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Italian envoy lauds Pakistan peace efforts

Stable institutions highest priority, says Shibli Faraz



## Briefs

### Italian envoy lauds Pak peace efforts



RAWALPINDI: Andreas Ferrarese, Italian Ambassador to Pakistan called on General Qamar Javed Bawa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at GHQ on Thursday. During the meeting matters of mutual interest, regional security situation and measures to enhance bilateral cooperation were discussed. COAS also offered all possible assistance to ambassador in fight against COVID-19. Visiting dignitary acknowledged and appreciated Pakistan's medical assistance and role for peace and stability in region.

### LHC extends Shehbaz's bail

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Thursday extended the interim bail granted to the Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif till July 23. The court accepted the PML-N leader's plea to have his bail extended and agreed to postpone the hearing of the case on Shehbaz's request as his lawyer was not present. Speaking to media after his court appearance, the PML-N president said he was not feeling well due to his illness. "I came because I respect the court. Politics is being played at my expense," he said regarding the case. During the last hearing on July 7, Shehbaz's counsel Amjad Pervez had told the court that the PML-N leader had tested negative for the virus.

### Government protecting corruption: Bilawal

KARACHI: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Thursday said that Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan and his front men are protecting K-Electric corruption. In a post on social-networking website Twitter, the PPP leader said that Pakistan Tehreek-Insaf (PTI) has no answer to any question raised about corruption in the press conference. Imran Khan and his front men are involved in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa bus rapid transit (BRT) corruption, he alleged.

## Pak gives 2nd consular access to Kulbhushan

Jadhav was given first consular access under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (VCCR) 1963 on September 2

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Thursday provided second consular access to Indian spy Kulbhushan Jadhav at the Indian request, the Foreign Office confirmed. "Two consular officers of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad were provided unimpeded and uninterrupted consular access to Commander Jadhav at 1500 hours," a Foreign Office Statement said issued here. The Foreign Office said Pakistan remained committed to fully implementing the International Court of Justice (ICJ)'s judgment of July 17, 2019. "It is hoped that India will cooperate with the Pakistan court in giving full effect to the said judgment," it said. Last year, Jadhav was given first consular access under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (VCCR)

### Indian officials run away: FM Qureshi

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said that Pakistan on Thursday gave consular access to Indian spy Kulbhushan Jadhav, however, the two Indian High Commission officials ran away from the meeting, without talking to him. The foreign minister said that they gave consular access to the Indian spy under agreed terms, however, the two Indian officials did not listen to him. "We removed a glass between the spy and the Indian officials while audio and video recording equipment was also removed on the request of the high commission officials," the foreign minister said adding that all such steps were taken to facilitate the meeting. However, despite all these arrangements, he said that the Indian officials left the meeting as Jadhav continuously asked them to talk to him.

1963 on September 2. Earlier, the mother and wife of Commander Jadhav were also allowed to meet him on December 25, 2017 as a humanitarian gesture. Indian serving navy Commander Jadhav is in Pakistan's custody following his arrest from Balochistan in a counter-intelligence operation on March 3, 2016.

## Stable institutions highest priority: Shibli

Prime Minister Imran Khan was keeping a close watch on everyone, and anyone involved in corruption will not be spared



FAIAZ CH.

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Senator Shibli Faraz Thursday said that stabilizing all damaged national institutions and strengthening the economy were among the highest priorities of the PTI-led government under hard-working leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan. Addressing a press conference he said that bringing important national organizations out of loss and making them self sufficient were

the topmost priorities of the PTI-led federal government. Criticising the two major opposition parties, he said opposition should not interfere in the efforts to move Pakistan forward as Pakistan is now heading towards development with Prime Minister Imran Khan's leadership, who with his team was currently dealing with important issues including coronavirus. He said in order to make all national institutions profitable, it was necessary to expedite administrative reforms as well as ensure efficient utilization of all available resources in a transparent manner. He said Prime Minister Imran Khan was keeping a close watch on everyone, and anyone involved in corruption will not be spared. He said the PTI was representative of the people of Pakistan and other side of the coin opposition known as corrupt practices. PTI government had successfully launched the biggest-ever financial assistance programme for deserving people in the history of Pakistan, as its fruits would reach the common people very soon, he said.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan chairing a high level meeting to review K Electric affairs. - DNA

## 12 countries offer to host intra-Afghan talks

The process should have happened 10 days after the peace deal, according to the US and Taliban agreement

DNA

### Eight Taliban killed

DNA

KABUL: Acting Foreign Minister of Afghanistan Mohammad Haneef Atmar said that 12 countries want to host intra-Afghan talks, including regional countries. In the press conference on Thursday, Atmar added that Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, China, Russia, Turkey, Iran, Qatar, Indonesia and Japan have shown interest in hosting intra-Afghan talks.

Atmar also said that the Afghan government has released 4,400 Taliban prisoners so far although the Taliban wants the release of 5,000. He said that 600 more prisoners have not been released because of serious problems but Taliban prisoners will

BALKH: In Afghanistan, eight Taliban were killed during clashes with security forces at Dawlat Abad district of Balkh province on Thursday. According to district governor, eight security forces personnel were also killed and over a dozen injured.

be released soon. He further added that the government has asked the Taliban to handover a new list for 600 more prisoners. The Taliban must show goodwill for the beginning of the intra-Afghan talks.

On the other hand, the Taliban released 30 Afghan government prisoners on Wednesday in Helmand. The Afghan government also released 32 Taliban prisoners from Bagram, seven from Helmand and one from northern Balkh province. So far, the Taliban has released 845 Afghan government prisoners.

Recently, the Afghan government has blamed the Taliban for not implementing their commitments, saying the movements by the group should be scrutinized after the peace deal. The prisoner exchange between the Afghan government and the Taliban has delayed the intra-Afghan negotiations. The process should have happened 10 days after the peace deal, according to the US and Taliban agreement.

### Lowest deaths in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: 40 people lost lives due to covid during last 24 hours. The ration of new cases and deaths has decreased considerably in Pakistan. According to details (37 Died in hospital and 3 out of hospital on 15 Jul) Total Active COVID CASES in Pakistan 73,751, 2,145 people tested covid positive across Pakistan during last 24 hours 24,262 tests conducted on 15 Jul Sindh: 11,060, Punjab: 7,493, KP: 1,875 ICT: 2,710, Balochistan: 499 GB: 131, AJK: 494. - DNA

### Foreign reserves rise

ISLAMABAD: The foreign exchange reserves held by State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) increased by US \$13 million to \$12.054 billion during the week ended on July 10. According to data issued by the SBP on Thursday, total liquid foreign reserves held by the country stood at \$18.952 billion on July 10. - APP

## Virus cases not reducing due to reduced testing

Asad Umar says If positivity ratio was same as in mid June... 22% +, the 24,262 tests done yesterday would have resulted in 5,500 cases

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar on Thursday dispelled the impression that daily confirmed coronavirus cases have declined due to a reduction in the number of tests. Taking to Twitter, he said that some people are saying that cases have gone down only due to testing reduction. "If positivity ratio was same as in mid June... 22% +, the 24,262 tests done yesterday would have resulted in 5,500 cases... Actual yesterday was 2,145! Decline is primarily due to a nearly 60% reduction in positivity," explained Asad Umar, who also heads the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) on Covid-19. According to the government's Covid-19 portal, 2,145 new cases were

detected after 24,262 tests were conducted in last 24 hours. 73,751 coronavirus patients are under treatment while 178,737 patients have recovered. 16,52,183 tests have been conducted across the country so far.

A total of 107,773 infections have been detected in Sindh so far, 88,045 in Punjab, 31,000 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 12,239 in Balochistan, 14,315 in Islamabad, 1,688 in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and 1,708 in Gilgit Baltistan.

Earlier, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari had slammed the PTI government for what he said lowering Covid-19 testing capacity on purpose. "If you stop testing, then the graph will go down. But the same number of people will fall ill and die," Bilawal said at a press conference.

## Economy not out of the woods yet: IMF

WASHINGTON: IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva has warned the world that a second major wave of coronavirus infections could trigger more disruptions in world economies.

Georgieva said the fiscal costs of actions aimed at containing the pandemic and mitigating its economic fallout were driving up already high debt levels, but it was premature to start withdrawing needed safety nets. "We are not out of the woods yet," she said in a blog posting ahead of Saturday's virtual meeting of finance ministers and central bank governors from the Group of 20 major economies. The IMF last month further slashed its 2020 global output forecasts, predicting a 4.9% contraction and weaker-than-expected recovery in 2021.

Georgieva said \$11 trillion in fiscal measures by G20 members and other countries, as well as massive central bank liquidity injections, have put a floor under the global economy. Even so, dangers lurked, she said, including a major new wave of infections, stretched asset valuations, volatile commodity prices, rising protectionism and political instability.

## K-Electric: chairman NAB moves

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Justice (Retd) Javed Iqbal has taken notice of public complaints against K-Electric. According to details, NAB Chairman Javed Iqbal, taking note of the complaints, has ordered an inquiry into extended unannounced load shedding and overbilling of billions of rupees. The Chairman NAB has also directed to inquire K-Electric's non-compliance with the agreement reached with the government.

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## Academic cooperation between IIUI, UNPAD discussed

Deny Tri Basuki, Counsellor, Indonesian Embassy, Islamabad, called on Dr. Mohammad Bashir and congratulated him on the very productive and successful Webinar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The International Islamic University, Islamabad and the University of Padjadjaran, Bandung, Indonesia, have shown great enthusiasm in identifying a range of areas of aptitude and excellence to establish strong academic cooperation between them and find ways for the development of the graduates of Arabic Literature so that they are able to prove their mantle in the challenging situations of competition and progress economically in their respective diverse fields. The upbeat prospects of academic cooperation came under discussion at an International Webinar organized by the University of Padjadjaran in collaboration with the



Indonesian Embassy, Islamabad, on July 15, 2020. Dr. Mohammad Bashir, Dean and Chairman of Department of Linguistics, IIUI, Islamabad, was

among the keynote speakers who attended the Webinar and delivered his lecture on "Arab Linguistic Studies in Non-Arab States: Pakistan's Experience".



The Webinar which discussed the importance and scope of Arabic Literature in the post COVID 19 world, was hosted by Dr. Hj. Titin Nurhayati Ma'mun, Head of Ara-

bic Literature Department, Faculty of Cultural Studies, UNPAD. On the occasion, Dr. Tajudin Noor, Professor of Linguistics in Arabic

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## Briefs

## President telephones families of martyrs

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday telephoned the families of martyred sepoy Muhammad Ismael Khan, Muhammad Shahbaz Yasin, Muhammad Rizwan Khan and Raja Waheed Ahmed, who lost their lives in an operation against terrorists in North Waziristan.

The president offered his condolences and prayed to Allah Almighty to grant the martyrs an elevated place in heaven. — APP

## Balochistan governemnt to renovate 100 schools

ISLAMABAD: Balochistan government would spend Rs 22 million on 100 public schools in first phase of the project for improving education facilities and ensuring revolutionary measures to provide best education to the masses in the province. Balochistan government has planned to improve the sector with provision of quality furniture, sports, computer lab and science equipments and other basic facilities in 100 public schools of the province, an official of the Balochistan government said on Wednesday while talking to APP.

"In the first phase of the project, Rs 22 million will be spent in the current financial year," he added. The official said that every school would be provided computers, smart writing boards, library books, scientific equipment, and internet facility in every school. The Balochistan government has decided to upgrade 53 middle schools to high school and 53 primary schools would be awarded the middle school status this year, he said. He said that Rs 402.8 million has been allocated for further improvement of existing schools across the province. — APP

## Over 60,000 health workers completed training

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Health, Dr. Zafar Mirza says health workers are rendering exemplary services and reduction in the number of new Coronavirus cases in the country is due to their commitment to the cause.

In a statement, he said protection of healthcare workers is the top priority of the government as they deal with the Coronavirus situation on the front line. He said despite limited resources, the government had given top priority to the protection of healthcare workers and its initiatives in this regard are being appreciated across the world. He said under "We Care" initiative, more than sixty thousand health workers belonging to all the four provinces, the Federal Capital, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Azad Jammu Kashmir have already completed their training. The Special Assistant appealed to the people to follow the guidelines announced on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha.

## 'SOPs compliance is only vital measure'

ISLAMABAD: The National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) on Thursday said wearing masks and compliance of standard operating procedures (SOPs) by the public were only measures to contain COVID-19 outbreak in the country. The NCOC meeting chaired by Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar took stock of SOPs through digital analysis and cattle markets' management and emphasized the need to ensure compliance of safety guidelines. Speaking on the occasion, Asad Umar said public health and safety was the government's top priority and any sort of complacency in following safety protocols would increase the risk of disease spread on Eid-ul-Azha. — APP



FAISALABAD: Vendors displaying sacrificial animals to attract the customers at Animal Market in connection with upcoming Eid Ul Azha. — APP

## BMP welcomes trade bodies' decision to announce election schedules

Jawad said that powerful lobbies have been given huge tax exemptions through SROs and that the whole tax system is now like an NRO for the elite class

DNA

KARACHI: The FPCCI's Businessmen Panel on Thursday welcome the announcement of the number of trade bodies to announce their election schedule for 2020-21.

Talking to media, Secretary General (Federal) of the BMP, Ahmad Jawad said the pandemic is on its way towards its ending and finally different trade bodies have announced their election schedule to its members for the new of-

fice bearers of the 2020-21 term which will strengthen the process of democracy in our trade bodies. He said currently all trade organisation are currently registered and regulated under TOG-2013 which has replaced TOG-2007 and 1961. Now the Senate Standing Committee on Commerce seeks recommendation from the regulator of trade organisation that how we facilitate trade bodies in less developed areas; and for that Trade organisation rules 2013 may be amended.

"I personally feel the trade bodies who have in less developed areas should be given some exemptions so that they can compete with the big chambers too and raise their voices more openly before the government, so the government may receive a consensus policy draft from every corner".

In view of the prevailing difficult business conditions, full compliance of all or major new stringent requirements, may be extended to a specified period, especially for small chambers of commerce. He also demanded from the gov-

ernment to abolish all companies specific Statutory Regulatory Orders (SROs) issued in last fifteen years saying SRO culture has ruined the country's economy besides adversely affecting the level playing field amongst all stake holders.

