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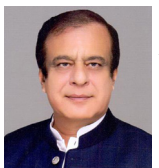
**Canadian envoy
lauds Pakistan
anti-polio efforts**
**Ambassador of
Hungary completes
his tenure in Pak**

**Swedish envoy
leaving Pakistan
after her term**


Briefs

Shibli Faraz lauds PM's handling of corona

FIAZ CH.

ISLAM-
ABAD:
Minister
for Infor-
mation and
Broadcast-
ing Senator

Shibli Faraz said on Sunday that resolute and steadfast handling of the coronavirus despite meager resources and outdated health infrastructure by Prime Minister Imran Khan has steered the country by balancing lives and livelihoods in an amazing display of competence and leadership. In a tweet, he said that National Control and Operation Centre and Ehsaas programme were the two main tools of success.

19 more cases in Balochistan

QUETTA: Nineteen more COVID-19 cases were reported in Balochistan on Saturday.

According to media coordinator on coronavirus Dr Muhammad Wasim Baig, the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases has surged to 11,424 in the province. He said 123,287 people have been screened and 8,399 have been recovered while 131 people have been died so far due to the deadly virus in Balochistan. – APP

Four men arrested for destroying Buddha statue

STAFF REPORT

MARDAN: Four men have been arrested in Mardan for destroying a 1,700-year-old Buddha statue. A video of the men, construction workers, destroying the statue with hammers went viral on social media, prompting the KP police to spring into action. The men found the statue while digging in Takhtbhai. The contractor, Qamar Zaman, Amjad, Aleem and Suleman have been arrested and an FIR registered against them under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Antiquities Act, 2016. They have been booked under sections 18 (Prohibition of destruction, damage, etc to protected antiquity or important antiquity), 24 (Destruction, damage, etc), 44 (Destruction or damage and treatment or repair of registered antiquity), 57 (Report and instruction on excavation for construction works), 60 (Report, instruction and order on excavation for investigation).

PM reaffirms support to Kashmir cause

We will continue to fight for justice for Kashmiris as they struggle against the brutal and illegal actions of the Hindutva supremacist Indian govt in IOJ&K. I know that justice will prevail

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan Sunday reaffirmed Pakistan's unflinching commitment to the people of Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJ&K) and their right to self-determination. In a series of tweets, the prime minister on the occasion of the Youm-i-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan, said this right to self-determination was recognised by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and the international laws. "Today we commemorate the historic occasion of Youm-i-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan, when Kashmiris passed a resolution for accession to Pakistan. We reaffirm our commitment to the Kashmiri people & stand with

FM Qureshi says Kashmiris will win

NEHAL MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Mahkdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi Sunday reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering support to the people of Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJ&K) in their just struggle for freedom from the illegal Indian occupation.

On the Youm-e-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan, the foreign minister posted "On this day in 1947, true representatives of J&K adopted a historic resolution for accession to Pakistan. Despite decades of Indian occupation, resolve of Kashmiris & immutable bonds to (Pakistan) stand strong.

them in their struggle for self-determination," the prime minister tweeted. He further posted, "Kashmiris right of self-determination is recognised by the UNSC under international law."

The prime minister also expressed his resolve to fight for justice for the oppressed Kashmiri people, struggling against brutal and illegitimate actions of Hindutva supremacist Indian government.

Swedish ambassador leaving Pakistan

Her successor already nominated; she is expected to leave by end of this month

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The ambassador of Sweden Ingrid Johansson is leaving Pakistan after completing her tenure. She is the third ambassador leaving in the month of July. High Commissioner of Nigeria and Ambassador of Hungary are also leaving this month. Ms. Ingrid was the third consecutive female ambassador of Sweden however her successor who has already been announced happens to be a male.



According to sources in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the outgoing Swedish ambassador was not very well known in Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs as she did not

involve in active diplomacy as compared with her predecessors nor did she considered media as a tool of promoting and strengthening bilateral relations. Nevertheless, Ms. Ingrid made her mark as a cyclist and a profound lover of hiking. She remained cardinal part of Islamabad Hiking Club and climbed Margallas almost on daily basis. According to sources, her successor who happens to be a business-oriented person is likely to revive bilateral relations by giving a spur to trade and business relations.

Taliban reshuffle team

KABUL: The Taliban have reshuffled their team of negotiations ahead of their talks with the Afghan government, adding several powerful figures to their negotiating team. Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada made the appointments to strengthen his control over the team, a Taliban commander told agencies. The aides are all members of the group's leadership council, which should help the team to make quicker decisions, two other sources in the Taliban movement who confirmed the move revealed. The talks with Kabul were originally supposed to have started in March, but there have been repeated delays, with the Taliban accused of increasing violence. The four new negotiators, who were appointed last month, are Taliban chief justice Sheikh

Abdul Hakeem, Maulvi Saqib, former chief justice during the Taliban's rule in the 1990s, Mullah Shireen, a close aide and bodyguard of the late Taliban founder Mullah Omar, and Maulvi Abdul Kabir, former governor of Afghanistan's eastern Nangarhar province. The reshuffle also saw three to four earlier members of the team removed, including Mullah Amir Khan Muttaqi, a senior militant leader, the sources said. It comes after Akhundzada appointed Mullah Yaqoob, the son of Mullah Omar, as head of the group's military wing. "Yaqoob is young, energetic and experienced," the military commander said and added that Yaqoob was respected in the Taliban because of his family background and experience. – DNA



LAHORE: Members of civil society holding a rally on the Yaum-e-Ilhaq-e-Pakistan on Sunday. – APP

Canadian envoy lauds Pak anti-polio efforts

The Canadian diplomat shared a brief video clip explaining how a small effort today makes a great difference tomorrow

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Canadian High Commissioner to Pakistan Wendy Gilmour on Sunday lauded Pakistan for its efforts to eradicate polio, saying Ottawa saluted the team working to fight the virus, a day ahead of an immunisation

drive across the country. "Tomorrow, door to door vaccination will resume in 169 high risk Union Councils, saving 770,000 children from this terrible disease," Gilmour wrote on Twitter. The Canadian diplomat shared a brief video clip explaining how "a small effort today makes a great difference tomorrow".

"Let's give healthcare workers our thanks and support," she added, with the video clip urging people to immunise "children against Polio and other diseases regularly". Gilmour also tagged Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Health, Dr Zafar Mirza, the national coordinator

for polio eradication, Dr Rana Muhammad Safdar, and Aziz Memon, who heads the Rotary Club's Polio Plus programme that funds many of the polio immunisation teams. A day prior, Dr Mirza had announced on Twitter that the "polio campaigns would resume in specific localities from July 20".

'No special treatment to Jadhav'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Law and Justice has denied the allegations that secretly an ordinance with a view to give reprieve to the Indian Commander Kulbhushan Sudhir Jadhav was promulgated by the federal government, without taking the country or the Parliament into confidence with a malafide intent. According to the law ministry spokesperson all such allegations are baseless and it is clarified that the government of India had initiated proceedings against Pakistan in the International Court of Justice (ICJ), in the matter of the detention and trial of an Indian national, Commander Kulbhushan Sudhir Jadhav, who had been sentenced to death by a military court in Pakistan in April 2017.

PIA sacks seven pilots

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has dismissed seven pilots after their licenses were cancelled by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). A PIA official confirmed that the pilots, including some first officers, have been issued termination letters.

Bidding process for Zhob-Kuchlak road underway

Balochistan people direly need the project that would also open the doors of socio economic development: Asim Bajwa



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting Lt. Gen (retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa on Sunday said that bidding process for a section of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Western Route-Zhob-Kuchlak (Quetta) road is underway. Taking to Twitter, he said Balochistan people direly need the project that would also open the doors of socio economic development of local people. He added as per plan, Chinese funding for Dera Ismail Khan-Zhob section of CPEC Western route is being processed to be incorpo-

rated in upcoming meeting of Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) of CPEC. Islamabad-Quetta would be connected through expressway on completion of this 210 km project, Bajwa said. On July 18, Asim Saleem Bajwa had said Sukkur-Hyderabad motorway project will bring a socio-economic revolution in the interior of Sindh. In a tweet, he said that after completion of 306-kilometer Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway (M-6), the CPEC Eastern route (Peshawar-Karachi) will also be completed. "306 KMs Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway (M-6) approved in ECNEC on BOT basis will contribute to the construction boom, socio-economic revolution for interior Sindh," he added.

Pakistan to resume anti-polio drive

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) on Sunday announced resumption of the anti-polio drive on July 20 after a hiatus of four months. The door to door vaccinations of children against polio was suspended on March 20 due to the coronavirus outbreak. The anti-polio drive, starting Monday, initially aims to vaccinate about 800,000 children under the age of five in high-risk districts, including Karachi, Quetta, Faisalabad, Attock and South Waziristan to protect them against the crippling disease. Around 8,000 health workers will take part in the polio vaccination campaign. The third phase of the polio vaccination drive in Pakistan will begin in the last three months of the current year. A largescale anti-polio drive will be launched in months of August and September, according to the NCOC.

Opposition criticises PTI govt

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Opposition lawmakers on Sunday castigated the PTI-led government after it decided to release details regarding asset ownership and dual nationalities of Prime Minister Imran Khan's un-elected special assistants and advisers to boost "transparency" in the government. It was revealed that four aides – Nadeem Babar, Tania Aidrus, Zulfi Bukhari and Shahzad Syed Qasim – have other nationalities. Following the disclosure of information, lawmakers from the Opposition parties tore into the incumbent government and reminded it about previous claims and promises made to the public. PML-N stalwart Khawaja Asif said that the federal cabinet is always a product of the parliament and rules regarding dual nationalities are applicable to both. "If a foreign national can't be member of the parliament, how can he/she be a member of the cabinet?" he asked.

Inside...

COMSATS to help prepare member States for post-COVID19 era – **Page 02**

Government committed to introduce fundamental health reforms: – **Page 03**

Provinces urged to take up the climate actions – **Page 04**

Waiting for a Savior – **Page 05**

Libya: GNA fighters head for front as battle for Sirte looms – **Page 06**

Armenia violates all norms of international law: Adil Aliyev – **Page 07**

Forty Years and Counting – **Page 08**

Webinar series titled "Knowing Japan" held

Shindo Yusuke, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Japan in Pakistan, presented his lectures during this first-ever webinar series that included the topics Japan – its people, society and tradition, education in Japan-key to Japan's development, secrets of Japan's economic development, Japanese culture and Japan-Pakistan relationship

ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: To create better understanding and acquaintance about Japan among the people of Pakistan, the Embassy of Japan in collaboration with the Islamabad Institute of Conflict Resolution (IICR) organized a five-day webinar series from 13 to 17 July which was largely participated by the people hailing from various sections of the Pakistani society. Mr. Shindo Yusuke, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Japan in Pakistan, presented his lectures during this first-ever webinar series that included the topics Japan – its people, society and tra-



dition, education in Japan-key to Japan's development, secrets of Japan's economic development, Japanese culture and Japan-Pakistan relationship. Mr. Shindo, in his lectures, started from the historic background of Japan and its age-old traditions and culture later explained in detail about the education system in Japan, the secrets Japan's economic development and the current level of Japan-Pakistan bilateral relations. Mr. Shindo noted that Japan-Pakistan bilateral relations are based on mutual respect, cooperation, and shared interests and these relations are growing further in multi-dimensions.

The participants of the week-long lecture series raised many thought-provoking questions during the question-answer sessions and deliberated upon the modern day Japan and its achievements. Mr. Shindo thanked the participants for their interest in Japan and their exchange of views on important issues. The webinar was an innovative attempt by the Embassy to continue its mission to promote Japan and its culture and values during this difficult time under COVID-19.* The Embassy will continue to host webinars of interest to our friends in Pakistan. Please let us know if you have topics you'd like us to cover.

Briefs

Animal dealing prohibited in Sindh's streets: NCOC

DNA

KARACHI: The buying and selling of sacrificial animals for Eidul Azha anywhere except cattle markets has been prohibited across Sindh, a meeting of the National Command and Operation Centre decided Saturday. The NCOC has directed the provinces to ensure strict compliance of standard operating procedures (SOPs) on Eid-ul-Azha management along with encouraging public adherence to safety guidelines.

Chief Minister Sindh while hosting the NCOC exclusive session welcomed the NCOC central team and said that the role of NCOC in coping with the pandemic was significant and sessions of NCOC in provincial capitals would enhance coordination and prove to be helpful for provincial management in fighting against the pandemic.

However, at the outset of coronavirus outbreak the provincial governments were facing issues related to hospitals' facilities for COVID treatment which were collectively resolved by the federal and provincial governments. He added that the health facilities were in a better position and the there was need to take preemptive measures to manage Eid-ul-Azha weak.

Punjab reports 442 new cases, 8 deaths

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab reported 442 new cases of the coronavirus in the past 24 hours, raising the provincial number of infections to 89,465, according to Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department. Eight more people died from the infection during this period, taking the total deaths to 2,067. The number of total tests in Punjab has now reached to 626,367. So far 65,009 patients have recovered from the pandemic. According to district-wise details of coronavirus cases, According to district-wise details of the fresh cases, Lahore reported 130 cases, Kasur one, Shiekhupura two, Rawalpindi 46, Jhelum two, Chakwal 9, Gujranwala 15, Sialkot three, Gujrat 21, Mandibahuddin 7, Multan 29, Vehari 14, and Faisalabad 18. The country reported 1,918 new coronavirus cases in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of cases to 259,998. According to the government's Covid-19 portal, 47 deaths were also reported during the past 24 hours, taking the total number fatalities to 5,475. 23,011 tests were conducted during the last 24 hours.

Heavy rain predicted in Karachi

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan Meteorological Department has predicted rain with thunderstorm and lightning in Karachi in upcoming 24 hours. The maximum temperature to remain in between 37 to 39 degree centigrade in the port city today. Currently the city is witnessing the north-southern winds at 18km/hour speed. On Friday, the parts of Karachi received moderate to heavy downpour. The downpour has increased the risks of urban flooding due to the lack of urban drainage and prevention plans by the concerned authorities. The team of city administration remained vanished from the spots facing flooding situation.

