. Country reports a 28% reduction in critical cases due smart lockdowns and implementation of SOPs As countries around the world juggle with strategies to flatten the Covid-19 curve, Pak strategy won an unexpected endorsement from the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. In a subtle acknowledgment on Twitter, Guterres said that there is no choice between health or jobs in the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. "They are interlinked. We will either win on all fronts or fail on all fronts," said the UN Secretary-General. According to data collected by The Express Tribune, a significant reduction in the number of positive cases has emerged as the

country crossed the 100-day mark in its fight against the respiratory disease which has claimed more than 5,000 lives. "Smart lockdowns, a stronger enforcement effort, compliance of SOPs and the nationwide change in the behavior can be credited for the current gains in the fight against the Covid-19 virus," reduction was recorded in the number of critical cases as a result of the selective lockdowns and implementation of SOPs introduced by the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC). The strategy "The prime minister was the first one to advocate for smart lockdowns. Countries around the world, Umar said, have realized that it is simply unsustainable to shut entire nations. "The only way is to identify high-density hotspots and target them accordingly." As long as the hotspot areas are taken out of the whole network, the minister said,

the cumulative impact is reduced. "That coupled with behavioral change has helped Pakistan in controlling the contagion," he claimed. The concept of smart lockdowns, when presented by Prime Minister Imran Khan, was fiercely opposed. But as the country appears to be on course to flatten the Covid-19 curve, its strategy is being endorsed by a number of developed nations. Germany, Italy, and Portugal are now considering local shutdowns to prevent a new surge of coronavirus infections. More and more countries are shutting down smaller regions as opposed to bringing their entire nations to a halt. Despite receiving flak from all corners, the prime minister stuck to his guns. He supported the smart lockdown strategy over nationwide shutdowns to prevent the spread of the disease and protect people below the headline from economic hardship.

The policy, experts believe, appears to have been validated by a recent report by Oxfam. The leading UK-based charitable organizations focusing on the alleviation of global poverty warned that the Coronavirus pandemic could kill more people through hunger than the disease itself. "Many people in middle-income countries who were on the breadline are also said to have been tipped over the edge by the health crisis," said Oxfam. Through the NCOC, the government has implemented a series of measures. In total, the government's central response unit has imposed more than 500 smart lockdowns to control the disease from spreading. "So far, we imposed 551 smart lockdowns across the country," said one senior official at the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC), which serves as the nation's nerve centre in the battle against Covid-19. In total, 8.2million are currently under lockdown," he revealed.

Briefs

PBF says country economic growth must be at 7%

ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) on Sunday said country has a dire and well-established need for wide-ranging structural and institutional reform. The required reforms encompass tax administration, the wider civil service, management of state-owned enterprises, the energy sector, regulatory agencies, the central bank as well as the regulation of the corporate sector, among other areas. Talking to business community, President PBF, Sahibzada Mian Usman Zulfikar said even there is no political will to reform the police. The latest Police Reforms Committee report prepared in January 2019 is gathering dust. Police in Pakistan must be depoliticised through democratic institutional oversight. The role of police as service provider and an institution that protects citizens must be consciously pursued to change the present militarisation of internal security. He said Pakistan's low economic growth since 1990 is more to do with lack of institutional reforms rather than external factors. "The rot had set in somewhere before 1990, which resulted in low economic growth later."

SalamAir to operate flights to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Oman's airline SalamAir will operate several special flights to Pakistan in the coming days. A statement issued by the SalamAir said, "SalamAir announces the operation of a special flight, Muscat-Karachi-Muscat on Monday, 13th July," Times of Oman reported. "In addition, a flight from Muscat to Sialkot and back will be operated on Tuesday, July 14 and another flight between Muscat and Multan will be operated on Wednesday, 15th July," SalamAir confirmed. "SalamAir also announces the operation of special flights, Muscat-Islamabad-Muscat and between Muscat and Peshawar, on Thursday, 16th July," the airline added. "A special flight between Muscat and Lahore will be operated on Friday, 17th July. - APP

Several road projects being executed in KP

ISLAMABAD: The government has launched several road infrastructure projects in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, most of them in less developed areas, a step towards equitable development of all parts of the country. Talking to APP on Sunday, an NHA official said that after completion, the ongoing road infrastructure projects in the KP would not only open new vistas of opportunities for the people of adjacent areas but also end sense of deprivation among the people. He said that under the Public Sector Development Programme in the previous fiscal year, Rs 6500 million were spent on the dualization and upgradation project of a section of Indus Highway from Sarai Gambila to Kohat. The NHA official said Rs 1110.718 million had been issued for the Lowari Tunnel whereas for the 32 km Peshawar Northern Bypass, Rs 2500 million had been released.

Drive against security agencies slammed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: PML-Q Deputy Secretary Information Khawaja Rameez Hassan has said that the ongoing campaign on social media against the army and law enforcement agencies of Pakistan is a matter of concern. He said that external forces are providing huge funding to destabilize Pakistan. In this regard, the educated youth of Pakistan are seduced and incited against their own state. Jobless patriotic youth are being used in negative activities by creating an atmosphere of deprivation.



ISLAMABAD: Workers busy in construction of underpass on Faisal Avenue. - APP

NAB's performance appreciated by National, Int'l organizations

NAB is the only anti corruption organization in Pakistan which is playing a vital role in recovering looted money from criminal elements and has recovered Rs. 466.069 billion since its inception

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB after assumption of his responsibilities as Chairman NAB not only devised an effective and proactive National Anti Corruption Strategy to check corruption but took necessary measures in order to nab corrupt elements. Owing to outstanding performance of NAB, reputed national and International organizations like Transparency International Pakistan, World Economic Forum, PILDAT and Mishal Pakistan have appreciated NAB's performance with 68.8 percent cumulative success ratio in 2019. According to a survey of Gillani and Gallop Pakistan 59 people of Pakistan showed confidence upon NAB. It is an honor for Pakistan that

Country's apex Anti-Corruption Organization NAB is a role model not only for Pakistan but also for entire SAARC countries as NAB is Chairman of SAARC Anti Corruption Forum which is the great achievement of Pakistan due to NAB's efforts. Pakistan is the only country to whom China has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for eradication of corruption. Pakistan and China are now jointly working for ensuring transparency in China Pakistan economic coordination CPEC projects. NAB is the only anti corruption organization in Pakistan which is playing a vital role in recovering looted money from criminal elements and has recovered Rs. 466.069 billion since its inception. The recovery made by NAB possible to return to hundreds of affectedes and some government de-



partments/private persons and all recovered amounts deposited in national exchequer which reflects excellent performance of NAB. NAB is committed to provide training to its investigation officers on modern lines. In line with the vision of Chairman NAB, NAB has introduced a new concept of combined investigation Team (CIT) in order to further improve the quality and standard of its inquiries and investigations. THE CIT comprises

one senior investigation officer and one junior investigation officer, Additional Director as case officer, legal counsel, financial expert and forensic expert under the supervision of Director and Director General concerned to benefit from collective wisdom. NAB has established its own Pakistan Training and Research Academy in which specialized training has started to impart investigation officers on modern lines in order to conduct investigations of cases of money laundering and white collar crime cases besides establishment of state of the art Forensic Science Laboratory in NAB Rawalpindi for scrutinizing documents and fingerprints, analysis of digital data etc. The Forensic LAB of NAB not only saves time but also ensures secrecy and quality which is lending quality in conduct of investigations.

Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB is regularly reviewing the performance of NAB Headquarters and all Regional Bureaus on weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly, six months and annual performance not only through computer based specially devised state of art monitoring and evaluation system but also physical inspecting the performance of all concerned by Chairman NAB's Inspection and Monitoring Team (CINT) which is helping in judging the performance of NAB and corrective measures are then taken as per law. NAB under the dynamic leadership of Honorable Mr. Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB is absolutely committed to the logical conclusion of mega corruption white collar crime cases with hard work, transparency, fairly, professionally and on merit for a 100% corruption free Pakistan.

Pakistan meets climate sustainable development goal

ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: Ranked as the most climate-vulnerable country, Pakistan has crossed a crucial milestone by achieving an overarching Sustainable Development Goal - 13 'Climate Action' much before the deadline, shows United Nations annual Sustainable Development Report 2020, launched recently. The Sustainable Development Report (formerly the SDG Index & Dashboards) is an annual global assessment of countries' progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. It is a complement to the official SDG indicators and the voluntary national reviews. "It is indeed a landmark achievement for the country to have achieved the crucial sustainable development goal 13 'Climate Action' well 10 years before deadline of 2030 for the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development

Goals," Malik Amin Aslam, Advisor to Prime Minister on Climate Change, said. "With achieving the Climate Action SDG 13, Pakistan has demonstrated itself a country seriously committed to global efforts aimed to tackle the challenge of climate change," he maintained. Pointing towards various measures taken by the present government and under the unwavering patronage of Prime Minister Imran Khan, Malik Amin Aslam said that adoption and implementation of different low carbon growth trajectory, mitigation and adaptation initiatives in fact paved the way for the country to achieve the UN's Climate Action Goal 13 that too 10 years before expiry of the SDGs. Spelling out details of the initiatives, Amin Aslam said that the some of the such leading initiatives taken by the present government include 10 Billion Tree Tsunami Programme, Clean Green Pakistan Initiative,

Clean Green Pakistan Index, Protected Areas Initiative, Eco-system Restoration Fund for facilitating the transition towards environmentally-resilient Pakistan by mainstreaming adaptation and mitigation through ecologically-targeted initiatives such as afforestation, biodiversity conservation, enhancing policy environment in consistent with the objectives of Pakistan's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and attaining Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN). Launched and adopted by all United States member countries in September 2015, the UN-led 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the roadmap to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. To be achieved by 2030, they aim to address the global challenges including those related to poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, health, education, water, sanitation, food security, peace and justice.

Polio vaccination resume from July 20

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will resume polio vaccination activities on July 20 with a campaign in selected districts after a four-month suspension of all polio vaccination activities due to COVID-19 pandemic. According to an official of the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC), Polio Eradication Programme, the government has decided to reach the eligible children with all essential vaccines and re-launch small scale door to door vaccination round since suspension during March in the context of COVID-19. He said that the first round of the campaign will be launched in districts included Faisalabad, Attock, South Waziristan, and parts of Karachi and Quetta with a target to vaccinate almost 800,000 children under the age of five. He said that under the guidance of the Ministry of National Health Services and following the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) guidelines and Polio Oversight Board recommendations, the Pakistan Polio Eradication programme had suspended all polio related activities in the last week of March, except surveillance.

Vehicle owners can pay token tax at NADRA 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 them registered on City Islamabad app, developed by National Information Technology Board (NITB) for the federal capital dwellers to provide 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 NADRA, said Director Excise Bilal Azam while talking to APP. 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. They urged the authorities to resolve their grievances on war footing to relief the masses and make the whole payment system online so the people may submit their fees without visiting the offices. - APP

'Parliamentary system has failed'

DNA

LAHORE: PML-Q Deputy Secretary Information Khawaja Rameez Hassan has said that the current parliamentary system has failed miserably. No effective political setup is possible without reforms in parliamentary system. He said that it is the responsibility of the patriotic authorities to make possible a transparent and impartial setup that would take practical steps to strengthen the infrastructure of the state. The constitutional amendments made in the past were a vicious conspiracy to strengthen the atmosphere of self-interest and provincialism, which caused irreparable damage to the education system.

Road accident claims one life in Matiari district

ISLAMABAD: A passenger coach collided with a motorcycle-rickshaw on the National Highway near Matiari district, killing at least one woman and injuring four others. According to Rescue sources the accident occurred because the coach tried to overtake another vehicle on the road. It smashed into the rickshaw and claimed one life. Rescue officials reached the site of accident and shifted injured and body to nearby hospitals. The police have impounded the coach and sent most of the passengers off in other buses, a private news channel reported. - APP

Hurriyat leader Ashraf Sehrai arrested in Srinagar

ISLAMABAD: In Indian occupied Kashmir, Indian police have arrested senior Hurriyat leader and Chairman of Tehreek Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir, Mohammad Ashraf Sahrai and booked him under the draconian Public Safety Act (PSA) in Srinagar, Sunday. According to Kashmir Media Service, Mohammad Ashraf Sahrai was arrested from his residence at Baghaat Barzulla in Srinagar in the wee hours of Sunday. "Authorities have booked Ashraf Sahrai under Public Safety Act", a top police officer confirmed to media men in Srinagar. Sehrai's son, Junaid Sahrai, was martyred by Indian troops during a cordon and search operation along with an associate at Nawakadal area of Srinagar recently. "He was wanted in multiple cases," Occupied Kashmir's Director General of Police (DGP) Dilbagh Singh said.