Jawad said that powerful lobbies have been given huge tax exemptions through SROs and that the whole tax system is now like an NRO for the elite class. He was of the view that the concessions and zero rating allowed through SROs should be rout-

ed through parliament and it should be the discretion of the latter to maintain or drop these concessions.

Though the SRO culture was introduced in 90's for political engineering through benefiting the individual businesses but needed to be eradicated to save the economy. Ahmad Jawad further viewed that Pakistan can still become governable and grow like India and China, but for that the country needs to implement institutional reforms to break from its past of over 25 years.

## Etihad resumes flight operations from Pakistan

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Etihad Airways that had suspended its services last month for outbound passengers from Pakistan has resumed its flight operations on Thursday with a flight to Abu Dhabi. The passengers desirous of flying to the United Arab Emirates aboard the airline's aircraft would have to prove that they are not suffering from Covid-19, said the carrier. The airline had suspended flights to and from Pakistan apparently after some passengers who had travelled to Hong Kong by another airliner were tested

positive for the potentially deadly disease.

The Etihad Airways would now operate 12 flights a week from Pakistan, seven of them from Lahore, two from Islamabad and three from Karachi, said the airline. Each passenger travelling from Pakistan must have a copy of a PCR test before travelling that (s)he should be able to produce before boarding, said the airline. The result of the Covid-19 medical test should have been issued no more than 96 hours prior to arriving in Abu Dhabi. However, children of up to 12 years don't need to complete the PCR test if they travel with their parents.

## 'CPEC projects to boost economic activity'

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly (NA) Speaker Asad Qaiser Thursday said the completion of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects, especially establishment of industrial zones in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) would boost economic activity and job creation in the province. He said the CPEC would help create job opportunities for those people who had been affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The NA speaker said this during a meeting with KPK Chief Minister Mehmoed Khan here at the Parliament House, said a press release issued here. Both the parliamentarians discussed various issues of mutual interest and development in the province. Commending the KPK government performance during the COVID-19 catastrophe, Asad Qaiser said the provincial government provided relief to the public earnestly by following the vision of the prime minister. He said the pandemic had disturbed the socio-economic pattern around the world and Pakistan was not an exception. He said the prime minister had envisioned Pakistan a true democratic, progressive and welfare state. — DNA

## Investments likely to rise in 2021

ISLAMABAD: Investment and savings for the fiscal year 2020-21 is expected to increase slightly to 15.5 percent of GDP during the fiscal year 2020-21 and help achieve sustained and inclusive growth keeping in view post corona crisis. Fixed investment is expected to grow to 13.9 percent of GDP in 2020-21, according to official data which added that the National Savings are targeted at 13.8 percent of GDP. During the fiscal year 2020-21, the focus would be on replacing consumption led growth with investment led growth. The new monetary policy posture with reduction in interest rate would encourage investors and consumer financing would boost economic activity. The investment-to-GDP ratio declined from 15.6 percent in 2018-19 to 15.4 percent in 2019-20. — APP

## Concerns over cut to Higher Education Funding

SHUJAAT HAMZA

Islamabad: The Senate Standing Committee on Information Technology has expressed strong concerns over the cut to the higher education sector funding and recommended for an increase in the budget as per the sector's requirement. The Senate body held a meeting with Senator Rubina Khalid in the chair at the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Secretariat to discuss the internet connectivity problems in online learning being faced by students of remote areas. Besides the committee members, the meeting was attended by Chairman HEC Tariq Banuri, Executive Director HEC Dr Fateh Marri, Rector National Academy of Higher Education Dr. Shaheen Sardar Ali, Vice Chancellors of different universities, and representatives of Ministry of Information Technology, Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), and Universal Service Fund (USF). Speaking on the occasion, the Chairman HEC briefed the Senate committee on the steps taken to execute the Learning Management System (LMS) in the

higher education institutions. Since the closure of universities due to COVID-19, HEC has been actively trying to minimise the disruption in educational activities. He elaborated: "Broadly, there have been two major issues. One, majority of faculty did not have online teaching background. Two, students faced internet connectivity issues." He highlighted the efforts made to train the faculty members to improve the quality of their lectures and their way of virtual teaching. He revealed that HEC has provided the universities with detailed policy guidelines on various issues, including conduct of entrance examinations, laboratory work, and all other essential academic activities amidst the situation created in the wake of COVID-19 outbreak.

The Vice Chancellors underlined the measures taken to promote e-learning and online classes through LMS. They appreciated the HEC's role in making the transition easier. However, they also pointed out the hardships universities are confronted with, especially in terms of payment of salaries and meeting other expenses as a result of the recent cut to the HEC funding.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister KPK Mehmoed Khan called on Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser at Parliament House. — APP

## Agha Shahab urges to shun all conspiracies

DNA

KARACHI: President Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Agha Shahab Ahmed Khan has said that as Federation of Chambers of Commerce in all the countries including India and Turkey are based in their capital cities hence, it is better to shift Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) to the capital city of Islamabad, therefore all the Executive Committee and General Body Members must shun all the conspiracies being hatched by unscrupulous elements and give go ahead to shifting the head office from Karachi to Islamabad in FPCCI's forthcoming General Body Meeting on 5th August 2020.

In a statement issued, Agha Shahab Ahmed Khan pointed out that Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) is based

in the capital of city of New Delhi whereas Mumbai, being the port city, remains the hub of commercial and industrial activities. Similarly, the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey, a confederation of all local chambers of commerce, industry and maritime as well as commodity exchanges, is also based in Ankara, the capital city of Turkey while Istanbul is well-known for its bustling trade and economic activities.

"Keeping in view the examples of above cited countries, I can confidently claim that the ruling group at FPCCI has undoubtedly taken the wise decision to move FPCCI Head Office from Karachi to Islamabad which the Businessmen Group (BMG) and KCCI fully support", Agha Shahab said while urging all BMGIANS and its supporters, who are either members of FPCCI's Executive Committee or its General Body, to fully endorse this initiative

at the next General Body Meeting so that this important institution could successfully be shifted to the federal capital which will definitely prove beneficial for the entire business & industrial community. President KCCI stated that it is a very wise decision as Islamabad is the Federal Capital of the country and all the departments falling under the purview of the federal government are based in Islamabad therefore, it is very critical that FPCCI's Head Office must also be based in Islamabad so that it could be in a much better position to efficiently advocate the issues being faced by business & industrial community and instantly get them resolved. Relocation of FPCCI's Head Office in Islamabad would also prove economically viable for the institution as it will drastically cut down the travelling and lodging expenses, he added. He was of the opinion that FPCCI's presence in Islamabad would surely

make it a vibrant institution by enabling it to always stay in touch with the federal government and all its departments including Prime Minister's Office, President's Office, Offices of all the Ministries such as the Finance & Revenue, Commerce & Textiles, Industry & Production, Energy etc. as well which is in the larger interest of the country as it would help in getting numerous issues instantly resolved. Agha Shahab was of the opinion that FPCCI is the apex body of Pakistan and its prime responsibility is to have strong linkages with the federal government so that economic policies could be extensively discussed after taking inputs and suggestions from all the Chambers and Associations, who are FPCCI's members. He said, "We have been demanding since long that FPCCI has to be moved from Karachi to Islamabad as it is not FPCCI's job to hold meetings with police officers and collectors in

Karachi. It is principally incorrect that instead of focusing on national policies, FPCCI stays engaged in local issues and they have also been issuing visa recommendation letters which is wrong as no individual business/industry is a member of FPCCI. It is heartening to see that the ruling group at FPCCI has identified this serious flaw in FPCCI's functioning and has taken the bold initiative to move the head office from Karachi to Islamabad which BMG and KCCI warmly welcome and appreciate. All Chambers and All Pakistan Associations are the members of FPCCI while no industry, individual business, town association or industrial association are FPCCI members yet they have been entertaining such institutions which is wrong". President KCCI requested all BMGIANS to fully support this initiative at the next General Body Meeting on 5th August so that FPCCI could be moved to Islamabad.

## Hajj deposit refunds to be completed by July 28

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony has directed the scheduled banks to complete the ongoing process of refunding the Government Hajj Scheme dues by July 28. Spokesman of Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony on Thursday once again asked the successful applicants of Government Hajj Scheme to contact their respective bank branches for getting their hajj dues back as soon as possible.

He said the ministry has not issued any directions to keep hajj dues in the banks or opening of new accounts for depositing these dues.

All the nominated banks were bound to refund the deposited dues sans any deductions. The Ministry was in close contact with the banks for hassle free return of deposited amount, he said.

The Ministry had started refunding Government Hajj Scheme dues following the limiting of hajj by Saudi Arabia to contain COVID-19 spread in the kingdom on July 2, 2020.

A total of 86,765 intending pilgrims were picked through general balloting from out of 149,295 applicants, aspiring to perform the sacred religious obligation under Government Scheme.

A total 179,210 Pakistanis were aspiring to perform hajj this year including 107,526 under government scheme and 71,684 under private scheme. — APP

## NA offers fateha for corona victim doctors

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly on Thursday offered fateha for doctors and paramedical staff dying from COVID-19 and for soldiers martyred recently in Balochistan. The fateha was led by member National Assembly Moulana Abdul Akbar Chitrali.

## SBP injects Rs 143 bn into money market

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan on Thursday injected Rs143 billion into money market for eight days as reverse repo purchase through its open market operation.

The rate of return accepted is 7.01 percent per annum, said SBP release.

## 11th tranche of PPEs dispatched to Balochistan

ISLAMABAD: National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has stated transporting the eleventh tranche of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) to Health Care Workers (HCWs) of Balochistan. According to authority's spokesman, some 64,000 N-95, KN-95 and surgical masks, 29,395 protective suits, 37,000 medical gowns, 44,000 pair of surgical gloves, 6,938 surgical caps, 28,000 protective goggles, 5,094 face shields, 4,058 shoes cover and 760 plastic shoes have been dispatched to Balochistan province. — APP

## PTI to spend Rs 95 bn on Agriculture: Minister

PESHAWAR: Provincial Livestock Minister, Muhibullah Khan on Thursday distributed agricultural tools and other gadgets among farmers of D I Khan under Command Area Project of Gomal Zam Dam.

The distribution was made with assistance of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government and USAID for farmers affected by the coronavirus situation.

Minister Muhibullah said Green Pakistan was the dream of Prime Minister Imran Khan and it's our priority to materialize this dream into reality as soon as possible.

He said the past government spent Rs 44 billion during 70 years on Agriculture and Livestock while the incumbent government will spend Rs 95 billion during its tenure in these important sectors. — APP

## Briefs

### Ehsaas budget increased to Rs 203 bn

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The total budget for the federal government's Ehsaas Emergency Cash programme has been increased from Rs144 billion to Rs203 billion, PM Imran Khan's Special Assistant on Poverty Alleviation Dr Sania Nishtar announced on Thursday. She was addressing a news conference alongside Federal Information Minister Shibli Faraz. Dr Nishtar said the programme will continue as long as the 16.9 million Pakistanis that are below the line of poverty can benefit from it. Dr Nishtar said the government's largest social protection programme, Ehsaas has taken the lead in radically expanding social safety nets to help mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 within Pakistan. Given the overall success of Ehsaas Emergency Cash and its massive demand in these unprecedented times, she said "the programme is fully transparent, rule and merit based, and apolitical. Sindh gains the most from this programme which shows its apolitical nature." She said as compared to the initiatives taken in other countries, Ehsaas Emergency Cash Programme gained international recognition for disbursing in time cash assistance in a well organized manner and at a larger scale.

### ANF seizes 1045.18 kgs drugs in 16 operations

RAWALPINDI: Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan has seized 1045.18 kg narcotics worth US \$ 604.62 million in international market, arrested 21 culprits including a female and impounded seven vehicles while conducting 16 counter-narcotics strikes. According to an ANF spokesman, the seized drugs comprised of 203.400 kg Hashish, 549 kg Morphine, 7.300 kg Opium, 285.460 kg Heroin and 20 grams Amphetamine Ice. ANF Rawalpindi conducted an operation near Golra More, G-13 Islamabad and intercepted a car. The ANF recovered 400 grams Heroin, 1.200 kg Hashish and 20 grams Amphetamine (Ice) from trunk of the vehicle and arrested Jhangir Anwar r/o Rawalpindi was arrested. All cases have been registered at respective ANF Police Stations under CNS Act 1997 and further investigations are underway. — APP

### IHC adjourns sugar mills case

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday adjourned hearing on an intra court appeal (ICA) of Sugar Mills Association against sugar inquiry commission till July 20. The court directed the sugar mills' lawyer to conclude his arguments till Tuesday and after this attorney general of Pakistan would start his arguments. A division bench headed by Justice Aamer Farooq conducted hearing on an ICA of sugar mills against the decision of single member bench in sugar inquiry commission case. During the course of proceeding, an assistant of petitioner's lawyer appeared before the court and told that senior counsel Makhdoom Ali Khan was not able to attend the proceeding this day and prayed the bench to adjourn the case till next date which was accepted. Justice Farooq remarked that the court hoped that the counsel would conclude his arguments till coming Tuesday. He said that attorney general would start his arguments on Wednesday accordingly. After this, the court adjourned hearing of the case till next date. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Guests taking interest in various pictures highlighting valiant struggle of Turkish people against a handful of miscreants who tried to topple the elected government on July 15. — DNA

