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Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

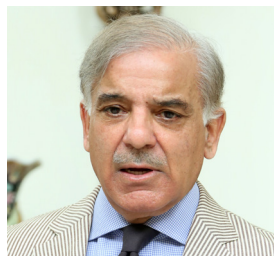
Price Rs. 20

Shibli Faraz assures APNS of early resolution of issues**"Three Gorges" drives development, says Cheng Xizhong****CPEC to continue, says Chinese ambassador****Briefs****Global virus cases surge past 19mn**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The COVID-19 pandemic continued to be a headache for countries around the world Friday as the US reported more than 2,000 deaths from the virus, and globally, more restrictions follow as the confirmed cases toll surges past 19mn.

The world's hardest-hit country, the United States, has seen a major coronavirus resurgence since the end of June, adding 2,060 deaths in 24 hours alone Thursday, a tracker by Johns Hopkins University showed. But other corners of the globe were also marking grim milestones, with Mexico's official toll soaring above 50,000 dead and the continent of Africa hitting one million confirmed cases. More than half of Africa's infections are in South Africa, which has the fifth highest number of infections in the world, after the US, Brazil, India and Russia. At least 19,000,553 cases and 712,315 deaths have been registered worldwide, figures compiled by AFP from official sources at 2300 GMT showed, driven by surges in Latin America and India.

Shehbaz slams FM Qureshi's OIC remarks

ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif on Friday criticised Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi's remarks about the Saudi Arabia-led Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), calling them "highly unfortunate and irresponsible".

In a tweet, the PML-N president said: "Qureshi's statement about brotherly Saudi Arabia is highly unfortunate & irresponsible. It flies in the face of history of our special & trusted relationship with the kingdom. 'The cavalier attitude by this government is undermining Pakistan's core relations with friendly countries!' In an unusually sharp warning on the first anniversary of India's controversial unilateral decision to revoke the region's semi-autonomy, Qureshi had asked the OIC to stop dilly-dallying on convening a meeting of its Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) on Kashmir."

Gold prices at all time high

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24-carat gold on Friday witnessed a sharp increase of Rs 2,500 as it was traded at the highest-ever rate of Rs132,000 against Rs129,500 on Thursday. Likewise, the price of 10 gram gold also witnessed an increase of Rs 2,144 to trade at Rs113,169 against Rs 111,025 the previous day, the Karachi Sarafa Association reported.

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Rs 5 trillion Ravi project launched**Modern city project was "vital to save the historical city of Lahore from environmental challenges in the wake of unplanned settlements: PM Imran**

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Prime Minister Iman Khan on Friday launched a Rs 5 trillion Ravi Urban Development Project to revive the lost glory of Lahore, struggling with the problems of pollution, sewerage and water shortage. Addressing the ceremony here, the prime minister said the modern city project was "vital to save the historical city of Lahore from environmental challenges in the wake of unplanned settlements".

The project will rehabilitate and develop the dying River Ravi into a perennial freshwater body, with high-quality waterfront urban development. The modern city will have all facilities for its dwellers, besides a forest area to be planted with six million trees.

Imran Khan said the project would be the second largest planned city in Pakistan, after Islamabad. He said over the past few decades, Lahore witnessed deterioration in

all civic services due to irregular expansion of the city, including waste disposal, provision of clean drinking water, electricity and gas, communication etc.

He pointed out that the pollution in Lahore rose to an alarming level, obstructing sunlight in winters with the people suffering serious breathing problems.

Imran Khan regretted that the grand River Ravi that once traversed through the city, eventually shrunk into a sewerage nullah. He expressed the hope that the new project that was abandoned for years, would restore the water table of Lahore that had dropped by 800 feet in 15 years. He said barrages in the Ravi would be constructed and sewerage treatment plants along the river would be installed to feed clean water into the river.

He said the new city, which would have high-rise buildings in vertical dimension to optimally utilise the land space, would be completed with the collaboration of private investors.

Int'l flight operations to resume from Aug 9

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: The government on Friday allowed international flight operations in Pakistan to fully resume at all airports, a day after it announced the lifting of several coronavirus restrictions in light of reducing cases and deaths.