565 new cases of corona reported on in Punjab

LAHORE: The COVID-19 has taken away 21 more lives in the province, while the number of coronavirus cases in the province reached 86,556 after registration of 565 new cases till Sunday morning. According to the spokesperson of the Punjab Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department, total number of deaths has reached 2006 in the province. The Punjab health department conducted 589,523 tests for COVID-19 so far, while 55,175 confirmed cases have been recovered all together in the province. The department also appealed the masses to follow SOPs for their protection. - APP

Energy efficiency of Uzbek economy touches new heights

From 1 August, the document establishes a tariff for guaranteed purchase of electricity from newly commissioned solar, wind and biogas power plants, micro and small hydroelectric power stations (HPPs), including surplus electricity produced for own needs

DNA

TASHKENT: It is planned to save 3.3 billion kWh of electricity and 2.6 billion cubic meters of natural gas in the economy of Uzbekistan over 2 years due to energy efficiency measures. Such parameters are provided for by the resolution of the President of the country PP-4779 adopted "On additional measures to reduce the dependence of economic sectors on fuel and energy products by increasing the energy efficiency of the economy and utilizing available resources" on 10 July 2020. Energy efficiency or, in other words, the rational use of energy resources in economic and social sectors is an important

factor in increasing the profitability and competitiveness of the manufacturing sector and energy saving, which in turn has a serious impact on energy security, job creation, the growth of well-being of the population and in general development of the country. From 1 August, the document establishes a tariff for guaranteed purchase of electricity from newly commissioned solar, wind and biogas power plants, micro and small hydroelectric power stations (HPPs), including surplus electricity produced for own needs. It is fixed that the determination of investors for the construction and operation of industrial power plants based on renewable energy sources (RES), except for hydropower plants, is carried out only through tenders. The document for the

period from 15 July to 31 December 2020 establishes privileges for manufacturers who organized the third (night) shift in the form of applying a reduction factor in payments for the used electricity. For enterprises with at least 50% of the state's share, the possibility of reducing the mandatory requirement for prepayment (up to 30%) for natural gas and electricity will not be used. The resolution approved the target parameters for saving fuel and energy resources in the sectors of the economy for 2020-2022, envisaging energy savings of 3.3 billion kWh, natural gas - 2.6 billion cubic meters, oil products - 16.3 thousand tonnes. The document also approved the Roadmap for improving energy efficiency in large enterprises and the schedule for

energy audits. The resolution approved the structure and identified sources of financing, the previously created extrabudgetary Interbranch Energy Saving Fund, which is part of the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Uzbekistan. It has been established that the funds of this Fund are used for: financing the preparation of feasibility studies for projects to improve energy efficiency, including improving thermal protection of buildings and multi-apartment buildings; the creation of thematic training centers; development of relevant startups and participation in the authorized capital of enterprises for the production of installations of renewable energy sources, heat pumps, capacitor banks and other products

aimed at improving energy efficiency. The resolution gave a number of instructions to the responsible structures, including the Ministry of Energy. In particular, it is prescribed within 2 months to ensure the involvement of leading companies (domestic and international) for energy audits at 285 large industrial enterprises, as well as to make a proposal to expand their list. The document envisages the creation of the Unified Information System of the Ministry of Energy, commissioning, which is scheduled for the end of 2021. Based on the analytical data obtained from the Unified Information System, a mechanism for mandatory energy audits of enterprises with high energy consumption will be introduced.

Briefs

NIC launches report on 'Impact of COVID-19'

ISLAMABAD: The National Incubation Center (NIC) has launched report entitled 'Impact of COVID-19 on 'Pakistani Startups and The Way Forward' the other day. 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.

Lok Virsa striving to preserve cultural heritage

ISLAMABAD: The Lok Virsa Folk Heritage Museum has been striving to preserve and promote cultural heritage of the country both tangible and intangible. According to an official of Museum, the focus is on the promotion of folk heritage of Pakistan in a way that is relevant to people of all ages and backgrounds and to provide more meaning, depth and rootedness in life. He said that the museum has portrayed antiquated cultures of South Asia to the present day folk heritage and traditions of Pakistan. The museum has represented the evolution of culture and tradition through the ages in an excellent manner.

Rangers arrest burglary suspect

KARACHI: Paramilitary Rangers have arrested a suspect of recent burglary and theft at Karachi University's Criminology Department. Rangers officials have arrested accused Awais, a former student of the university, and recovered various items stolen in the incident. The suspect has been handed over to police after initial investigation, Rangers officials said. According to the Head of the Department, Prof. Ghulam Muhammad Burfat, different articles, multimedia project, examination results, and attendance sheets were the items stolen from the department office. - APP

Two killers arrested during raid

RAWALPINDI: Police have arrested two killers involved in brutal murder in the jurisdiction of Police Station Ganjmandi here on Sunday, informed police spokesman. Babar Gulzar was stabbed to death by Muneeb and Nasir over petty dispute and after committing crime both were fled away from the scene. Ganjmandi police team using the latest technology managed to arrest the two killers within days. Police have registered a case and started investigation. - APP

REOPENING OF SCHOOLS ON SEPT 15

Education Ministry starts talks with stakeholders, says Shafiqat

The reopening of schools is not just an education decision, but primarily a public health one that needs to assess the various factors by analyzing how to mitigate the risk of contamination

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Federal Education Shafiqat Mahmood Sunday said government to take strict administrative actions for the implementation and enforcement of the standard operating procedure (SOPs) in schools after its reopening and nothing will be rushed without proper consultations and students' safety will be the top priority while making any decision.

Talking to a private news channel, Education minister said that our priority has always been the safety and security of students and teachers, adding, education department with the help of district administration would monitor the implementation of the SOPs in private schools and any school or academic institution that was found guilty of violating SOPs will be shut down by authorities.

The reopening of schools is not just an education decision, but primarily a public health one that



needs to assess the various factors by analyzing how to mitigate the risk of contamination.

He explained that the reopening of schools depending on the evolution of the pandemic over the coming months.

Minister further said the discussions will be held on the matter and authorities will review the decision in August in light of the coronavirus situation in the country. If the crisis is not curbed, schools and universities will not be opened, he said.

The Ministry has been preparing guidance on reopening that provide a full range of health and

safety recommendations and in our final meeting health ministry would also be the part of our decisions as well.

Digital applications are being developed for teachers around socio-emotional and academic challenges, while student evaluations will be conducted differently, he said. We must work together to make our education systems more resilient and better prepared for the current paradigm shift as well as to face possible crisis in the future.

IGP visits Kurram

PESHAWAR: Inspector General Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Dr. Sanaulah Abbasi Sunday visited district Kurram reviewed overall situation of law and order in the area. He was received by Deputy Inspector General Kohat Regions and high ranking police officials. He acquired briefing and discussed measures to further improve security situation in the district Kurram.

Speaking on the occasion, IGP said 90 percent merger of levies and Khasdars in police has been completed adding the remaining process would be completed in next week. He said that decision has been taken to start formal training of levies and khasdars from August 1. Police Chief said that process to acquire land for police stations in merged has been completed and construction work would start very soon. - APP

SOPs issued for cattle markets ahead Eid

ISLAMABAD: The district magistrate, Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) has issued Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for trading and transportation in cattle markets across the federal capital in wake of COVID-19 pandemic and Congo virus spread.

Metropolitan Corporation, Islamabad (MCI), District Administration, health department, Ministry of Health Services Regulation and Coordination, was taking necessary measures to prevent and control spread of the communicable diseases, like Cholera, Typhoid Fever, Congo Crimean Hemorrhagic Fever (CHF) and Respiratory infections, a handout available with APP said.

According to SOPs, the cattle markets should be established at designated points, at least two to five kilometers away from city limits. However the technical working group (TWG) recommended increase in number of cattle markets to manage the rush of traders and customers. The management of cattle markets must ensure controlled entry to the market and the parking area would be marked for distanced parking. Only two people per vehicle would be allowed while the elderly and children would not be allowed to enter into the cattle markets.

The markets should ensure provision of hand-hygiene facilities at entry points and multiple spots inside. No person would be allowed to enter without covering the face. Thermal scanning of staff and visitors at entry points by trained personnel should be ensured. - APP



ISLAMABAD: A customer checks a sacrificial animal before purchasing. - APP

AIOU sets up prospectus sale-points across country

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), being the mega university of the country, with approximately 1.4 million course enrollments in different academic programmes facilitates new admissions seekers by setting up prospectus sale-points across the country. Prospectuses will be available at these points from July 15.

As per the directives of the Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof.

Dr. Zial-ul-Qayyum, besides uploading admission forms of all the academic programmes being offered in the first phase of Autumn semester 2020, the university has set up Sale Points in all small and large towns and cities all over the country wherefrom students will be able to get prospectuses and admission forms easily. Moreover, each regional centre of the varsity has also been directed by the competent authority to establish an information desk for provision of ad-

mission-related information and admission forms to the desired students. Director Admissions and Mailing, has informed that details of all prospectus sale-points have been uploaded onto the university website. He said that candidates would get details of their respective nearest prospectus sale point by clicking the link "prospectus sale point" which will be made available on 15 July on the main web page of the university. He further informed "in the first phase the university

offers admissions in Matric, FA (general), FA (Dars-e-Nizami), BS (face-to-face), MSc (Face-to-face), MPhil and PhD in different subjects". It is to mention here that as per HEC guidelines this will be the last offering of MA/ MSc and M.Ed programmes. Last date for submission of matric, FA (general), and FA (Dars-e-Nizami) will be September 04, whereas admission forms of BS and MSc (face-to-face) and M.Phil and PhD programmes will be received till 19 August.

Renowned Saifuddin Saif remembered

ISLAMABAD: The 27th death anniversary of legendary lyricist, poet and film-maker, Saifuddin Saif was observed on Sunday. Late poet was still remembered for his heart touching songs. He was born in the city of Amritsar, India on July 20, 1922. "Aye mausam" was the most popular song of his other hits, he was also immensely praised for 'Jal-tay Hain armaan Mera Dil rota hay' and "mein tera shehar schor jaou ga". After Partition, he migrated to Lahore and started working as a dialogue writer and lyricist for Pakistani films. Saifuddin Saif passed away on this day in 1993, and was buried at a graveyard near Model Town in Lahore. - APP

Entry of sacrificial animals banned

RAWALPINDI: Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi (MCR) has imposed a ban on the entry of sacrificial animals to keep the city and to protect the citizens from COVID-19 on the auspicious occasion of Eid ul Azha. Under the ban, the sale and purchase of sacrificial animals has been restricted. The squad will not allow the cattle to walk in city freely, informed spokesman of MCR here. - APP

Theater Wallay to start first acting classes after lock down

ISLAMABAD: Art Group, Theatre wallay will start first acting classes after lockdown with strict SOPs to adopt acting as career. The Acting Classes will help person to gain confidence to speak before a bunch of people, and help to get rid of self-consciousness and body stiffness. The Training will focus on preparing an actor for theater performance - building an actor's physique, breathing, and control over his/her voice, dialogue delivery, understanding character, scene analysis, and basic acting techniques.

It will end with short scenes/monologues, which will be recorded and uploaded to TW's YouTube Channel, an official said on Sunday. He said that it would be a three month course on every Monday and Thursday in a week. He said that the registration has opened and first class would be held from August 04, 2020. He said that the Theater Wallay has been opened for cultural activities with strict SOPs after being shut down for three months, due to COVID-19. - APP

IRSA releases 324,900 cusecs water

The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 214,800, 189,100 and 56,200 cusecs respectively

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 324,900 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 336,100 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1460.42 feet, which was 74.42 feet higher than its dead level 1386 feet. Water in-

flow in the dam was recorded as 167,600 cusecs and outflow as 175,000 cusecs. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1224.60 feet, which was 184.60 feet higher than its dead level of 1040 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 43,600 cusecs and 25,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 214,800, 189,100 and 56,200 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River a total of 58,300 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 33,600 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala. - APP

PTI leader denies land grabbing charges

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan-Tehreek e-Insaf (PTI) leader Haleem Adil Sheikh, who is facing a NAB probe over alleged encroachment and sale of 257 acres of state land, vowed on Sunday to face the corruption watchdog whenever he is summoned for questioning. "There is no truth in these allegations," he told a press conference, adding he just got four acres on lease where he set up a poultry farm after obtaining a loan. Unlike opposi-

tion leaders who, according to him, made lame excuses whenever they are called by NAB, he said he would appear before it. Accusing the Anti-Corruption Establishment Sindh of initiating a witch-hunt against him after he held a rally against O n n i Group, owned by

former president Asif Ali Zardari's close aide Anwar Majeed, Haleem Adil Sheikh said it cooked up a plethora of lies to implicate him. He also denied money laundering allegations levelled against him and sought constitution of a judicial commission to probe encroachments on

state land in Karachi's Malir district. It was reported on July 11 that NAB has summoned all relevant details of the land in question from the Malir deputy commissioner. Speaking on the occasion, Firdous Shamim Naqvi, the Sindh Assembly's opposition leader, said the PPP-led Sindh government bears Haleem Adil Sheikh malice. He called for a probe into allegations against PPP ministers. The PTI leader announced to approach the bureau for probe into corruption charges against the provincial government.