## Experts highlight key measures to boost Services Sector in Punjab

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: The services sector has a critical importance for any vibrant economy. However, several steps are required to tap the real potential of sector, especially in Punjab. The experts on economy and investment said this while sharing their views with the participants at online consultative dialogue 'Better Business Regulation for Services Sector in Punjab' organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here on Thursday. Mr Sohail Qadiri, Director (Policy) at Punjab Board of Investment and Trade, while citing the examples of Chinese enterprises that are relocating due to higher labour

costs are opting for Mekong countries that are known for quick harmonizing their regulatory regime with China. IT parks can help promote IT enabled businesses which are much desired by the Chinese, he said and added that we need to channel our new graduates towards understanding the needs of Chinese services sector and how to integrate in Chinese value chains. Group Head at the Bank of Punjab, Mr Khawar Ansari, on the occasion informed the participants that banking services are being innovated to respond to the Covid19-related needs of businesses. However, businesses will need to develop a decent history of using banking channels. "We would like to see that

businesses applying for loan have secured their future cash flows," Mr Ansari said and added further that we need to be more receptive to venture and angel investors. Dr Vaqar Ahmed, Joint Executive Director, SDPI, while moderating the dialogue shared the findings of the SDPT's survey with the participants and said that services sector in Punjab is finding it hard to grow due to difficult access to business premises. Besides, rental spaces; fragmented tax regime demanding compliance with over 3 dozen taxes; and difficulties in accessing running finance and fixed investment sources particularly in Covid19-times, he added. He said that some other challenges affecting sustain-

ability of services sector firms include weak access to public procurement opportunities, inadequacy of e-commerce, online and digital payments infrastructure as well as weak linkages with regional and global value chains; and arbitrary imposition of labour, municipal, and environmental laws. He hoped that the government will soon initiate a trade-in-services agreement with China which can bring down costs for Pakistani firms wishing to integrate with Chinese services sector and services sector economic zones under CPEC will be expedited. Imran Jattala, Director (Innovation) at Lahore Garrison University, was of view that the knowledge of building services businesses and

scaling it up is limited to select family groups in Pakistan. The National Incubation Centers but we need more such centers in second-tier cities of Pakistan. Senior Research Fellow at Punjab Economic Research Institute (PERI) Dr Shehzada Naeem, asserted that the provincial government is trying to improve engagement with business associations to better understand the needs of the private sector in the wake of Covid19. To boost productivity in the services sector, he emphasized on the importance of improving Pakistan's ranking in ICT adoption and logistics indicators which are closely watched by foreign investors. Ms Mahnoor Arshad, researcher on issues faced by women-led enterprises, was

of opinion that women-led enterprises have been the hardest hit during Covid19. She said that the learning needs of women businesses need to be explored in after-Covid19 scenario including orientation to online ways of doing business and overcoming constraints to mobility and attracting investors during the pandemic. Earlier, Mr Ahad Nazir, Head SDPI Center for Private Sector Engagement shared his insight on the impacts of Covid19 on the business including the Services Sector and said that the Federal government should streamline regulatory environment whereas e-commerce and cluster based services sector development should be promoted in Punjab.

### AIOU, PCRWR to collaborate in agriculture technology

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) and Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) here on Thursday signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) at the Main campus of the University for collaboration in the areas of agricultural technology and agricultural water management research. The signing of LoI between the two organizations is aimed to promote research in Pakistan. As per the agreement, the PCRWR will provide access to their research facilities to students of Agricultural Department of the AIOU both in their field research and laboratory experiments. Sohail Nazir Rana, Registrar AIOU, and Chairman, PCRWR, Dr. Muhammad Ashraf signed the LoI. Professor Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum, Vice Chancellor AIOU, Dean Faculty of Sciences, Dr. Zafar Ilyas, Director, PCRWR, Faizan-ul-Hassan, and Prof. Dr. Sher Muhammad witnessed the ceremony. According to the LoI, the two new partners will jointly conduct research studies on water management, especially crop water requirements, water conservation, groundwater investigations, hydrology modeling and GIS/RS, recharge of depleted Aquifers, watershed management, and draining and land reclamation.

### 'No hide collection without prior permission'

ATTOCK: The district Police officer (DPO) Attock Syed Khalid Hamdani has said hides collection without prior permission of the district administration would not be allowed and stern action would be taken against the violators. He was presiding over meeting of the Sub Divisional Police Officers, Station House Officers and supervisory staff in DPO office on Thursday. He said the security plan had been devised for Eid and security personnel would be deployed outside mosques and other places and only recommended organizations would maintain the record of hides. He said there was a complete ban on objectionable advertisements, graffiti, wheeler and display of weapons. He informed that Attock police have chalked out a comprehensive security plan for Eid ul Azha under which 2,326 security personnel will be deployed at mosques, Imambargahs and important buildings. He informed that the security personnel include 1,158 volunteers, six DSPs, 15 SHOs, 200 SIs and ASIs, 945 constables and 35 sections of elite force. — APP

## 14 held during crackdown against criminals

DIG (Operations) has appreciated this overall performance and directed all police officials to ensure effective policing measures

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Police have arrested 14 persons during the last 24 hours in its crackdown against drug pusher as well as criminal elements and recovered narcotics, and weapons from them, a police spokesman. Following directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Muhammad Aamir Zulfkar Khan, Deputy Inspector General of Police (Operations) Waqar Ud Din Syed issued directions to all zonal officers for renewed efforts against those involved in anti-social activities. Aabpar a police arrested accused Zafar Ali Khan and recovered 140 gram hashish from him. Kohsar police arrested Waqar Ahmed and recovered 120 gram hashish from him. Tarnol police arrested accused Ghulam Jillani involved in illegally oil selling. Industrial-Area police arrested accused Ahmed Ali and recovered one 30 bore pistol from their possession. Shams

colony police arrested two accused Sohail Awaish and Bilal sadiq 120 gram hashish and Khanna police arrested two accused Tariq Ahmed and Khuram Shahzad involved in theft, while police also arrested a drug peddler namely Adnan Shahzad and recovered 1.035 kilogram hashish from him. Nilor police arrested accused Waheed Ayub and recovered 125 gram heroin from him. Lohibher police arrested accused Ehsan Jamshed and recovered a dagger from him. Separate cases have been registered against the nabbed persons and further investigation is underway from them. During special crackdown against absconders, Islamabad police nabbed three proclaimed offenders and court absconders from various area of the city. DIG (Operations) Waqar Uddin Syed has appreciated this overall performance and directed all police officials to ensure effective policing measures in their respective areas.

### Govt. intends to start import of high grade fuel

ISLAMABAD: The government has planned to start import of high grade petrol and diesel during the current fiscal year aimed at tackling the environmental issues and meeting requirements of high-tech vehicles in the country. "To reduce the environmental impact through improved quality of fuel, high grade imports of petroleum products i.e. Petrol and High Speed Diesel is planned to be initiated during 2020-21," a senior official privy to petroleum sector developments told APP while referring to the Annual Plan 2020-21. For the purpose, he said, a Euro-IV and V standard fuel testing laboratory had already been set up at the Hydrocarbon Development Institute of Pakistan (HDIP) Islamabad, while more labs would be upgraded in due course of time. — APP

## Senate body briefed about aviation affairs

ADNAN YOUSAF

ISLAMABAD: Senate Standing Committee on Aviation in its meeting on Thursday was given a briefing on the privatisation of PIA properties inside and outside Pakistan including Roosevelt Hotel in New York along with the recommendations of Task Force in each property. The Committee recommended that till the pandemic persists the question of any change in current status of any PIA properties including the Roosevelt hotel should be overruled as at this time the world is holding onto its properties instead of giving them away and even if there are chances of the site being declared a heritage/landmark site it should still be kept in possession and other measures like improving management to maintain profitable

status should be taken. The meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Senator Mushahidullah Khan here at the Parliament House on Thursday and was attended among others by Senators Sherry Rehman, Faisal Javed Khan, Mustafa Nawaz Khokhar, Shaheen Khalid Butt, Asad Ali Junejo, Minister for Aviation Ghulam Sarwar Khan, Secretary Aviation and officials from the ministry, CAA and PIAC. The Committee was told that the Roosevelt hotel was bought in 1999 and it earned 424 million dollars in profit since 1999 till 2019. However the building is very old and requires continuous renovations which need a lot of money. Added to it is the fact that the post pandemic situation has resulted in loss of business in most hotels worldwide and it is being estimated by professionals that it will take 3 years for it to return to routine business.

## President Arif Alvi for research in aeronautics

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi has underlined the need for undertaking research in the fields of aeronautics and space sciences so as to meet the challenges in the field of space technology. He stated this during a presentation, given by the Vice Chancellor (VC), Institute of Space Technology (IST), Maj Gen @ Rehan Abdul Baqi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. The meeting was attended by Secretary to the President, Mr. Tariq Najeem Najmi, Chairman SUPARCO, Maj Gen Amer Nadeem, Director Strategic Plans Division (SPD), Brig @ Abdul Rehman Arif, Registrar IST, Engr Ishaat Saboor Khan and Director IST, Engr Hassan Rana.

The Vice Chancellor (VC) briefed the President about the role and achievements of the Institute. He informed that the Institute offered graduate and undergraduate degree programmes in specialized engineering and space-related disciplines. He said that the IST continued its classes uninterrupted during the Corona Pandemic by providing online education to the students. The VC apprised the participants about the research activities of the institute and said that IST was equipped with state-of-the-art equipment that was compatible with international standards. The President asked the management of the institute to increase its outreach to the remote areas of the country and particularly focus on Balochistan, AJK and Gilgit-Baltistan.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor displaying bicycles to attract customers at his roadside shop. — APP

## Briefs

**'290,000  
Islamabad  
citizens could  
be COVID-19  
positive'**

ISLAMABAD: A population-based, age-stratified, sero-epidemiological survey for COVID-19 was conducted in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) to determine the extent of infection in the general population, age-specific attack rates and the fraction of asymptomatic or sub-clinical infections.

According to National Institute of Health (NIH), the cross-sectional survey was conducted between June 1 and June 25, 2020. The geographic scope of the survey was limited to the ICT while equal representation from the rural and urban areas was ensured.

The preliminary analysis showed a prevalence of COVID-19 to be 14.5 per 100 population. As for the area wise distribution of the disease, rural union councils were more affected while out of all the union councils, Chattar was found to be most affected followed by union councils Muhrian and Tarlai Khurd. Considering age, the most affected group was 41-50 years followed by 31-40 years and 51-60 years age groups. RT-PCR positivity rate was found to be 17%.

The results of the survey showed that the calculated prevalence of COVID-19 in ICT is 14.5% which translates to 290,000 individuals in ICT have been exposed to the SARS-CoV-2 virus and have developed the immunoglobulins against the virus. Applying the stratified systematic random sampling using probability proportionate to size technique a sample of 4,328 was calculated. A structured, pretested questionnaire was used to gather demographic, clinical, exposure and risk factor data from the community. — APP

**NCHD  
mandated  
to promote  
literacy**

ISLAMABAD: National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) was mandated to promote literacy and non-formal education in the country.

An official of NCHD told APP on Thursday that NCHD sets up Adult Literacy Centers for local communities providing basic literacy skills to the individuals especially women in the age group of 11-45, who were either never enrolled before or dropped out of school before acquiring literacy skills.

"The syllabus and textbooks are designed for easy learning and functionality, thereby enhancing retention" he said.

Nusrat Bibi, a 15 year old resident of UC Shah Kot District Neelum said that she did not have an opportunity to be enrolled in formal education system. She said that NCHD started literacy program in her village as she is now able to write her name for the very first time in her life.

Sakina Bibi, a 43 years old woman lives in Basala, Mansehra. Her thirst for knowledge made her one of the brilliant learner at NCHD center in Basla. She also voluntarily offered her only room for Adult Literacy Center class.

**Gold price  
increases to  
Rs109,350  
per tola**

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs50 on Thursday and was traded at Rs109,350 as against its trading at Rs109,350 the previous day, Karachi Sarafa Association reported.

Likewise the price of 10 gram gold also witnessed decrease of Rs43 and was traded at Rs93,750 against its sale at Rs93,707. The price of per tola silver remained stable at Rs1100 whereas that of 10 gram silver also remained constant at 943.07.

In international market, the price of per ounce gold decreased by \$2 and was traded at \$ 1806 against \$1808, Karachi Sarafa Association reported. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Ombudsman, Syed Tahir Shahbaz presenting Report of Federal Ombudsman to President, Dr. Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad. — DNA

**Pakistan fully facilitating Sikh  
Yatrees from India, NA told**

Parliamentary Secretary for Interior Shaukat Ali told the house during question hour that there may be reduction in the number of Sikh yatrees from India due to COVID-19 but there is no obstacle from Pakistani side in their way to visit their revered site

FIJAZ CH

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly was informed on Thursday that Pakistan is fully facilitating the Sikh Yatrees from India to visit Kartarpur to perform their religious rituals. Parliamentary Secretary for Interior Shaukat Ali told the house during question hour that there may be reduction in the number of Sikh yatrees from India due to COVID-19 but there is no

obstacle from Pakistani side in their way to visit their revered site.

The parliamentary secretary said the Sikh yatrees are allowed to visit Kartarpur without visa, however, they are bound to bring their valid Indian passport for immigration clearance as per the MOU signed between Pakistan and India. Shaukat Ali said the list of Sikh pilgrims is provided by the Indian authorities ten days in advance which is shared with the relevant

institutions for security and verification. Upon their approval, the Sikh Yatrees are allowed to visit Kartarpur. The Parliamentary Secretary said legislation is on the cards to curb human trafficking. He said reforms are also being brought in the FIA to curb such crimes. The Parliamentary Secretary for Interior said the overall law and order situation has improved in the country under the present government.

As regards the federal capital, he said the crime rate has reduced by twenty nine percent over the last two years. He said Islamabad safe city project has fully been made functional. He said when the PTI came to power, only three hundred out of two thousand cameras were operational under this project. He said 1950 cameras have now been made operational. Responding to a calling attention notice, Minister for Power Omar Ayub said the

present government is investing in the up-gradation of power distribution and transmission system.

He said when we came to power, our system was not able to transmit eighteen thousand megawatt of power but now during the summer season, it is capable enough to transmit twenty three thousand megawatts of power. He said this was made possible due to introduction of latest technology. He said issues of low voltages in congested areas

are also being addressed. He said efforts have been accelerated to check power pilferage.

He said there is a plan to enhance power generation to one hundred thousand megawatt by 2040 by primarily exploiting the indigenous resources including hydel, coal and renewables. At the outset, the house offered feteiha for doctors and paramedical staff died of COVID-19 and three soldiers martyred recently in Balochistan.