The parts of Karachi which received heavy rain include Clifton, I I Chundrigar Road, Saddar, Gulistan-e-Johar, Korangi, Akhtar Colony, Mahmoodabad, Manzoor Colony, Malir, M A Jinnah Road, Sharea Faisal. More than 500 small nullahs were overflowed across the metropolis. According to the Met officials, the heaviest downpour was recorded in 63.55 mm in PAF Faisal Base, 41 mm in Saddar, 13.8 mm in PAF Masroor, 9 mm in Nazimabad, 40 mm in Gulshan-e-Hadeed and Landhi, 16 mm in surrounding areas of University Road and 15 mm at Jinnah Terminal.

COMSATS to help prepare member States for post-COVID19 era

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: The post-COVID19 world would be much different as its overall socio-economic impact is yet to be determined. It is expected that the world would be faced with even greater challenges in the form of rising food insecurity, unemployment, poverty, healthcare needs, etc. The pandemic has enormously affected the tourism, transport, education and agriculture sectors. The Information Technology is expected to play an increasingly important role in our daily lives in the post-COVID19 period through e-learning, e-health, e-agriculture, artificial intelligence, etc. There are, therefore, more reasons for the world to focus on science, technology and innovation. This was noted by the international participants of the 23rd



Meeting of the Coordinating Council of the Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the South (COMSATS), which was held virtually due to present-day travel restrictions globally. The meeting had participation of 26 high profile scientists and representatives of 19 Centers of Excellence of COMSATS belonging to Bangladesh, China, Colombia, Egypt, The Gambia, Ghana, Indonesia, Iran, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine,

Sri Lanka, Syria, Tanzania, and Turkey. Beside these Council members, 24 officials of COMSATS also attended the meeting from its Headquarters based in Islamabad. COMSATS is an international/inter-governmental organization of 27 developing countries based in Islamabad. Its programmes related to South-South and Triangular cooperation in various fields of science and technology are implemented through its Network of Centers of Excellence,

currently comprising twenty-four (24) academic, scientific and R&D centers from the developing world. The Heads of these Centers constitute COMSATS Coordinating Council, which meets each year in order to review the ongoing programmes and chalk-out the future work-plan.

In his opening remarks, the Chairperson of COMSATS Coordinating Council, Prof. Dr. Ashraf Shaalan (Egypt) appreciated the efforts made by COMSATS Sec-

retariat for organizing the on-line meeting amid COVID-19 crises.

While sympathizing with those who have been affected by COVID-19, Prof. Shaalan hoped that through joint efforts, the world will soon rise above this challenge. Also speaking at the occasion, the Executive Director COMSATS, Dr. S. M. Junaid Zaidi stated that the COVID-19 crisis has solidified the resolve of COMSATS and its Coordinating Council to continue striving

for the promotion of South-South and Triangular Cooperation in STI, through all possible means.

During the meeting, the Council deliberated upon the ongoing programmes, including COMSATS Centre for Climate and Sustainability, postgraduate scholarships and post-doctoral fellowships at various Centres of Excellence, capacity building activities, Telehealth programme, activities of International Thematic Research Groups, programmes for achieving SDGs, and publications. Noting with great concern the devastating global impacts of COVID-19, which has affected almost all of the COMSATS' Member States, the Council members deliberated upon collaborating with one another and pool their expertise, human and technological resources in order to meet the challenges posed by the pandemic.

Bolan Medical College employees stage protests

DNA

QUETTA: Students and employees of Bolan Medical College took to the streets on Saturday to protest against the government by blocking access to Quetta's Manan Chowk. The protesters chanted slogans and warned that if their demands are not met, they will go on an indefinite hunger strike. They want the institution to be converted back into a college.

"Forty days ago we were promised that some progress will take place on our demands, but nothing has been done yet," an employee of the college said. People said that because of the protests, traffic congestion in the area has worsened. Bolan Medical College was converted from a college to a university but the move drew the ire of both teachers and students.

Balochistan reports another polio case

DNA

QUETTA: Another polio case has been reported in Balochistan, taking the tally to 15 in the current ongoing year, citing sources within Health department. The case was reported in Chaman, where a 17-month-old girl was confirmed with the virus. Her samples were collected on June 5 and 6.

Sources said that the parents of the affected girl were reluctant from administering anti-polio drops to their child. Last week, the federal government had decided to launch a special anti-polio immunization campaign after the country so far recorded 58 cases of the disabling disease during the ongoing year. According to sources, the immunization campaign would be launched in four provinces of the country, especially in the areas that have reported rising polio cases. "The campaign is titled as targeted response campaign and would begin from July 20," sources in the national health department said.

It is pertinent to mention here that on June 11, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa and Microsoft Founder and Co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Bill Gates discussed the anti-polio drive in Pakistan during a telephonic conversation. Director-General Inter-Services Public Relations (DG-ISPR) said.

Sindh govt allows petrol pumps to remain open

DNA

KARACHI: In a move to facilitate masses, the Sindh government on Saturday allowed petrol pumps to remain open 24 hours. Sindh Information Minister in a statement said the decision was taken to facilitate masses during ongoing monsoon rains.

He said that a notification regarding the new order will be issued by the Home Department.

Earlier, the petrol pumps across the province had been allowed to open from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

It is pertinent to mention here that Pakistan Meteorological Department has predicted rain with thunderstorm and lightning in Karachi in upcoming 24 hours. On Friday, the parts of Karachi received moderate to heavy downpour. The downpour has increased the risks of urban flooding due to the lack of urban drainage and prevention plans by the concerned authorities.

The team of city administration remained vanished from the spots facing flooding situation. The parts of Karachi which received heavy rain include Clifton, I I Chundrigar Road, Saddar, Gulistan-e-Johar, Korangi, Akhtar Colony, Mahmoodabad, Manzoor Colony, Malir, M A Jinnah Road, Sharea Faisal. More than 500 small nullahs were overflowed across the metropolis.

Violations of SOPs will not be tolerated: Buzdar

LAHORE: Chief Minister of Punjab Sardar Usman Buzdar has said that the cooperation of the masses is very important to stop the spread of coronavirus. He also warned that violation of SOPs on Eid-ul-Azha will not be tolerated.

Chief Minister Usman Buzdar while ordering strict implementation of SOPs issued for Eid-ul-Azha, urged people to ensure social distancing and implementation of precautionary measures.

Usman Buzdar further added that one has to learn to live with coronavirus by taking precautionary measures as no one knows how long the pandemic will last.

CM Punjab also directed relevant departments and institutions to ensure strict implementation of the coronavirus guidelines and said that there is no room for negligence. — DNA

SSGC to gasify areas around gas fields

ISLAMABAD: The Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) would gasify the localities and villages falling within five-kilometer radius of gas producing fields, being operated by Exploration and Production (E&P) companies in different parts of Sindh and Balochistan, under a multi-billion rupees project.

"Accordingly, the company is in the process of preparing PC-I to undertake the first phase of the project which will be submitted to DDWP (Departmental Development Working Party) for its approval," a senior official privy to petroleum sector developments told APP.

He said the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet in its recent meeting had allowed the Finance Division, on a summary submitted by the Petroleum Division, to release Rs1 billion to the company for undertaking the gas supply project in the localities situated within 5-KM radius of gas fields. "It is in compliance with the Supreme Court and High Court decisions."

The total estimated cost of the project is Rs4.912, out of which SSGC would get Rs1 billion during the year 2020-21, while the remaining amount in subsequent fiscal years.

Meanwhile, according to an official document available with APP, the company would provide around 144,371 new gas connections including 143,023 domestic, 1,164 commercial and 184 industrial during the current fiscal year as per its annual network expansion plan. — APP

meanwhile, according to an official document available with APP, the company would provide around 144,371 new gas connections including 143,023 domestic, 1,164 commercial and 184 industrial during the current fiscal year as per its annual network expansion plan. — APP

COVID-19 infects 2580 policemen: IGP

DNA

KARACHI: The COVID-19 infected 2580 policemen, of them 16 patients lost their lives, 1604 are under treatment and 960 have recovered. Therefore, the policemen have been provided necessary training so that they could perform their duty safely.

The public safety commission appreciated the Sindh police for performing duties selflessly during the ongoing pandemic. Secretary commission Abro told the meeting that the public complaints filed against the police officers have been disposed of by the concerned committees. The complaint filed against a former police officer for

exerting pressure to usurp land adjacent to a water park, Sukkur. The meeting was told that after investigation FIR was registered and the case has been in the court of law.

MPA raised the issue of growing street crime in the city. At this the chief minister said that in the next meeting Adl IG Karachi would be invited in the meeting to brief the members about the street crime activities and the measures taken by the police. The members took up the issue of providing vehicles to the public safety commission officers.

Punjab Wildlife Minister resigns

ISLAMABAD: Malik Asad Ali Khokhar on Sunday resigned as Punjab Minister for Wildlife and Fisheries, a private news channel reported, citing sources.

Sources said that Asad Khokhar has tendered his resignation to Punjab Chief Minister Usman Buzdar which was approved by him. Sources said that Punjab Chief Minister has decided to remove Asad Khokhar from the post after consulting with Prime Minister Imran Khan, who had visited the provincial capital yesterday.

On the other hand, Asad Khokhar has said that he resigned from the ministry as he wants to give more time to his constituency. — APP

PIA makes Corona Test compulsory for passengers

DNA

KARACHI: All travelers flying out of Pakistan to Canada by a PIA flight need to present a negative COVID-19 test certificate. The Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has declared coronavirus test compulsory for passengers three days before their flight to Canada, according to sources. According to sources, Canadian health authorities have made coronavirus negative certificate mandatory for the passengers traveling by the PIA. The Canadian Public Health

Agency has sent an email to PIA authorities with regard to presence of coronavirus positive passengers in the airlines' flight PK-783 from Lahore to Toronto, sources said. "Coronavirus positive passengers were pointed out traveling at seat numbers 22 to 28 in the flight," according to the email.

The PIA Toronto station staff has informed the airlines about the Canadian Health Agency's email, sources said.

The airline has encountered scores of incidents involving passengers testing positive for the coronavirus onboard.



MULTAN: A vendor arranging and displaying seasonal fruit mango to attract customers. — APP

Accession to Pakistan goal of Kashmiri people

"The universally recognized inalienable right of self-determination of the Kashmiri people has been usurped by India over the decades, but the Kashmiri people would not let this heinous conspiracy of India to succeed at any cost," he added

DNA

MUZAFFARABAD: Azad Jammu and Kashmir President Sardar Masood Khan has said that Pakistan and Kashmir are intertwined and interconnected in all respects, and accession to Pakistan is the ultimate goal of the Kashmiri people. In a special message on the occasion of accession to Pakistan Day being observed on Sunday, he said that the day of July 19 has great significance in the history of Kashmir because on this day in 1947, the accession to Pakistan

resolution was adopted at the residence of Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan in Srinagar, and thus the Kashmiri people had set their future direction and destination even before the inception of Pakistan.

The AJK president said that the United Nations, on the request of India itself had made the decision of holding a plebiscite to resolve the Kashmir issue and they had been repeating their commitment from time to time. The Indian leaders at that time also accepted the resolution and made a promise to provide an opportunity to

Kashmiris to decide their future. But later, he regretted that the Indian rulers deviated from their commitment, which had culminated in starting of a movement for the realization of the right to self-determination.

"The universally recognized inalienable right of self-determination of the Kashmiri people has been usurped by India over the decades, but the Kashmiri people would not let this heinous conspiracy of India to succeed at any cost," he added.

Sardar Masood Khan said that today the defenseless Kashmiri

people of the occupied Jammu and Kashmir are striving to attain the goal the top Kashmiri leadership had set through their historic resolution on July 19, 1947.

The people of IOJK, Khan said are writing a new chapter of their history with their blood, which will serve as a beacon light for other oppressed nations in the world. He added that day is not far off when the struggle waged by the people of IOJK will crown with success.

Highlighting the deteriorating situation in the Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, President Masood emphasized that the uni-

lateral and illegal actions taken by India on August 5, 2019, and the subsequent move to bifurcate the occupied territory into two parts posed a grave risk for regional peace and security.

On this occasion, the AJK president appealed to the Pakistani people to inculcate unity in their rank and file to frustrate the conspiracies being hatched against Pakistan, and strengthen and stabilize their motherland. He also appealed to the Kashmiri brethren to play their active role to highlight the significance of the ideology of accession to Pakistan.

Briefs

Saleem Shehzad re-elected PML-N President of Attock

FAISAL MUNIR

ATTOCK: PML-N District President Muhammad Saleem Shehzad has been re-elected for the second time and the President of Attock District has been honored for the second time. Rana Sanaulah, Sardar Owais Khan Leghari has issued a formal notification of Muhammad Saleem Shehzad for Attock district with the approval of Central President Shahbaz Sharif. Sheikh Aftab Ahmed, Senior Vice President PML-N Punjab, MNA Malik Sohail, Former Provincial Minister Chaudhry Sher Ali, Jahangir Khanzada, Malik Bahadur Yar Khan, MPA Sardar Iftikhar Ahmed Khan, Former Provincial Assembly Candidate Sheikh Salman Sarwar, Malik Raisat Sadrial, Malik Sher Khan Sadrial, Former Chairman Attock Municipality Nasir Mahmood Sheikh, Former Councilor Sheikh Arif Mahmood, Sheikh Zahoor Elahi, Sheikh Mahmood Elahi, City President Ambassador, Tariq William, Raja Zahid, Javed Iqbal, Sardar Mammuriz, Iftikhar Baloch, Malik Rizwan, Abid Shehzad, Dr Mian Rashid Mushtaq, Dr Muhammad Ashraf Butt, Talal Butt, Malik Ansar Khan, Malik Jamil Khan, Haji Ehsan, Sheikh Muhammad Ajmal, Sheikh Awad Safdar, PML-N Appreciating the decision of the Punjab leadership to unanimously nominate Muhammad Saleem Shehzad for the re-election of Attock District, we congratulate Muhammad Saleem Shehzad.