Saudi Arabia to construct Quran complex in capital

This would be the first government-owned Quran complex. We have got offers of financial assistance for the building of the complex from Saudi Arabia, the Saudi-based World Muslim League and some other Gulf countries

DNA / APP

ISLAMABAD: Saudi Arabia has offered financial assistance for the construction of Pakistan's first sate-owned Quran complex in Islamabad, officials confirmed on Sunday. Religious Affairs Minister Pir Noorul Haq Qadri announced that the government wanted to build the complex in the federal

capital to preserve historical manuscripts of the Muslim scripture. "This would be the first government-owned Quran complex. We have got offers of financial assistance for the building of the complex from Saudi Arabia, the Saudi-based World Muslim League and some other Gulf countries," spokesman of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Imran Sid-

diqui said in an interview with Arab News. He added that the ministry has already initiated the process of land acquisition near the Golra area in the Islamabad Capital Territory. The center will also oversee and set standards for the publication of the Quran in the country and would recycle worn pages of the holy book. "This would be a huge complex on approximately 10

kanal land in Islamabad. The complex will have different sections like error-free publication of new Quran and a plant for the recycling of worn pages of the book gathered from all over the country," Siddiqui said. Dr. Masoom Yasinzai, rector of the International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI), hailed the plan as one that can be unifying for Muslims. "In this Quran complex

they should also work on research to unite all the Muslim from different schools of thought in Pakistan. The government should take guidance from the Quran complex in Medina. It should have a proper board, editing, evaluation and monitoring system for the error-free printing of the Quran," he said. According to Dr. Muhammad Khalid Masud, former chairman of Pakistan's

Council of Islamic Ideology, it is a constitutional obligation of the government to oversee the publication of the Quran. "Under the Constitution of Pakistan, it is the responsibility of the government to ensure error-free publication of the Quran. It would be a good step if the government can implement standards like Saudi Arabia for the publication of the holy book in Pakistan," he said.

10 outlaws including car lifter held

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Police have arrested 10 outlaws including Car lifter and recovered narcotics, stolen car, and weapons from them, a police spokesman said. According to details, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Muhammad Amir Zulfiqar Khan has ordered crackdown against criminals especially drug pushers. ACLC police arrested a car lifter namely Zubair Khan and recovered stolen car from him.

Briefs

Mafia thriving on Pakistan-India trade suspension

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the business community and former President ICCI Shahid Rasheed Butt on Sunday asked the government to consider lifting ban on import of edibles from India as suspension has provided an opportunity to the mafia to milk masses. Trade with India was a deterrent to the mafia as any hike in the price of edibles would have initiated imports but this option was closed a year ago resulting in a windfall for the profiteers, he said. Shahid Rasheed Butt said that government could consider allowing imports of poultry, milk, fruit, vegetables, and pulses without compromising on its principled stance. He said that many countries have differences and even enmity but they are not mixing economics with politics. Bilateral trade between the US and Russia is almost 29 billion dollars, China-US trade volume is around \$700 billion while India and China are conducting two-way trade worth \$86 billion. The business leader said that China has never accepted Taiwan as a county, she considers it part of the China but the bilateral trade and investment surpass 250 billion dollars.

Airblue identifies two pilots with suspected fake degrees

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Airblue has submitted a report to the Supreme Court of Pakistan on the verification of its pilots' licences and said only two pilots possess suspected fake credentials. Chief Justice Gulzar had ordered the heads of Airblue, PIA and Serena Air to verify the licences of the pilots in their employ and submit a report. The Ministry of Aviation sent Airblue a list of nine pilots it employed that possess suspected fake licences. Seven pilots on the list left the airline in 2014, 2015 and 2018. The remaining two pilots, Fida Khalil and Naveed Khokhar, were still serving in Airblue. Khalil resigned on July 5 and Khokhar had been suspended on June 26. He has filed an appeal so further action against him is pending until the appeal is decided on, read the report. "During the years 2018-19, 100 pilots were working in Airblue Ltd. All their educational certificates and degrees were put under verification and as per report of concerned institutions the educational certificates and degrees of 98 pilots were found correct and genuine."

PSA wants schools reopened

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Private Schools Association Chairman Malik Abrar and All Sindh Private Schools and Colleges Association Chairperson Haider Ali have rejected the government's decision to reopen schools from September 15. In an interview with a private television channel, the chairpersons said that if the government was planning to reopen schools with coronavirus SOPs, then it should do so right away instead of waiting till September. According to Abrar, the number of cases of the deadly virus have been on a decline in the country. "The government should immediately reopen schools so that this year's school session is not wasted," he said. He added that due to the closure of more than 40% private schools, teachers and other staff in schools are nearly unemployed. The schools should be provided a relief package to pay teachers and make up for their losses, Abrar demanded. Ali questioned that when all other businesses in the country had resumed why had schools not been granted permission. "Schools and colleges should be immediately reopened," he said.

Chairman FBR assures businessmen for addressing tax issues, facilitating them

DNA / SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) Muhammad Javed Ghani on Saturday said he would try to address the tax related issues of business community so that they could be facilitated in promoting business activities and strengthening the economy. He said this while talking to a delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) that called on him led by Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President. Tahir Abbasi Senior Vice President ICCI, Malik Sohail Hussain Chief Coordinator UBG FPCCI and Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari former Vice President ICCI were in the delegation, says a press release. Accepting the invitation of Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, Javed Ghani said he would visit ICCI for an interaction with the business community to know about their tax issues and get their input for bringing further improvements in the prevailing tax system. He said efforts would be made to evolve a taxation system that could facilitate the growth of economic activities and help in improving tax revenue of the country. He welcomed the suggestions of the delegation members for resolving problems and broadening the tax base.



ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Ahmed President Islamabad Chamber, Malik Sohail Hussain Chief Coordinator UBG Fpcci, Tahir Abbasi Senior Vice President ICCI and Ahsan Bakhtawari EC member ICCI called on newly appointed Mr Muhammad Javed Ghani Chairman FBR and also presented the Crest of the Chamber. – DNA

Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry congratulated Muhammad Javed Ghani for assuming the charge of chairman FBR and hoped that he would take measures to address the key tax issues of business community and promote the vision of the prime minister to turn Pakistan into a fast growing economy. He said the current government has made commitments to streamline the payment of tax refunds, but the process was quite slow due to which the business community was facing liquidity issues. He said the covid-19 pandemic had created extraordinary challenges for the business community and the overall economy and this situation necessitated that FBR to focus on speedy automation of refunds including customs duty, sales tax and income tax to ensure that all tax refunds were automatically transferred to the bank accounts of the concerned taxpayers. He said another better option to solve the refunds issue was to allow taxpayers to adjust their payable taxes against the accumulated refunds. This mechanism would not only address the liquidity issues of business community; it would also improve the tax revenue of the government.

Mayor reviews COVID-19 plans in various areas

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Mayor Islamabad Sheikh Anser Aziz after recovery from Corona visited all key areas of Islamabad, to review the state of preparedness and likely problems in wake of forthcoming Moon Soon scenario. Mayor Islamabad also shown his grave concern on scarcity and shorage of water this summer and applauded all measures undertaken so far, he however added that if at all the Government would have backed our efforts in



terms of funds and development schemes, the capital city would have been flourishing every passing day. Mayor further directed all subordinate functionaries of environment, sanitation and flood relief cells, to ensure services at every residents door step and figure out best service delivery mechanism for all segments of society without discrimination. The visit concluded on a hope note that moon soon season shall be met and responded to the best of MCI abilities.

'No chances of bilateral dialogues with India'

So, I think that we have this new space in the international domain. We should use it, not lose it."

DNA

MUZAFFARABAD: The President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Sardar Masood Khan has said neither India would come to the table for talks on Kashmir nor Pakistan want to indulge in talks with India because of what India has done in Occupied Kashmir. "India has changed the dynamics of the area unilaterally. So we would not sit with them around the negotiating table," Masood said in an interview. He said that Kashmir has been internationalized and multi-lateralized and we should not bring it to the bilateral level. Because bilateral negotiations have been a mirage and India has been using them as a tool to perpetuate its hold on the Jammu & Kashmir territory. "So, I think that we have this new space in the international domain. We should

use it, not lose it." When asked to comment on the Simla Agreement, which states that India-Pakistan shall settle their differences by peaceful means through bilateral negotiations, President Masood Khan said the agreement is now redundant mainly because of unilateral Indian actions in IOJK. However, he said although the Simla Agreement is disused, we haven't changed our stance and we shouldn't. He emphasized that instead, we should use the full potential of the United Nations. We should use this platform because it is relevant to the Kashmir issue. He maintained Pakistan and people of Jammu and are ready for third-party mediation. "I think that as citizens of Pakistan, we are ready for the diplomacy of any kind. I believe that the starting point of such diplomacy should be the United Na-



tions Security Council resolutions because these were drawn after prolonged deliberations and should not be set aside." Further, the Kashmiris should be associated with any direct or indirect negotiations on Kashmir. They are the real party to the dispute, he said. AJK President said because of Indian steps in IOJK. There is a huge reaction and resentment in the occupied territory as well as in Azad Kashmir and Pakistan. Also, in the world: the diaspora community is seething with anger because India is committing serious crimes with impunity. President Khan warned that occupied territory and AJK is already perilous and will lead to more radicalization of Kashmiri youth. This is why the Indian Occupation forces are targeting Kashmiri youth. Every day they gun down these Kashmiris in fake encounters.

Kashmir marks the 89th Martyrs Day on 13 July

FIAZ CH.

ISLAMABAD: Kashmir marks the 89th Martyrs Day on 13 July, the day in 1931 when twenty-two Kashmiri civilians gave their lives in a tragic incident that lives in the memory of millions as a story of courage and sacrifice. The 22 Kashmiris were killed for reciting the Muslim call to prayer, or azaan, which was banned in Kashmir at the time. One by one, they stepped forward to recite as each was killed by a single bullet. In 1846, Britain as a colonial power sold Kashmir to a wealthy Indian Maharaja named Gulab Singh. He was a ruthless monarch. He set out to humiliate the majority Kashmiri Muslims. In July 1931, Singh banned the azaan, the call to prayer rendered at mosques. A Kashmiri man, named Abdulqadir, was arrested by maharaja's soldiers and tried for sedition. On the day of his trial, on 13 July 1931, thousands of Kashmiris gathered outside the prison awaiting the result of the trial. During the wait, it was noon prayer time, known to Muslims as Zohr. One Kashmiri stood up and recited the azaan. Before he could complete it, he was shot and killed by maharaja's police. Another Kashmiri man took his place and attempted to complete the azaan but was shot to death. A third man rose, and then a fourth. In the end, a total of twenty-two men were killed, each one of them having recited a part of the call to prayer until it was read out in full. Every day for the past 89 years, Kashmiris have faithfully marked Kashmir Martyrs Day to commemorate the sacrifice of these men for freedom. History is made of such stories. Nations rise when its sons and daughters feed national pride with compelling examples of sacrifice.

RCCI urges Govt to address cottage industry issues

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has urged the government of Pakistan to address the grievances of cottage industry amid Covid-19 and smart lockdown. RCCI President Saboor Malik in a statement said that due to lockdown, smart lockdown and complete lockdown on weekends (Saturday and Sunday) the business of cottage industry, Small industry and Retailer Furniture has been affected largely. The lock-down policy should be based on ground realities. "The two major industries are believed to be the economic barometers of any country- one is small and medium enterprises and the second is cottage industry. The growth of these two important sectors help flourish the country's economy," he further added. Businesses linked with the cottage industry should be open 7 days a week under strict SOPs, he suggested. The RCCI president said that the Chamber in its Budget recommendations



had demanded that tax incentives should be given to local industry to promote imports substitution and GST should be reduced to single digit level to bring down cost of doing business. Moreover, as huge loss is caused to the businesses since lockdowns implementations, the governments should provide interest free loans, he added. The status of cottage industry be revived and the government should through notifications should provide at least half concession against 6 months rents. Concession on property tax be also announced by the governments, he demanded. All Sales Tax of this year be exempted.