A NOTAM (notice to airmen) issued by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) said that operations will resume from August 9 midnight.

"The government of Pakistan is pleased to allow all

international passenger operations to/from all airports as available pre-Covid-19.

"International scheduled flight operations to/from Pakistan will revert to authorisations as per summer-20 scheduling season. However, international flight operations shall be conducted in accordance with established guidelines and applicable standard operating procedures (SOPs).

"International cargo and special flight operations may also be conducted to/from Pakistan as per applicable SOPs," it said.

In another NOTAM, the CAA said all types of domestic passenger operations would be allowed to and from all airports. A day earlier, the Aviation Division had announced that domestic flight operations would be restored from all airports in the country from August 6 midnight.

Aviation Division's senior joint secretary, Abdul Sattar Khokhar, said all operators would be required to implement the established guidelines, SOPs, and that they would seek prior schedule approval from the competent authority.

CPEC to continue, says Chinese ambassador

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Yao Jing, during a webinar organised by SDPI, spoke in appreciation of collaboration and economic partnership between Pakistan and China through CPEC and development of Gwadar Port.

Despite the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic, breakthroughs were made in implementation of Gwadar project. Similarly, Chairperson CPEC Authority, Lt

Gen (R) Asim Bajwa, expressed his deep satisfaction over Gwadar port operating at its full potential.

He elaborated that Gwadar East bay expressway and Gwadar airport are under construction and will soon connect the soon to be mega city to rest of Pakistan and the world.

He further added that Gwadar Project exceeds its primary goal of mobilising a deep sea port and extends to encompass development of Gwadar Economic District and socioeconomic progress in South Balochistan.

**BRUSSELS: Pakistan ambassador to EU Zaheer Janjua had a fruitful & productive meeting with CEO of BECI Brussels. They discussed ways and means to enhance economic & trade cooperation post COVID-19. — DNA****NDMA distributes 100 vents**

ISLAMABAD: National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has distributed the 100 ventilators donated by the United States of America (USA) among across country hospitals.

According to NDMA spokesman, 13 ventilators have been given to Balochistan, 27 to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 23 to Punjab, 26 to Sindh, 6 to Azad Jammu and Kashmir and five ventilators have been shipped to Gilgit Baltistan. The US government had donated a total of 200 ventilators to Pakistan to fight COVID-19. The first 100 ventilators received earlier had already been distributed among the country wide hospitals. — APP

IHC forms larger bench for Jadhav case

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has constituted a larger bench to hear case pertaining to the appointment of legal representative for spy and agent of intelligence agency Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) Kulbushan Jadhav. According to details, the bench includes IHC Chief Justice Athar Minallah, Justice Amir Farooq and Justice Mian Gull Hassan Auranzeb. The hearing will begin from September 3. The details regarding formation of the larger bench have been uploaded at the website of the IHC. Earlier, Pakistan had recontacted Indian government to appoint a legal representative for spy and agent of intelligence agency RAW Kulbushan Jadhav, said FO Spokesperson Aisha Farooqi.

Pak donates 8 tons of supplies to Lebanon**FM Charbel Wehbe expressed his gratitude to the Government and people of Pakistan for their sympathies and solidarity at the difficult time**

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: "Pakistan on Friday donated eight tons of relief assistance comprising medicines and food to Lebanon as a token of solidarity for the victims of blasts that took place in Beirut on August 4. Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, in a telephonic conversation with his Lebanese counterpart Charbel Wehbe, conveyed deep sorrow and grief of the Government and people of Pakistan over the loss of precious lives, injuries to thousands, and extensive material damage, caused by the explosions, a Foreign Office press release said.

He told the Lebanese foreign minister that the relief assistance would be delivered by Friday evening sent by Government of Pakistan as a token of solidarity. The foreign minister said

Prime Minister Imran Khan and President Arif Alvi had already conveyed profound sympathies and condolences to the Lebanese leadership over the tragedy. He underscored that, at that difficult time, the Pakistani nation stood in strong support and solidarity with the brotherly Lebanese people. Appreciating the Lebanese

people's resilience, the foreign minister expressed full confidence that they would grapple with the challenging situation with their characteristic strength. Foreign Minister Charbel Wehbe expressed his gratitude to the Government and people of Pakistan for their sympathies and solidarity at the difficult time.