Two drown in different incidents

DNA

ATTOCK: Two persons including a toddler were drowned in two different incidents in different parts of the district. In the first incident, a three year old girl was drowned in a well located in her house in Mohallah Mehrabad in the limits of Hassanabad Police station. According to district emergency officer Dr Ishfaq Mian, three year old Iqra Bibi was playing in the courtyard of her house when she accidentally slipped in the well which was without cover at the time of the accident. He said on getting information, a rescue team had reached the spot and shifted the baby to THQ hospital where she was pronounced dead. Separately, a man drowned while his two other friends' lives were saved who went for bathing in a water channel in Dhoke Balouch in the limits of Bassal Police station. Police and rescue sources said 27 years old Iqbal along with his two other friends went to a water channel where they went in deep waters and lost control.

Six outlaws including five gamblers held

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police on Sunday arrested six outlaws including five gamblers from various areas of the city and recovered stolen cash, Stake money and gambling tools from their possession a police spokesman said. He said that SP (Industrial-Area) Zubair Ahmed Shaikh constituted a police team including SHO Noon police station Sub-Inspector Abdul Razaq, Sub-Inspector Zahid, and others. This team raided at gambling dens and arrested five gamblers while stake money and gambling tool were also recovered from them.



ISLAMABAD: Vendors unloading sacrificial animals from vehicle at Sacrificial Animal Market near Kohinoor Mills. – APP

Government committed to introduce fundamental health reforms: Mirza

Mirza said “With the grace of God and hard work we have been able to contain the disease through timely decisions, smart lockdown strategy, SOPs implementation and Trace, Test and Quarantine Strategy”

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on National Health Services Dr Zafar Mirza Saturday said the government is committed to introduce fundamental reforms by bringing primary health care based universal health coverage in the country. Responding to the opposition's press conference on health issues in a statement, he said issues faced by health sector today in Pakistan are a result of a collective failure of all previous governments who never prioritized health needs of the people of Pakistan. He said it is ironic that the same people are today trying



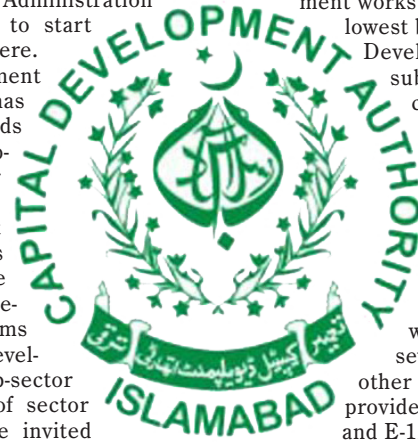
ing to champion the health development in Pakistan. He said the PTI government is fully aware of the problems and working hard to fix them. He said Pakistan's preparation and response to the COVID-19 has been one of the best in the world. “We started early, our first case was delayed in the region (on February 26) and our decline in cases is the earliest than most other countries. Mirza said “With the grace of God and hard work we have been able to contain the disease through timely decisions, smart lockdown strategy, SOPs implementation and Trace, Test and Quarantine Strategy.” He added, “We have ramped

up the health system capacity and undertaken close monitoring of the situation and appropriate decision making at the national level through establishing NCOC.” He said the government for the first time is trying to reform Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PM&DC) which had become a center of corruption and inefficiency as a result of policies favoring the vested interests who financially benefited from the system. The PMC law will establish this important regulatory body on modern lines in sync with the international best practices and will make it a transparent and efficient organization, he added. He said public sector hospitals in Pakistan have become very inefficient and low quality and are seen as health facilities only for the poor. This government is trying to reform these hospitals. He said it is absolutely incorrect that the government is privatizing the public sector hospitals instead we are making these hospitals autonomous. They would still remain the property of the government which would continue to finance these facilities but these hospitals will be run through better local management and local and efficient decision making. Poor patients will continue to receive preferential treatment but a better quality treatment than before, he added. Mirza said the issue of foreign medical graduates will be resolved soon through a reformed PMC. “Not all but many have very low level degrees from other countries and we cannot and should not legitimize all foreign medical graduates without proper policy and scrutiny.” He said blanket approval of all foreign graduates without proper scrutiny will be equivalent to exposing patients to not-properly trained doctors.

CDA initiates development work to meet housing needs

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) is moving ahead consistently to cater housing needs in Islamabad. For this purpose, development work in long neglected residential sectors is being initiated. E-12 is one such residential sector which CDA launched several years back but failed to develop. The Incumbent CDA Administration however took pains to start development work there. In a latest advancement in this regard CDA has opened technical bids for starting development works in sector E-12. CDA during the last month invited bids under Single Stage Two Envelope procedure from the firms for carrying out development works in sub-sector E-12/2 and E-12/3 of sector E-12. The bids were invited



separately for both sub-sectors. In response to the advertisement, 12 firms submitted their bids for sub-sector E-12/3 while 10 firms submitted their bids for development works in sector E-12/2. The technical bids will be evaluated by a committee headed by Director General Works. The financial bids of technically qualified firms will be opened after evaluation of technical bids. After opening of financial bids development works will be awarded to the lowest bidder. Development work in both sub-sectors would be carried out simultaneously by different firms so that development work in both sub-sectors could be completed effectively. Under this project, road infrastructure, water supply system, sewerage system and other civic amenities will be provided in sub-sector E-12/2 and E-12/3.

RDA sets up over 100 fair price shops

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi District Administration has made arrangements to ensure availability of 20 kg flour bag at Rs 860 retail price fixed by the Punjab government besides setting up over 100 fair price shops for uninterrupted supply of flour to the citizens. According to a district administration spokesman, the administration on the directives of Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi Anwar ul Haq was making all out efforts to ensure uninterrupted supply of flour and other necessary items to the residents and the shopkeepers had been warned of strict action on violation of the prices fixed for essential commodities. He advised the citizens to use helpline 0800-0234 for registration of complaints about profiteering and hoarding. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Vendors displaying sacrificial animals to attract the customers ahead of Eid in animal market. – APP

Islamabad Hindu temple controversy is an opportunity to educate the nation: IPS roundtable

The thoughts were shared in a session titled ‘Minority Rights in Pakistan in the Specific Context of Hindu Temple Controversy’, which was organized by IPS, Islamabad to have a look at the intricacies of the issue. The session was chaired by the Institute’s Executive President Khalid Rahman

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Sensitive matters like building a Hindu temple in Islamabad should be dealt with very diligently on the back of careful need assessment, proper planning and adequate homework. The judgement now is in the hands of the Council of Islamic Ideology, whose verdict not only should be based on facts, figures and on-ground realities, but also needs to be articulated enough to be used to educate the masses. The thoughts were shared in a session titled ‘Minority Rights in Pakistan in the Specific Context of Hindu Temple Controversy’, which was organized by Institute of

Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad to have a look at the intricacies of the issue. The session was chaired by the Institute’s Executive President Khalid Rahman. Sharing his views over the matter, Rahman said that the matter however would have attracted much less criticism if it was backed by proper homework. He was of the view that there was no denying the fact that the constitutional rights of non-Muslims in Pakistan should be protected. However, even in Western democracies there are criteria and procedures for religious communities to construct new places of worship. The discussants raised questions if the population of Hindus in Islamabad qualifies to have a temple built in its prime location. They

also looked at the matter from economic, constitutional, humanitarian and international contexts, maintaining that while the development can also be seen as a step towards promoting a soft image of Pakistan, it also remains a fact that there was an adequate space for the less than 3000 Hindu population in Islamabad and Rawalpindi combined to perform their religious rituals and festivals. The session was also told that there were 428 temples across Pakistan - including 11 in Sindh, 4 in Punjab, 3 in Balochistan and 2 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa - out of which only 20 are in actual use and others are dysfunctional because of the absence of Hindu population after the Partition in

their vicinities. Studying articles 20, 36 and 37 of the constitution of Pakistan were suggested to know about the provisions of minority rights in the country’s constitution, while also urging to have a look and the legal obligations of international law before deciding over the matter. It was also highlighted that the Dalit organizations and their leaders – whose population accounts for more than 90 per cent of the four million Hindus in Pakistan and is not even allowed in temples run by upper castes – have also distanced themselves from the Islamabad mandir controversy and have instead demanded the government to establish a university in Nagarparkar, Sindh.

Concluding the session, Rahman said that since the matter now has been forwarded to the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) for ruling, it should base its judgement on facts, figures and ground realities. It should take all the concerned stakeholders on board to hear their viewpoint, collect the data about the population of the Hindu communities in the twin-cities, ascertain how many of them actually are concerned about building the temple in the capital especially when there already exist a few in Rawalpindi, and then if the genuine need is established as a result of all this exercise, all these cogent arguments should not only be used to form the verdict, but also to educate the nation over such issues.

CPO Rwp holding ‘Khuli Kutcheries’ daily

RAWALPINDI: City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi, DIG, Muhammad Ahsan Younas is holding ‘Khuli Kutcheries’ here at CPO office on daily basis to provide relief to the citizens. According to a Police spokesman, special arrangements were made for the Khuli Kutcheries and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) issued by the Punjab government to prevent spread of coronavirus were being implemented. The CPO had warned the police officers of strict action on negligence and directed them to address complaints of the citizens particularly marked by him within shortest possible time frame, he added. – APP

Crescent sighting on Tuesday evening

ISLAMABAD: A meeting of Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee, chaired by Mufti Munib-ur-Rehman, would be held in Karachi on Tuesday for sighting the crescent of Zu al Hajjah, the 12th month of the Islamic calendar, said an official notification issued by Ministry of Religious Affairs and Inter-faith Harmony. The members of Zonal/District Ruet-e-Hilal Committees would attend the meetings at their respective headquarters. Whereas the meeting of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Hilal committee would be held at Ministry of Religious Affairs, 1st floor Kohsar block, Pak Secretariat, Constitution Avenue here. All information about the positioning of the crescent could be conveyed to Chairman, Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee on Cell Ruet-e-Hilal Committee Chairman Mufti Munib-ur-Rehman would announce the decision of crescent sighting or otherwise after the conclusion of the meeting. Meanwhile, according to astronomic calculations, the crescent of Zu al Hajjah might be visible on Tuesday evening. This means that Wednesday, July 22, will mark the first of Zu al Hajjah. – APP

PAL published over 500 books on literature

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) has so far published more than 500 books on Pakistani literature and mystic poetry translations to increase reading habits and encourage youth to read quality material. According to an official, in year 2019-2020 PAL has published 10 books and five quarterly magazines Adabiyat (Urdu) and bi-annual Pakistani Literature (English) and monthly newsletter academy. He said that several quality books were published “Khaqan of the East: Personality and Art” by Junaid Azer, “Munir Ahmad Badini: Personality and Art” by Dr. Ekun Bakhsh Bazzard, Professor Taha Khan: Personality and Art ”by Dr. Omar Qiaz Qayil, Pierre Fazl Hossein Gujarat: The Personality and Fan “From Mysticism to Ahmad Arifi, Dr. Aminul Haq Javed: Personality and Art ”by Dr. Amjad Ali Bhatti, Architect of Pakistani Literature ”(reprint, edits and additions edition),”Sheikh Ayaz: Personality and Art” by Dr Anwar Faghar Hakdero (Edits and Additions Edition) and “Kishwar Naheed: Pey Dr. Shaheen Mufti. He said that the books were also published on other topics including Balochi Language and Literature- an Overview ”by Ghaus Bakhsh Sabir (Ninth Edition) and Khourke Bourkhis’s Selected Fiction “Translator: Zaeef Sayed.” Magazines were also published on various topics including “Literature” (Issue 119), “Literature” (Issue 120), “Literature Pediatrician” (Issue 8-9) and “Literature Pediatrician” (Issue 10) and Fishing “Pakistani Literature” (English). – APP

Briefs

IUI wins nationally competitive project

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Erum Jamil, Incharge Department of Electrical Engineering (Female Section) from the platform of the Centre for Advanced Electronics & Photovoltaic Engineering (CAEPE), International Islamic University has been awarded with a Triple Helix project worth Rs. 16.9 Million from Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF).

This project is among the four projects funded under the provision of Special COVID-19 R&D grants out of hundreds of nationwide proposals received. Dr. Erum, in collaboration with a leading IT solution provider and CAEPE, will provide an emergent solution to the Govt. of Pakistan for Informed Decision Making in Covid-19 and future pandemic scenarios using multi-technology platform of Artificial intelligence, Sensing Devices and Data Mining etc.

Keeping the ongoing emergency in view, the project will be rapid in nature to provide deliverable to the Government of Pakistan in a year's time.

The project, which has already started with the first installment paid to the university, is housed at the Centre for Advanced Electronics and Photovoltaic Engineering.

Drive against encroachment continues

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) is continuously operating against encroachments in the city. In this connection, Enforcement Directorate of the authority during the last three days conducted several operations in different areas of the city and demolished several illegal constructions and encroachments from the state land. These operations were conducted by the Enforcement Directorate while assisted by ICT Administration, Islamabad Police and other relevant formations. In connection, with anti-encroachment drive a massive operation was conducted in Saidpur area. During this operation, 50 animal sheds established on the state land were dismantled. After clearing the encroachments the site was handed over to Environment Wing of Metropolitan Corporation (MCI) for tree plantation and make arrangements so that the encroachments could not re-established. During another operation conducted in sector G-8 and G-9, Enforcement Directorate removed 25 building material depots and confiscated construction material being illegally sold. The confiscated material was later on shifted to MPO store.

Online shopping: A new normal

ISLAMABAD: Like rest of the world novel coronavirus badly impacted the variety of life and stretched a deserted look in busy markets and shopping centers of the twin cities Islamabad and Rawalpindi said an aged shopkeeper sitting on footpath and waiting for his customers.

He said Covid-19 had changed the entire life style of the residents of Federal capital now they were not interested to visit markets as per previous routine.

Talking to APP, he stated that markets were deserted and businesses were suffering due to lockdown as sellers were waiting for the customers but online shopping trend emerged as new normal during contagion. Saad Malik, an owner of branded clothes shop at F-10 markaz said, he never experienced such an idleness while working in the shop, daily dozens of clients used to visit the shop and their daily earnings were in thousands.