'People with comorbidity at high risk of severe COVID-19'

ISLAMABAD: "People with comorbidity are at high risk of severe status of COVID-19. Elderly people particularly with heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, obesity, liver disease and any other ailment going on must be very careful. The current pandemic is an emerging infectious disease." This was stated by the famous Physician Prof. Dr. Wasim Jafri while speaking at the COMSTech webinar titled, "COVID-19 Pandemic and Related Health Issues." The webinar was attended by more than 78 health professionals from the OIC member states. Coordinator General COMSTech Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary also spoke on the occasion. Prof. Wasim Jafri pointed out that diabetes could not be ignored at all as diabetes made everything worse including this fatal disease. The proportion of severe disease increases with age and so is the case of the death but must not neglect the younger population, he said. – DNA

Experts urged govt to spend for the resilience of capital city

Naqvi said the encroachments cannot be removed without the support of ICT district management. Despite repeated requests MCI was not extended due cooperation by the district management to remove illegal constructions from the green belts and national park areas

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Experts and civil society representatives speaking to a webinar criticized Capital Development Authority (CDA) for its tug of war with Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) since the inception of the latter for the last over four years. They said citizens have badly suffered from the illogical rift as the civic services and environmental conditions have deteriorated over a few years of the local government system in the federal capital. The tug of war between the two, the city managers and the peoples' representatives, over the funds and authority have spoiled the sustainability of the entire system of service delivery.

The civil society reps highlighted that water shortage, lack of proper management of domestic waste and sewage, broken roads, diminishing green cover and belts and irrational development have marred the sustainability of the city. Development Communications Network (Devcom-Pakistan) organized the webinar on the subject "Population and Sustainable Urban Practices for Islamabad" on Saturday to mark the UN World Population Day. The webinar was conducted and hosted by Devcom-Pakistan and DTN Director Munir Ahmed who is a well-known environmentalist and climate advocacy expert. Zeeshan Naqvi said Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) was allocated PKR 14 billion two years back for different pro-

ject proposals but no penny was released so far. Even the MCI cannot use the tax it collects from different sources because the MCI Rules of Business are not approved as yet by the government. The MCI House has approved the schemes of small dams on eight natural streams originating from the foot of Margalla Hills, improvement in the sewage treatment plants, repair and provision of water, filter plants, maintenance of parks. They are all possible if the funds are provided. We are handcuffed by the government, perhaps, because we belong to the opposition party. Naqvi said the encroachments cannot be removed without the support of ICT district management. Despite repeated requests

MCI was not extended due cooperation by the district management to remove illegal constructions from the green belts and national park areas. However, he said, MCI is trying to take care of the city with whatever limited human resources and funds are available. Collection of domestic waste has been improved while working on the landfill site, trying to improve the conditions of parks besides efforts are underway to overcome shortage of water supply. He asked the government to urgently start a process of amendments in the rules and regulations framed for the capital city to ensure rights to the locals. He said legislation is needed on the contradictions in the same zone that perturb the rights of citizens.

Talking about the new paradigm of sustainable urban management, the water and climate resilience of the city matters that how good coping mechanisms are in place to face the disasters, urban flooding, impact of harsh weathers, water scarcity, recycling and waste management systems. He said the concept of smart city for Islamabad is already underway but without meaningful measures it would not be sustainable. The population density becomes more productive in terms of socioeconomic outcomes if they have opportunities to be productive. The federal city is expanding beyond limits without any planning and resource management that would become liability

soon if conditions remained so. Devcom-Pakistan Director Munir Ahmed said civil society representatives and experts should play their role in bridging the conflicts among the city managers ICT district management, CDA and MCI for the sake of citizens. He also urged the government to urgently release the funds so that development projects should begin to improve the civic and environmental conditions in the federal capital. Mome Saleem urged the government to take immediate steps to remove encroachments from the green belts and national park areas. Saadat Ali said a comprehensive plan is required to segregate 750 ton waste at source and its disposal in an adequate manner.

Deadlocked

HERE appears to be a never-ending deadlock between the government and the opposition regarding amendments to NAB laws. Even now there is remote possibility of introducing any legislation about this in the ongoing session of the National Assembly. There appears to be no contact between the PTI and the opposition parties to hammer out suitable amendments to NAB laws. Ideally, by now the government should have shared some draft proposals and the opposition also should have done likewise, but both sides appear to be showing both a sluggish pace and reluctance to move forward for an amicable conclusion to this long-drawn process. This matter has been pending for over six months now. The last we heard about it was in May when the government reiterated its resolve to not compromise on the powers of NAB to continue the "accountability process".

The government must realize that to reduce the impression of selective accountability there is an urgent need to clip at least some of the powers of the anti-corruption watchdog. Rather than working in this direction, the governments and its ministers seem to be interested in creating more controversies by expressing their displeasure about the current NFC Award and the 18th Amendment which ensure some autonomy to provinces. For both the government and the opposition it is better not to indulge in blame game while the country's economy is reeling under the strain of the Covid-19 pandemic. If NAB law is not amended, the time will not be far away in future when the PTI may find itself embroiled in cases that will be difficult to defend in accountability courts in the presence of nearly unrestrained power to NAB and its chairman. As per opposition allegations, NAB has been violating its own protocols and SOPs and we have seen people being dragged to courts and then to jails, and bails being denied on flimsy charges. All this does not bode well for businesses, for democracy, and for the government itself in the long run.

If the government and the opposition keep showing the irresponsible attitude they have been displaying with regard to NAB laws, this procrastination may lead to serious consequences in future. Now an impression is being created about the government's consistent laggardness in constructive and useful legislation. For the past 20 years since Gen Pervez Musharraf converted the Ehtesab Act 1997 into the National Accountability Ordinance (NAO) in 1999, all governments failed to make any positive changes to the NAB laws, with the result that NAB is haunting everyone - barring those who are part of the incumbent governments. Even the Supreme Court has directed that amendments be made into NAB laws, so there is apparently no excuse to delay it further. We hope to see accountability in this country - but that accountability must come with fairness and justice, not vendetta and partisanship.

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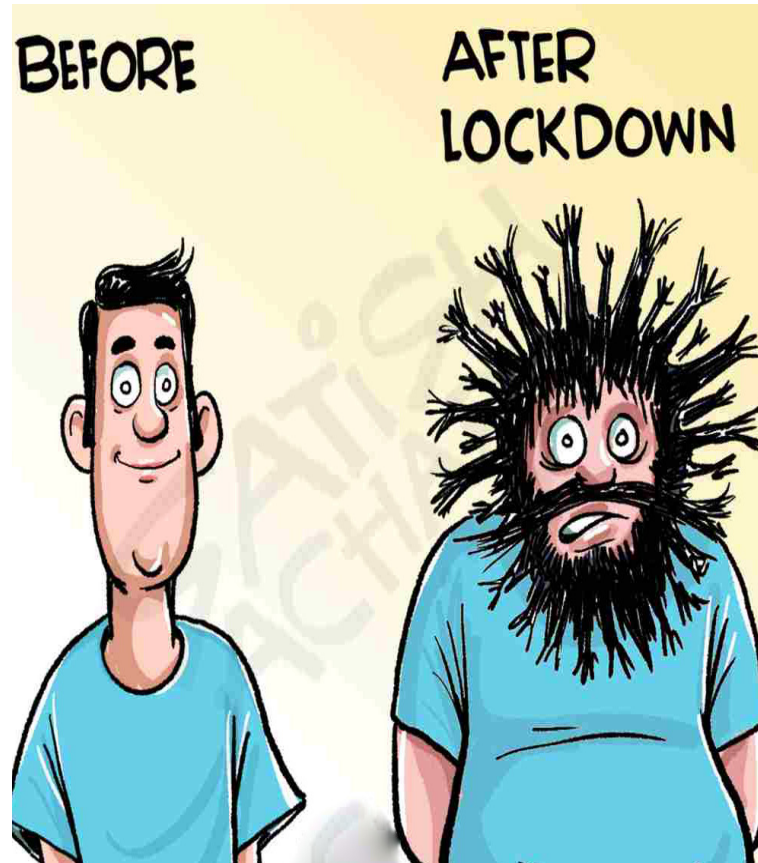
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Trade deficit

A Decline in trade deficit is normally good news, but not if it shrinks by as much as 27 percent. According to reports, Pakistan's trade deficit shrank to slightly over \$23 billion in the last fiscal year. From July 2019 to June 2020 it was a 27 percent decrease in comparison with nearly \$32 billion in the previous fiscal year of 2018-19. The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) has released its official data showing that Pakistan exported nearly \$21.4 billion worth of goods in the last fiscal year, whereas the target set for such exports was around \$24 billion. So, there was a shortfall of \$2.6 billion in exports showing a sluggish performance of the sector.

Exports in 2018-19 amounted to \$23 billion and the PTI-led government had set a pretty modest increase target in exports of just one billion dollar, but the country's economy could not even match the previous year's mark of \$23 billion. A nearly seven percent decline in exports is a reflection of the worsening potential of our domestic economy to compete in the world market. In terms of imports the country has seen \$44 billion worth of imports compared with nearly \$55 billion in the previous year. This decline by nearly 11 billion dollars is not a cause of any jubilation. If the trade deficit declines as a result of an increase in exports, it is good news, but a sharp decline in imports with no substantial improvement in exports shows a faltering economy that can neither export nor absorb import to fuel its potential. Though the government claims that the import bill compressed thanks to the plummeting oil prices in the international market, the fact is that it happened only in the last quarter of the fiscal year from April to June and that was the same period when the Covid-19 pandemic also surged in the country.

The point of concern is that the prices of oil in the international market are bouncing back and the Covid-19 pandemic is also likely to subside, but the economic and financial manager of the country appear to be lacking in initiative to tap the new opportunities. For the time being some relief in debt payments and some new loans have injected a pulse of life into the economy but the country needs a sound strategy to boost exports that will result in better tax collections. Frequent changes in the top slot of the Federal Board of Revenue are another cause of concern. The coming months will be challenging for the economy for the government, and its economic managers must brace for it.

Wani's Blood Gave New Strength to the Kashmir's Struggle

Sajjad Shaukat



Reacting to the incident, Amnesty India said, "It is a breach of the best interests of the child principle as required to be the basis of any action by authorities under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which India is a state party." A day after the horrifying event which triggered massive outrage and protests in Indian Kashmir, the UNO said that "whosoever responsible for the killing in Sopore, has to be made to account for it." FM Shah Mehmood Qureshi stated that the image of the three-year-old sitting on his grandfather's "lifeless, bullet-ridden body exposed the real face of PM Narendra Modi's fascist India"

BURHAN Wani, the popular Commander of Hizb-ul-Mujahideen was martyred by the Indian government forces in the Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK) on July 8, 2016. After the martyrdom of Burhan Wani, widespread and spontaneous protests erupted throughout the IOK. In order to control the mass movement, the Indian occupation forces unleashed reign of terror against the Kashmiri civilians. As a result more than 300 people embraced martyrdom and around 30,000 got injured. The uprising in the Indian Held Kashmir did not end within a few weeks or months. It continued, and still continues, as Wani's blood gave new strength to the Kashmir's struggle for independence.

Wani, in his early 20s, had become the face of the struggle in Kashmir and over the last five years was using social media like Facebook to reach out to young Kashmiri men to continue their movement for the independence of Kashmir. He became voice of the Kashmiri youth and his popularity irritated New Delhi. When Indian fanatic Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the leader of the ruling party BJP, came to power, he accelerated anti-Kashmir moves. Since August 5, 2019 Modi's government ended special status of the Jammu and Kashmir to turn Muslim majority into minority in the Indian Controlled Kashmir. Implementing the August 5 announcement, Indian central government issued a notorious map on October 31, 2019. In accordance with it, Jammu and Kashmir was bifurcated into two union territories—Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. Besides, Modi-led government's malevolent acts such as more than nine month's lockdown in the IOK, martyrdom of thousands of the Kashmiris there, introduction of new domicile law against the majority of Kashmiris, issuance of domicile certificates to 25000 non-Kashmiris, persecution of religious minorities especially Muslims, anti-Muslim laws-CAA/NRC, assaults on Muslims by the fanatic Hindus, blaming Indian Muslims and Pakistan for spreading coronavirus in India and the IOK etc. and intermittent shelling inside Pakistani side of Kashmir in relation to the Line of Control (LoC)-which has killed hundreds of innocent villagers, indicate 'Modi's fascist India'. Thus, New Delhi completely ended any sort of dialogue with Islamabad to settle the Kashmir issue.

Despite the deployment of 900,000 troops in the IOK and intensification of firing by the Indian forces in wake of shortage of foods and even medicines for the patients, innocent Kashmiris are still violating the lockdown by protesting

against Indian illegal actions. In order to conceal India's state terrorism, Indian Controlled Kashmir has been cut off from the world due to lockdown. But, some reports and images are appearing in the world and the social media, which show extrajudicial killings of the innocent people by the ruthless Indian forces. Dreadful practice of Indian state terrorism could be judged from the martyrdom of a 65 years old person Bashir Ahmed Khan on July 1, this year in front of his grandson by Indian troops in Sopore, Srinagar, Local Kashmiris and family of the martyred said that the unarmed "Khan was dragged out of his car and shot dead by paramilitary troopers". His three-year-old toddler grandson, who was travelling with him, was later pictured sitting on his chest. The awful photo of the child, which appeared in the social media, shocked the international community.