**Kinara Park sealed  
over SOPs violations**

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration has sealed Kinara Park in Rawal Dam over violations of COVID-19 standard operating procedures (SOPs), to contain the spread of novel coronavirus. The teams of ICT were monitoring all the public places including markets, parks, shopping mall and other recreational spots on daily basis to ensure the implementation of COVID-19 SOPs, said Deputy Commissioner, Islamabad,

Hamza Shafqaat while talking to APP. All the assistant commissioners and magistrates were asked to take indiscriminate action against the violators and no laxity would be bore in that regard. He appealed to the public to cooperate with the city management in implementation of SOPs and prove themselves a responsible citizen. He said next few weeks are crucial for limiting the spread of the coronavirus,

which will be controlled if people follow SOPs during the preparations and celebration of Eid ul Azha. Meanwhile Assistant Commissioner (City) along with Tiger Force inspected shops and private offices in Blue Area. Assistant Commissioner (Industrial Area) carried out inspection of industrial units in I-9 along with DHO office teams and Tiger Force volunteers. Those units found with massive noncompliance were sealed. — APP

**RPO awards  
policemen**

RAWALPINDI: Regional Police Officer (RPO) Dr Suhail Habeeb Tajik on Thursday gave commendation certificates and cash awards to the policemen for arresting Pro-claimed Offender (PO). Naseerabad police held pro-claimed offender involved in murder case in 2019. After committing crime the accused ran away from the scene.

After hectic efforts, Naseerabad police successfully arrested the accused by using latest technology. The RPO gave commendation certificates and awarded cash to Sub inspector Nasir Mumtaz, Sub inspector Zafar Iqbal, ASI Amir Ashraf and Constable Ghulam Abbas. SDPO Cantt Kamran Hameed was also present on the occasion.

Dr Suhail appreciated the performance of the policemen who arrested pro claimed offender by putting their lives in danger. He called upon policemen to play their role in controlling crimes adding it was prime responsibility of the police department to protect the lives and property of the citizens. — APP

**Govt advises  
no tourism on  
Eid: Sadaqat**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf MNA Sadaqat Ali Abbasi on Thursday said tourist resorts and excursion points would remain closed on Eid-ul-Adha to avoid the spread of COVID-19. Talking to a private news channel, he said that people would through to the hilly stations and mountainous areas to celebrate this big event which would certainly, increase the risk of coronavirus spread in the tourist destinations.

The government would revise SOPs for independence day celebration and the masses would be advised to act upon the SOPs. It would be advised to avoid huge public gatherings in parks and other public places, he added.

"I always celebrate independence day with my supporters in my hometown but this time I would prefer to observe national day while keeping social distance to contain COVID-19," he mentioned. — APP

**Police recover  
drugs, arrest two**

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi police in crackdown against bootleggers and drug peddlers have arrested two anti-social elements and recovered 80 bottles of liquor and 2130 grams charras from their possession, said a police spokesman here on Thursday. He said, Rawalpindi District Police on the directives of City Police Officer (CPO) Muhammad Ahsan Younas have accelerated their ongoing

operation against anti-social elements. Waris Khan police managed in netting a drug peddler namely Yasir Hussain and recovered 2130 grams charras from his possession while Rawat police arrested a bootlegger identified as Saood Chaudhary and seized 80 bottles of liquor from his possession. Separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigations are underway. — APP

**Police officer kills dacoit  
during robbery attempt**

Rescue 1122 shifted the body of dacoit to District Headquarter Hospital for autopsy. Police also recovered weapon used in the crime

ISLAMABAD: A police officer killed a dacoit during robbery attempt in the jurisdiction of Cantt Police Station, informed a police spokesman. Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) Amir withdrew cash from ATM of a private Bank at Haider Road when a dacoit entered into the

cabin and pointed gun at the police officer. The dacoit tried to snatch cash during scuffle the police officer shot the dacoit. Soon after the incident, heavy contingent of police rushed to the crime scene. Rescue 1122 shifted the body of dacoit to District Headquarter Hospital for

autopsy. Police also recovered weapon used in the crime. Meanwhile, City Police Officer (CPO) Muhammad Ahsan Younas appreciated the police officer who showed valor, adding that such police officers are pride of police department. — APP

**Crime rate in Capital  
decreased by 29 pc**

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary for Interior Shaukat Ali on Thursday informed the National Assembly that overall crime rate in the federal capital had decreased by 29 percent due to measures taken by the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf government.

Responding to questions during question hour, he said, that as per a survey, Pakistan's capital Islamabad had been declared one of the safest places to live.

He said that almost all the no go areas had been ended in the federal capital. The secretary said that 80 percent check posts in the city had been removed due to improved law and order situation.

Shaukat Ali said that 1200 vacant posts in police department had also been filled by the government on merit. "The numerical strength of police has been improved by appointing people on vacant posts on merit," he explained. He added that police reforms had also been introduced to improve the efficiency of police in the federal capital. He said that separate police stations had also been established for women.

He informed the lawmakers that out of 2000 cameras installed in the city under safe city project by the previous government, 1700 cameras were out of order. He said that present government rectified faults in the 1700 cameras and also replaced faulty cable at various places. He said that a contract had been signed to monitor functionality of the cameras, adding a report about working of cameras was submitted to high-ups on daily basis. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Turkmenistan met with Ambassador of Iran Ali Hosseini. — DNA

**ECP began  
survey to  
reduce  
gender gap**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan has started a Pilot Survey to reduce gender gap between male and female voters in the country.

According to ECP, the commission has identified 229 Census Block Codes in 21 Tehsils across the country having a significant gender gap in the voter registration.

Door to door survey in the aforementioned areas to know the reasons behind the gender gap in voter registration started today. The data to be collected during the said survey will be compared with that of NADRA, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics and Electoral Rolls.

**WWDC to start  
new courses  
for deserving  
women**

ISLAMABAD: The Women's Welfare and Development center (WWDC) will start different short courses from July 20 for poor and deserving women to make them economically strong. According to an official, under this programme, she said different courses would be imparted them to help channelize their hidden skills. She said that beside short courses, one year diploma will also be given in Beauty Parlour, Computer and Fashion Designing.

She said that there is compulsion of Intermediate degree for computer course and for other courses Matric is compulsory. She said that the short courses including Dress making, Textile designing, commercial embroidery, home arts, Zari work, Glass painting, Short computer course, Arts and Crafts and Beauty parlour. She said that the aim of said program was to facilitate needy women and enabling them to support their families through their professional skills, mitigating poverty at grassroots level. She said that WWDC was all committed to empower women in all possible ways. — APP

**IRSA releases  
311,800  
cusecs water**

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 311,800 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 292,200 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1456.70 feet, which was 70.56 feet higher than its dead level 1386 feet. Water inflow in the dam was recorded as 148,000 cusecs and outflow as 175,000 cusecs.

The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1225.65 feet, which was 185.65 feet higher than its dead level of 1040 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 32,400 cusecs and 25,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 221,600, 198,200 and 66,400 cusecs respectively.

Similarly, from the Kabul River a total of 53,000 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 25,600 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala. — APP

**Online  
programme  
arranged at  
PUCAR**

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Council of the Arts, Rawalpindi (PUCAR) arranged an online programme "Kuch Yadein Kuch Batein" in the honor of senior drama artist, writer Anjum Malik.

The programme was a part of online activities owing to COVID-19 lockdown, which was anchored by Nigar Shah. Senior artist Anjum Malik started his career from Pakistan Television and acted many famous role. Anjum Malik said that nepotism and non-professionalism had destroyed the standard of TV dramas.

On the occasion, he also shared his past and future of present drama. Director Punjab Arts Council, Waqar Ahmed said on the occasion that the series of events will be continued. — APP

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## A serious matter

**W**E cannot call the charge of blasphemy made against former defence minister and PML-N leader Khawaja Muhammad Asif even a case of intolerance. Most would agree that the innocuous remarks he made in the National Assembly would not alarm even an intolerant person. Yet a local PTI leader from Narowal has targeted Asif by accusing him of committing the crime and stating that he had violated the constitution of Pakistan and the law of the land. The charges brought against Khawaja Asif also add to the often negative vision with which Pakistan is looked upon by the rest of the world. In a tweeted message the United States Committee on International Religious Freedoms has condemned the charge against the PML-N leader.

It seems quite obvious that this is yet another attempt to harm a person against whom the individual making the charge has some petty issues. In this case politics and the fact that Khawaja Asif belongs to a party that rivals the PTI may have contributed to the ludicrous charges made. However, as we know from past experience an accusation of blasphemy can often have extremely serious consequences in our country even when there is no validity behind it. Scores of people have suffered, some only because of a petty dispute over matters of business or jealousy within an institution. The blasphemy law has been abused again and again to settle issues for which the law was never intended. In effect, using charges of blasphemy in this fashion amounts to a serious crime.

Trivializing such a serious charge in this fashion does not serve the interests of anybody in the country. In this case as in others there is also risk that extreme religious elements will attempt to play up the matter. Narowal police have so far refused to file an FIR. The matter has been referred to the DPO. We hope the police will act in a responsible fashion and fulfil their duties. The risk however is that until there is room for the blatant misuse of the law, it will be deployed against more and more people. We also hope that the PTI leadership will take note of the matter.

Imran Khan and his party came to power using the slogan of justice. It is therefore their duty to ensure that justice does indeed prevail and that extremely grave charges are not flung about only on the basis of political rivalry or vindictiveness. Other people have suffered before Khawaja Asif. They included educationists, members of minority communities, politicians and even children. It is time the government took action to ensure the law cannot be misused as has happened too frequently in the past. This would be a true act of justice falling in line with the principal slogan of the PTI and its leadership.



## China-Iran deal

Syed Tahir

**O**VER the past week, news of a long-term strategic pact between China and Iran has caused an uproar among the Iranian public and politicians alike, with both supporters and opponents voicing strong opinions on social media. Iran's former president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, rang alarm bells when he warned of a public backlash totally rejecting the deal should the government fail to consult lawmakers before signing the agreement. In response, government officials were quick to denounce his proclamation as fake news, claiming that there is nothing secretive about the deal. On the contrary, Iran's government has held the agreement up as a major diplomatic achievement for the country at a time of increasing international isolation.

China and Iran are reported to have quietly drafted a comprehensive military and trade partnership. The deal would make way for about \$400 billion worth of Chinese investments into Iran's key sectors, such as energy and infrastructure, over the next 25 years. According to US officials, the agreement could also make way for Chinese military bases in Iran, fundamentally changing the region's geopolitics. The Print looks at the proposed deal, what led to it and its implications for the Middle East. An 18-page draft of the proposed agreement was accessed and reported by the New York Times (NYT), and it talks about expanding Chinese presence in Iran's "banking, telecommunications, ports, railways and dozens of other projects". In return, Iran is to provide regular and "heavily discounted" supply of oil to China for 25 years.

In the strategic realm, the proposed draft talks about deepening military cooperation, with "joint training and exercises", "joint research and weapons development", and intelligence sharing. This deepening military cooperation would be intended to fight the "lopsided battle with terrorism, drug and human trafficking and cross-border crimes". The deal is reported to have been first proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping during his 2016 visit to Tehran, and the proposed draft was approved by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif over the last couple of weeks. The opening sentence of the proposed draft says: "Two ancient Asian cultures, two partners in the sectors of trade, economy, politics, culture and security with a similar outlook and many mutual bilateral and multilateral interests will consider one another strategic partners." There are nearly 100 projects cited in the document that would have Chinese investments, and are expected to be a part of Xi's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which aims to extend China's strategic influence across Eurasia. These 100 projects include "airports, high-speed railways and subways", effectively touching the lives of most Iranian citizens. "China would (also) develop free-trade zones in Maku, in northwestern Iran; in Abadan, where the Shatt al-Arab river flows into the Persian Gulf, and on the gulf island Qeshm," notes the NYT report. The draft agreement also talks about China building infrastructure for 5G telecommunications network in Iran. This would see Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei — a company that has come under severe US sanctions and been banned by many countries across the world such as the United Kingdom and Australia — enter the Iranian market. Chinese global positioning system BeiDou is also proposed to assist Iran's cyber authorities in regulating what is shared in the country's cyberspace, potentially paving the way for Iran to develop a China-like "great firewall".

# Kazakhstan's Day of National Mourning

Dr Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan



Kazakhstan national mourning day upheld the philosophy of "Al-Farabi" which emphasized correlation between "dynamic" and "dynasty" and government's moral values/strength, optimal rightness of social relationships, justice, kindness, and sincerity. It was held to honor its doctors, paramedics and citizens who died in the fight against novel coronavirus

**A**L-FARABI'S Philosophy of Society and Religion is the "essence" of humanity and "immortal" human traits. His philosophy is becoming more "relevant" to achieve desired dreams of human rights, knowledge, wisdom, happiness, harmony, hope and last but not least moral "perfection" of man and society.

He was famous for his concept on political leadership, his ideas about the virtuous society, justice, equality, preserving peace, preventing war, condemnation of wars and respect for personal "sorrows" and "grieves" too. For him even sorrows and grieves are "essential" to basic "human" development and eventually, play very decisive role in the "infinite" voyage of human "caravans".

Most recently, Kazakhstan being "cradle" of humanity and esteemed place of genuine human traits has arranged national mourning to honor the departed souls combating against COVID-19 in the country. In this context, Kazakhstan President H.E. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev declared July 13 as a day of national mourning in his July 9 televised address, noting that each death has personally touched his heart. Throughout the country, national flags on government buildings as well as diplomatic missions remained lower to half-staff to honor the memory of COVID-19 victims. The moment of "silence" was observed at 12.00 p.m. nationwide and was aired on national TV channels too.

Human spirits never die. Most recently, on July 13, 2020 Kazakhstan government observed national day of mourning which was the vivid reflection of its holistic policies towards economics of humanity which has multiplier effects and hopefully pay back its unlimited dividends for centuries to come.

President Tokayev and the country's high-level officials, including State Secretary Krymbek Kusurbayev, Chief of the Presidential Administration Yerlan Koshanov, Security Council Secretary Asset Issekeshov and Healthcare Minister Alexey Tsoy, gathered in front of the Akorda residence to commemorate the victims of the coronavirus pandemic with a minute of on July 13, 2020.