"Now during week days customers don't come at all, sometimes we ourselves pretend to be customers of each other as we certainly miss our business and its hustle bustle," he mentioned. — APP

Provinces urged to take up the climate actions

Malik Amin Aslam said: All SDGs are interconnected, so the highly significant initiatives and achievements on Pakistan's climate action agenda would not be contributing to the SDG-13 but these interventions would have positive effect on other SDGs too

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Environmental experts while speaking to a webinar participants have expressed that Pakistan's green initiatives would bring positive change in the local environment, reduce vulnerability to natural disasters, and improve social health and economic conditions if implemented in letter and spirit. They mentioned that the outcome of Pakistan's climate action would contribute to the regional and global targets detailed in the relevant Sustainable Development Goal (SDG-13) in enormous ways. However, they said,

the success of the initiatives depend on the effective role of provincial and local authorities, communities and other stakeholders and partners. Development Communications Network (Devcom-Pakistan) and DTNTV organized the webinar on the subject "SDG-13: Pakistan's Climate Action – Prospects for Socioeconomic Development" on Saturday. Devcom-Pakistan and DTNTV Director Munir Ahmed hosted and conducted the webinar.

Malik Amin Aslam, Federal Minister and Prime Minister's Advisor on Climate Change, was the keynote speaker. The panel of experts included Asian De-

velopment Bank Climate Scientist and former chair of the National Climate Change Taskforce Dr Qamar-uz-Zaman Chaudhary, Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) Executive Director Dr Abid Qayyum Suleri, EMC Chief Operating Officer and former Director General Pak EPA Asif Shuja Khan.

Malik Amin Aslam said: All SDGs are interconnected, so the highly significant initiatives and achievements on Pakistan's climate action agenda would not be contributing to the SDG-13 but these interventions would have positive effect on other SDGs too. Our green initiatives have been admired

by all leading forums and organizations including IUCN, WWF, and World Economic Forum.

Citing the Pakistan government interventions, Malik said, Pakistan's continuous efforts and initiatives of large-scale afforestation, biodiversity conservation, investment in clean energy, electric vehicles and green jobs to combat climate change impacts have earned the country worldwide acclaim.

He said, the 10 Billion Tree Tsunami Program, Clean Green Pakistan Initiative, Clean Green Pakistan Index, Protected Areas Initiative adding nine more national parks to the existing six, Ecosystem Restoration

Fund for facilitating green growth and policies consistent with the objectives of Pakistan's Nationally Determined Contribution and attaining Land Degradation Neutrality. These initiatives have been taken to prevent and to be better prepared for the threat of climate change experienced by the country such as floods, heat waves, droughts and melting glaciers.

Malik mentioned that Transition to a green economy and green future is at the core of Pakistan government's policies spearheaded by Prime Minister Imran Khan. The government has initiated steps to "convert China Pakistan Economic Corridor

(CPEC) project into the China Pakistan Green Economic Corridor project."

"We have deferred 2740 MW of imported coal projects signed by the previous government and replaced it by zero-carbon and hydropower projects of 3700 MW. Government's shifting to clean energy shows its commitment to climate-friendly and sustainable development beneficial for both Pakistan and the global community.

All the benefits of Pakistan's Climate Action would also harness socioeconomic benefits at the grassroots level where an improved environment would also contribute to health and hygiene, Malik added.



ISLAMABAD: Members of traders community holding a rally in Islamabad to press for their demands. The traders demanded opening of restaurants and marriage halls. — DNA

Auction of Blue Area commercial plots concludes

SHAHEEN QURESH / DNA

ISLAMABAD, The landmark auction of the Blue Area Commercial plots by Capital Development authority concluded at Jinnah Convention center. The three-day auction proceedings held in the backdrop of Prime Minister's package for construction industry. According to statement issued by the CDA public relations department, the auction proved to be a major success for the government and the CDSA, as it attracted large member if investors who made this event an historic success and promoted a culture of business and investment friendly policies of the government and CDA. Collectively the auction committee of the CDA received bids for 15 plots amounting to Rs.22 billion, the committee, however considered bids for 12 plots amounting to Rs. 17.04 billions. On third day of the auction the committee considered the bids for four plots amounting to 4.26 billion. On the second day of the auction proceedings, the committee considered bids four plots amounting to Rs. 5.54 billion. On the first day the committee received auction bids against seven plots amounting to Rs.11.7 billion. The auction committee however considered offers for fur plots amounting to Rs.7.25 billion which was equal to the expected proceeds from this auction as per CDA budget estimates.

Largest plot presented for auction was 7000 square yards and highest bid Rs. 1.5 million per square yard was received. Furthermore, 50% inventory has been sold.

Chairman Capital Development Authority has thanked the investors for their participation in the auction proceedings and reposing their confidence in the government and CDA policies. The chairman on this occasion said enormous success of auction was reflection of the fact that business and investor community is happy with business friendly atmosphere in Pakistan in general and Islamabad in particular. He added that CDA would provide one-window facilitation to successful bidders to ensure that construction activity on auctioned plots starts at the earliest for activation of economic activities and generation of employment opportunities is the country as per vision the Prime Minister. He further appreciated the Auction Committee and the entire auction term for making this auctions success. CDA had announced special incentives for this auction which include dedicated team to facilitate incentive at every step, first installment of 25 percent within 30 days of bid acceptance, building plan approval facility after first installment and 10% discount of full payment in advance. Similarly advance income tax on pro rate basis and 100 percent coverage for less than 100 Sq. yd. Plots. 70 to 75 %coverage, every plot with all round circulation strip, ample public parking while application of newly developed building bye laws, approval of building plans after first installment and the bidders who get their building plans approved by December 31, 2020 will be eligible for the benefit of PM package for construction industry which include reduction in tax rate from 29% to 10% and exemption from source of income declaration.

New trend makes weddings affordable

ISLAMABAD: Countrywide a changing trend in the tradition of wedding ceremonies has been witnessed during the outbreak of novel coronavirus which has made it easy, simple and economically affordable for almost all segments of the society. The ongoing coronavirus has altered almost all aspects of life from public to private, working to socialization, teaching to learning and meetings to greetings. The virus has also left long-lasting effects on the existing tradition of matrimony in the country. Weddings are a time of great joy and celebration. Everyone wants to invite maximum friends and family members to witness and celebrate the event to the fullest.

Nuptial doesn't mean getting together of just two persons but rather of several families and communities. Consequently, marriage is always considered one of the biggest events in life for almost everyone. But at the same time, it is not easy to tie the knot in Pakistan due to deep rooted cultural rituals, traditions and unwritten code of the society. Therefore, it takes weeks and sometimes months to make preparations for weddings both on the bride and bridegroom sides. — APP

Islamabad police launch action against land grabbers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Police have arrested several land grabbers during its operation against those involved in occupying lands by harassing people and recovered weapons and ammunition from them. According to police spokesperson, Islamabad police have launched effective crackdown against land grabbers following directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Muhammad Aamir Zulfiqar khan. This operation is being conducted under the supervision of DIG (Operations) Waqar Uddin Syed and all Zonal SPs are making renewed efforts to ensure arrest of land mafia. During this operation, Islamabad police have arrested several land grabbers and recovered weapons and ammunition from them.

IGP Muhammad Aamir Zulfiqar khan said that land grabbing activities would not be tolerated and indiscriminate action would remain continue against those



illegally occupying land of others. He asked DIG (Operations) to monitor himself all policing action against land grabbers and ensure that no group make any new effort to disturb the people and harass them. He directed to take prompt action on complaints of citizens and provide relief to them. Islamabad police chief said that effective action should be ensured to protect lives and property of the citizens. He said that no sluggish attitude would be tolerated in this regard.

The IGP asked police officials to accomplish all their responsibilities in a professional manner.

'PML-N to prepare health charters'

DNA

LAHORE: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) will draft health charters, both for provinces and one for the whole of Pakistan to make sure that the rights of healthcare professionals across Pakistan are protected during the coronavirus pandemic, PML-N leader Ahsan Iqbal said on Saturday. "These charters will be drafted after consultation with top doctors and will be presented before Parliament in the form of a bill," Iqbal said while addressing a press conference in Lahore. The politician said PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif had approved the move and the process will begin from Azad Kashmir, where the PML-N is in power. Ahsan

AIOU should pay its dues: tutors

DNA

ATTOCK: Allama Iqbal Open University should pay tutors for the fall semester 2019. Tutors of various subjects affiliated to Allama Iqbal Open University told reporters that Allama Iqbal Open University hired them for the fall semester 2019.

We have completed all the work on time but so far the university authorities have not paid the compensation even though the semester of Fall 2020 has been admitted and the advertisement for Fall Semester 2020 has also been placed.

He said that the university is going to introduce online billing system for which software is being developed after which payment of fees will start. The tutors further said that the university has increased the admission fee in different classes many times but has not increased the tutors 'compensation which is a gross excess and the compensation is also delayed. Allama Iqbal Open University officials took notice of the situation and tutors' problems. Play your part in solving.

PAL to hold seminar

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) will hold an online seminar titled "Translations of literature in Punjabi language" on 23 July 2020. The online seminar will put light on "Importance of Translation in Punjabi Language" as Punjabi language is being most spoken in country. According to an official, Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training and National Heritage and Culture Shafqat Mahmood will be the chief Guest.

Different Articles will be presented including Ancient Punjabi Translations, Broadcasting of Punjabi Language Translation, Punjabi Translations over the years, Criticism and translation of research books in Punjabi and Importance of translation in Punjabi and it's great tradition. Different Intellectuals and writers will participate the conference from all over the country, he stated. He said that Chairman PAL Dr Yousuf Khushk will preside the online conference. — APP

Speakers for collaborative efforts in social sciences

ISLAMABAD: Speakers on Sunday at a virtual session emphasized on collaborative efforts to strengthen social sciences in Pakistan. The virtual session was organized by Quaid-i-Azam Alumni Association Pakistan on the topic of "Social Sciences in Pakistan: Challenges, Prospects, and Opportunities". The speakers also resolved to emphasise the role of social engineers in the society. Higher education institutions need to emphasise social innovations and societal impact. Social science subjects, such as philosophy, need to be introduced at the metric and intermediate level. It was also resolved that Interdisciplinary efforts are necessary for the progress and development of the country. Jobs should be created for social scientists in the public policymaking bodies. Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Dr Razia Sultana, Vice-Chancellor, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University, Peshawar highlighted role of universities in strengthening social sciences especially bridging gap between academia and policy makers. — APP

'Promoting Healthy Lives' drive launched

ISLAMABAD: The shelter homes management has launched a comprehensive campaign to transform 'Panahgahs' of twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad into healthy and eco-friendly places through active mobilization of human and financial resources. "Panahgahs in twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad are buzzing with positive activity and already bear a neat and clean look with successful launching of 'Promoting Healthy Lives' drive," Prime Minister's Focal Person on Shelter Homes Naseem ur Rehman told the media here at a Panahgah of Sector G-9. The drive was launched in collaboration with the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration, he added. — APP

Mafias galore?

JUST as we have seen before, the federal government for all its words against hoarding and its promises to defeat the various mafias involved in this practice seems to be failing completely in this respect as wheat prices across the county hit new highs. While in Punjab the price of a bag of wheat flour has remained at Rs860, the problem is that the flour is of such poor quality that people are unwilling to purchase it. Instead they have been forced to resort to buying flour which is priced at well over Rs1000 per bag. In the rest of the country too wheat prices have risen, in some cases to nearly Rs2000 per bag. The Sindh government has promised it would do all it can to keep down prices but has failed in this respect.

The real question is that of the policies and tactics adopted by the federal government on a matter which literally affects the daily life of almost everyone in the country. The problem has been ongoing since March this year when a notification on wheat prices issued by the PM's office was not implemented for weeks as the rate of taxation on this vital commodity was decided. There were other delays in implementing what the prime minister ordered further down the line. We saw this in June this year. The federal government had stated there was an adequate or even surplus supply of wheat in the country. We wonder then what happened to these talks. Why were orders able to decrease in keeping it away from people and creating a false shortfall which obviously led to an uncontrollable surge in prices.

Also, there is the issue of why despite the many proclamations made by the government including the prime minister, it has not been possible to crack down or penalize these mafias. The prime minister has now asked the Tiger Force, which has so far remained almost completely ineffective, to try and establish who is involved in hoarding, and report these persons to higher authorities. It is difficult to understand why, if the shortfall of wheat is real, this basic commodity was not imported as it happened in the past. The rise in the prices of wheat flour has naturally left people who are already faced with joblessness and lower wages in an extremely precarious position. Prime Minister Imran Khan had sworn that he would do all that he could to protect these persons. In fact, his government has done just the opposite. The steep increase in prices after large stocks of wheat, which should have been enough to meet the needs of people, were bought from farmers raises a whole number of questions. It should not be difficult to identify the mafias deliberately working to keep the prices high and making huge profits by hoarding back supplies.

Clearly, we are seeing a complete failure in the government's ability to manage the crisis. Before this, people have already experienced a crisis concerning the rise in sugar prices and overall inflation which has affected the economy of the country and most citizens. The reasons for the government's inadequate response to the problems needs to be examined and explained. We understand that discussions have been held at the cabinet level. But it appears no solutions have been found. The situation is a dire one and has to be tackled soon if people are to be enabled to buy wheat flour which is a staple food item for the majority of the country.

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Monsoon mayhem in Karachi

M OMAR IFTIKHAR

EACH year the monsoon season brings the same problems for the people of Karachi. While those at home enjoy the blessings of the rain, the people on the streets have to face the brunt of lack of planning and the absence of proactive thinking. Karachi that runs the business lifeline of Pakistan resembles a dystopian-era city when rainwater inundates its lanes and streets. Water becomes stagnant on roads causing bottlenecks. The traffic jams become a dreadful experience for those who are a part of it. At some points across Karachi, water enters homes while people on the road have to wade through water.