**Pakistan embassy in Switzerland observes Youm-e-Istehsal**

ISLAMABAD: The embassy of Pakistan in Geneva observed the August 5, 2020 as the Youm-e-Istehsal to mark one year of Indian government's move of scrapping special status of the valley. According to available information from abroad, the embassy organized a ceremony on this occasion in which a large number of people of Pakistan and Kashmir community participated and condemned the cat of India in which a year back Modi government had snatched the basic rights of Kashmiri people.

On this eve, Pakistan Ambassador Ahmed Nasim Warach and Raja Hafeez said while addressing the gathering and said that India could not win the hearts of Kashmiri people with force and could not keep occupation of the land. Kashmiri people do not want to live with brutal India and they hearts are pumping with the people of Pakistan. Ahmed Warach said that the PTI government led by great leader Imran Khan was fully support the people of Kashmir at all international and diplomatic fronts. "Kashmiri people are facing immense difficulties, pain and persecution under the continued military siege for the last one year. — DNA

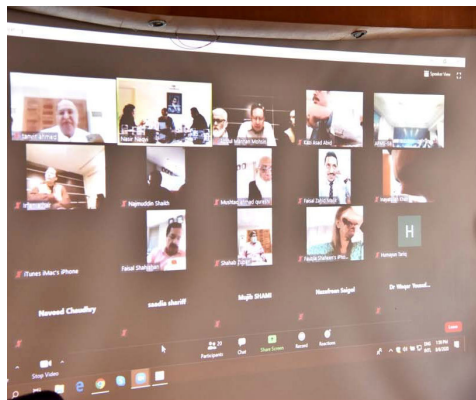
Shibli assures APNS of early resolution of issues

DNA / STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Senator Shibli Faraz, Federal Minister for Information who attended the Zoom meeting of the Executive Committee of the APNS, assured that the Federal Government would positively respond on the issues raised by the APNS particularly increase in the quantum of advertisements, suspending the process of ABC verification, relief package for newspaper industry, promotion of regional press and regional language publications, immediate payment of refund of Withholding Tax by FBR and enhancement of government advertisement rates.

The Executive Committee of the APNS held it meeting on Zoom wherein Senator Shibli Faraz, Federal Minister for Information, Mr. Akbar Hussain Durrani, Secretary Information and Ms. Shahera Shahid, PIO attended on special invitation. Mr. Sarmad Ali, Secretary General pointed out that the Prime Minister has repeatedly advised the concerned ministries to clear the outstanding dues amounting to Rs1.048 billion but a substantial amount still remains unpaid.

He stated that the quantum of advertisements released by the Federal Government, has decreased by over 50% whereas in the pandemic situation, the media expected support from the government to brave the financial crunch. He suggested that the quantum of ads be restored, if not increased, to the level of 2018, so that the newspaper



industry would be able to survive in the present conditions. It was pointed out that 8th Wage Board has recommended payment of outstanding dues, and increase in the government rates as per increase in the CPI to build the capacity of newspapers to implement the salary increase by the 8th Wage Board. He asserted that if the above recommendations are not implemented forthwith it would be difficult for establishments to implement the Wage Board.

The members also pointed out that the ABC has started raids on the premises of newspapers and presses to verify circulations which is causing harassment. They pointed out that in the present pandemic situation, economic standstill and lockdowns, the newspapers distribution system has broken down and they are unable to maintain their normal circulations. It was suggested that the verification process be de-

ferred for 06 months till the economic activity comes to normalcy. The Minister was apprised that with the implementation of the New Advertising Policy from April, 2020 the invoices for ads released by the PID, have not yet been processed and no mechanism of payment has been evolved which would further aggravate the financial crunch in the industry and publications would not be able to meet their obligations especially for timely payment of salaries to their employees.