Even Kazakhstan's First President Nursultan Nazarbayev and founding father of the national also expressed condolences to fellow citizens, calling the pandemic an unprecedented challenge for the country and human survival. He mentioned that

dangerous infection spread into cities and ayuls of the country. However, he showed his concerns on its spreading which unfortunately instrumental to the death of people. Former president Nazarbayev termed "unity of the people" key to fighting the pandemic.

According to Kazakhstan official statistics (July 13, 2020), since the beginning of the pandemic in Kazakhstan, about 60,000 cases of COVID-19 have been identified, more than 34,000 people have recovered; 375 people died including the doctors who risked their lives to save people.

The Kazakh Prime Minister Askar Mamin expressed his condolences to the families of Kazakhstan and people who died from coronavirus infection by sharing sympathy. He assured that the measures taken by the government will be effective to stop the spread of the pandemic. He once again saluted resilience, firm will and the indestructible faith of his country fellows combating against COVID-19.

Kazakh Healthcare Minister Alexey Tsoy as a true human campaigner expressed his true spirits on his Facebook, towards loss of his friends, colleagues, doctors and medical workers in the fight against deadly COVID-19.

He termed it horrible and unpredictable threat to human survival and productivity. He further said coronavirus has become the cause of death of the nation's best doctors and nurses and this loss is irreplaceable. They were wholeheartedly committed to their profession and they will always be heroes for us.

Kazakhstan national mourning day upheld the philosophy of "Al-Farabi" which emphasized correlation between "dynamic" and "dynasty" and government's moral values/strength, optimal rightness of social relationships, justice, kindness, and sincerity. It was held to honor its doctors, paramedics and citizens who died in the fight against novel coronavirus.

It was arranged to salute and honoring all the departed souls who lost their precious lives against combating COVID-19. Kazakhstan national mourning reflected various holistic human traits of its society and governance. Human traits have direct correlation with pure economic development. Human traits are pro-development attributions and Kazakhstan is the real champion of human values and traits. Submission, service and of course forwardness are the keys to form a stable society and sustainable

economic development in the world and Kazakhstan is not any exception. Kazakhstan is the "zenith" of human values and always cares about sacrifices of people for "struggling" humanity. It always respects the "departed souls" who lay down their precious lives for national causes. Due to which COVID-19 pandemic has now been marginalized and diminished in Kazakhstan having strong political commitment and superior people's persuasions.

It reported that throughout Kazakhstan people of all classes, ranks, affiliations, professions and association observed moment of silence. In big cities to rural areas, unlimited ethnic groups and people belonging to different classes together paid respects to the thousands of neighbors and fellow Kazakhstan nationals friends, family, patients and medical workers who are no longer with them in the fight against COVID-19. Virus of COVID-19 has been defeated with superior spirits of virtue and growth of this worm has also been substantially decreased because of warm spirits of Kazak people.

Al-Farabi one of the greatest ancient philosopher and political thinker spoke highly about humans and human values. He cared about human beings, the human condition of metaphysics. He emphasized that good government would promote social harmony and the general well-being and cater sorrows and grieves of common people at large.

On July 13, 2020 Kazakhstan observed national day of mourning during which heads bowed and hearts filled with spirits of respectfulness and thankfulness to all those martyrs and departed souls alike who fought bravely against COVID-19 and acted like a frontline army to stop its national pervasiveness.

Being prominent regional expert of Kazakhstan & CIS I personally, think that proper nurturing of human grief and sorrow would create befitting proposition between Kazakhstan government and its diversified population. It will form an unbreakable chain of trust, respect, affection and greater socio-economic harmony in the country.

Economics of humanity always merged real winner against all odds. Kazakhstan government announced more than \$ 13 billion economic support package for all the stakeholders to revive national economy and recently held national mourning will have far-reaching socio-economic consequences in the days to come.

# New measures in the fight against the epidemic

DNA News Agency

The new management at the Ministry is currently preparing an updated protocol for the treatment of corona, taking into account the outbreak of pneumonia caused by the coronavirus infection. In addition, the new management in the Ministry is preparing a package of measures to protect the population from COVID-19, which is based on the effective experience of states that have already managed the epidemic and which have good medical potential. For example, currently a group of several dozen doctors from Russia is working in the country, who are sharing their experience in treating coronavirus with Kazakh colleagues

**E**ACH state has its own conditions, mentality, social environment, economy and, accordingly, the ability to combat the epidemic. Some countries were able to overcome the epidemic relatively quickly, while some are still in crisis. COVID-19 has had a different impact on the development of countries and their plans. Kazakhstan, like all countries of the world, is going through its difficult period and does not hide its challenges and individual problems. As in all countries of the world, the national healthcare system of the Republic of Kazakhstan is undergoing a severe test, both citizens and doctors, who are on the front line of the fight, are becoming ill. Just like in the whole world, there are human losses in Kazakhstan. All this naturally impacts the morale of the population, which, it must be acknowledged, previously did not completely trust the information about the new coronavirus.

Doctors, hospitals, public infrastructure, a medicine distribution system, and everything else are now operating to their limits and are under tremendous pressure. The population began to justly criticize a number of issues through the media and social networks. Within the framework of the concept of the "listening state", the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan has taken prompt measures in response to the requests of the Kazakhstani society.

In addition to the epidemic, Kazakhstan has confronted panic, provoked by an overload of various information and a wave of incorrect assessments in foreign mass media. This led to a certain misunderstanding of the real situation in Kazakhstan. Thus, the so-called infodemia around the coronavirus, which the WHO warned about earlier this year, jumped the gun and exaggerated the risks in the minds of the population.

So what is the real situation? Currently, more than 61,000 cases have been recorded in the country, of which 375 have been fatal. According to the classification of the American Johns Hopkins University, Kazakhstan occupies the 31st position in the world in terms of the prevalence rate of the illness. In these conditions, Kazakhstan is adapting to the changes in the epidemiological situation. First, On July 10, at an expanded meeting of the Government, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, summed up the results of the work carried out to counter the epidemic and set out new tasks. In his statement, the Head of State directly answered all the resonant questions that concern the Kazakhstani society, and set the Government clear tasks for the new period of battle with COVID-19. The President publicly criticized the mistakes and shortcomings in the work of a number of central government bodies and local authorities in the

regions of Kazakhstan. The head of state put an end to the discussions and doubts regarding the statistics on the increase of incidence of the disease. He noted that all statistics in Kazakhstan are absolutely transparent, and various disinformation is aimed at destabilizing the situation. Such a public discussion of all pressing issues and urgent problems in the implementation of measures to combat the epidemic indicates the openness of the state and transparency of the state's response to the epidemiological challenge.

Second. At a new stage in the fight against the epidemic, the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan has replaced the senior management in the healthcare system. A new experienced Head of the Ministry of Health has been appointed, and the state body has been given broader powers for interagency coordination in the field of combating the epidemic. The new leadership of the Ministry of Health has changed the methodology for counting the patients infected with coronavirus, which led to an increase in their number, and an uncertain perception of the epidemiological situation due to different statistics.

The new management at the Ministry is currently preparing an updated protocol for the treatment of coronavirus, taking into account the outbreak of pneumonia caused by the coronavirus infection. In addition, the new management in the Ministry is preparing a package of measures to protect the population from COVID-19, which is based on the effective experience of states that have already managed the epidemic and which have good medical potential. For example, currently a group of several dozen doctors from Russia is working in the country, who are sharing their experience in treating coronavirus with Kazakh colleagues.

Third. In response to public criticism of disruptions in the supply of medical drugs and equipment, President Tokayev instructed to change the leadership of two organizations responsible for the distribution of medicines and public access to medical services. In particular, there has been a change of leadership in the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund, which must provide the population with equal access to health services. The leadership of SK Pharmacia, a state organization that distributes medicines in all regions of the country, has also changed. The new leadership has the task of ensuring an uninterrupted supply of necessary medicines.

President Tokayev has also set the task of creating the necessary reserve of medicines and medical devices. It is planned to additionally purchase more than 4,000 ventilators in case of the worst case scenario of the development

of coronavirus. More than 3,000 units will be purchased from domestic manufacturers. According to the Ministry of Industry and Infrastructure Development of Kazakhstan, starting in August, industrial production of ventilators will be established, and the first batch of 595 units will go to healthcare organizations.

Fourth. The country is preparing a package of measures to stimulate the national economy in a downturn in business activity. The Government and the National Bank are developing an action plan to support sectors of the economy and the population in the event of a likely worsening of the situation. To increase the efficiency of the budget revenues, tax preferences and benefits will be analysed. In order to create a stable environment for attracting direct investments, necessary amendments to the legislation will be introduced to the Parliament of Kazakhstan to ensure stability in maintaining conditions for strategic investors. Fifth. For the period of July 5-19, there are a number of restrictions in the country due to quarantine measures. On 14 July, it was decided that the quarantine period in Kazakhstan will be extended for another two weeks until August 2. The state will provide financial assistance for food products to certain categories of the population, as well as make social payments in case of temporary loss of income. Overall, the first stage of the global pandemic in March-May, under the conditions of a complete lockdown, passed generally unnoticed and without noticeable losses in Kazakhstan. Seemingly, that period consolidated the perception of Kazakhstan as a country where the risk of COVID-19 is minimal.

During the second post-quarantine stage, when it is necessary to deal with the epidemic and rebuild the economy, it has become much more difficult to cope: the epidemic in the country is reaching its peak. When comparing this period with previous months, there is to some extent a perception that a complete crisis is taking place in Kazakhstan.

In fact, from the point of view of the global situation, the current situation in Kazakhstan is in some ways better and in some ways worse than in other states. In addition, according to the World Health Organization, the epidemiological situation in the world is now getting worse. However, there is no single recipe in the world for how to respond to COVID-19 without loss. Each state is coping with the epidemic based on its capabilities. The task of countering the epidemic in Kazakhstan is being successfully addressed. Today, the state is working on mistakes, adapting to new trends and building a new strategy for its actions to protect the population.

## Briefs

## German league issues guidelines

BERLIN: The return of supporters to German stadiums next season took a step closer on Wednesday as the 36 clubs in the Bundesliga's top two tiers received guidelines on how to keep spectators safe from infection amid the coronavirus pandemic.

The Bundesliga season finished at the end of June with the last nine round of matches played behind closed doors. However, with clubs having lost millions in match day revenue, the German Football league (DFL) has provided help in how to create a safe environment in grounds.

"The guideline serves as an orientation for the basic structure" of hygiene concepts and "contains numerous aspects to be considered," the DFL said in a statement. Each club would need their concept approved by the local health authority. The DFL's guide has already been submitted to the German government's Federal Ministry of Health (BMG) for evaluation. As the league points out, the BMG says high standards of protection to prevent infection is a basic requirement before fans can return. Germany currently has around 200,000 cases and recorded 9,071 deaths due to the virus. - APP

## Olympics boss reluctant to hold Games without fans

LAUSANNE: Banning fans from the Tokyo Olympics is "clearly something we don't want", International Olympic Committee chief Thomas Bach said, adding that "multiple scenarios" were under consideration for the rescheduled Games. Bach said safety was the top concern for organisers of the Tokyo Olympics, which were due to start next week but have been postponed for a year over the COVID-19 pandemic. But he clearly signalled his reluctance to hold the Games at empty stadiums, now a common sight in sport as other competitions make a tentative return from virus-enforced shutdowns. "Olympic Games behind closed doors is clearly something we do not want," the IOC president told reporters in a video call.

"So we are working for a solution of the Olympic Games which, on one hand, is safeguarding the health of all the participants and, on the other hand, is also reflecting the Olympic spirit." Bach and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe have both warned that it would be hard to postpone the Games beyond 2021, raising the nightmare scenario of the first Olympics to be cancelled in peace time. "The first priority is about the safety of all participants of the Olympic Games," said Bach. "For this reason, we are working now on multiple scenarios of the organisation of the Games with regard to the health situation of which we do not know how it will be in one year from now." - APP

## Rashford to be awarded honorary doctorate

## WEB DESK

MANCHESTER: Manchester United forward Marcus Rashford is to become the youngest ever recipient of an honorary doctorate from the University of Manchester, awarded in recognition of his campaign against child poverty in the UK and for his sporting exploits on the pitch.

In June, Rashford successfully pressured the UK government to reverse its decision to not extend free school meal vouchers throughout the summer holidays for children from low-income families. "It's a proud day for myself and my family," Rashford told the Manchester United website. "When you look at the great names that have been awarded this doctorate in the past, it's humbling."

"We still have a long way to go in the fight to combat child poverty in this country but receiving recognition from your city means we are heading in the right direction and that means a lot. Thank you to The University of Manchester."



OLD TRAFFORD: England and Windies cricket players show their support for the Black Lives Matter movement by taking a knee before the start of the 2nd Test match at the Emirates Old Trafford. - DNA

# COVID-19: Chinese economy bounces back into growth

The Chinese economy managed to grow more strongly than expected as it emerged from the lockdown

## DNA

BEIJING: China's economy grew 3.2% in the second quarter following a record slump. The world's second biggest economy saw a sharp decline in the first three months of the year during coronavirus lockdowns. But figures released on Wednesday show China's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) returned to growth during April to June.

The numbers are being closely watched around the world as China restarts its economy. The figure is higher than experts were predicting and points towards a V-shaped recovery - that is, a sharp fall followed by a quick recovery. It also means China avoids going into a technical recession - signified as two consecutive periods of negative growth. The bounce-back follows a steep 6.8% slump in the

first quarter of the year, which was the biggest contraction since quarterly GDP records began. The country's factories and businesses were shut down for most of this period as China introduced strict measures to curb the spread of the virus. The government has been rolling out a raft of measures to help boost the economy, including tax breaks. Media caption Why does China's economy matter to you?

The Chinese economy managed to grow more strongly than expected as it emerged from the lockdown. All the stimulus measures announced by the authorities seem to be working - with factories getting busier, evident in growth in the industrial production data. But one sector that hasn't recovered as quickly as they had hoped is retail sales. They still fell in the second quarter - and getting people spending again will remain a challenge.