Reacting to the incident, Amnesty India said, "It is a breach of the best interests of the child principle as required to be the basis of any action by authorities under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which India is a state party." A day after the horrifying event which triggered massive outrage and protests in Indian Kashmir, the UNO said that "whosoever responsible for the killing in Sopore, has to be made to account for it." Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi stated that the image of the three-year-old sitting on his grandfather's "lifeless, bullet-ridden body exposed the real face of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's fascist India". Nevertheless, this merciless event displays that India does not have any qualms about murdering any Kashmiri civilian as part of extrajudicial killings. And many civilian Kashmiris have become permanently blind due to pellet guns shots and chemical weapons, used by the Indian military and paramilitary troops. Curfew-type shutdown remained in the IOK. Almost 14,000 people were arrested or detained. During special operations-house to house search, India military and paramilitary troopers have martyred and injured tens of thousands of the Kashmiris, including women and children. These cruelties have compelled the Kashmiri youngsters to pick arms and to target the Indian forces, sacrificing their lives for the right of self-determination, as recognized by the related UNO resolutions. Therefore, intermittent gunbattle between the freedom fighters and Indian military continues in various regions of the IOK.

However, Burhan Wani was a great voice for freedom of the Indian Held Kashmir. Hence, every year his death anniversary is being cele-

brated on July 8, 2017 by Pakistanis and Kashmiris to pay homage to him. On this very day, strikes, protests and demonstrations across the IOK and Pakistan take place to show solidarity with the Kashmiri freedom fighters who are demanding their legitimate right of self-determination, as recognized by the related UN resolutions. Since 1989, various forms of state terrorism have been part of a deliberate campaign by the Indian army and paramilitary forces against Muslim Kashmiris. It has been manifested in brutal tactics like crackdowns, curfews, illegal detentions, massacre, targeted killings, sieges, burning the houses, torture, disappearances, rape, breaking the legs, molestation of Muslim women and killing of persons through fake encounters.

In fact, Indian forces have employed various draconian and controversial laws like Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) and the Public Safety Act (PSA) etc. in killing the Kashmiri people, and arbitrarily arrest of any individual for an indefinite period.

Besides Human Rights Watch, in its various reports, Amnesty International has also pointed out grave human rights violations in the Indian controlled Kashmir, indicating, "The Muslim majority population in the Kashmir Valley suffers from the repressive tactics of the security forces. Under the Jammu and Kashmir Disturbed Areas Act, and the Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act and Public Safety Act, security forces personnel have extraordinary powers to shoot suspected persons." It is mentionable that under the cover of draconian laws, most of the times, majority of the popular pro-movement leadership is detained or house-arrested by the Indian security forces, and mostly, without prior orders from the higher authorities. As per a Kashmiri human rights group, Voice of Victim (VOV), a total of 1 471 torture centers are operating in the Indian Controlled Kashmir where arrested Kashmiri leaders and the youth are subjected to severe torture.

Undoubtedly, martyrdom of Burhan Wani by the Indian brutal security forces has given a new strength to the Kashmir's struggle for independence, as it has been intensified, bringing the Indian atrocities in the occupied Kashmir in the limelight of the international community and their media.

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Coronavirus and how to cure it- some tips

Prof. Dr. Nusrat Ara Majeed



There is a growing misconception that virus is losing virulence—it is not true—only better understanding of pathogenesis has resulted in better survival of the patients Today in JUNE_JULY we know the disease much better

THE year 2020 began with usual new year celebrations all over the world—and we heard CORONA coming as an epidemic in China and soon became PANDEMIC and it is ENDEMIC i.e we have to live with it.

WHY IS THE VIRUS CALLED CORONA
It is a LATIN word meaning CROWN or WREATH, itself a borrowing from Greek KORONE; Garland 'wreath' The name refers to the characteristic appearance of Virions [the infective form of Virus] which have a fringe of large, bulbous surface projections -this morphology is created by viral spikes, which are proteins at the surface of virus -So people realized the importance of frequent hand washing for at least 20 seconds, because soap breaks down the protein hence virus loses its virulence

MODE OF TRANSMISSION Infected carriers shed virus into environment-It is transmitted from one host to another either by AEROSOL, Formite or feco-oral route.

MYTHS AND REALITY There is a growing misconception that virus is losing virulence—it is not true—only better understanding of pathogenesis has resulted in better survival of the patients Today in

JUNE_JULY we know the disease much better. In feb. 2020 it was a new disease [novel], there are 5 important facts that we understand better than 4 months ago

- 1-Initially pneumonia was the cause of death so breathing was a major symptom and ventilators were the best way to treat but now we understand that virus causes BLOOD CLOTS in the blood vessels of the lungs and other parts of the body. This led to the use of blood thinners and hence better outcome
- 2-Initially many would drop dead on the roads because of HAPPY HYPOXIA [covid patients with falling oxygen levels did not have symptoms till it became critically low] so the patients reached the hospital late resulting in high mortality but now by advocating home monitoring of oxygen by PULSE OXYMETER has resulted in better survival as the doctors now have more time to correct Hypoxia
- 3-We now have medicines like FAVIPRIVIR and REMDESIVIR -these are given before the patients develop hypoxia
- 4-many died due to patient's immune system responding in an exaggerated manner which not only killed the virus but also proves fatal for the patient in Feb.2020

doctors did not know how to prevent it but today we know that STEROIDS can be used to prevent this exaggerated response

- 5-We understand that patient becomes better by lying on his own belly [prone position] The latest discovery that a chemical released by patients white cells can cause microclots in the blood vessels can be prevented by a very common drug COLCHICINE used to treat GOUT.

So the countries which imposed strict lockdown during initial three months were able to save many lives.

So getting infected at a later stage better outcome due to above mentioned facts. We must follow S.O.Ps to combat the problem -BOOSTING immunity is very important -Mango is full of immunity boosting minerals and vitamins. To enjoy it even better I recommend MANGO SALSA -it can be taken either as Salad or even a meal How do we prepare Salsa Cut mango pulp in pieces of 1 to 2 inches -add one Medium sized chopped onion 2 chopped green chillies, black pepper and finally lemon juice Hope you will try the recipe.

Prof. Dr. Nusrat Ara Majeed is a consultant cardiologist.

Briefs

Jack Charlton, dies at 85



SPORTS DESK

DOHA: Jack Charlton, a football World Cup winner with England who became the darling of Ireland after leading their national team to unprecedented success as a manager, has died aged 85. A family statement said the former Leeds United defender, who helped England beat West Germany in the 1966 World Cup final at Wembley, died peacefully late on Friday at his home in Northumberland, northern England.

"We cannot express how proud we are of the extraordinary life he led and the pleasure he brought to so many people in different countries and from all walks of life," the statement said. "He was a thoroughly honest, kind, funny and genuine man who always had time for people. His loss will leave a huge hole in all our lives but we are thankful for a lifetime of happy memories."

Serbians join anti-govt protest

DNA

BELGRADE: Several thousand people gathered in front of the Serbian parliament building in Belgrade on Saturday for a fifth consecutive night of protests against government policies, including measures to contain the novel coronavirus outbreak. Protesters, most of whom wore masks, walked in front of the parliament building in the Serbian capital, occasionally calling for President Aleksandar Vucic to step down.

"We hope that authorities will hear us," said Stefana Radjenovic, one of the protesters. "We want authorities to stop lying to us and we want to know the entire truth about everything that has been happening in connection with the coronavirus epidemic." Similar peaceful protests were held in the cities of Novi Sad, Zrenjanin, Cacak and Nis. Late on Friday, police clashed with demonstrators who threw flares and stones. Fourteen police officers were injured and 71 people arrested, police said. Demonstrators storm Serbian parliament over coronavirus lockdown This week's demonstrations were initially driven by frustration over economically stifling measures to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus, but soon evolved into anti-government rallies that demanded Vucic's resignation.

Pakistan can benefit from French expertise

From Page 06

which was a source of employment for the residents besides attracting tourists. The Ambassador said that experience of France and its best practices would help Pakistan in its own "Ten billion tree plantation campaign". During his interactions, he also highlighted the priority of the government of Pakistan for development and modernization of agriculture sector as it contributes 18.5% to country's GDP, provides 38.5% employment to national labor force and is a key to economic growth and poverty alleviation. He said that the Embassy is in discussion with the French authorities for setting up of special training modules for Pakistani farmers. Negotiations are also underway with French companies to set up a state of the art market in Pakistan for the storage, sale and distribution of fresh farm produce. France is one of the most advanced agricultural countries of Europe. It is a European leader accounting for 22% of the EU's total agriculture output. It is among the top producers in the world for wheat, cereals, milk, meat, sugar beet and oil seeds.

Erdogan rejects global criticism over Hagia Sophia decision

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan defends move to reconvert iconic Hagia Sophia museum into a mosque

DNA

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has rejected international condemnation over the decision to change the status of Istanbul's landmark Hagia Sophia from a museum to a mosque, saying it represented his country's will to use its "sovereign rights". In the past, he has repeatedly called for the stunning building to be renamed as a mosque and in 2018, he recited a verse from the Quran at Hagia Sophia. "Those who do not take a step against Islamophobia in their own countries ... attack Turkey's will to use its sovereign rights," Erdogan said at a ceremony he attended via video-conference on Saturday.

The colossal Hagia Sophia was built 1,500 years ago as an Orthodox Christian cathedral and was converted into a mosque after the Ottomans conquered Constantinople, now Istanbul, in 1453. The secular Turkish government decided in 1934 to make it a museum. Erdogan on Friday formally converted the building back into a mosque and declared it open for Muslim worship, hours after a high court annulled the 1934 decision turning it into a museum. He said Muslim prayers would begin at the UNESCO World Heritage Site on July 24. The president went ahead with the plan despite appeals from NATO ally the United States and from Russia, with which Ankara has forged close relations in recent years.

Churches appeal to Turkey on mosque decision

LONDON: The World Council of Churches has called on Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to reverse his decision to turn the celebrated Hagia Sophia museum back into a mosque. In a letter to Mr Erdogan, the Council, which counts 350 churches as members, said the move would sow division. The Unesco World Heritage site in Istanbul has been a museum since 1934. The president announced his decision on Friday following a court ruling which annulled its museum status. The Hagia Sophia was built 1,500 years ago as an Orthodox Christian cathedral, but was converted into a mosque after the Ottoman conquest in 1453. It was converted to a museum on the orders of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founding father of modern, secular Turkey. Since then religious services have been banned at the site, but devout Muslims have long campaigned for worship to be allowed. - DNA

Greece swiftly condemned the move as a provocation, France deplored it while the US also expressed disappointment. Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Grushko on Sat-

urday said Moscow regretted the decision.

"The cathedral is on Turkey's territory, but it is without question everybody's heritage," he told the Interfax news agency. The World Council of Churches wrote to Erdogan expressing "grief and dismay" over the move and urged him to reverse his decision. As a World Heritage museum, "Hagia Sophia has been a place of openness, encounter and inspiration for people from all nations," interim secretary-general Ioan Saucă said in the letter released on Saturday.

Saucă said the museum status had been "a powerful expression" of Turkey's commitment to inclusion and secularism. The influential bishop Hilarion, who heads the Russian Orthodox Church's department for

external church relations, also expressed his sorrow.

"It is a blow to global Christianity ... For us [Hagia Sophia] remains a cathedral dedicated to the Saviour," he told state-controlled TV Rossiya24 late on Friday. But Ozgur Unluhisarcikli, Ankara director of the German Marshall Fund, told AFP the move would win hearts and minds at home as most Turks "would favour such a decision for religious or nationalist sentiments."

"This is a debate president Erdogan cannot lose and the opposition cannot win. As a matter of fact, this issue also has the potential to disunite the opposition parties." Erdogan's nationalist ally Devlet Bahceli welcomed the decision, saying that reopening Hagia Sophia to Muslim worship "has long been our desire".

Walt Disney World reopens in Florida

WEB DESK

FLORIDA: Walt Disney World Resort has begun to reopen in Florida despite a coronavirus surge across the US state. The site's Magic Kingdom and Animal Kingdom opened on Saturday. Epcot and Disney's Hollywood Studios are expected to follow from 15 July. Visitors will be required to wear masks and adhere to other safety measures across the complex in Orlando. Over a quarter of a million cases of Covid-19 have been reported in Florida, along with 4,197 deaths. Disney first closed the resort in March during the early months of America's outbreak. While infections were largely concentrated in New York and California at first, Florida is among several states recording a rise in cases in recent weeks. In Orange County, where the resort is based, authorities have reported 16,630 cases - some of the highest numbers in Florida. What's behind the new US outbreaks?

How people in Florida and Texas are living with the outbreak



As a result, many cities and counties across Florida have reinstated restrictions that were lifted in May when infections began to drop. Despite the outbreak, hun-

dreds of people made their way to the Disney flagship resort on Saturday. Some of its competitors, Universal Orlando and SeaWorld Orlando, reopened to visitors several weeks ago.