Cars and motorcycles partially submerge in the water while the pedestrians have no idea if there is an open manhole or a pothole in their way. This happens because the city never had an operational water drainage system.

Even if this system was ever in place in some areas, no efforts were made to keep this drainage system clean from garbage and dirt. The rain is not a problem as it does not cause traffic jams. These congestions are caused when roads are partially submerged in water. The city government can still devise a practical solution to drain rainwater from the roads and streets to a reservoir. This water can later be used for various purposes. However, the keywords here to focus on are "commitment" and "vision".

The leaders need to utilize their available resources to provide the citizens of Karachi with a solution. Even if the rain falls for half an hour, water covers major parts of Karachi. Even the areas such as DHA and PECHS, considered to be the residence of high-status citizens show a picture of distress.

The need of the hour is to provide Karachi with a workable solution of the rainwater drainage system. Even in this age of technology, suction pumps are used to drain water from the roads. A sustainable, practical system must be put into place to keep Karachi operational and comfortable even when it rains.

Waiting for a Savior

Ali Sukhanver



The helpless people on one hand have to face indifferent selfish attitude of the court of law and on the other hand illegal abduction, sexual harassment and use of pellet guns and shotguns by the military troops. Certainly, there must be someone who could put a full-stop to this tale of brutality; Kashmir is waiting for that savior

ACCORDING to the latest reports, Indian troops martyred three Kashmiri youths in Nagnad Chimmer area of the Kulgram district of the Indian Occupied Kashmir on 17th July, 2020. These three innocent ones were targeted during a cordon and search operation. Experts say that this fresh act of state terrorism would give birth to new wave of agitation in the valley.

In the name of cordon and search operations, such brutal activities of the Indian forces are simply a routine matter particularly after abolishment of Article 370 of the Constitution which granted special status to Indian occupied Kashmir. Certainly this situation is adding more unrest to the region and surely this unrest would affect the world peace directly or indirectly.

A debate on 'Human rights in Kashmir' was nominated by the Backbench Business Committee of the UK Parliament after a representation from Debbie Abrahams MP and Yasmin Qureshi MP in the last week of April 2020. During the debate, an assessment report was also presented; its topic was the situation in Indian-administered Kashmir, five months after the Indian government's August 2019 revocation of the region's autonomy. This report was prepared by the US-based Human Rights Watch. The report said, "Since the restrictions in August 2019, the government has taken slow, reluctant steps to ease some of them, but is still falling far short in upholding Kashmiri rights. Many of the thousands arbitrarily arrested – lawyers, shop owners, traders, students, rights activists – have now been

released, but reportedly only after promising not to criticize the government. Some senior Kashmiri political leaders, including former chief ministers, remain in custody.

The Police admitted at least 144 children had been detained. The government had also blocked phone lines and access to the internet. The government was so fearful of criticism and dissent that it curtailed Kashmiris' ability to share news of births or deaths, call their doctors, order supplies, research term papers, file taxes, and trade apples and walnuts."

In the year 2019, after the cancellation of the Article 370 and 35A, the Aljazeera also published a very comprehensive report on cruelties of the Indian Forces in Jammu & Kashmir. This report had a lot of resemblance with the report recently prepared by the Human Rights Watch. The report said that more than 50 residents in a dozen villages in Kashmir were interviewed by their correspondent and they all made the same complaint; the Indian military had raided their homes since India's government imposed a security crackdown in the region on 5th August. The soldiers inflicted beatings and electric shocks, forced them to eat dirt or drink filthy water, poisoned their food supplies or killed livestock, and threatened to take away and marry their female relatives. Thousands of young men had been arrested. 'Hats off' to the callous stubbornness of Mr. Modi that he kept on singing the same song shamelessly; 'the cancellation of Article 370 and 35A would bring a new flood of peace and prosperity in the Indian Held Jammu & Kashmir'. Where is that flood of peace and prosper-

ity; no one knows. No doubt the atrocities of the Indian Army in the Indian Occupied Kashmir are the worst example of human rights violations. Kashmir has become a territory of fear and suppression where the innocent Kashmiris cannot even breathe freely.

The situation in Indian Occupied Kashmir is getting worse day by day and even the pandemic could not put a full-stop to the human rights violations there. From illegal detention of young Kashmiri leaders to the rape of Kashmiri women, the tale of brutality seems never ending. According to the Kashmir Media Service, only in the month of June more than 50 innocent people were cruelly murdered by the Indian forces deputed in the Kashmir valley, three women were shamelessly gang-raped and more than 25 houses and shops were destroyed.

From January 1989 to June 2020, at least 95623 Kashmiris lost their lives at the hands of the Indian forces and more than 11000 women have been molested during the same period as the Indian Army uses rape as a weapon against the local people. Without giving reference to the brutalities done by the Indian Armed Forces deputed in the Indian Occupied Kashmir no report on human rights violations can be authentic.

The helpless people on one hand have to face indifferent selfish attitude of the court of law and on the other hand illegal abduction, sexual harassment and use of pellet guns and shotguns by the military troops. Certainly, there must be someone who could put a full-stop to this tale of brutality; Kashmir is waiting for that savior.

India Moving towards Breakup like the Soviet Union

Sajjad Shaukat



Pointing out the BJP's attitude towards the minorities, Singh wrote: "Every Muslim that lives in India is a loyal Indian... look into the eyes of Indian Muslims and see the pain." He warned in his book, if such a policy continued, "India could have third partition"

THE former Soviet Union which had subjugated the minorities and ethnic groups in various provinces and regions through its military, disintegrated in 1991. Even its nuclear weapons could not save its collapse. One of the important causes of the disintegration of the former Russian Empire was that its greater defence expenditure exceeded to the maximum, resulting into economic crises inside the country. About a prolonged war in Afghanistan, former President of the Soviet Union Gorbachev had declared it as the "bleeding wound." However, militarisation of the Soviet Union failed in controlling the movements of liberation, launched by various ethnic groups and nationalities.

Learning no lesson from its previous close friend, India has been acting upon the similar policies in some other way, which led to the breakup of the Soviet Union. When Indian fanatic Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the

leader of the ruling party BJP, came to power, he accelerated anti-Kashmir moves. Since August 5, 2019 Modi's government ended special status of the Jammu and Kashmir to turn Muslim majority into minority in the Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK). Acting upon the August 5 announcement, Indian central government issued a notorious map on October 31, 2019. In accordance with it, Jammu and Kashmir was bifurcated into two union territories—Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

Besides Pakistan, China also rejected Indian map and bifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories as "unlawful and void", and against the UNO resolutions. Despite the new agreement, border dispute between New Delhi and Beijing, which still remains unsettled, has increased tension between the two countries.

However, Indian other malicious acts such as introduction of new domicile law against the majority of Kashmiris, issuance of domicile certificates to 25000 non-Kashmiris and intermittent shelling inside Pakistani side of Kashmir in connection with the Line of Control (LoC)-which has killed hundreds of innocent villagers, indicate 'Modi's fascist India'. Thus, New Delhi completely ended any sort of dialogue with Islamabad to settle the Kashmir issue.

Now, almost one year has passed. But, Indian extremist rulers continue military clampdown in the IOK where Indian forces have broken all previous records of gross human rights abuses by martyring tens of thousands of the Kashmiris through brutal tactics, pellet-guns and various kinds of torture.

Despite the deployment of 900,000 troops in the Indian Held Kashmir and intensification of firing by the Indian forces in wake of shortage of foods, medicines for the patients and coronavirus pandemic, innocent Kashmiris are still violating the lockdown by protesting against Indian illegal actions. In order to conceal India's state terrorism, Kashmir has been cut off from rest of the world. But, some reports and images are appearing in the world and the social media, which show extrajudicial killings of the innocent people by the ruthless Indian military and paramilitary troopers.

In fact, since Modi became the Indian Prime Minister, he started implementing ideology of Hindutva (Hindu Nationalism). Under his regime, persecution of religious minorities such as Dalits, Sikhs, Christians and particularly Muslims, including even of lower cast-Hindus has been intensified.

In this regard, the Indian Citizenship Amendment Act 2019 (CAA), passed by the Indian Parliament further exposed the discriminatory policies of the Modi government. The CAA coupled with the National Register of Citizens (NRC) is mainly against the Muslim immigrants especially from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

Since December 15, 2019, daily mass protests, even by the moderate Hindus have been taking place across every state in India against the CAA and the NRC, which resulted into killing of more than 200 persons and injuring 900-mostly Muslims by the police and fanatic Hindus. But, Modi-led regime has not withdrawn the CAA/NRC.

In the recent years, Maoist intensified their struggle by attacking official installations. In this context, Indian media admitted that Maoists have entered the cities, expanding their activities against the Indian union. On 22-23 April 2018, at least 39 Maoists were killed in an alleged encounter with Indian security forces in district Gadchiroli. Maoist uprising is second major freedom movement after that of the Occupied Kashmir. Indian former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had called Maoist insurrection, "the single biggest internal-security challenge", whereas, Home Secretary G.K Pillai had reiterated the magnitude of this threat by saying that the Maoists want to completely overthrow the Indian state by 2050. The Naxalite-Maoists, as they call themselves, are the liberators, representing landless farmers and the downtrodden masses who have been entangled into vicious circle of poverty, misery and deprivation.

Nevertheless, India, dominated by politicians from the Hindi heartland—Hindutva have been using brutal force ruthlessly against Assam, Kashmir, Khalistan, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tamil Nadu, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura. These states which are ethnically and linguistically different from rest of the country are rocked by a large number of armed and violent rebellions, some seeking separate states, some fighting for autonomy and others demanding complete independence.

Instead of redressing the grievances of the people by eliminating injustices against them, Modi-led Indian regime is depending upon state terrorism to crush these extremist and secessionist movements. But, India's unrealistic counterinsurgency strategy has badly failed. It is notable that by ignoring the modern global trends like renunciation of war, peaceful settlement of disputes and economic development, India has accelerated alarming arms race in South Asia. In its report, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) has revealed on February 17, 2020 that in 2019, total global military expenditure rose to \$1917 billion in 2019. It said that the five largest spenders in 2019 accounted for 62 percent of expenditure. India is among the world's largest recipient of arms.

According to the 'Military Balance 2018' report of IISS, "India's defence budget broke into the world's top five...beating the UK for the first time...India overtook the UK as the fifth-largest defence spender in the world in 2017 at \$52.5 billion, up from \$51.1 billion in 2016."

It is noteworthy that India test-fired its longest range surface-to-surface nuclear ballistic missile Agni-5 on December 26, 2017, which is capable of striking a target of more than 5,000 km away. It can carry a nuclear warhead of more than one tone. It can target almost all of Asia, including Pakistan, China and Europe. While, the Agni-6 is reported to be in early stages of development and the most advanced version, with a strike-range of 8,000-10,000 km.

Meanwhile, America set aside the Indian poor record regarding the safety of nuclear weapons and materials. Despite, Indian violations of various international agreements and its refusal to sign Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and Additional Protocol

with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the US signed a pact of nuclear civil technology with New Delhi in 2008. During American President Barack Obama's visit to India, on January 25, 2016, the US and India announced a breakthrough on the pact which would allow American companies to supply New Delhi with civilian nuclear technology. On November 2, 2010, the US agreed to sell India the new F-35 fighter jets, including US F-16 and F-18 fighters, C-17 and C-130 aircraft, radar systems, Harpoon weapons etc. Besides acquisition of arms and weapons from other western countries—especially Israel, America is a potential military supplier to India. US also pressurized IAEA and the Nuclear Suppliers Group to grant a waiver to India for obtaining civil nuclear trade on larger scale.

While, French aircraft maker Dassault Aviation has handed over three Rafale multirole fighter aircraft to the Indian Air Force. Delivery of all 36 aircraft is expected to be completed by April 2022.

Notably, Indian ex-Army Chief, General Deepak Kapoor had said on December 29, 2010 that the Indian army "is now revising its five-year old doctrine" and is preparing for a "possible two-front war with China and Pakistan." Particularly, fast growing economic power of China coupled with her rising strategic relationship with Russia, the Third World and especially Pakistan—after signing of the agreement China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has irked the eyes of Americans, Indians and Israelis. Owing to jealousy, America desires to make India a major power to counterbalance China in Asia.

Even, Indian civil society organizations, while complaining of Indian excessive defense spending, pointed out that the government spends very little amount for the betterment of people. Indian defense analyst Ravinder Pal Singh, while indicating New Delhi's unending defense expenditures at the cost of poverty-alleviation, calls it guns-versus-butter question.

Showing realistic approach, Indian Minister of External Affairs Jaswant Singh who served the BJP for 30 years was expelled from the party for praising Mohammad Ali Jinnah [Founder of Pakistan] and echoing the pain of the Indian Muslims in his book, "Jinnah: India, Partition, Independence".

Pointing out the BJP's attitude towards the minorities, Singh wrote: "Every Muslim that lives in India is a loyal Indian...look into the eyes of Indian Muslims and see the pain." He warned in his book, if such a policy continued, "India could have third partition."

Nonetheless, India is moving towards breakup like the Soviet Union and Kashmir which has become special target of India's perennial state terrorism is giving impetus to other movements of separation and insurgency in the country in wake of financial crises, acute poverty and rapidly-spread of coronavirus pandemic.

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Briefs

Archer available for final test

DNA

MANCHESTER: Jofra Archer will be available for England's third and final Test against the West Indies next week after being ruled out of the second match for a breach of coronavirus protocols, it was announced. The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB)'s statement came as the hosts' quest to level the three-match series at 1-1 was frustrated by rain in Manchester.

Both teams have been living in 'bio-secure bubble' sites at the Ageas Bowl, the venue for last week's first Test, and Old Trafford, where the final two matches of a series that marks international cricket's return from lockdown are taking place.

Fast bowler Archer broke the rules by going home to Hove on Monday, during which time he met with an unnamed individual following England's four-wicket loss in the series opener at Southampton before the team travelled north to Manchester.

Hamilton on Grand Prix pole position

SPORTS DESK

MOGYORÓD: Lewis Hamilton beat team-mate Valtteri Bottas to lead a Mercedes one-two in qualifying for the Hungarian Grand Prix.