The members also pointed out that the Prime Minister at the beginning of COVID-19 pandemic, had advised the FBR to immediately effect the payment of refunds of Withholding Tax but the refunds pertaining to newspapers, have not been paid despite various communications. The members raised the issue of the continuous incarceration of Mir Shak-



il-ur-Rehman on unfounded charges and termed his arrest as an attack on the freedom of press. They asked the Minister to himself look at the charges framed against Mir Shakil-ur-Rehman to understand how baseless the case is. In fact, the frivolity of the case reminds one of the charges of stealing buffaloes against Ch. Zahoor Elahi in the seven-tees.

The Federal Minister gave a patient hearing to the members of the Executive Committee and announced that the Federal Government acknowledges the importance of print media and was keen to address the issues confronted by the newspaper industry. He appreciated that the quantum of advertisements needs to be increased and priority be accorded to the promotion of regional press in the country. In this respect, the Ministry has evolved a policy of ads release to regional publications which will be shared with the APNS. He also stated

that the newspaper industry deserves a relief package as given to other sectors for which, he will talk to the Prime Minister. On the issue of the refund of Withholding Tax, he assured to take up the matter with the Finance Advisor, Dr. Abdul Hafeez Sheikh and other concerned authorities.

The Minister also agreed in principle with the APNS request to suspend ABC verification process and assured to revert back after consultation within the Ministry. The meeting was attended on Zoom by following members at APNS House Karachi, PC Hotel Lahore and Marriot Islamabad:

Mumtaz A. Tahir, Vice President, Sarmad Ali, Secretary General, Shahab Zuberi, Finance Secretary, Syed Sajjad Bokhari (Daily Abtak), Bilal Farooqi (Daily Aghaz), Mukhtar Ahmed Aqil (Weekly Al Akhbar), Mohsin Bilal (Daily Ausaf), Waseem Ahmed (Daily Awam), Ansar Mahmood Bhatti (Monthly Centre Line), Naveed Chaudhry (Daily City 42), Hasan Akbar (Dawn), Najamuddin Sheikh (D/Deynat), Kazi Asad Abid (Fortnightly Ibrat), Faisal Shahjehan (Daily Jiddat, Karachi), Mustansar Javed (Daily Mashriq, Quetta), Mush-taq Ahmed Qureshi (Monthly Naey Ufaq), Inayat ullah Khan (Monthly Naya Rukh), Rukhsana Saulat Saleemi (Weekly Nikhar), Umer Mujib Shami (D/Pakistan, Lahore) Faisal Zahid Malik (D/Pakistan Observer), Jamil Athar (Daily Tijarat) and Syed Haroon Shah (Daily Wahdat).

Briefs

Collected Women, UNW to hold webinar

ISLAMABAD: In collaboration with UN Women Pakistan, connected women will hold an online webinar on business transformation with digital platform skills for women on August 19. The goal of webinar is for women to be economically empowered during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to an official, the webinar will shed light on offline to Online Business Transition Learning and maximizing digital platforms for MSMEs. He said that webinar will also discuss the opening up networking and business opportunities Teaching and refining IT skills for women Tapping online work opportunities.

He said that UN Women and Connected Women are dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women adding that they are global champion for women and girls in Pakistan. – APP

Munaza all praise for ensuring SOPs

ISLAMABAD: Secretary Pakistan Women Parliamentry Cacus MNA Munaza Hassan on Friday highly praised the masses for ensuring implementation of SOPs during COVID-19 pandemic.

In a twitter message, she said that the real heroes were masses in fight against the COVID pandemic due to which Pakistan close to defeat it. She said that government is considering to reopen various sectors to reduce financial difficulties of masses. – APP

IESCO issues power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Friday issued a power suspension programme for Saturday in various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to IESCO spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 05:00a.m to 09:00a.m, Old Kalam, Behkri, Milat Chowk, Mureed, PAF, Sihala, RCCI-1, RCCI-2, RCCI-3, Islam Pura, Samote feeders and surrounding areas. – APP