Disney has also resumed limited operations at its four parks in Asia, and at Disney Springs - an outdoor shopping mall in Orlando. Disney reported a \$1.4bn (£1.1bn) hit to profits in the

first three months of the year. "The world is changing around us, but we strongly believe that we can open safely and responsibly," said Josh D'Amato, Disney's

theme park chairman, in an interview with the New York Times. "Covid is here, and we have a responsibility to figure out the best approach to safely operate in this new normal."

Coronavirus 'storm' as South Africa cases surge

DNA

CAPE TOWN: South Africa has reported 13,497 new coronavirus cases, reaching a total of 264,184 including 3,971 deaths. Health Minister Zweli Mkhize warns of a COVID-19 "storm". Brazil, the world's number-two coronavirus hotspot after the United States, has recorded 1,071 new deaths from the outbreak, pushing its death toll to 81,469, with a total of 1,839,850 confirmed cases.

US President Donald Trump, who has avoided wearing a mask in public even as the coronavirus pandemic spreads, donned one on Saturday at a military medical facility outside Washington, DC where he visited wounded soldiers and front-line healthcare workers. More than 12.7 million people around the world have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and more than 565,000 have died, according to a tally by the Johns Hopkins University. More than seven million patients have been recovered.

Hong Kong people ready to leave for UK

DNA

BEIJING: Since China imposed a draconian national security law on Hong Kong, a lot of dinner party chatter in this protest-minded city has been about personal exit strategies. For up to three million Hongkongers, the exit could come in the form of a British National (Overseas) passport. Will they re-

ally leave - and what of those left behind? Michael and Serena have decided to leave Hong Kong for good and settle in the UK, a country they have never set foot in.

The couple have British National (Overseas) - or BNO - passports, which were issued to Hong Kong residents that registered before the city was handed back to China on July 1997.

Essentially a travel document with rights for some consular assistance, its usefulness seemed limited to many for anything but easier access to the UK and European travel. Some people went for it anyway. Why not, went the thinking for many Hongkongers. Michael and Serena are the embodiment of the comfortable prosperity common in Hong Kong: well-travelled with a 13-year-old daughter,

they are both middle managers in a bank and bought a flat many years ago. It is a lot to give up. They say that Hong Kong has become unrecognisable in its handling of the months-long protests triggered by a bill which proposed to allow extradition to mainland China. What the couple saw was a government which did not listen to the people, and police force that showed little restraint. - Source BBC.

Champions League to resume behind closed doors in August

Spanish giants Real Madrid could meet Italian side Juventus of its former hero Cristiano Ronaldo, while German league leaders Bayern Munich may face Barcelona

SPORTS DESK

LONDON: The Champions League, Europe's top football club competition, will resume behind closed doors next month after being halted in March due to the coronavirus pandemic, with all the quarter-finals being played in Portugal's

capital, Lisbon. UEFA, European football's governing body, held the draw for the one-leg quarter-finals and semi-finals at their headquarters in Nyon, Switzerland, on Friday. Four quarter-finalists were confirmed before the COVID-19 pandemic suspended the season, while the remaining four last-16 second

legs will be played at the respective clubs' home stadiums. Spanish giants Real Madrid could meet Italian side Juventus of its former hero Cristiano Ronaldo, while German league leaders Bayern Munich may face Barcelona. Real must first conclude their last-16 tie with Manchester City. They enter

the second, away, leg trailing 2-1, having lost at home. Juventus, meanwhile, must overcome a 1-0 first-leg defeat by Olympique Lyonnais in the last-16 stage when they play again in Turin. Friday's draw also paired tournament debutants Atalanta with Paris Saint-Germain and RB Leipzig with Atletico Madrid.

Mali's President dissolves court

DNA

MALI: Mali President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita has announced the dissolution of the constitutional court in an attempt to calm unrest that saw four people killed in street protests. The president said he would not tolerate such violence. The court has been at the centre of controversy after it overturned provisional results for parliamentary elections in March.

Messi tees up victory

Overall, Madrid need only five points from their remaining three matches to secure their third La Liga title in eight years. "We are doing things that deserve more than where we are," said Barca coach Quique Setien.

MADRID: Lionel Messi made it 20 assists for the season in Barcelona's stodgy 1-0 win over Real Valladolid on Saturday, even as his team's La Liga challenge appears almost over. Messi teed up Arturo Vidal's winner at Jose Zorrilla to become the first player to provide 20 assists in Spain's top flight since Xavi Hernandez in 2009. Victory for Barca means Real Madrid cannot clinch the title on Monday by beating Granada but only an incredible collapse will prevent them putting their name on the trophy later in the week. If they beat Granada, Madrid will win La Liga by prevailing at home to Villarreal on Thursday, regardless of Barcelona's results. Overall, Madrid need only five points from their remaining three matches to secure their third La Liga title in eight years. "We are doing things that deserve more than where we are," said Barca coach Quique Setien. "To win La Liga, I don't know as because our rival is winning everything." Yet even as Barca's turbulent domestic campaign draws to a close, Messi continues to shine. His delightful pass for Vidal in the 15th minute, a scoop between two Valladolid defenders, triggered more remarkable milestones. As well as matching the best La Liga total for assists by one player in the last 11 years, Messi extends his own career-best number of assists in a single league season. - APP

How New Zealand's media endangered public health

NEW ZEALAND'S health minister, David Clark, has been forced to resign and the nation's hyperactive media have claimed their latest scalp. In the middle of a pandemic, no less. Unseemly as the media's months-long hit on Clark was - a classic example of trial by media - it was consistent with the borderline misconduct that has defined much of the reporting throughout the COVID-19 crisis. While the response to the pandemic threat from the national capital, Wellington, can be held aloft, for now, as a rare success story in a world of disarray, the machinations of much of the nation's media leaves much to be desired. Taken over time, New Zealand's reporters have appeared focused on managing perceptions, berating and cajoling a fearful public on numerous

fronts. In doing so, and from the earliest stages of a four-level alert system, public health concerns have been eclipsed by a clamouring commentariat, all seeking to score political points and undermine the government's health-first priorities. A case can be made that the nation's media, lauding many of the opposition's attack lines and big business talking points, have repeatedly endangered public health. This was driven not only by the country's clutch of prominent Fox News-style commentators - Mike Hosking, Heather du Plessis-Allan and Duncan Garner - each of whom hawks anger and division to drive ratings, but by senior reporters and editors. New Zealand entered alert level four at midnight on March 25. Public fear had built throughout February, sharpening to a peak in the latter part of March.



Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and her government had to rapidly scale up a response when it became clear in January that China had not contained the virus. With multiple clusters across the country - a high school in Auckland, a wedding in the deep south, a bar in the tourist hub of Matamata - the government heeded the advice of leading epidemiolo-

gists. They opted for an elimination strategy. That would mean a strict and prolonged lockdown, easing over time. New Zealanders overwhelmingly endorsed this approach, putting public health above all other considerations - specifically the economy. The opposition, business elements and an instinctively conformist media moved quickly to set the

agenda, artificially narrowing the parameters of public discourse. There were, for example, no deep-dive stories into the state of the health system, eviscerated by aggressive neo-liberalism since the late 1980s, yielding the country acutely vulnerable to COVID-19. Little was said about our hyper-globalised societies' increasingly fraught relationship with nature, of which COVID-19 is a symptom. Such discussions were omitted from the news agenda. Instead, economic considerations dominated media messaging. Then-leader of the National Party, Simon Bridges, began imitating Donald Trump, claiming that "the medicine should not be worse than the cure." Disinformation about a spike in suicides as a result of lockdown proliferated. Trans-Tasman rivalry was cynically leveraged into the public domain, with claims that Australia was out-

performing New Zealand on health and economic outcomes due to its less stringent lockdown. An organisation called Plan B, a "cross-disciplinary group of academics", became ubiquitous in the media. Its website read, "International health data and experience is showing that New Zealand's lockdown may now be unnecessary, and even more harmful than the problem we're trying to solve." The messaging was clear: the government had "overreacted" and it was time to get back to work. With Ardern set to announce whether cabinet would move down alert levels on April 20, journalists and commentators brazenly agitated for a move to alert level three, which would allow for cafes and restaurants to offer contactless delivery and take away services, namedropping their favourite fast-food chains in a media-wide in-joke. - Courtesy AJ Jazeera

Briefs

Britain's border checks to get £705m boost

NEWS DESK

LONDON: A £705m funding package to help manage Britain's borders has been announced as the UK prepares to leave the EU customs union at the end of the year. Plans include new border control posts and 500 extra Border Force staff. Cabinet Office Minister Michael Gove said the move would help the UK "seize the opportunities" post-Brexit. Labour has accused the government of complacency in its preparations for the end of the Brexit transition period. The funding follows a leaked letter from International Trade Secretary Liz Truss raising concerns about the readiness of Britain's ports. Under the plans, new border posts will be created inland where existing ports have no room to expand to cope with the extra checks that will be required at the existing entry points. It relates only to the external borders of England, Scotland and Wales. The government is expected to publish specific guidance and measures for Northern Ireland in the coming weeks.

China economy rebounds in Q2 after virus hit

BEIJING, July 12 (AFP/AP-P): China returned to growth in the second quarter after the coronavirus pandemic handed the world's second largest economy its first contraction in decades, according to an AFP poll of analysts. The survey of analysts from 11 institutions pegged China's growth at 1.3 percent - a far cry from the 6.1 percent expansion posted last year but in better shape than other countries still grappling with the contagion. The coronavirus, which first emerged in China's industrial central province of Hubei late last year, has shut businesses worldwide and destroyed hundreds of millions of jobs. But analysts forecast China will be the only major economy to experience positive growth this year - partly because it was first to be hit by COVID-19 and therefore first to recover. China is expected to post 1.7 percent growth for the full year, according to the economists surveyed by AFP, compared with IMF forecasts of a global contraction. - APP

UN restarts cross-border aid to Syria

UNITED NATIONS: The UN Security Council passed a resolution to restart cross-border humanitarian aid to Syria, but only after caving to Russian pressure to close one of two access points into the war-torn country. Following a week of division and seven ballots, the Security Council passed a proposal submitted by Germany and Belgium allowing the use of the Bab al-Hawa crossing point for one year. The measure was approved by 12 of 15 members, with Russia, China and the Dominican Republic abstaining, diplomats said. Authorization for the continued transport of aid to Syria, a system in place since 2014, expired Friday night after Moscow and Beijing used their veto power and the Council then rejected a counter-proposal from Russia. With the approval of the German-Belgian proposal on Saturday, the Bab al-Hawa crossing point on Syria's northwestern border with Turkey will be maintained for a year, until July 10, 2021. This will allow badly needed humanitarian aid to continue flowing to several million Syrians living in the insurgent region of Idlib, which the Syrian regime does not control. For weeks, Russia, Syria's most important ally, has been demanding an end to the use of the Bab al-Hawa border crossing, which leads to the Aleppo region in northern Syria. European countries and the US had wanted to maintain both crossing points. "Russia controls this process," said Richard Gowan of the International Crisis Group think tank. - APP

NAM members praise Azerbaijan's efforts in fight against COVID-19

The representatives of WHO expressed gratitude for Azerbaijan's international efforts in fight against COVID-19, including permanent support to the activity of WHO, and expressed support to the activity of the Working Group established upon Aliyev's initiative

DNA

BAKU: The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) chaired by Azerbaijan has held its first online meeting on combating the COVID-19 pandemic, Foreign Ministry reported on July 10. NAM working group on COVID-19 was established upon Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev's initiative on May 4. During the online meeting, the representatives of WHO expressed gratitude for Azerbaijan's interna-

tional efforts in fight against COVID-19, including permanent support to the activity of WHO, and expressed support to the activity of the Working Group established upon Aliyev's initiative. Moreover, the WHO representatives noted that based on relevant information provided by Azerbaijan, WHO has started to provide assistance to NAM member states. Furthermore, NAM member states participating in the meeting thanked Azerbaijan for its intensive activity in the field of fight against COVID-19 as chairman

of the organization and informed about the work done in their countries in the field of fight against pandemic. In the course of the online meeting, the Azerbaijani delegation informed the participants of the work done for the past period on formation of the group and preparation of a single information database. Additionally, regular steps related to the activity of the Working Group were planned at the end of the meeting. The meeting was attended by representatives of many NAM mem-

ber states, as well as Michelle Boccoz, Director-General of Multilateral Affairs of the World Health Organization and Paul Molinaro, Head of Operations and Supply Division of the organization. Working Group was established on the initiative of the Chairman-in-Office of the Non-Aligned Movement, President Ilham Aliyev on May 4, 2020 during the summit meeting in the format of videoconference on combating the pandemic COVID-19 of the Contact Group of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The group is tasked to create a single information database reflecting the medical, social and humanitarian needs of the Non-Aligned Movement countries. It should be noted that Azerbaijan has also initiated holding a session of the UN General Assembly dedicated to fight against COVID-19. The session was held on July 10. Moreover, Azerbaijan has donated \$10 million to the World Health Organization and provided humanitarian and financial aid to over 30 countries to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thousands protest in Israel

NEWS DESK

TEL AVIV: Thousands of Israelis have staged a demonstration in Tel Aviv to protest against what they say is economic hardship caused by the government's mishandling of the coronavirus crisis. Rabin Square was filled with mainly young protesters wearing masks but not observing social distancing. They say government compensation payments have been slow to arrive. The event was organised by small businesses, self-employed workers and performing artists' groups. Many are experiencing economic hardship and have been angered by coronavirus measures which have taken their livelihoods away.