Mercedes were in a league of their own - Hamilton beat Bottas by 0.181 seconds while Racing Point's Lance Stroll in third was 0.93secs off the pace.

Stroll headed a Racing Point second row alongside team-mate Sergio Perez.

Ferrari locked out row three, Sebastian Vettel ahead of Charles Leclerc, with Red Bull's Max Verstappen seventh.

Lando Norris, third in the championship after two impressive opening races, was eighth for McLaren, while George Russell put in an impressive performance for the Williams team, recovering from a dismal 2019, in 12th.

Canada: Tour bus accident kills three

MONTREAL: A glacier-viewing bus overturned on Saturday at a popular tourist spot in the Canadian Rockies, killing three people and seriously injuring several others, news reports said.

The all-terrain vehicle rolled off the road near the Columbia Icefield in Jasper National Park, Alberta, national broadcaster CBC said. Photos published by media outlets show the upturned red-and-white bus, equipped with monster-truck style tires for crossing ice, on a rocky slope below the road across the glacier's moraine.

The bus lost control and rolled down the hill, witness Vanja Krtolica told the Globe and Mail.

"All of a sudden, everybody started screaming because they saw the coach lose control," said Krtolica, who was on a similar bus.

"It was careening down that 33 degree ... steep hill and lost control," he told the newspaper. – APP

Arteta hopes Auba will stay

LONDON: Mikel Arteta hopes Arsenal's run to the FA Cup final can persuade Wembley hero Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang to stay at the club. Aubameyang underlined his value to Arsenal with a brace in their shock 2-0 win over FA Cup holders Manchester City in the semi-final on Saturday.

But the Gabon forward has just a year to run on his contract and has been linked with Barcelona and Paris Saint Germain, with talks over a new deal to stay at Arsenal yet to produce an extension. The 31-year-old has admitted he has a big decision to make over his future. But Arsenal boss Arteta is confident his team's improved form and their forthcoming FA Cup final appearance could be enough to convince Aubameyang to stay. – APP



MANCHESTER: Carlos Brathwaite of West Indies plays a shot during fourth day of second test match against England. – DNA

Libya: GNA fighters head for front as battle for Sirte looms

The LNA has itself sent fighters and weapons to bolster its defence of Sirte, already badly battered from earlier phases of warfare and chaos since the 2011 NATO-backed uprising which led to the overthrow of longtime ruler Muammar Gaddafi

NEWS DESK

TRIPOLI: Libya's internationally-recognised Government of National Accord (GNA) on Saturday moved fighters closer to Sirte, a gateway to Libya's main oil terminals that the GNA says it plans to recapture from the eastern-based self-styled Libyan National Army (LNA). Witnesses and GNA military commanders said a column of about 200 vehicles moved eastwards from Misrata along the Mediterranean coast towards the town of Tawergha, about a third of the way to Sirte. The GNA recently recaptured most of the territory held by the LNA in north-west Libya, ending eastern-based renegade military commander Khalifa Haftar's 14-month campaign to take the capital, Tripoli, before the new front line solidified between Misrata and Sirte. Backed by Turkey, the GNA has said it will recapture Sirte and an LNA airbase at Jufra. But Egypt, which backs the LNA alongside the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Russia, has threatened to send troops into Libya if the GNA and Turkish forces try to seize Sirte. The United States has said Moscow has sent warplanes to Jufra via Syria to act in support of Russian mercenaries who are fighting alongside the LNA. Moscow and the LNA both deny this. The LNA has itself sent fighters and weapons to bolster its defence of Sirte, already badly battered from earlier phases of warfare and chaos since the 2011 NATO-backed uprising which led to the overthrow of longtime ruler Muammar Gaddafi. Meanwhile, leaders of France, Italy and Germany said in a joint statement on Saturday they were "ready to consider" sanctions on foreign powers violating an arms embargo in Libya. The statement did not directly name any foreign actors funneling arms to Libya but multiple powers have been sending fighters and weapons, fuelling a bloody proxy war that reflects wider geopolitical rifts and divisions in the Middle East and within NATO. "We ... urge all foreign actors to end their increasing interference and to fully respect the arms embargo established by the United Nations Security Council," the statement said. "We are ready to consider the possible use of sanctions should breaches to the embargo at sea, on land or in the air continue and look forward to the proposals the EU High Representative/Vice President will make to this end," it added. – APP

Berlin, Rome, Paris threaten sanctions

BERLIN: France, Italy and Germany are "ready to consider" imposing sanctions on foreign powers that violate an arms embargo in Libya, a joint statement by the EU countries' leaders said Saturday. "We ... urge all foreign actors to end their increasing interference and to fully respect the arms embargo established by the United Nations Security Council," the statement said. "We are ready to consider the possible use of sanctions should breaches to the embargo at sea, on land or in the air continue and look forward to the proposals the EU High Representative/Vice President will make to this end," it added. – APP

A Pak fan used to send me letters through Rashid: Vinod Kumbli

ISLAMABAD: Former Indian batsman Vinod Kumbli has revealed how a Pakistani fan followed him since 1991, and used to send him letters, through erstwhile glove-man Rashid Latif. There have stories about India and Pakistan cricketers sharing a bond of friendship despite the traditional rivalry. Kumbli said the Indian cricket team was treated very well in Pakistan. The fan, he was talking about here, followed him since 1991 when he made his debut in international cricket. At that time there were no mobile phones or calls so he used to send letters to Kumbli and express himself. He also said that you won't believe that Rashid used to bring him all the letters whenever he visited Pakistan. Kumbli also very fondly said that even after he retired he retained fan following in Pakistan. "We were treated very well

when we went to Pakistan. In fact, I have a fan, who was following my career since I made my debut in '91. He was from Karachi," said on The Greatest Rivalry podcast as quoted by cricketaddictor.com. "And he used to send me letters because that time when there were no mobiles, no phone calls so he used to express himself through letters. And you won't believe who used to bring those letters for me Rashid Latif."

"He (the fan) used to go to Rashid Latif and gave all his letters to him and Rashid, whenever they used to come here, then I got it." "So the fan following in Pakistan also, it's still there. When I was playing and after I retired also, the fan following was there," he said. Kumbli played 17 Tests for the national team, scoring 1084 runs at an average over 54.20. In the ODIs, he scored 2477 runs at an average over 34.

Zinedine Zidane Dismisses Tag Of "Special One"

DNA

MADRID: Real Madrid manager Zinedine Zidane has insisted that he is not "special", saying he is just lucky to be in charge of the club. After winning the La Liga 2019-20 season, Real Madrid manager Zinedine Zidane has insisted that he is not "special", saying he is just lucky to be in charge of the club. Zidane has led Madrid to the La Liga title this season and as a result, he won his 11th trophy as the coach of the side. "No, no. I don't feel that (special one). I feel lucky to be here with these players every day. And being in this club, that's why I feel lucky, and that's why I enjoy that much every day," Goal.com quoted Zidane as saying. "Because one day it will finish, as it happened already, but this time for real. That's why I am enjoying and focused on these kinds of things," he added. This La Liga win was Real Madrid's first since the 2016-17 campaign when Cristiano Ronaldo had led them to the crown. Real Madrid would now face Leganes in their final game of the La Liga season later today. "I think every time we get is the merit of the team, the players who are involved in that time. It doesn't have to demerit them, especially this one, as it has been very complicated and tough. We have fought until the end," Zidane said. "It is time to enjoy the achievement, but for football and for everyone, we have a game against Leganes," he added. Real Madrid currently has 86 points from 37 matches in the La Liga standings.

Russian envoy denies vaccine hacking allegations

DNA

LONDON: Russia's ambassador to London has denied accusations by Britain and its allies of helping hackers target labs conducting coronavirus vaccine research, in a UK television interview to be broadcast on Sunday.

Andrei Kelin said the allegations Thursday by Britain, the United States and Canada that a hacking group called APT29 was behind the online attacks, and "almost certainly" linked to Russian intelligence, made "no sense".

"I don't believe in this story at all, there is no sense in it," he told the BBC's Andrew Marr Show, adding he had learned about the hacking collective's existence from British media reports. "In this world, to attribute any kind of computer hackers to any country, it is impossible."

Kelin, who was appointed Moscow's top envoy in Britain last November, also rejected a separate claim by London that "Russian actors" sought to disrupt last year's UK general election.

British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said Thursday the perpetrators had circulated leaked trade documents between Britain and the United States, in a bid to sow greater division in the contest.

"I do not see any point in using this subject as a matter of interference," Kelin said. "We do not interfere at all. We do not see any point in interference... we will try to settle relations and to establish better relations than now."

Russia and Britain have been at loggerheads since Moscow was accused of trying to kill double agent Sergei Skripal with a powerful military-grade nerve agent in 2018.

The attack in Salisbury, southwest England, came 12 years after the radiation poisoning of former spy Alexander Litvinenko in London.

Again, Russia has denied involvement and Kelin said the country is ready to move on from the controversies. "We are prepared to turn the page and we are prepared to do business with Britain," he added.

Arsenal beat Manchester City to reach FA Cup final

LONDON: Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta outmanoeuvred his mentor Pep Guardiola as the Gunners reached the FA Cup final with victory at Wembley.

Arteta, who left his job as Manchester City assistant manager to succeed Unai Emery at Arsenal in December, now has a chance to mark his first season in charge with major silverware when they face Chelsea or Manchester United in the final on 1 August.

The match-winner was Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, the world-class striker Arsenal are desperate to secure on a new long-term contract, as he ruthlessly exposed City's defensive deficiencies.

Aubameyang had already shot straight at Ederson with one clear chance but there was no escape for City after 19 minutes when he showed great technique to steer home Nicolas Pepe's cross with the outside of his foot at the far post. City dominated possession after the break but squandered their opportunities and Aubameyang made them pay once more in the 71st minute when he raced away on the angle to slide a composed finish under the keeper. – DNA

Hockey competition schedule announced for Olympics

ISLAMABAD: Following the one-year postponement of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 due to the COVID-19 global health pandemic, the International Hockey Federation (FIH) has confirmed the match schedule for the men's and women's hockey competitions of the XXXII Olympiad.

The hockey event was originally scheduled to run from Saturday July 25 until Friday August 7, 2020, with matches being played at the purpose-built Oi Hockey Stadium in Japan's capital city. Although nothing has changed in terms of the location and overall running order of the matches, the Olympic hockey competitions will now start on Saturday July 24 and conclude on Friday August 6, 2021, the FIH said in a press release.

In line with what was planned for this year, the opening match of next year's Olympic Games will be contested between the men of Japan and Australia, with the host nation facing a stern test from the 2019 FIH Hockey Pro League champions - Olympic gold medalists at Athens 2004 - on July 24. The opening match of the Women's tournament will be played on the same day, with reigning world champions and current world number one the Netherlands - Olympic champions in 1984, 2008, and 2012 - taking on India.

The men's and women's gold medal matches will take place on August 5 AND 6, respectively. The pools for the Olympic hockey competitions are as under:

Men: Pool A: Australia, Argentina, India, Spain, New Zealand, Japan

Pool B: Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, Great Britain, Canada, South Africa

Women: Pool A: Netherlands, Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, India, South Africa

Pool B: Australia, Argentina, New Zealand, Spain, China, Japan

The teams that will compete in Tokyo all earned their tickets by either becoming continental champions of their respective regions or via the FIH Hockey Olympic qualifiers. – APP

'Second-hand' mall draws big crowds in Sweden

ESKILSTUNA (Sweden): Not content with the average neighbourhood thrift store, a city in Sweden has opened a whole shopping mall dedicated to giving pre-owned items new life.

The mall, located an hour's train ride west of Stockholm in the city of Eskilstuna, consists of 13 stores and covers 5,000 square metres (54,000 square feet), employing between 50 and 65 people. It has been named ReTuna, a play on Eskilstuna, which began an effort to reinvent itself as an ecological city in the 1990s.

"We are traditionally an industrial town, we have had our difficulties and we thought we have to find some things that can build confidence and where we can take responsibility," the city's mayor Jimmy Jansson told AFP, adding that city leaders were now trying to develop it "into a modern industrial town".

ReTuna, inaugurated in 2015, was named "the world's first shopping mall designated for repaired, recycled and restored items" by the Guinness Book of World Records in 2020. – APP

Americans see travel horizons narrowing

WASHINGTON: After months of working from home, stir-crazy Americans have finally reached the long, hot days of summer only to watch their vacation horizons dim, with travel options shrinking as the country's coronavirus cases soar.

"All I've been doing this year is canceling trips," 61-year-old Keith Gibbons said with a sigh, a new reality that the government contractor called "very frustrating."

Trips abroad are mostly out: The overwhelming majority of countries now bar American citizens amid a sharp US resurgence of COVID-19. The country's caseload has climb to over 3.7 million - more than one-fourth the world's total - and deaths have reached over 140,000.

As for cross-country trips, it's not that simple: In the vast US, laws on mask-wearing and social distancing vary dramatically, and sometimes confusingly, from one jurisdiction to another.

Some states are even imposing quarantines on visitors. Hawaii, for example, has ordered those arriving on the Pacific archipelago to self-quarantine for 14 days.

Its governor, David Ige, announced Thursday that beginning September 1, visitors will also have to submit to a coronavirus test within 72 hours of departing for the state and present proof of a negative result upon arrival in Hawaii.

Meanwhile, New York has extended its list of US states - totaling 22 now - whose citizens will be required to self-quarantine after arriving in the north-eastern state.

And in the city of Chicago visitors from 17 states must self-isolate for two weeks - or face fines of up to \$500 a day.

Complicating many Americans' travel plans, the summer destinations of Florida and California are among the hardest-hit by COVID-19, even if the popular Disney World park in Orlando, Florida has partially reopened and a Disney-linked shopping district in California reopened earlier this month. – APP

Khushdil ruled out of action for three weeks

LAHORE: Pakistan cricket squads left-handed batsman Khushdil Shah has been ruled out of action for three weeks after suffering a fracture in his left thumb while batting during Saturday's training session in Derby, England.