And just as the economy starts to recover, tensions with the US are flaring up - especially over Hong Kong. That is why some economists are reluctant to call it a V-shaped recovery just yet. A research note from Deutsche Bank said the "V-shaped recovery" was "largely completed". "Consumer spending is still below its pre-Covid path, but the remaining gap is largely concentrated in a few sectors - travel, dining,

leisure services - where rapid recovery is unlikely," it added. In May, China announced it would not set an economic growth goal for 2020 as it dealt with the fallout from the coronavirus pandemic. It is the first time Beijing has not had a gross domestic product (GDP) target since 1990 when records began. For the first six months of the year, China's economy fell 1.6%, its National Bureau of Statistics said.

# Liverpool to lift Premier League trophy on the Kop

## DNA

LONDON: Liverpool will lift the Premier League trophy on the famous Kop stand at Anfield after their final home game of the season against Chelsea on July 22. Kenny Dalglish, who was the Reds' manager the last time they won the English top flight 30 years ago, will hand out the medals to players and staff. With no fans able to attend due to the coronavirus pandemic, Liverpool said the idea for the trophy lift was to honour the club's fans. "With supporters unable to attend the behind-closed-doors fixture, the histor-



ic occasion will involve a unique presentation designed to acknowledge and celebrate Liverpool fans," Liverpool said in a statement. "Reds players and staff will collect the Premier League trophy and their winner's medals on a special podium built at the centre of the Kop surrounded by fan banners." The match will be broadcast on a free-to-air channel to encourage supporters to stay at home for the occasion rather than crowding around Anfield. Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp has urged fans to respect social distancing measures after thousands gathered around the club's stadium and in the city centre following their coronation as champions last month.

# Academic cooperation between IIUI, UNPAD discussed

From Page 01

Literature, Faculty of Cultural Studies UNPAD delivered the lecture on "Arab Linguistic Studies in Non-Arab Countries: Indonesia's Experience". The speakers agreed that on the importance of mastering the Arabic language for the Islamic studies and said that the Holy Quran, the Sunnah and other authentic Islamic literature was preserved in the Arabic language and the meticulous knowledge of Arabic language was indispensable to understand and follow them correctly.

Dr. Bashir in his lecture apprised the participants about the contribution the IIUI has made in imparting education of Arabic Language and Islamic Studies in Pakistan. He highlighted that the International Islamic University in Islamabad which was founded back in 1980 with just three departments had come a long way and today had the most comprehensive faculties with more than forty departments in the scientific, technological, social, human, and languages fields with the number of students exceeding twenty five thousand annually. He informed that the teaching of Sharia Sciences and other Islamic sciences and studies were thoroughly taught in the Arabic language and it was also compulsory subject for all the students at all the existing faculties and departments of the University.

Dr. Mohammad Bashir elaborated that the university also organizes three levels for Arabic Language courses, namely degree level, diploma level, and higher diploma level. While highlighting some statistics, he said that in most cases those who enrolled for the courses were doctors, engineers and employees from government ministries, private companies, entrepreneurs, businessmen, professionals, traders and university students. The speakers realized that Arabic language which was spoken in over 22 countries with population of over 436.4 million offered some great opportunities to the Arabic Literature graduates in pursuing their careers in international relations, foreign service, international organizations, multinational companies, business & trade and service sector. They also expressed unanimity of views that demand for people fluent in Arabic was reasonably good and it could steadily rise locally and internationally. There were many employment opportunities for the Arabic speakers in the fields including e-commerce, information technology, Foreign Service, aviation and tourism, banking and finance, education and journalism and marketing and consultancy.

The speakers during discussion session also agreed that IIUI and UNPAD should establish dynamic and innovative academic cooperation and work together to develop Arabic Language curricula, teachers training programs and ensure quality education with additional skills to build students capacity to adopt to the demands of the local and international job market and successfully compete in the challenging environments. They also stressed on catering the needs of the professionals, entrepreneurs and businessmen for their Arabic language skills. The speakers opined that the COVID 19 pandemic had created even greater challenges for the students or graduates of the Arabic Literature especially in the context of the rising tough competition and the declining economic activity. They stressed on the urgent need of developing strategies to overcome the emerging challenge. Nevertheless, they also cited the pandemic as blessing in disguise as it was not only a crisis but an opportunity as well to bring a paradigm shift or a new approach towards future of learning Arabic Literature. The graduates of Arabic literature must be able to compete and prosper economically in diverse fields, they emphasized.

# South Africa virus cases rise over 300,000

JOHANNESBURG: South Africa's coronavirus cases inched over 300,000, the health ministry said, as the continent's worst-affected country hurtles towards an expected peak of infections. "We have exceeded the 300,000 mark to reach a cumulative total of 311,049 confirmed COVID-19 cases in South Africa," Health Minister Zweli Mkhize said in a statement.

An additional 107 fatalities were also reported on Wednesday, bringing the total number of deaths up to 4,453. Over 35 percent of cases were recorded in Gauteng province - South Africa's financial hub and epicentre of the outbreak, which also accounts for the highest number of deaths. President Cyril Ramaphosa last week warned that the "coronavirus storm" South Africa faced was "far fiercer and more destructive than any we have known before". The country is the hardest-hit in Africa, followed by Egypt with just under 85,000 confirmed cases and 4,067 deaths to date. South Africa's mortality rate has remained low, however, at just under 1.5 percent on Wednesday. More than half of the country's COVID-19 patients have recovered from the virus.

# PCB announces Pepsi as Pakistan team partner

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board and Pepsi on Thursday announced a one-year extension as principal partner of the Pakistan men's national cricket team for all three formats. The partnership will run initially until June 30, 2021, during which period Pakistan will take on England in the upcoming Test and T20I series from August 5 and are then scheduled to feature in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup, home series against Zimbabwe and South Africa, and away series against South Africa, New Zealand and Zimbabwe. Pepsi and PCB have enjoyed a fruitful partnership for over two decades. Easy Paisa, Pakistan's first mobile financial services platform, will be the associate partner of the Pakistan men's national cricket team for the upcoming tour of England. Director - Marketing & Franchise, PepsiCo Pakistan, Saad Munawar Khan here: "We are proud to continue our much cherished journey with Pakistan cricket as the principal partner of the Pakistan men's national cricket team."

"Pepsi, Pakistan cricket and our passionate supporters are all part of one family and we are very excited to see our champion cricketers taking the field and making us proud with stellar performances." PCB Director - Commercial, Babar Hamid: "Despite working with a backdrop of a challenging economic climate, I am delighted that we have reached an acceptable agreement with Pepsi to continue as a principal partner for, at least, the next 12 months."

"Pepsi has been our valued partner since the 1990s, during which period we have shared great on-field memories and we look forward to that continuing over the next 12-months. "This extension of the partnership not only reflects our relationship and understanding with Pepsi, but also indicates the value that they place on the profile and visibility that sponsoring the Pakistan men's national cricket team brings." - DNA

# Spinner Kashif tests positive for coronavirus

## WEBDESK

LONDON: Pakistan left-arm spinner Kashif Bhatti, who is currently in England for the upcoming Test series, tested positive for coronavirus on Thursday and is currently under self-isolation. The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has sought an update from the England Cricket Board (ECB) in this regard and has said that Bhatti's case now falls under the jurisdiction of the English cricket board. Bhatti departed for the series after two negative COVID-19 tests, and as

per the Pakistan Cricket Board, tested negative again when he underwent another coronavirus test for the airline. "Arrangements for a bio-secure environment are the responsibility of the ECB," the Pakistan Cricket Board said. Meanwhile, the Pakistan Cricket Board also notified that Harris Rauf, who previously tested positive for coronavirus, is now recovering and his recent COVID-19 test also came back negative. The Pakistan Cricket Board said that if he tests negative for the virus again, the right-arm quickie will be eligible to join the rest of the squad in England.

# EU chief calls for agreement on economic relaunch

BRUSSELS: EU chief Charles Michel has called on European leaders to agree on a plan to relaunch the bloc's virus-ravaged economy, two days before a key summit in Brussels. Europe has been thrust into its biggest recession in history and European Council head Michel is seeking the green light to launch a 750-billion-euro recovery fund to help governments weather the crisis. "Now is the time. A deal is essential," he said Wednesday in a letter to the 27 leaders of the EU member states. "We will need to find workable solutions and come to an agreement, for the greater benefit of our citizens."

Finding agreement will require hard work and political will on the part of all," he added. This will be the first in-person summit since the pandemic engulfed Europe in March and leaders will also seek approval of the bloc's long-term budget. Last week Michel unveiled his latest proposal for the 750-billion-euro fund in the hope of winning over the more frugal member states.

The fund would include 500 billion euros of direct grants to the hardest-hit countries, financed by joint borrowing backed by all EU members. But countries including the Netherlands, Austria, Denmark and Sweden are resisting the plan, saying the money should be advanced as loans with tough conditions attached, such as deep economic reforms to cut debt. - APP

# Victoria registers worst day during pandemic

## DNA

VICTORIA: The Australian state of Victoria has suffered its worst day since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, with 317 new cases reported within 24 hours, said state officials on Thursday.

Two men in their 80s died due to Covid-19 in the past day, said Premier Daniel Andrews. That brings Victoria's death toll to 29, and the national toll to 111. Of the 317 new cases, only 28 were linked to known outbreaks. The remaining 289 cases are still under investigation. The number of coronavirus-related patients in Victoria hospitals has risen to 109, with 29 in ICU, Andrews said. Meanwhile, the neighboring state of New South Wales recorded 10 new Covid-19 cases, its Health Department announced Thursday. The NSW outbreak has been linked to the Victoria outbreak, with a man having traveled from Melbourne to Sydney in June, then meeting with friends at a pub in July.

# Jofra Archer excluded from 2nd Test

## DNA

OLD TRAFFORD: England fast bowler Jofra Archer has been excluded from the second Test against West Indies after breaching the bio-secure protocols. All of England's matches this summer are being played behind closed doors and in a bio-secure environment.

Archer was confirmed in England's squad as late as Wednesday afternoon and it has not been confirmed what he has done to breach the protocols. The 25-year-old has not been replaced in the 13-man squad. Archer said: "I am extremely sorry for what I have done. "I have put not only myself but the whole team and management in danger. I fully accept the consequences of my actions and I want to apologise to everyone in the bio-secure bubble. "It deeply pains me to be missing the Test match, especially with the series poised. I feel like I have let both teams down, and again I am sorry." West Indies are 1-0 up in the three-Test series. Archer will now have to isolate for five days, during which time he will take two coronavirus tests, both of which must return negative results before he can return to the England squad.

## Briefs

## Inefficient power sector can bankrupt Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the business community and former President ICCI Shahid Rasheed Butt on Thursday said fundamental changes are needed in the power sector otherwise, it will bankrupt the country. State-run power companies have become a liability while the experience of privatization has left much to be desired therefore establishment of microgrid stations on cooperative basis should be considered, he said. Shahid Rasheed Butt said that power production is beating demand, therefore, the under construction projects which will generate very costly electricity should be put on hold or slowed down. He said that on one hand the government is involved in negotiations with IPPs to reduce the cost of electricity, current production is well above demand while new projects are being completed rapidly, which is amazing. Discos are rife with corruption, inefficiency, political interference and misdirected preferences but the government is neglecting reforms and they are allowed to have monopoly in the power market which is against the rights of consumers, he added.

## Xinjiang speeds up 5G rollout, smart hospital project

DNA

XINJIANG: China Mobile, the country's largest telecom operator, and the First Affiliated Hospital of Xinjiang Medical University, conducted a joint 5G smart hospital trial on Wednesday to speed up smart hospital construction, as Urumqi, capital of Northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, is to be fully covered with 5G networks at the year end. 5G coverage will provide a foundation for new infrastructure construction and 5G technologies have been applied in smart hospitals, telemedicine, VR, mining with unmanned aerial vehicles and other fields, according to Xinjiang Communications Administration in June. To boost 5G construction, Xinjiang plans to invest over 2 billion yuan (\$282 million) to erect 4,900 5G base stations this year. As of June 30, Urumqi had built 2,379 5G base stations. Meanwhile, the number of 5G users in Urumqi has reached 234,300. Industry and tourism will take the lead in the construction and application of the 5G networks, said the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region government in April. 5G application scenarios will be expanded throughout Xinjiang to cultivate the digital economy.

## Germany readies tougher lockdowns

BERLIN: Germany plans to allow for tougher lockdown measures to contain local outbreaks and ward off the threat of a second coronavirus wave, according to a draft agreement between the federal and regional governments. The new rules would include a ban on travel "in and out of the affected areas" to limit the spread of the virus, the document seen by AFP said. The plan is set to be finalised later on Thursday and comes as countries across the world are reimposing curbs on public life in response to a surge in new infections. Germany, which has been less affected by the pandemic than many of its neighbours, aims to respond to new clusters with hyper-local lockdowns and rapid contact tracing and testing, rather than blanket lockdowns of whole towns or districts. The need for clear rules was highlighted last month when a COVID-19 outbreak at a slaughterhouse in the western state of North Rhine-Westphalia led to Germany's first renewed lockdowns, covering two neighbouring districts. Chancellor Angela Merkel on Tuesday voiced support for travel bans in and out of coronavirus hotspots imposed by local authorities. — APP

## United States mulls more sanctions over Hong Kong

"In no way has he taken anything off the table with respect to further sanctions of party officials for actions in Hong Kong or on other issues. Any suggestion otherwise by anonymous sources is flat out wrong," John Ulyot said

## NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has not ruled out further sanctions against top Chinese officials, including Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie

Lam, in response to the handling of the political unrest in the semi-autonomous territory, a White House National Security Council spokesman said. "In no way has he taken anything off the table with respect to further sanctions

of party officials for actions in Hong Kong or on other issues. Any suggestion otherwise by anonymous sources is flat out wrong," National Security Council spokesman John Ulyot said. The Hong Kong Autonomy Act, which Trump signed

on Tuesday, allows him to impose sanctions and visa restrictions on Chinese officials and financial institutions involved in the imposition of China's new national security law in Hong Kong. He announced the end of preferential treatment of

Hong Kong. Bloomberg reported Trump had ruled out additional sanctions on top Chinese officials to avoid escalating tensions, but a person familiar with the matter told Reuters news agency that White House discussions on potential targets

for sanctions were continuing and no final decisions have been made. Among names being suggested as a possible target for sanctions is Lam, who backed the implementation of the security law, the source said.