RIYADH: Gold is still Saudi consumers' favorite metal to invest in despite increase in VAT rates. - DNA

Kazakhstan terms pneumonia reports as false

DNA

NUR SULTAN: Some Chinese media outlets are claiming that Kazakhstan has reported cases of unknown pneumonia, more deadly than coronavirus. The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan officially states that this information is FALSE. It should be noted that the WHO introduced codes for pneumonia in the In-

ternational Classification of Diseases (ICD-10), while COVID-19 is diagnosed clinically or epidemiologically, for example through the symptom of ground-glass opacity and affected lungs, and it is not laboratory confirmed. Kazakhstan, in this regard, like other countries, monitors and keeps a record of these types of pneumonia, which enables timely management-level decisions aimed at stabilising the incidence and prevalence of

the coronavirus infection. At a briefing on July 9, the Minister of Health of Kazakhstan Alexey Tsoi spoke about the overall number of pneumonia cases in the country: bacterial, fungal, viral origin, including "viral pneumonia of unspecified etiology", as per the ICD-10 classification. Therefore, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan emphasizes that the Chinese media reports are FALSE.

Expanding 5G ecosystem will boost economies

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Telecommunications leaders and experts from Pakistan and across the world recently gathered at the SAMENA Telecommunication Council Leaders' Summit to review plans for unleashing the potential of 5G networks to boost economies and societies in a post COVID-19 environment. Held virtually for the first time due to social-distancing requirements, the Summit was hosted by Huawei for the seventh consecutive year.

This year, the SAMENA Telecommunications Council Leaders' Summit welcomed H.E. Maj. Gen. Amir Azeem Bajwa, Chairman of the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority; H.E. Tania Aiderus, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister, Digital Pakistan; H.M. Queen Silvia of Sweden, Founder of World Childhood Foundation; H.E. Houlin Zhao, Secretary General of the ITU; Mats Granryd, Director General GSMA; Isabelle Mauro, Head of Telecommunications at the World Economic Forum in the USA; Mark Spelman, Head of Thought Leadership at the World Economic Forum in Switzerland; and Dr. Boutheina Guermazi, Director - Digital Development at The World Bank Group in the USA. The Summit was held under the theme "5G-X: Harnessing 5G Across Industries for Investment Revival" and highlighted how technology and ICT infrastructure play a significant role in our

Uzbek President addresses ILO Global Summit

DNA

TASHKENT: Geneva hosted ILO Virtual Global Summit on COVID-19 and the World of Work, Uzbekistan MFA reports. According to the Permanent Mission of Uzbekistan in Geneva, the summit was attended by over 80 heads of state and government, international organizations, including the UN, WTO, WHO, World Bank, IMF. Participants presented information on measures taken to overcome the negative consequences of the pandemic at the national, regional and international levels. At the invitation of the ILO Director-General, President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev addressed the Virtual Global Summit. In his welcoming remarks, the President of Uzbekistan emphasized that since



the beginning of this year, the situation with the COVID-19 pandemic has become the most important issue on the global agenda. There is no country or region that would not directly or indirectly experience the negative effects of the spread of coronavirus infection. Certainly, to effectively overcome this and other global challenges, first of all, coordinated actions are needed.

And the current ILO Global Summit is a good platform for coordination of efforts. In a pandemic, social support is vital along with ensuring the sustainability of the economy. This is fully in line with the task of ensuring social justice, as enshrined in the ILO Centenary Declaration. It was emphasized that the implementation of the ILO conventions in the national legislation and practice, in

particular, the ratification of the C144 Convention on Tripartite Consultation, gave a powerful impetus to development of tripartite social dialogue in Uzbekistan. In accordance with the principle of tripartism plus, business, trade unions, non-governmental organizations, civil society institutions and the public actively participate in the process of developing anti-crisis measures during the pandemic. This is a guarantee of the successful implementation of anti-crisis programs, protecting the interests of all segments of the population. The President of Uzbekistan noted that the pandemic has identified a number of problems in development of sustainable international relations and the absence of a global strategic plan of action in such emergency situations.

FPCCI President calls for opening of restaurants

During the closure period restaurants have incurred operational expenditure without any revenue from their own resources including payroll, salaries, utility bills, rentals etc. Therefore, financial assistance package is required for restaurants by way of working capital facility of up to Rs.10 million as soft loan without markup

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) has asked the government to allow the reopening of restaurants at the earliest with minimum 50 percent seating capacity under the strict SOPs set by the government. In a meeting with Provincial Minister for Industries, Commerce & Investment Mian Aslam Iqbal along with the delegation of restaurants and marriages halls owners, FPCCI President Mian Anjum Nisar urged the authorities to announce a date for reopening of the eateries, as the government has assured the restaurant owners several times of re-

opening, which was not implemented so far. He observed that country-wide lockdown in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic has officially been lifted for a long time, as gyms, salons, shopping malls, markets and almost every business has been allowed to reopen except restaurants, which is not fair. Mian Anjum Nisar said that every business took the hit during the lockdown period while restaurants also incurred heavy losses, as the industry employs hundreds of thousands of workers across the province, who might go jobless if the current situation persisted for a long time. The restaurants' bodies' representatives have met with government authori-

ties many times, apprising them of their plight and suggested SOPs they could take while resuming operations. The restaurants owners, on this occasion, said that during the lockdown they were constantly taking up the issue of reopening of restaurants with the authorities, as they also wrote to the chief minister as well as the prime minister, asking them to kindly look after this industry, which is in a bad condition but all in vain. They said that the authorities' response was apparently quite encouraging, and even the provincial cabinet committee decided several times to allow restaurants to reopen but never implemented this decision. They said that the Punjab cabinet

committee also sent its recommendations to the federal government for its final approval from the National Coordination Committee (NCC) but no final date of restaurants opening was decided so far. Mian Anjum Nisar said that the FPCCI was well aware of the miseries of this sector and had already taken

up the issues at the highest level. He said that hotel industry has been allowed to reopen in several countries, as everyone has now to live with coronavirus like several other diseases. So, the government should manage and allow restaurants to reopen in line with other industries and sectors. He stated the marriage



halls and restaurant industry has been very badly hit by COVID-19 and non-operational since March 20th, 2020. This pandemic has caused many restaurants to close down permanently while others are near to bankruptcy. He demanded that marriage halls and marquees should also be allowed to reopen and operate at 50% capacity up to a maximum of 300 guests, duly following the SOPs as approved by government. He suggested that the restaurants should be allowed to operate during timings from 12:00 pm to 12:00 am. Mian Anjum Nisar recommended that the rent of restaurants established at government owned properties and parks should be waived off at 50%.

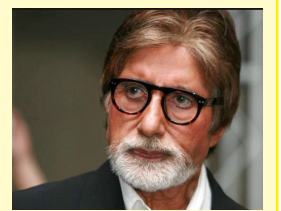
He said that during the closure period restaurants have incurred operational expenditure without any revenue from their own resources including payroll, salaries, utility bills, rentals etc. Therefore, financial assistance package is required for restaurants by way of working capital facility of up to Rs.10 million as soft loan without markup. He asked the provincial minister to recommend federal government that a similar package should be given to restaurants as given to small industries and commercial shops where 3 months for loads up to 70 kilowatts be waived off. He asked the government to take appropriate necessary actions for possible implementation in order to revive the restaurant industry.

Amitabh Bachchan tests positive

CULTURAL DESK

MUMBAI: Amitabh Bachchan, one of India's best known film actors, has tested positive for Covid-19, he told his millions of Twitter followers.

"I have tested Covid positive, shifted to hospital, hospital informing authorities, family and staff undergone tests, results awaited," he wrote. His son, Abhishek, later tweeted he had also tested positive. Bachchan, 77, has been involved in 200 films since becoming a star five decades ago. He, and Abhishek, 44, have been taken to Nana Vati Hospital in Mumbai, and his son described them both as having mild symptoms. Amitabh is stable with mild symptoms and is currently in the isolation unit of the hospital, news agency ANI reported, quoting a public relations officer for the hospital. He urged anyone who had been close to him in the past 10 days to get tested. The rest of the Bachchan family - actors Jaya



Bachchan, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, and daughter Aaradhya - have returned negative coronavirus antigen test reports, local media reported. Mumbai municipal officials have since put up banners outside the actor's house in Mumbai, classifying it as a "containment zone". The news has led to an outpouring of support for the pair on social media. Among those paying their respects were actress Sonam K Ahuja and former India cricket player Irfan Pathan.

"Dear Amitabh ji, I join the whole Nation in wishing you a quick recovery! After all, you are the idol of millions in this country, an iconic superstar! We will all take good care of you. Best wishes for a speedy recovery!" said India's Health Minister Harsh Vardhan.

PIAF demands incentive package for whole industry

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: The Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front has welcomed the new incentive package for the construction industry, with allocation of Rs.30 billion subsidy for the Naya Pakistan Housing Project, urging the government to announce the same relief to also other industrial sectors with a view to promote economic activities and generate new employment in the post-corona slowdown economy. PIAF chairman Mian Nauman Kabir, in a joint statement with senior vice chairman Nasir Hameed and vice chairman Javed Siddiqi, termed the package announced by the PM for construction sector as historic, saying it would prove a turning point for the economy, besides providing financial flexibility to the low income people for building their own houses. Mian Nauman Kabir said that government has already declared the sector as an industry as it had huge demand of up to 70 associated industries.

He added that the move would add the positive impact in country's economic health and also enhance economic growth, besides facilitating the daily wagers. He said the construction industry is the second largest sector in the country which provides employment to the people. Mian Nauman Kabir said that PIAF appreciates the PM to create a balance between maintaining a lockdown and keeping the construction sector running to save people from hunger and poverty. He also appreciated the allocation of huge funds by the SBP for those who have lost their jobs or facing income issues during the coronavirus crisis, urging the government to formulate a mechanism to ensure that funds are provided to the most deserving segments of the society. Hailing the special package for construction industry, the PIAF leader, who is also the former interim provincial minister as well as the ex-LCCI Senior vice president, said that the sector plays an important part in development of a country.

Briefs

PTI to approach NAB against Sindh govt

DNA

KARACHI: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Sindh chapter leaders plan to go to the National Accountability Bureau against the Sindh government. MPA Haleem Adil Sheikh says a 52% 'commission' is taken for every job in the province. Speaking to the media at a press conference at Insaf House on Sunday, the leaders said they would file a complaint against the Sindh government for destroying the province. And then I will see what action NAB takes against it, said Sheikh. The leaders said they were not worried about the inquiry against Sheikh. NAB has claimed that Sheikh occupied 253 acres in Karachi's District Malir with the help of government departments. Firdous Shamim Naqvi said they are presenting themselves for a judicial inquiry too but will not support a media trial. On the case against the Sindh government, Naqvi said they will uncover the provincial government's corruption. The PTI isn't a party to say 'mujhay kyun nikala (why did you kick me out)', he said, adding that people involved in corruption will not stay in the party.

IEP restarts licensed PC development activities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Institution of Engineers, Pakistan (Rawalpindi-Islamabad Center) has restarted their professional development activities by strictly following the COVID-19's SOPs. In spite of the COVID-19 spread, the Center decided to continue its educational technical sessions on different aspects of engineering field to upgrade the knowledge of engineers so that they could play effective role in the country's socio-economic development. Gp. Capt. Engr. Najamuddin, who secretary of the Center having long standing experience of Pakistan Air Force and Pakistan National Accreditation Council was the resource person delivered the lecture on non-conformances in technical entities in governmental as well as Corporate sector organizations. He shared his practical experience with the participants about the non-compliances of ISO's standard which can lead to deterioration of quality within the organizations and increased their quality rejects. Engr. Najamuddin emphasized that all institutions must follow the prescribed standards, set by the Accreditation and Conformity Assessment Bodies to enhance the credibility of their organizations. The event was presided over by the Chairman IEP-RIC, Engr. Hafiz M. Ehsan ul Haq Qazi, who in his concluding remarks said that the Center will continue its professional development program, during the COVID-19 crisis by taking all preventive measures. He said it is high time to create awareness about implementing ISO's standards in all industrial organizations. The chairman IEP-RIC appreciated the role of Pakistan Engineering Council which facilitated the manufacturing of medical Ventilators, according to international standards, enabling the country not only to make available the critical item to the hospitals but also effect huge savings in foreign exchange.