IRSA releases 255,200 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 255,200 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 327,700 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1490.44 feet, which was 94.44 feet higher than its dead level 1386 feet. Water inflow in the dam was recorded as 192,700 cusecs and outflow as 130,000 cusecs. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1232.10 feet, which was 192.10 feet higher than its dead level of 1040 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 24,800 cusecs and 15,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 175,500, 166,300 and 54,700 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River a total of 46,400 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 32,500 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Chief Commissioner Islamabad Amir Ali Ahmad along with Muhammad Ahmad Waheed, President ICCI inaugurating ICT Administration Facilitation desk at ICCI. Tahir Abbasi SVP ICCI, Mian Akram Farid Chairman founder group, M Ejaz Abbasi, Zafar Bakhtawari, Khalid Chaudhary and others are also present. – DNA

Chief Commissioner inaugurates ICTA facilitation desk at ICCI

Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President ICCI said that the chamber was focused on providing maximum facilitation to its members in business promotion and inauguration of ICTA Facilitation Desk was another positive step in that direction

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has established a Facilitation Desk of ICT Administration (ICTA) to resolve issues and provide services of around 18 departments working under the local administration to its members under one roof. Amir Ali Ahmed, Chief Commissioner Islamabad and Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) formally inaugurated the operation of the Facilitation Desk during a

ceremony held at ICCI. Addressing the ceremony, Amir Ali Ahmed announced that a representative of ICCI would be included in the Design Vetting Committee (DVC) of CDA to speed up approval of construction plans of private sector. Highlighting various initiatives taken to bring reforms in CDA, he said that CDA has now been converted into a financially robust civic body as it closed outgoing financial year with an amount of around Rs.9-billion in surplus while when he had taken over its charge, it was not able to pay salaries of its staff. He said that CDA's develop-

ment budget has been increased from 20 percent to 36 percent. He said that CDA generated around Rs.17 billion from auction of plots. He said all stuck up development projects were being revived as CDA development cycle has got the momentum and an amount of Rs.25 billion has been dedicated for development works that would be further increased to Rs.35 billion. He said that these development works would give boost to business activities. He said that CDA would soon start repair of roads and was in the process of hiring consultants for devel-

opment of parking plazas and rain water harvesting. He said that automation of CDA would be completed in near future to reduce human interaction and facilitate business community and citizens. He said that Islamabad would be developed into a tech-based city of the country. He lauded the initiative of ICCI for setting up ICTA Facilitation Desk and said that ICCI should also set up CDA Facilitation Desk for facilitation of business community. Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President ICCI said that the chamber was focused on providing maximum facil-

itation to its members in business promotion and inauguration of ICTA Facilitation Desk was another positive step in that direction. He said that ICCI has already setup the Facilitation Desk of Pakistan Customs and such desks of more organizations including CDA, FBR, Police would be established soon to further facilitate the business community in business promotion. He thanked Chief Commissioner Islamabad for visiting ICCI to inaugurate the FD and hoped that he would take more measures to resolve CDA related issues of business community.

FPCCI congrats Iftikhar Ali on RDA nomination

ISLAMABAD: Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) has congratulated Iftikhar Ali Malik on his nomination as member of newly established Ravi Urban Development Authority for a period of three years. Vice President FPCCI Zahid Iqbal said that Prime Minister Imran Khan has reposed full confidence in the top leadership of private sector by appointing all its members from business community, said a press release received here Friday. He said that private sector which was backbone of the economy will live upto his expectations and aspirations. He said that fairly competent business magnates enjoying good repute and the highest degree of integrity had been selected for this gigantic task for developing a new modern city with all basic amenities of life. He hoped that prime minister will continue to take all stakeholders into confidence prior to policy formation for yielding better results. He said business community will act as bridge between the private and public sectors to help accelerate the pace of industrialisation in country. Zahid Iqbal said that Iftikhar Ali Malik was one of the leading non controversial veteran trade leader not only in Pakistan but also in entire South Asia who never availed any perks, allowances, lodging, domestic and foreign travelling during his term as Presidents of FPCCI, LCCI, member board of directors National Bank of Pakistan, and SAARC Chamber. – APP