## Spain mourns its corona victims

MADRID: Spain has lost more than 28,400 people to the pandemic so far. King Felipe on Thursday gathered with EU heads, Spanish politicians and the families of victims to honour all those who have died, as well as those who continue to work against the virus. About 400 participants came to the Royal Palace in Madrid and sat in socially distanced chairs in concentric circles around a flame. People wore black face masks and placed flowers around the fire. Hernando Maria Calleja, brother of the journalist Jose Maria Calleja who died of Covid-19, told the audience that the virus was a "cruel, destructive, cold killer".



MADRID: Members of Parliament and civil society gather to pay homage to those who lost lives fighting COVID 19. — DNA

## New French PM vows to battle 'radical Islamism'

DNA

PARIS: France's newly-appointed Prime Minister, Jean Castex, has vowed to be "intransigent" in defending France's official secularism, promising to fight "radical Islamism in all its forms" as "an absolute priority". Unveiling new government policy in Paris on Wednesday, Castex told the National Assembly that the French republic was being "shaken to its foundations" by "the coalition of its enemies - terrorists, conspiracy theorists, separatists and communitarians". Castex, a centre-right pro-



vincial mayor who graduated from the elite National School of Administration, said a new law to combat "separatism" would be introduced after the summer break. It would aim to "avoid certain groups becoming closed

in around ethnic or religious identities," he said. French President Emmanuel Macron also recently warned against anti-racist movements being taken over by "separatists", after demonstrations against al-

leged police violence and racism in Paris - although the president did not say what he meant by the term. Some members of France's Muslim minority feel that the country's official secularism is mainly brandished against them, although Macron himself has condemned divisive approaches to it. Castex also set out a hard line on violence at demonstrations and petty crime, saying police would be given the resources they needed. Local judges would be appointed to ensure "day-to-day anti-social behaviour" was punished swiftly, he said.

## UK payrolls shrink by 649,000 jobs

WEB DESK

LONDON: The number of workers on UK payrolls has fallen by 649,000 between March and June, official figures indicate. The number of people claiming work-related benefits - including the unemployed - was 2.6 million. However, the total was not as big as many feared, because large numbers of firms have put employees on the government-backed furlough scheme. Economists say the full effect on employment will not be felt until the scheme ends in October. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) said that since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, total weekly hours worked in the UK had fallen by a record 175.3 million, or 16.7%, to 877.1 million hours. "This was the largest annual decrease since estimates began in 1971, with total hours dropping to its lowest level since May to July 1997," the ONS added. "Vacancies in the UK in April to June 2020 are at the lowest level since the survey began in April to June 2001, at an estimated 333,000; this is 23% lower than the previous record low in April to June 2009." The BCC called for a cut in employers' National Insurance contributions to protect businesses and jobs.

## India cases near 1m after new daily record

WEB DESK

NEW DELHI: India's coronavirus cases have surged another 32,695, taking the nation closer to one million and forcing a new lockdown in the popular western beach state of Goa two weeks after it was reopened to tourists. Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro is again touting the supposed benefits of malaria drug hydroxychloroquine as a treatment for COVID-19, as he tests positive for the virus again. More than 13.5 million people around the world have been diagnosed with COVID-19, while more than 7.5 million have recovered and more than

582,000 have died, according to data from Johns Hopkins University. Uzbekistan's president has criticised his health minister and the mayor of Tashkent over their handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, warning that the situation in the capital was "deplorable" and causing popular discontent. President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's comments were the first official acknowledgement that Central Asia's most populous nation is having problems coping with the new coronavirus. The former Soviet republic of 34 million imposed a second nationwide lockdown this month and has confirmed 14,581 COVID-19 cases, with 71 deaths.

## Trump replaces campaign manager

DNA

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has axed his longtime campaign manager amid sinking poll numbers that showed him trailing further behind Democratic candidate Joe Biden with less than four months to go before the November 3 election. In a Facebook post on Wednesday, Trump said campaign manager Brad Parscale would be replaced by Bill Stepien, who has been the deputy campaign manager. Parscale will shift to a role focused on digital and data strategy, the president said. A leadership shake-up had long been rumoured. Parscale was blamed internally for a botched Tulsa, Oklahoma, rally last month that drew a much smaller crowd



than he predicted. A subsequent coronavirus outbreak forced Parscale and other campaign officials who attended to self-quarantine for two weeks. Stepien, a longtime Republican strategist, was political director at the White House before moving to the campaign. In his statement, Trump credited both Parscale and Stepien for their involvement in his 2016 victory in the US presidential election and predicted that he would glide to a second term in office.

## Major Twitter accounts hacked

WEB DESK

SAN FRANCISCO: Twitter (TWTR) accounts belonging to Joe Biden, Bill Gates, Elon Musk and Apple, among other prominent handles, were compromised on Wednesday in what Twitter said it believes to be an attack on some of its employees with access to the company's internal tools. "We detected what we believe to be a coordinated social engineering attack by people

who successfully targeted some of our employees with access to internal systems and tools," Twitter's support team said late Wednesday. The attackers posted tweets that appeared to promote a cryptocurrency scam. The accounts, along with those of former President Barack Obama, Kanye West, Kim Kardashian West, Warren Buffett, Jeff Bezos and Mike Bloomberg, posted similar tweets soliciting donations via Bitcoin to their verified profiles on Wednesday.

## Brazilian president announces he still has COVID-19

RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro announced Thursday that he still had the coronavirus after undergoing one test, saying that he is 'fine' and has been taking the anti-malarial drug hydroxychloroquine. "I'm fine, thank God. Yesterday morning, I took the test, and in the evening the result was that I am still positive for the coronavirus," the far-right leader said in a Facebook Live broadcast from the gardens of his official residence in Brasilia.

Bolsonaro said he is not experiencing symptoms and that his use of the anti-malarial drug hydroxychloroquine, which he said he has been taking since he was diagnosed last week, is working. "I am not recommending anything. I recommend that you talk to your doctor. In my case, a military doctor recommended hydroxychloroquine, and it worked," he said. The presidential press office said in a brief statement that Bolsonaro, who at 65 is in a high-risk group, will remain

in quarantine at the official Alvorada Palace residence, where he will continue to work by video conference. The far-right president, who has caused huge controversy in Brazil for repeatedly flouting lockdown measures in place to curb the spread of the virus, first tested positive a week ago. He admitted on Monday by telephone interview with CNN that he "can't stand this routine of staying at home" and said he was waiting "anxiously" to be given the all-clear to

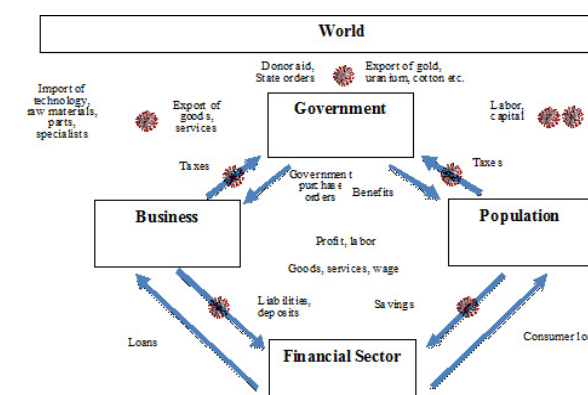
leave the house. He told the television channel he hasn't had any symptoms such as a fever or respiratory difficulties since July 6. And he added that he continues to take the anti-malarial medication hydroxychloroquine. The drug has been pushed as a treatment for COVID-19 in many countries - but its effectiveness has not been formally proven and the issue is deeply dividing the global scientific community. He is due to take a new test "in the coming days." — DNA

## Uzbekistan: Post-COVID Economic Recovery Strategy

BAKHTISHOD KHAMIDOV &amp; MALIKA JUMANIYOZOVA

GIVEN the high likelihood of the second wave of COVID-19 outbreak, countries still face a choice between the people and the economy. Today the task of reducing the spread rate of infections directly contradicts the task of limiting the depth of the economic recession accompanied. In other words, a slowdown in the process of reaching the peak of infection can occur only when the economy will not operate at full capacity. In this case, the removal of workers from their jobs, social distancing of consumers reduces economic activity, which affects economic growth negatively, and through the channel of economic expectations - to the levels of investment and consumption. Estimations show that without government intervention (containment policy), with an initial mortality rate of 2% and reproduction rate of 5% in an overloaded health systems 1% of the world's population can die (76 million people). However, if the quarantine and self-isolation policies are activated for a short period of time (a month

or two) and 50% or more people may not be able to work, GDP may decrease by 6.5-10% of economic downturn, through their anchors of economic intervention. Impact of pandemic on the macroeconomic balances of Uzbekistan. The following were observed based on preliminary results of the first quarter of 2020, compared with the previous year: -a decline in the imports of consumer goods and medicines (according to the Chinese statistics, in the first quarter of 2020, China's exports to Uzbekistan decreased by 14.3%); -a decrease in migrant remittances (according to World Bank forecasts remittances will decrease by 20%, the number of citizens who could not go to work abroad amounted to 143 thousand people); -slowdown in the import of technologies, semi-finished products and raw materials (due to the temporary delays in international transportation); -a decrease in the export of goods and services (as a result of a decrease in external demand and prices for basic commodities, according to Chinese analysis Uzbekistan's exports to China in the first quarter of 2020, decreased by 31.2%); -decrease of budget revenues (as



a result of reduced economic activity); -increase in unemployment (according to opinion polls 21% of people temporarily lost their jobs); -decrease in demand for durable goods and services (as shown by a survey by the Center for economic research and reforms, 68% of the population believes that now it is not the time to buy durable goods, against 13%); -decrease in saving and investment; -an increase in the share of non-performing debts and bank liquidity; -increase in social responsibility of the government and pressure on the budget, government debt (the government intends to attract loans of international financial in-

stitutions which amounts to \$3.1 billion); Given the interrelations and interdependence among sectors and agents of the economy, without an economic intervention policy, an economic recession can turn into a financial crisis (due to the problems in liquidity in the banking system), a debt crisis (due to an increase in additional debts) or a foreign currency crisis (due to the decrease in foreign trade). How does Covid-19 affect main macroeconomic balances? Government policy objectives and tools The primary task of the government is to minimize the level of economic downturn and neutralize its negative consequences.

An analysis of world experience shows that macroeconomic tasks of many countries are aimed at stimulating, first of all, domestic demand, in particular: - providing households with cash and partial compensation for mortgage/rent payments; - providing temporarily dismissed or remotely working workers with salary for the period of quarantine; - ensuring that firms have sufficient cash to pay employees, suppliers, to fulfill obligations to creditors and tenants, especially small and young enterprises, in order to avoid bankruptcies. - support banks to avoid the transformation of the health crisis into a financial crisis. Wherein, alternative stimulation tools can be: 1. Increased government spending on the public health sector (fiscal policy). 2. Tax exemption, tax reduction, tax holidays and other types of benefits (tax policy). 3. Announcement of tax credits and providing the population with temporary universal income and companies with cash grants (social policy). 4. Reducing interest rates, launching quantitative easing poli-

cy and lending schemes (monetary policy) 5. Support new sectors of the economy that are not affected by the virus spread (industrial policy). Most countries take measures in accordance with the point 3. Recovery policy priorities In particular, under the Presidential Decrees, measures were taken to support the business, which provided funds in the amount of 3.7 trillion sums. Within the framework of the nationwide "Charity and Support" (Saxovat va Ko'mak) movement, which is designed to efficiently dispose sponsorship and charitable funds of enterprises, 101 thousand enterprises provided social assistance to a total of more than 361 thousand families. VI. Non-economic important tasks of the state that are crucial for economic recovery include restoring public order and market infrastructure, ensuring the availability of capital, labor, natural resources, uninterrupted provision of public services and spiritual/ethical values of the society. The writers belong to Center for Economic Research and Reforms under the Administration of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

**Briefs**

**Russia to hold phase 3 vaccine trial**

MOSCOW: The second phase of a COVID-19 vaccine trials in Russia is expected to be finished by Aug. 3, head of the Russian Fund of Direct Investments Kirill Dmitriev said on Thursday. Right after the third phase starts, it will take place "not only in Russia but also in the Middle East and some other countries," Dmitriev said. Russia has been developing 26 vaccines, and one of them, produced by the Gamaleya National Research Centre for Epidemiology and Microbiology, has successfully undergone the first phase of trials. Another vaccine from competing research establishment, the State Scientific Centre "Vector", is being examined by experts to obtain permission for clinical trials. Asked about competition in producing vaccine against COVID-19, head of the Gamaleya Centre Alexander Ginzburg said: "The globe needs unprecedented amounts of vaccine", meaning all the producers will have enough clients. Only people who survived the severe form of coronavirus do not need inoculation against the novel virus as they develop strong immune response, he added. — APP

**China to reopen cinemas**

BEIJING: Most Chinese cinemas will be allowed to reopen next week with social distancing rules following months of coronavirus closures, authorities have said, as domestic infections remained at zero for 10 straight days. Movie theatres in "low-risk" areas of the country can resume operations on July 20, but must screen patrons for fevers and enforce mask-wearing, the China Film Administration said. Cinemas are also required to sell tickets for no more than 30 percent of the available seats at each screening, and must keep groups of moviegoers at least one metre (about three feet) apart, the administration said.

**Bank of America profits fall**

NEW YORK: Bank of America reported a big drop in second-quarter profits Thursday due to large provisions set aside for potential loan defaults amid the downturn in the wake of the coronavirus. Results for BoFA, the second biggest US bank by assets after JPMorgan Chase, followed a similar template as that of rivals from earlier in the week in which the effects of a likely hit from loan non-payments from households and businesses were offset somewhat by strong performance in financial trading. Net income fell 54 percent to \$3.3 billion as revenues dipped 3.3 percent to \$22.3 billion. Profits were hit by \$5.1 billion in credit losses, including \$4.0 billion added to reserves for bad loans. Chief Executive Brian Moynihan described the stretch just after much of the US economy shut down due to the coronavirus as "the most tumultuous period since the Great Depression," according to a statement.