Khushdil is not featuring in the ongoing four-day intra-squad match and will not be available for selection for the second four-dayer, which will be played from 24-27 July in Derby, said a spokesman for the Pakistan Cricket Board here on Sunday. "As the nail is intact and there is no injury to nail bed, the orthopedic surgeon, team physician and team physiotherapist expect Khushdil to resume physical training by the end of the next week," he said. – APP

Briefs

Syria votes for new parliament

DNA

DAMACUSUS: Syria is holding parliamentary elections across government-controlled areas of the country on Sunday, as President Bashar al-Assad marks 20 years in power amid a continuing war and deep economic woes. More than 2,000 candidates, including businessmen under recently-imposed United States sanctions, are running in the legislative election - the third since the start of the 2011 protests and ensuing civil war. The elections, originally scheduled to be held in April, were postponed twice due to the novel coronavirus pandemic. Although several lists are running in the polls, real opposition to al-Assad's Baath Party is absent in the election. Opposition groups traditionally tolerated by the government are expected to boycott the polls and the Baath Party is guaranteed to monopolise the new parliament as it has done in previous elections. In the last vote in 2016, the Baath and its allies took 200 of the 250-seat parliament while the remaining posts went to independent candidates.

EU extends summit after deadlock over recovery plan

NEWS DESK

BRUSSELS: European Union leaders failed to agree on a massive stimulus fund to revive their coronavirus-hammered economies on Saturday after two days of fraught negotiations, but extended their summit for another day to try and overcome their differences. As the 27 leaders scurried back to their hotels after a late, inconclusive dinner, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron stayed behind in the EU's headquarters in Brussels to haggle with the Dutch-led camp of thrifty countries demanding cuts to the 1.8 trillion euro (\$2.06 trillion) package. "The negotiations were heated," said Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte of Italy, one of the EU countries most affected by the coronavirus crisis that are seeking generous aid from the bloc. "Europe is under the black-mail of the 'frugals'." "We have to do all what is possible to reach a deal tomorrow. Further delays are not useful to anybody." Summit chairman Charles Michel was due to hand new proposals before the 27 reconvene on Sunday. With the pandemic dealing Europe its worst economic shock since World War II, leaders first locked horns on Friday over a proposed 750 billion euro (\$857bn) recovery fund and a 2021-27 EU budget of more than a trillion euros (\$1.14 trillion).

Black Lives Matter mural vandalized

WEB DESK

MANHATTAN: The Black Lives Matter street mural in front of Trump Tower in midtown Manhattan has been vandalized three times in one week, according to the New York Police Department. The latest incident occurred on Saturday afternoon when two women from Staten Island, ages 39 and 29, were arrested after they were seen pouring paint on the mural, an NYPD spokesperson told CNN. When an officer attempted to approach one of the women, the officer slipped and injured his head and arm. He was taken to Bellevue Hospital and is in stable condition, the spokesperson said. The two women were charged with criminal mischief and were released with desk appearance tickets, according to the NYPD. The mural was first vandalized Monday when an unnamed suspect dumped red paint on the V in "Lives." The department said it was investigating the vandalism. On Friday, surveillance video captured three individuals "pouring and smearing paint on the mural and one female spreading flyers at the scene," according to the NYPD.

Armenia violates all norms of international law: Adil Aliyev

Adil Aliyev said: If we look at the analogy of history, this attack of the Armenian state is similar to the attack of 1992. They started to use large-caliber weapons against civil population, and finally these attacks killed 11 servicemen and one civilian

DNA

BAKU: "Currently, the whole world is fighting against the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Azerbaijan is one of the most supportive states, and the World Health Organization appreciates the steps taken by our country and sets an example to other countries for its efforts to defeat the disease. However, in such a difficult situation, the Armenian state have already begun to commit provocations on the borders of our country since July 12. Till today, Armenia has been carrying out its provocative activities in the direction of Tovuz region," Deputy Chairman of the Azerbaijani Parliament Adil Aliyev has told journalists. Adil Aliyev said: "If we look at the analogy of history, this attack of

the Armenian state is similar to the attack of 1992. They started to use large-caliber weapons against civil population, and finally these attacks killed 11 servicemen and one civilian. Unfortunately, these attacks make the fight against the pandemic even more difficult. At present, at the command of the Armenian leadership, along with the civil who died during the provocation on the border of Azerbaijan, the civil population are targeted by large-caliber weapons. Thus, a resident of Aghdam village of Tovuz region, Azizov Aziz Izzat oglu, born in 1944 (76 years old), died as a result of the explosion of gun shell falling on his house. The right of the deceased to live, provided for in Article 2 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, was violated by the Armenian state. It should be not-



ed that this is not the first case by Armenia, not only during the war, but also during the ceasefire period. Zahra Guliyeva was killed along with her grandmother. Also, as a result of provocations committed by the Armenian side on the borders of our country, the houses inhabited by civilians are under attack, the main reason for which is the desire to create panic among the local inhabitants.

Armenian troops began to use weapons against the Azerbaijani civilian population since 1992, when Azerbaijani historical lands Nagorno-Karabakh and our ancient lands were occupied, more than 1 million IDPs were forced to flee their ancestral lands. According to paragraph 2 of Protocol No. 4 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of the country. However, the current provocation by the Armenian government aimed at evacuating the civilian population. For this reason, various gun installations target the homes of civilians, resulting in deaths and injuries. In connection with the Armenian attacks on Azerbaijan, the United Nations adopted resolutions

822, 853, 874 and 884. These documents directly confirmed the occupation of Azerbaijani territories by Armenia, the massacres in Azerbaijan, the killing of thousands of people, the capture of more than a million people. These attempts by the Armenian side are the most gross violation of universally accepted norms of international law. Despite the occupation of Azerbaijani lands and massacres on its territory, it is based on the provisions of international law, and despite having a strong army, our country is in favor of a peaceful solution to the conflict. However, Armenian government doesn't change aggressive policy, on the contrary, they continue to commit provocations. Today, we demand that the world give a fair assessment to the provocative mission carried out by the Armenian side."

US divided over masks, schools

WHO reported a record increase in global corona cases, with the total rising by 237,743 in 24 hours

DNA

WASHINGTON: Iran's President Hassan Rouhani has said that 25 million Iranians have been infected with the coronavirus and that another 35 million are at risk of acquiring it. More than 14 million people around the world have been diagnosed with COVID-19, while more than 7.8 million have recovered and more than 600,000 have died, according to data from the Johns Hopkins University. The World Health Organization reported a record increase in global coronavirus cases, with the total rising by 237,743 in 24 hours. India's coronavirus caseload topped one million, with the United States and Brazil the only other nations with more infections.



MEXICO: Ambassador Tasswar Khan Meeting Ambassador Robert Djerou Ly and signing the condolence book opened by the Embassy of Côte D'Ivoire on the demise of Prime Minister Amadou Gon Coulibaly. May his soul rest in eternal peace. – DNA

Rouhani says 35 million Iranians may contract virus

NEWS DESK

TEHRAN: Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has said 35 million Iranians may contract the coronavirus as the country still did not have herd immunity although a quarter of the population may be infected. "Our estimate is that up to now, 25 million Iranians have been infected with this virus," Rouhani said during a televised meeting of the coun-



try's virus-fighting task force on Saturday. "We have to consider the possibility that

30 to 35 million more may face infection." It appears to be the first time a senior Iranian official has indicated the country is seeking to defeat COVID-19 via herd immunity. "We have not yet achieved herd immunity and we have no choice but to be united and break the chain of transmission of the coronavirus," he said, citing the results of a study by the Iranian health ministry. Iran has been battling a resurgence of COVID-19, with figures showing a rise in both new infections and deaths since a two-month low in May.

Foreign direct investment soars to \$2.56b

DNA

KARACHI: Foreign direct investment has improved by 88% in fiscal year 2020 to \$2.56 billion with major investment coming in the power and telecommunication sectors from China and Norway respectively. However, part of that 88% figure can be attributed to the major dip in FDI in fiscal year 2019 after CPEC projects had slowed down and the rupee depreciated, which made foreign investor wary to invest. The FDI fell by 51% from \$2.78 billion in fiscal year 2018 to \$1.36 billion in fiscal year 2019. "There were multiple reasons for low FDI in fiscal year 2019. The rupee was depreciating while the phase first of CPEC completed and concerns were also raised after the new government came into power, which slowed down investment from China," senior research analyst Karim Punjani said. Investors are reluctant to invest in countries where currency is depreciating.



Anti-Kremlin protest in Russia

WEB DESK

MOSCOW: Tens of thousands of demonstrators in Russia's far eastern city of Khabarovsk have taken to the streets, protesting against the arrest of the region's governor on charges of involvement in multiple murders. Local media estimated the rally in the city 6,100km (3,800 miles) east of Moscow on Saturday attracted more than 15,000 people. Khabarovsk's Governor Sergey Furgal was arrested two weeks ago and flown to Moscow where he was put in jail for two months. The huge rallies in the city of Khabarovsk on the border with China present a growing concern for the Kremlin, observers say, and come

after President Vladimir Putin this month oversaw a controversial vote that allows him to extend his hold on power until 2036. Both demonstrations are reported to be the largest in the history of Khabarovsk, a city with a population of 590,000. While many expressed support for the arrested politician, some of the protest signs and chants were distinctly anti-Putin. Smaller rallies also took place in nearby cities and towns including Komso-molsk-on-Amur and Amursk and the Pacific port of Vladivostok in next-door Primorsky Krai region. In rallies that lasted several hours, the crowds also massed outside the building housing the regional administration, chanting "Freedom!"

Kuwait's Sheikh Sabah admitted to hospital

That came after visiting Iranian FM M Javad Zarif wrote on Twitter that he was "praying for Emir's speedy recovery", without elaborating

DNA

KUWAIT: Kuwait's 91-year-old ruler has been admitted to hospital for a medical checkup, the oil-rich nation's state-run news agency has reported. Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah was in "good health", the KUNA news

agency said on Saturday, citing a statement from the country's diwan minister. The brief report did not elaborate. The hospital visit comes as the nation continues to fight the coronavirus pandemic, which has seen more than 58,000 cases and 400 related deaths in the country of 4.1 million. Its health minis-

try says more than 49,000 people have recovered from the virus and the COVID-19 disease it causes. In August 2019, Kuwait acknowledged the emir suffered an unspecified medical "setback" that required him to be hospitalised. That came after visiting Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif wrote

on Twitter that he was "praying for Emir's speedy recovery", without elaborating. Sheikh Sabah has ruled Kuwait since January 2006. He has pushed for diplomacy to solve regional issues, such as the continuing boycott of Qatar by four Arab nations, and hosted major donor conferences for war-torn nations like Iraq and Syria

Shifting of FPCCI to Islamabad opposed

Iftikhar Ali Malik said that head offices of all major banks, state bank of Pakistan, shipping corporation, sea port, largest dry ports, trade development authority Pakistan, DG Customs Transit trade and other important commercial offices are located in Karachi, an economic hub of the country

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: The United Business Group (UBG) the largest alliance of chambers and trade bodies Sunday unanimously opposed the demand for shifting of Head Office of Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry from Karachi to Islamabad and termed it a well conceived conspiracy against pandemic severely hit businesses community. Chairing a high level 20 member core committee meeting drawn across the country here today UBG Chief Iftikhar Ali Malik said that the demand for shifting FPCCI HO is absolutely ill conceived,

illogic and don't reflect the aspirations of the major chunk of business community. Prominent present among other core committee members were UBG patron in chief SM Muneer, Zubair Tufail, Khalid Tawab, Malik Sohail Hussain, Haseeb Khan, Ghazanfar Bilour, Waqar Ahmad Mian, Zafar Bukhtawar, Zahid Iqbal, MNA Tahir Ch, Ms Shireen, and Rehman Aziz Ur Rehman etc. Iftikhar Ali Malik said that head offices of all major banks, state bank of Pakistan, shipping corporation, sea port, largest dry ports, trade development authority Pakistan, DG Customs Transit trade and other important commercial offices are



located in Karachi, an economic hub of the country. SM Muneer briefly speaking on this occasion said sea port is playing key role in import and export and entire business community is

fully facilitated under one window and categorically set aside the demand of shifting FPCCI. He said business community will frustrate the evil designs of disgruntled elements who are out to achieve their ulterior motives for their vested interests. He said that business community is on one page on this issue. Vice President FPCCI Zahid Iqbal said that FPCCI HO was established in 1958 with only two rooms which is now a beautiful multi storey building built by the UBG ruling group. He said UBG ruling group also constructed capital office building in Islamabad where Federation President holds meetings besides two VPs from

federal capital also perform their obligations. Federation regional offices are also located at all provincial metropolis for establishing direct liaison with business community and help address their genuine grievances at local level through collaboration with state functionaries. Former Federation President Zubair Tufail and provincial UBG President Sindh Khalid Tawab said that forthcoming FPCCI general body to be held on August 05 next will never support this unlawful demand as UBG enjoy majority in the house. They said that UBG leadership will live upto the aspirations of the business community.

Norway arrests British man

DNA

OSLO: Norwegian authorities say they have arrested a 51-year-old British man suspected of issuing a bomb threat midair during a Ryanair flight from London to Oslo. The incident triggered a security operation at the Norwegian capital's Gardermoen airport and the plane was escorted to Norway by the Royal Danish Air Force's F-16 fighter jets. Flight FR1392 from Stansted airport with 142 passengers and six crew members on board landed safely at Gardermoen on Friday, officials said. Norwegian police said on Twitter: "A Ryanair plane has received a bomb threat while in the air."