Significant success achieved against epidemic: Dr Yasmin

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Provincial health minister Dr. Yasmeen Rashid visited PTI central Secretariat. She held special meeting with Chief Organizer Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Saifullah Khan Niazi. Comprehensive briefing was given to her on health sector reforms in Punjab. The minister was informed about the strategies to deal with the contagious disease like Coronavirus in the province and the facilities provid-

ed to the affected citizens. "By the grace of God and the hard work of the staff of the health department, significant success has been achieved against the epidemic", said Punjab Health Minister. "Doctors and paramedics who wage jihad against epidemics deserve special praise", said Dr Yasmeen Rashid. The provincial government deserves congratulations for protecting the people of Punjab from Karuna in the face of limited resources and difficult circumstances, said PTI chief organizer.

Huawei donates PPE to MOFA

ISLAMABAD: Huawei Pakistan Deputy CEO Ma Libing presented a donation of personal protective equipment to Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the context of Pakistan-China cooperation against Covid-19 pandemic. Additional Secretary Asia Pacific Zahoar Ahmed and Additional Secretary Foreign Minister's Office Khurram Rathore received the donation. They appreciated the gesture of support during the epidemic reflecting the brotherly relations between the two countries. – DNA

NCOC prepares ahead of Independence Day, Muharram

ISLAMABAD: The National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) on Friday was apprised that a complete code of conduct was prepared to ensure social distancing, wearing face masks and standard operating procedures (SOPs) compliance ahead of Independence Day and Muharram occasions. The NCOC morning session was held under the chairmanship of Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar. The forum deliberated in length on road map and measures post opening up various

sectors and upcoming two major events including Independence Day and Muharram. The forum was informed that wearing of face masks including simple cloth masks help in containing COVID-19 spread. Speaking on the occasion, Asad Umar said that opening up of various sectors should be followed with health guidelines. The coronavirus threat was still there and if health guidelines would not be followed then there was always a threat that disease could again spread. Asad Umar said, "People of Pakistan have been very

responsive and they have shown great patience and compliance to various health guidelines. If the same spirit is followed up till Muharram it will help to mitigate health challenges." Asad Umar urged federal and provincial administrations to ensure public safety and well being through effectively measures during upcoming Muharram. Federal Minister for Interior Brig (Retd) Ejaz Ahmed Shah, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Health Dr Faisal Sultan and others also attended the meeting. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Provincial Health Minister Dr. Yasmeen Rashid meeting with Chief Organizer PTI Saifullah Khan Niazi during her visit to PTI Central Secretariat. – DNA

President stresses need to integrate family planning

The President asked all Federal and Provincial Governments to implement the decisions of the Task Force on fast track basis so as to check growing population

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi chaired the 3rd meeting of the Federal Task Force on Alarming Population Growth in Pakistan to evolve strategy to lower population growth in the country. The meeting extensively discussed various proposals to contain the increasing population. All provincial governments, including Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan, briefed the meeting about the steps taken by them about family planning. The provinces informed they had been taking serious measures to check increasing population. The meeting agreed to seek the cooperation of media and Ulama

to play their role in educating the people about the implications of fast-growing population. In order to create public awareness, the meeting underscored the need to launch national campaign on family planning and reproductive health through print, electronic and social media. It emphasized that all provincial governments needed to seek support of ulama to sensitize the people about the importance of family planning. The meeting tasked Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony and Council of Islamic Ideology to convene meeting of the Ulama within a month to seek their cooperation with regard

to population growth. It also directed the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination to study population models of the countries which have succeeded in controlling their population and submit report to the Task Force based on the findings. The meeting stressed the need to integrate family planning and primary health care services to achieve the objectives of family planning. It also recommended to increase funds for the family planning-related programs. The President assured that he would ask the Prime Minister to increase funds in this regard. It was agreed to convene the next

meeting of the Task Force after 45 days. He advised the provincial governments to include mother & child healthcare in their education curriculum. The President asked all Federal and Provincial Governments to implement the decisions of the Task Force on fast track basis so as to check growing population. The meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Pir Noor ul Haq Qadri, Advisor to Prime Minister on Commerce, Textile, and Investment, Abdul Razak Dawood, SAPM for Poverty Alleviation and Social Protection/Chairperson Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), Dr. Sania