**Iraq urged to keep away from regional tensions**

BAGHDAD: French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian urged Baghdad on Thursday to "dissociate" itself from boiling regional tensions, hinting at dissatisfaction with unilateral Iranian and American strikes on Iraqi territory. Iraq has been caught for years in the power struggle between its two main allies Washington and Tehran, but has had to walk an increasingly fine line since 2018, when the US began a "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran. — APP

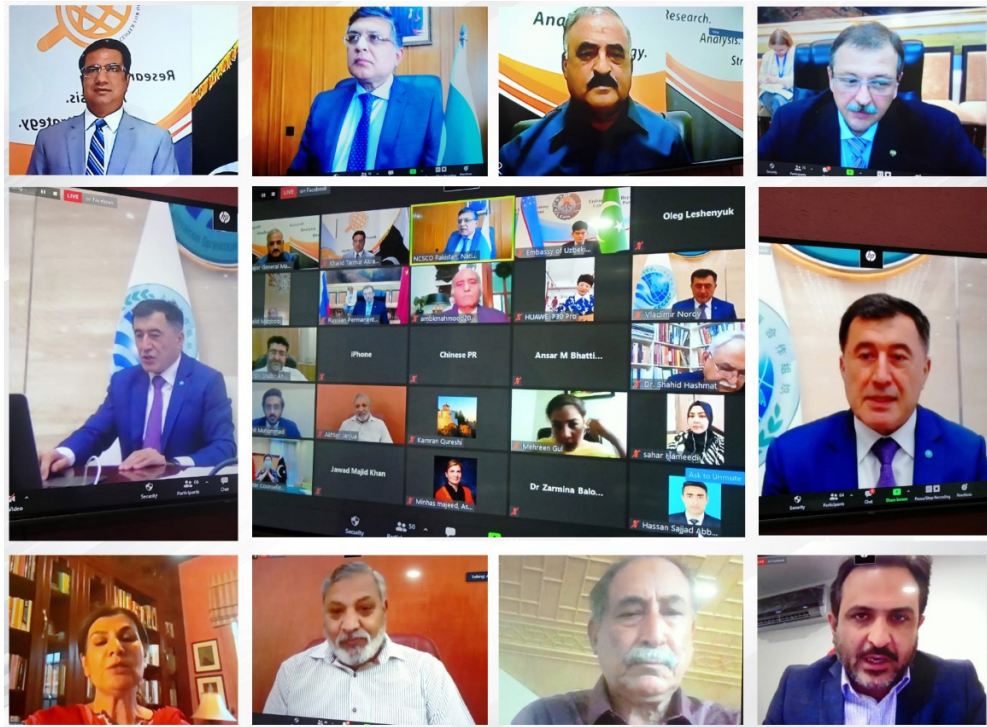
**SCO effective platform for national, regional integration: Vladimir Norov**

Secy General Says several of my speeches and interviews have been published in leading Pakistani newspapers; thanks CGSSS for hosting webinar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Secretariat, Beijing, China and Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad jointly organized a Webinar "SCO: A Gateway to Regional Cooperation & Integrated Development". Vladimir Norov, Secretary-General SCO was the Chief Guest at the occasion and it was his first ever interaction in Pakistan at a Webinar. Brigadier Akhtar Nawaz Janjua (Retd), Senior Member Advisory Board CGSS commenced the session and stated that it is the first time that His Excellency Vladimir Norov is interacting with people of Pakistan and it is an absolute honor for CGSS that His Excellency has accepted our invitation and chose this platform to express his views and thoughts. Vladimir Norov, Secretary-General, Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Secretariat, Beijing, China thanked CGSS and stated that CGSS is working in close collaboration with the SCO member countries for strengthening diplomatic relations and takes an active part in the activities of the SCO Forum. He added that this year marks the 15th anniversary of the Forum's establishment. During this period this mechanism has proved to be an important platform for dialogue between research and analytical institutions of the SCO Member States. We appreciate the close contacts of the SCO Secretariat with representatives of Pakistani think tanks and mass media. Over the past two months, several of my speeches and interviews have been published in leading Pakistani newspapers. It is gratifying that these publications arouse the Pakistani public's interest in the SCO. He stated that the current profile of the Organization SCO is one of the key mechanisms of security and stability in the

Eurasian region. Moreover, today the SCO has become, without exaggeration, an integral element not only of regional but also of international policy and security. The potential of the SCO has increased and the desire of many other countries to become members of the Organization is an indication of its growing credibility in the world. He further highlighted that currently, SCO member states account for about 20% of the global GDP and more than 40% of the world's population, thus representing the most powerful and densely populated transcontinental Organization. The leaders of SCO States have repeatedly stressed that no matter how the international situation changes, Member States will firmly follow the "Shanghai spirit", stand firm in upholding the concept of equal, open and mutually beneficial cooperation, and strive to maintain regional peace, stability, and prosperity. In this regard, he stated that "I am very much impressed by the words voiced by Prime Minister Imran Khan at the Bishkek SCO Summit last year, that, the SCO is a complete expression of our historical roots". He emphasized that Pakistan actively participates in all SCO mechanisms and is contributing to the development of the Organization. He added that SCO's commitment to political and diplomatic



settlement of conflicts is based on strict compliance with universally accepted norms and principles of international law. First of all, practical work is carried out based on the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure, which demonstrates significant results in countering terrorism, separatism, and extremism. Last year alone, the competent authorities of the SCO Member States have un-

covered 288 crimes of terrorism. Pakistan having relevant counter-narcotic experience is now offering joint training sessions to SCO law enforcement agencies at the Academy of Anti-Narcotics Forces in Islamabad. It is important to note that the SCO serves as an effective platform for the interconnectivity of national and regional integration initiatives, including the Eurasian Economic Union, "One Belt, One Road" initiative, and the economic development strategies of member states. Thus, the SCO can play an important role in the realization of the idea of forming the Greater Eurasian Partnership, a broad integration structure based on a network of regional associations and transcontinental projects. He further mentioned that we attach importance to deepening ties in the sphere of tourism. Through the efforts of the Secretariat the project "Eight Wonders of SCO", aimed at unlocking the cultural and tourist potential of the SCO countries

is being implemented. Among them is the Mughal Legacy in the city of Lahore and we are confident that a presentation will also be held in Pakistan. Summing up his speech, he stressed that SCO's international standing has grown considerably in recent years, and the Organization has secured its status as the leading multilateral structure in the region in the fight against terrorism, extremism, and drug trafficking. In his remarks, Additional Foreign Secretary and National Coordinator for SCO Mr. Zahoor Ahmed highlighted the importance attached to SCO by Pakistan. He said that SCO's objectives of regional cooperation and development were in complete harmony with Government of Pakistan's foreign policy objectives. Pakistan considered SCO as a vital platform to forge closer ties with regional partners and enhance mutual understanding. Of SCO provides various mechanisms and processes crucial for promoting multi-faceted linkages, connectivity and cooperation

among the SCO member states. He also mentioned SCO's significance as an important platform for realizing benefits of the emerging confluence of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Eurasian Economic Union. Highlighting Pakistan's role in SCO, Mr. Zahoor Ahmad specifically mentioned the significance of CPEC in the context of enhancing connectivity in the region and beyond. He also said that in order to share Pakistan's rich experience in poverty alleviation initiatives, Pakistan had recently proposed the establishment of an SCO Joint Working Group and a Center of Excellence to discuss poverty alleviation in the SCO region. He lauded the efforts of SCO member states and the Secretariat in coordinating response to COVID-19 Pandemic. Mr. Zahoor Ahmad reiterated Pakistan's active participation in all SCO mechanisms. Major General Hafiz Masroor Ahmed (Retd), Vice President, Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad presented a detailed overview of the contributions by CGSS in regard to SCO. He stated that CGSS represents Pakistan at the SCO Think Tank platform. CGSS has organized various Seminars, Conferences related to SCO and is promoting SCO through its research and analysis. He stated that as the member of SCO, Pakistan is willing to, together with all parties, promote the building of community of shared future, a common home of security, stability, development and prosperity. Pakistan believes on consolidating solidarity and mutual trust, strengthening security cooperation, development strategies, deepening people-to-people and cultural exchanges and other aspects with the SCO member and observer states. The session was attended by 200 participants and was also covered live on various social media platforms. The Webinar was moderated by Lt Col Khalid Taimur Akram (Retd), Executive Director, CGSS.

**Pak becomes permanent member of SCO Youth Council**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has become a permanent member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Youth Council, Special Assistant on Youth Affairs Usman Dar revealed on Thursday. In a video message, Dar said that the result had been achieved due to the efforts of Prime Minister Imran Khan and his initiatives for the youth, such as the Youth Council, Kamyab Jawan and Hunarmand Pakistan programmes. "Pakistani youth will now be able to represent their country at SCO Youth Council meetings and its exchange programmes," Dar said, adding that the representatives will also take part in skill development programmes of the Council. The Youth Council of SCO was set up after a proposal was made by Russian President Vladimir Putin at the SCO summit in June 2006. The concept of the Council was represented at a meeting of the SCO heads of state in Beijing in May 2007. — DNA

**Saindak project smeltery resumes production of copper**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: After lockdown for about 10 months, smeltery of Saindak Project, Metallurgical Corporation of China Ltd. (MCC), has resumed its work and produced the first batch of crude copper this week, Gwadar Pro reported on Thursday. According to manager of Saindak Project, "the smeltery is

a core part of whole project. The first batch of crude copper produced means that Saindak Project resumes complete flow scheme of beneficiation, mining, and smelting while preventing and controlling epidemic." Impacted by winter vacation and COVID-19, Pakistani staff couldn't get full salary due to the smeltery locked since November 2019. "The livelihood of Pakistani personnel is facing crisis,

and such a situation will threaten the regional security, prosperity and stability," the manager said. As per the details, on June 6th, 68 Chinese staff arrived Saindak Balochistan and started a 14-days isolated for observation. Meanwhile, Pakistani personnel were gathered in another isolated site nearby Saindak project to prepare for resuming smelting. During observational peri-

od, both Pakistani and Chinese staff strictly complied with each term of stipulation and measure so that their health could be protected from COVID-19. On June 22th, the personnel finished isolation and taken nucleic acid testing on June 28th. Though the staff were released from isolation, the smeltery couldn't resume immediately because there were several issues left to cope with. Due to the long-term lockdown, apparatus and machines in Saindak smeltery needs a complete overhaul. Hence, technical staff discussed and drew up a plan for resuming production in detail, including controlling pandemic, overhauling devices, personnel training, and igniting furnace. On July 9th, the smeltery of MCC Saindak Project was reignited after it had been shut down for nearly 10 months. At 11:39 PM on July 13, the smeltery produced its first batch of crude copper this year, the report added.



**Pakistan-US to prevent child abduction cases**

WASHINGTON: Pakistan and the US will now be able to resolve cases of parental child abduction between the two countries as Washington has accepted Islamabad's accession to an international treaty on child abduction. The US State Department announced that on July 1, 2020, the United States accepted Pakistan's accession to the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, an international treaty providing a framework for the return of a child abducted by a parent living in another country, a press release said Thursday. The convention will enter into force between both countries on October 1, 2020, and will put in place an internationally recognized legal framework to resolve cases of parental child abduction between the two countries. "As partners, we will enhance our shared commitment to protecting children and open a new chapter in the vibrant U.S.-Pakistan relationship," read a statement issued by the department. "Preventing and resolving cases of international parental child abduction is one of the Department's highest priorities." "The Convention is a vital tool to deter international abduction and secure the return of abducted children. It provides a mechanism under civil law in either country for parents seeking the return of children who have been wrongfully removed from or retained outside of their country of habitual residence in violation of custodial rights. Parents seeking access to children in treaty partner countries may also invoke the Convention," the US State Department said. The Convention addresses where child custody issues should be decided, it said. "We look forward to welcoming Pakistan as a new partner in this global effort to address international parental child abduction," it added. — DNA

**NDMA dispatches PPEs to Balochistan**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has dispatched 11th consignment of the PPEs for the doctors and the paramedical staff, who are fighting coronavirus pandemic. As per details, 64,000 surgical and N95 masks have been dispatched to Balochistan, while 29,395 protective suits and 37,000 gowns have also been sent. Moreover, 44,000 hand gloves and 6,398 caps along with 458 shoe-covers and 760 plastic shoes were also dispatched by the NDMA in a move to enhance capacity of the frontline workers in a fight against coronavirus. Earlier this week, Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Lieutenant General Muhammad Afzal had said that the facilities are being increased at the hospitals to deal with coronavirus pandemic.

**Sherry Rehman demands resignation of CAA officials**

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Addressing the media after attending the Aviation Committee, Parliamentary Leader of the PPP in the Senate, Senator Sherry Rehman said, "After 2 hours of solid questioning, the civil aviation authority (CAA) and minister Aviation statements are not matching. It is alarming that no one is taking responsibility for anything while PIA remains grounded. No one could tell how many licences were issued and from where. The Aviation Minister was adamant that he did the right thing. While we have been telling them that this issue needs to be resolved tactfully. Why was this done publicly?" Commenting on the fake

degree scandal, the Senator stated that, "There is no certainty if the licenses are fake or genuine as they have been making contradictory statements since day one. Today, we do not even know who is actually investigating this issue. It is shocking that no one is ready to take responsibility. For the last 15 months, we were requesting the federal government to scrutinize all of this but the federal government conveniently disregarded our concerns.

"The government is giving the wrong impression that the Minister has satisfied the committee. When in fact the entire Civil Aviation division and the Aviation Minister were not able to satisfy anyone nor could they match their statements," she added. She said, "After this meeting I don't see any hope from them. I don't think they can stabilize PIA. Who is responsible for our pilots and PIA's downgrading? Do they have any action plan? We have not been given any clarification. Even we knew there is an issue which needs to be resolved but what did they do instead? Nothing." "Instead of investigating the issue first, the Minister first gave a statement and then said that we will investigate. This has led to sheer embarrassment for the country.



**JULY 2020**

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