Briefs

Nepotism
alleged
in BZU

MULTAN: A senior professor of pharmacy department, Bahuddin Zakariya University (BZU) claimed of committing 'misappropriation' and 'promoting favoritism' in appointment of Dean, Faculty of Pharmacy in the university here on Sunday. In his written statement issued here, Professor Dr Nisar Hussain Shah held complaint that the incumbent Dean of faculty of pharmacy Dr Muhammad Uzair whose notification was released on 17th July, 2020, had backing of a specific religio-political lobby working in the academia. He said he was a senior most professor and working already as an acting Dean for quite some time in the department. He said notification for appointment of the incumbent Dean had been changed for three times under 'malafide agenda'. — APP

Two more
deaths in IOK

ISLAMABAD: Two more deaths due to Covid-19 were reported on Sunday, taking the overall fatality count related to the disease toll to 239 in the Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK), Kashmir Media Service reported. One of the victims was an 84-year-old man from the Kashmir Valley's Baramulla district and other a 50-year-old woman from Rajouri district in Jammu division. Out of the 239 Covid-19 related deaths in occupied Kashmir, 219 are from the Kashmir Valley, 19 from Jammu division and one from Ladakh region. — APP

Worldwide
virus deaths
pass 600,000

NEW YORK: More than 600,000 people have died with the coronavirus around the world. Nearly a quarter of them were in the US. The world has seen the largest single-day increase in cases, the WHO reported. The number of new cases of coronavirus rose by almost 260,000 in 24 hours. The number of new coronavirus cases rose by almost 260,000 in 24 hours — the largest single-day increase since the pandemic began, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Saturday. The WHO said it is the first time the number of new daily infections has surpassed a quarter of a million. — APP

UAE reopens
prayer rooms
in malls

DNA

DUBAI: The UAE is reopening of prayer rooms in malls and towers at 30 percent capacity starting July 20 as the country further eases measures earlier imposed to control the spread of coronavirus. Worshippers must maintain a physical distance of two meters, are neither allowed to gather before and after prayer, must also avoid shaking hands in all forms, sanitize their hands before entering the prayer rooms as well as have their masks worn at all times, state news agency WAM reported. People are also required to recite the Quran via their personal electronic devices including their smartphones and must use a single-use prayer mat, which will be available in the prayer rooms, WAM added, quoting the General Authority for Islamic Affairs and Endowments and the National Emergency, Crisis and Disasters Management Authority.

Hong Kong
tightens
virus curbs

HONG KONG: Non-essential Hong Kong civil servants will work from home from Monday as the global financial hub tightens social distancing restrictions further amid an escalating third wave of coronavirus cases, the city's leader Carrie Lam said on Sunday. Lam said the city recorded more than 100 cases in the past 24 hours, taking the tally since late January close to 2,000 patients, 12 of whom have died. — APP

Forty Years and Counting

After spending four years and welcoming their second son into the world while in Lagos, the couple moved back to Budapest and stayed at the head office for two years before being posted out to Cairo, Egypt. The ambassador narrates fond memories of Cairo. They travelled around the country, dugged into ancient Egyptian history and made friends while stationed in Nile city

A B KHAN

LUXURY cars fluttering with country flags, surrounded by body guards and a red carpet welcome; from afar, a life of an ambassador looks too good to be true. Little, one does know how many storms' this position has weathered in past decades pregnant with personal sacrifices to reach the end of the tunnel. Istvan Szabo, the Hungarian ambassador to Pakistan is no different. Ambassador Szabo was posted to Pakistan in 2012 and now after eight fulfilled years, his time has come to hang his boots as he reached his age of supuration last year. As we sat in his living room to talk about his stay in Pakistan over a cup of coffee, Ambassador Szabo and his wife Emilia who is also a diplomat by profession and Head of Counselor section in Hungarian embassy, Islamabad boarded the nostalgic bandwagon which took us back to the future. "It was forty years ago, on 1st March 1980 that I joined Foreign Service in Budapest, Hungary where my wife to be was already working" informs the ambassador as we switch the recording button "ON". Life was not all bed of roses for the ambassador during his illustrious carrier but lady luck was on his side from the very beginning. His first assignment was United Nations desk at the head office which took him around the world and provided an opportunity to be part and parcel of the discussions, decisions and policies-making; re-shaping the world order. UN General Assembly, New York was the epicenter for the new world order and Ambassador Szabo was always present at the helm of the affairs. In his mid twenties, traveling around the globe, brushing shoulders with who's who of the diplomatic community and drafting MOU's was not less than a dream come true for any young Hungarian diplomat at the start of his career, Istvan Szabo was that lucky star. After initialing spending first four years in Budapest as part of the job requirement, the couple got their first posting abroad and it was not very good news. They arrived in Lagos, the capital of Nigeria along with their first born son at a time when the African horn was troublesome news. Armed robberies, street crimes,



extreme poverty, military dictatorship and scarce food supply were the order of the day.

"It was a hard posting and we had to manage things with great difficulty" adds Emalia. After spending four years and welcoming their second son into the world while in Lagos, the couple moved back to Budapest and stayed at the head office for two years before being posted out to Cairo, Egypt. The ambassador narrates fond memories of Cairo. They travelled around the country, dugged into ancient Egyptian history and made friends while stationed in Nile city. Once back home, ambassador Szabo was assigned a very challenging task. "When I returned to Budapest, at that time Hungary was President of OSCE, (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) and it gave me a good opportunity to travel in Europe and learn about the European policies from a diplomats perspective" he informs with a smile.

It was turning point in the history of Europe. The war in Balkans, Dayton Peace Process, disintegration of Yugoslavia, Europe was the nerve center of the new world order as things were moving with great dynamism between 1994 and 1995" ambassador explains. Now deeply involved in policy making with an enriched experience and so many Accords, MOU's and bilateral, unilateral agreements under his belt, ambassador Szabo opted for a posting in Brussels, Belgium looking after an important NATO assignment. "It was a very important position at that time and my experience at UN desk and OSCE make handy. Nato became an integral part of the process of annexation negotiations and its intervention in Serbia, during Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic rule became part of my resume", he informs. After playing a decisive role during the NATO posting, ambassador Szabo wished to opt for a relatively calmer station and again

thank to his lucky stars, he got his first ambassadorial posting in Prague, the Czech Republic. The couple went happily, leaving their two teenage sons in Budapest to continue their higher education. "I wanted a quiet and relaxed position after spending too much time in policy matters so Prague was the best option. It was close to home so we left our now teenage sons in Budapest to continue their high education and made frequent visits to home" he adds. In 2008 Ambassador was back home for four years working as Director General Balkans desk. "It was in 2012, one afternoon, the deputy Secretary of State who was my boss called me. He just asked me directly over the phone, what would you say Yes or No on posting to Pakistan as ambassador. Since I had never been to Asia and my profile was more of a policy issue expert especially during the Balkans, Nato, OSCE Presidency so I asked him to give me a week or

so to discuss with my family. He said ok, you have till tomorrow" informs ambassador laughingly. "Arriving in Pakistan was a pleasant surprise. I had never served in Asia so I was also excited but at the same time, skeptical. Pakistan in 2012 was griping with democratic form of government after a militarily rule. Terrorism, blasts, no-go areas and restrictions on diplomatic movements was not happy news. It took us a few years to settle down comfortably as things started to claim down and Pakistan moved into a much peaceful station as years passed by" ambassador informs. As the couple was inching towards end of their four year posting term, the rules at the Foreign Office, Budapest changed from 4 year posting to five years. The couple got one more year life line in Islamabad. "My age of retirement was approaching in two years time so I requested my boss, that if you are happy with my performance, I would like to

stay two more years in Islamabad and retire from here and they accepted it" he adds while narrating how 4 years turned into 8 years in Islamabad. You are still short of one year? I asked. "The last eighth year was an extension" he informs laughingly. In the last eight years, the diplomatic duo, made many Pakistani friends, they were seen on private dinners, events wedding of Pakistani families. Travelling was their favorite hobby and northern areas were their Mecca. "We are just spell bound by the beauty of Northern Areas especially Shijar, Khuplo, Dosaei Lands. The landscape is breathtaking" said the mesmerized couple. Ambassador Szabo extensively travelled for his work assignments and many a times his wife Emilia accompanied him. "I had visited Faisalabad, Sialkot, Gujranwala and other business hubs to explore opportunities of trade between Hungary and Pakistan. I had even gone up to South Punjab and mystified by the grandeur of Cholistan Desert" he informs. The couple takes back home, very fond memories of Pakistan with them apart from truck art furniture and other artifacts. "The cultural values and norms in Pakistani traditions are so well intertwined that it leaves one fogged. Whenever there is trouble, I see Pakistani people rushing to help each other. There is so much unity and solidarity and willingness to help each other in time of need that is still beyond my imagination. Having said that the couple also stressed that the country and the government needs to prioritize education facilities in Pakistan. Emilia departing note was for the women of the rural areas to learn and educate themselves. "I see many educated women working in offices and private sector companies; I also meet women parliamentarians who are in large number now but when I meet the rural women especially the ones living in northern parts they need attention. They are confined to their houses and do not know a much about the outside world leave alone their rights. This needs to be changed" adds Emilia. Both Ambassador Szabo and wife Emilia plan to settle down in their ancestral house in Budapest which has been refurbished already once they arrive back. Emilia wants to spend a couple of years in Budapest before accepting her foreign posting.

Kashmiris should be given the right
to self determination: Shehryar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Parliament's Special Committee on Kashmir Chairman Shehryar Khan Afridi on Sunday strongly denounced the Indian-occupation regime for enacting new laws to enable illegal military cantonments in the disputed area of Indian-occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IoK) and urged United Nations to take action to stop this illegal process. Addressing a seminar at National Press Club to mark Kashmir Accession Day, Shehryar Afridi said the new laws were a part of Indian plan to bring demographic changes in the IoK in a bid to artificially turn Muslim dominated Kashmir into Hindu majority territory. "This is a nefarious design cooked up to violate the United Nations Security Council resolutions. The world needs to act now," said Afridi. Under this sinister design, thousands of Indian labourers have been brought for construction near the Army Can-



tonment. Massive constructions are going around several Indian-occupying Army camps in Kashmir. Thousands of residential flats are being constructed at transit points in Srinagar for Indian Army troops. This is all in violation of the UN resolutions and its conventions," he added. He said that India is violating International law by settling Indians in the UN-recognized disputed territory. The world must take note and warn India of its implications in the region, he demanded. Afridi said the UN must pursue its own resolutions on Kashmir to hold a plebiscite in the occupied territory,

failing which it would lead the UN towards the fate of League of Nations. Afridi also pointed out that thousands of Indians have been granted citizenship rights and being shifted in IoK. "Over the last few weeks, tens of hundreds of non-natives are being ferried to Kashmir and are being settled in far off areas near Indian-occupying army camps. This has increased the anxiety among Kashmiris," Afridi added. He said despite the oppressive occupation by India, Kashmiri people have not given up their desire for accession with Pakistan and Kashmiri people, expressing their love for Pakistan and are still waving Pakistani flags in Indian-occupied Kashmir and raising slogans of "Long live Pakistan". He said Kashmiris are determined to continue their struggle for the accession with Pakistan and independence from India. "The Government of Pakistan, while upholding its principled position, continues to provide political and diplomatic support to the Kashmiris," he said.

Protests
against
Thai govt

DNA

BANGKOK: Defying a coronavirus ban on large gatherings, thousands of mainly young people converged on Bangkok's Democracy Monument late Saturday to demand the government's resignation. Protesters allege freedoms have been disappearing under former army chief turned prime minister, Prayuth Chan-ocha, who came to power in a coup in 2014. Opposition to his military-stacked administration has been growing in recent months, and the worsening state of the pandemic-hit economy has only added to public anger. "How can we be OK with the lack of democracy like this?" student activist Tattep Ruangprapaik asked the crowd.

Decline in country's
polio cases

ISLAMABAD: A massive decline has been reported in polio cases in Pakistan during the over last two decades, says a report of UNICEF. According to the report the decline started since the launch of the Pakistan's 'Polio Eradication Programme in 1994' UNICEF report said. The cases have dropped

to only eight in 2018 from over 20,000 cases every year during early in 1990s. UNICEF report also mentioned that polio vaccination campaigns have been temporarily suspended to contain the spread of COVID-19 however, plans are in place to start the vaccination of children as soon as possible. — APP

Turkish police detain 27 people

ISTANBUL: Turkish police said on Sunday they had detained 27 people with links to the Daesh militant group whom they suspect were preparing for an attack. Police said they had learned that the people had been ordered to carry out an attack in retaliation for social media posts that insulted Prophet Muhammad. The operation targeted addresses in 15 districts of Istanbul, police said. Daesh has conducted numerous attacks across Turkey, including on a nightclub in Istanbul on Jan. 1, 2017 in which 39 people were killed, and a bombing in the city's historic heart that killed 12 in 2016. — DNA

Hydropower projects take CPEC
program into full swing: experts

DNA

BEIJING: The recently signed agreements in Pakistan for hydropower projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) marked the beginning of a mature new phase for the program, which is under the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), according to Chinese experts. The concessional agreement for the 700.7-MW Azad Pattan Hydropower Project was signed last week, a breakthrough for the implementation of the project, according to China Gezhouba Group, the Chinese investor in the project. With a total investment of \$1.54 billion, the construction period of the project is expected to be 69 months and the hydropower plant

will generate some 3.265 billion units of clean energy per year and provide relief from water shortages, Global Times reported. Prior to the agreement, another deal on hydropower - the largest energy sector investment in the history of Pakistan - was signed in June. The project will be implemented by China Three Gorges Corp through its subsidiary under the framework of the CPEC. Zhou Rong, a senior research fellow at the Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies at the Renmin University of China said that the Pakistani government has realized the importance of infrastructure construction for its economic development and employment, which is a "fundamental change." "Infrastructure projects like hydropower were not given

that much attention as early as 2018 when the government valued projects related to people's livelihood more," said Zhou. Compared with coal power and thermal power, the hydropower projects signed with the two Chinese firms will help reduce Pakistan's over-dependence on imported fuel, save costs, and provide green energy to help improve its environment, he noted. "More importantly, as the projects pick up, it will create a large number of jobs for local people during the construction process," Zhou said. From the perspective of labor and employment, since the start of the CPEC, more than 75,000 direct jobs and 200,000 indirect jobs have been created for Pakistani people, increasing the average income in Pakistan by 23 percent, data showed.

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