US posts new daily virus case record of 66,528:

WASHINGTON: The United States, the country hardest hit by the coronavirus, on Saturday posted 66,528 new cases, a record for a 24-hour period, according to a tally from Johns Hopkins University. The country has now recorded a total of 3,242,073 infections, the Baltimore-based university said in its latest data as of 8:30 pm (0030 GMT Sunday). The death toll stood at 134,729 with 760 additional deaths counted. - APP

Balochistan political parties voice support for CPEC

All the speakers reaffirmed their commitment towards CPEC and appreciated the responsible role that China played in combating COVID19 at home and abroad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani and Chinese leaders agreed that Balochistan was important to both the all-weather friends and the province was a key part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Emerging Policymakers' Institute (EPI) - an Islamabad based independent public policy think tank which conducts wide-ranging research & analysis on the issues of governance, security, social development, and regional connectivity - organized a webinar on "Balochistan's Political Parties' Dialogue: CPEC and China's Global Leadership during COVID19." According to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Saturday, the dialogue engaged speakers from most of the mainstream political parties of Balochistan to reiterate their commitment towards making CPEC a success and to discuss China's achievements in tackling the Corona Virus pandemic at home and abroad.

The dialogue also aimed to discuss the opportunities for Balochistan under co-operation mechanism on COVID19 to uplift its health care system, among other important agenda items. Governor Balochistan Justice Rt Amanullah Khan Yasinzai and China's Ambassador to Pakistan Mr. Yao Jing addressed the forum as keynote speakers. Chinese ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing in his keynote address highlighted the importance of Balochistan to Pakistan and China. He explained the achievements of China in tackling COVID19 faced by and also appreciated the efforts of Pakistan in the war against the pandemic. Moreover, he assured that China will stand beside Pakistan through thick and thin. China has helped Pakistan in establishing a 1000 bed isolation hospital and is continuing to help Pakistan. Yao said CPEC is not all about China-Pakistan friendship rather it is just a small part. China Paki-



stan Friendship is much beyond the CPEC. Governor Balochistan Amanullah Khan Yasinzai in his address said that both China and Pakistan need each other. "If they have the technology we have the resources. So we should use the technology to extract resources and get a mutual benefit." He further added that CPEC is not being digested by India and other powers and they are trying to sabotage it. Moreover, he said, "Balochistan needs much atten-

tion in all spheres of society. We, Bloch, are the true representatives of the Balochistan and not the BLA type organizations" The Governor said the provincial government and the federal government were committed to making CPEC a huge success in the interest of Pakistan, China, and the region. "There have been issues (among the Baloch people) in the past but not anymore. We are united on CPEC," he said. Other participants believed CPEC was a life-

line for Pakistan and the region. They agreed that iron brother China had injected money to improve Pakistan's economy. All the participants acknowledged China's help over the years to promote Pakistan's economy and position on international issues. They regretted that India had been trying to sabotage the CPEC and create confusion, and made a joint pledge that "We will not let India create misunderstandings. China is our friend. We love China."

Earlier, Chairman EPI Ahsan Hamid Durrani gave the opening remarks by explaining the purpose of holding the dialogue. He said that the dialogue is an important effort by his organization to bring together the Chinese government and the political leadership of Balochistan to discuss the CPEC and COVID19. Speakers from various political parties of Balochistan included Malik Sikandar Khan Leader of opposition in Balochistan Assembly, Sanaullah Khan Baloch Member Provincial Assembly, Balochistan National Party-Mengal, Abdul Khaliq Hazara Chairman of Hazara Democratic Party, Dr. Ishaque Baloch - Central Information Secretary of the National Party, Prince Agha Umer Member Central Executive Committee, Balochistan Awami Party, Jaffar Khan Mandokhel President - PMLQ Balochistan and Dr. Hayatullah Khan Khilji - Member of Provincial Council and CEC Awami National Party.

Tariq Cheema contracts coronavirus



DNA

ISLAMABAD: PML-Q's Tariq Basheer Cheema has contracted the coronavirus, it emerged on Sunday. He was admitted to the Pims hospital in Islamabad yesterday after testing positive. Cheema is the Federal Minister for Housing and Works and his party is Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's key coalition partner at the Centre.

Conspiracy hatched against me: Ajmal Wazir

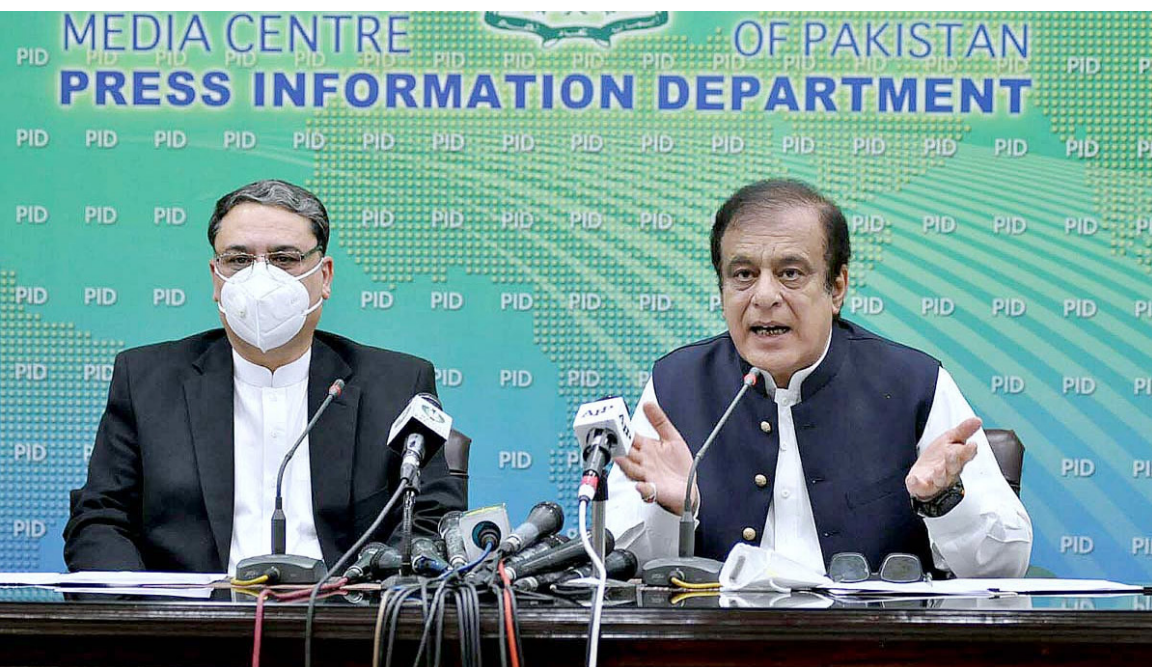
DNA

PESHAWAR: Former Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government spokesman Ajmal Wazir, who was the victim of an alleged audio scandal, has said that a conspiracy was hatched against him. In a statement, Ajmal Wazir said that he was convinced of the vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan and would face the charges. Artificial audio tape was created by editing various meetings and briefings. The basis on which this audio was based was the list of the advertising companies for the TV channel. According to the information rules, the chairman of the steering committee is the Minister of Information. The steering committee had met twice and was chaired by the health minister, said Ajmal Wazir. Former Information Adviser Ajmal Wazir said that he has nothing to do with the issue for which he is being criticized.

Ganguly confirms Australia tour

DNA

NEW DELHI: India's cricket chief Sourav Ganguly Saturday said the national team will tour Australia in December but called for a shortened quarantine period for the players. Australia has checked the spread of the coronavirus except in Melbourne, its second-biggest city, which has witnessed a recent surge in cases. "Ya, ya, we have confirmed that tour. In December we will be coming. We just hope the number of quarantine days get reduced a bit," Ganguly told Today. "Because we don't want the players to go all that far and sit in hotel rooms for two weeks. It is very, very depressing and disappointing."



ISLAMABAD: Federal Information Minister Shibli Faraz addressing press conference. - DNA

Pakistan to send mango gifts to 17 head of states

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: President of Pakistan will gift mangoes to heads of friendly states as well as potential buying countries to showcase the brilliance of Pakistani mangoes. The decision to send gifts of Pakistan's best mangoes as a part of trade diplomacy has a well-defined objective to strengthen diplomatic relations with friendly countries, besides introducing the fruit to new markets so that the country's horticulture exports could be enhanced. President Dr Arif Alvi, has decided that Pakistan would promote trade by gifting

mangoes to all friendly countries. Federal Aviation Division in a letter to Director General Civil Aviation has directed to take steps for sending gifts of Pakistani mangoes to 17 heads of states and governments. The mango gifts will be dispatched to Kuwait, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Qatar, Oman, Malaysia, Morocco, Nepal, Singapore, Spain, UK, Italy and other friendly countries. The letter has demanded July and August flight schedules of Turkish, Qatari and Emirates airlines, as well as the schedule of flights of the national airlines to the concerned countries. Pakistan will dispatch overall

4,810 kilograms of mangoes to the heads of states of 17 countries. The CAA has also been directed to arrange and facilitate the special cargo and relevant services and provide details about timely and safe dispatch of the mango cargo. It is pertinent to mention here that in a meeting the president was apprised of the current state of export of the fruit and vegetable sector and the reasons behind Pakistan's meager share of less than 0.5pc in international trade. The participants were informed that the international trade of fruits & vegetables was around \$200 billion, while Pakistan exported fruits & vegetables

worth \$651 million in 2018-19, which was just 0.33pc of this total revenue. Pakistan is ranked sixth in terms of mango production and fifth in terms of mango exporting countries in the world, having around 5pc share. The country's mango industry has a volume of Rs100 billion while millions of people are employed in the industry. Pakistan exports mangoes to 40 countries of the world and by adopting meticulous planning and removal of barriers restricting the export, Pakistan can also have access to high-value international markets include USA, Japan, China, South Korea and Australia.

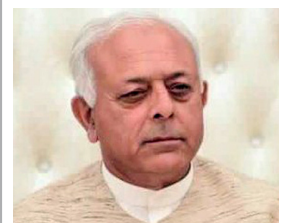
World Bank provides \$ 500 to Uzbekistan

DNA

TASHKENT: In a video conference format, a ceremony of signing a loan agreement with the World Bank for a total of US\$500 million for the implementation of a project to modernize agriculture in Uzbekistan was held. On the Uzbek side, the agreement was signed by Deputy Prime Minister - Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade Sardor Umurzakov, and on the part of the World Bank, Lilia Burunciuc, Regional Director for Central Asia. The signing ceremony was also attended by the head of the World Bank in Uzbekistan M. Mantovanelli, the Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan J. Khodjaev and other representatives of the Bank and relevant departments. The project will be financed by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Development Association in the amount of US\$276 million and US\$224 million respectively. Agriculture is one of the most important sectors of the economy of Uzbekistan: its share in GDP is 28%, the share of the working-age population employed in this sector is 27% (3.6 million people), and the share of the country's total exports is 10%.

This area demonstrates high economic growth, and is also one of the drivers of private sector growth. Since 2017, changes in the field of agriculture have become an important component of the broad reform program of the government of Uzbekistan. Their goal is to increase labor productivity in the industry, increase agricultural exports, further modernize and diversify production in order to reduce the share of cotton and wheat in agriculture and increase output of high value-added products, including fruit and vegetable and livestock products. "Reforms in agriculture will create a large number of well-paid jobs in rural areas, strengthen the country's food security and increase the export income of farmers and agricultural enterprises of Uzbekistan. The government works closely with the World Bank and other international partners to achieve these goals. The new project, financed by the Bank, will contribute to the further transformation of agriculture into a marketable and competitive industry, as well as significantly improve the provision of public services to our agricultural producers," Sardor Umurzakov noted during the ceremony of signing loan agreements.

Asset details of Ghulam Sarwar given to NAB



DNA

RAWALPINDI: The revenue department in Rawalpindi on Sunday has handed over the assets record of Minister for Aviation Ghulam Sarwar Khan to National Accountability Bureau (NAB). Sources said the anti-corruption watchdog sought the property details of the minister and members of his family from the Rawalpindi revenue department in connection with its ongoing investigation into his assets. The property details provided to the bureau included information on commercial and agricultural land owned by him. According to reports, the

anti-graft watchdog has also decided to take information from Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in this regard. Earlier, NAB had formally initiated investigation against Federal Minister Ghulam Sarwar Khan in an assets beyond means case. Assets details of Sarwar's wife and children were also sought. NAB had asked for the record of all agricultural, residential and commercial properties of the Federal Minister. On May 15, the aviation minister had welcomed the National Accountability Bureau inquiry against him and his family. Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly, he had said he will not criticise the anti-graft watchdog as it is a sovereign body. Mr Sarwar said he and his family has been in politics for five decades. He added he will present himself and family before the NAB for an inquiry into assets beyond means charges.

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