Nishtar, SAPM for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, Dr. Faisal Sultan, Chief Minister Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah, Chief Minister Balochistan, Jam Kamal Khan, Caretaker CM GB, Mir Afzal, Chairman, Council of Islamic Ideology, Prof. Dr. Qibla Ayaz, Chief Secretary Sindh, Mumtaz Ali Shah, Chief Secretary KP, Dr. Kazim Niaz, Chief Secretary Balochistan, Capt. (R) Fazeel Asghar, Country Director Population Council Islamabad, Dr. Zeba Sathar, Representative UN Population Fund (UNFPA), Ms. Lina Mousa and provincial ministries and secretaries of population welfare departments.

COMSTech, UOL offer research fellowships

DNA

ISLAMABAD: COMSTech in collaboration with the University of Lahore announces 10 research fellowships, 15 trainings and Indus-Nile forum for academic management training workshops for OIC least developed member states in Asia and Africa.

This was decided in a meeting held at COMSTech between Coordinator General COMSTech, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary and Mr. Awais Raof, Chairman, BoG, The University of Lahore and Honorary Consul of the Republic of Uganda. Mr. Murtaza Noor, National Coordinator Inter University Consortium for Promotion of Social Sciences Pakistan, also attended the meeting. These scholarships are offered in health and education sectors. The avenues of collaborative efforts between the two institutions have been discussed to benefit from mutual collaboration. It was also agreed to undertake collaborative efforts aimed at enhancing cooperation among OIC countries in the areas of science, technology, health and higher education. Mr. Awais Raof also assured his utmost cooperation in creating effective networking and linkages among higher education institutions across the Muslim Ummah.

AIOU holds M.Phil, PhD examinations from Monday

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) will hold final examinations of M.Phil/MS and Ph.D programmes of Faculty of Social Sciences & Humanities, and Faculty of Arabic & Islamic Studies for semester Spring 2020 from Monday (10th August). As per details students will physically appear in these examinations and they will be held at the main campus of the university (Islamabad) only, a press release Friday said. The Examinations Department has arranged exam hall for Students of Faculty of Social Sciences & Humanities at the Academic Complex of the University, while examination of M.Phil/ PhD students of Faculty of Arabic & Islamic Studies will be held at the Committee room (Block 12) of the Faculty of Arabic & Islamic Studies. As per a notification, students of nine disciplines of Social Sciences and three disciplines of Faculty of Arabic & Islamic Studies will appear in Spring 2020 examinations. These M. phil and PhD programmes are: M.Phil Iqbalia, M.Phil Urdu, M.Phil Pakistani Languages, M.Phil Mass Communication, M.Phil economics, M.Phil Pakistan Studies, M.Phil Library Science, MS Management Sciences, M. Phil Islamic Studies, M.Phil Sharia, PhD Urdu, and PhD Business Administration. The university has also notified a revised schedule of examinations of BS, MSc, MS/M.Phil and PhD programmes of various Departments of the Faculty of Sciences. – APP

PNCA marks Independence day

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Popular folk singers duo Javed Naizi and Babar Naizi performed in a musical show arranged by Pakistan National Council of the Arts to celebrate Independence Day of the mother land. This was part of PNCA programmes of Independence Day celebrations to be presented online due to the COVID- 19 pandemic. The brothers presented national songs "Watan Ki Mit-ti Govha Rahna", "Sadaay Des Di Shan Vakri Ha" and "Shamaa Pey Gayan" and their popular track, "Tut Gai Trakh Kar Ky". They also presented Baba Bulay Shah poetry, Kafi and geet. Director General, PNCA Dr. Fouzia Saeed commented that Independence Day should be celebrated with commitment to work for promotion of peace, fraternity and brotherhood. Young generation should work for progress and prosperity of the country.

Collapsing confidence

ACCORDING to a survey conducted by the Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry, business confidence in Pakistan has been falling since August 2019. The survey says that this is due to factors which include high inflation and interest rates, currency devaluation, the economic stabilization programme and then Covid-19 with the lockdown and uncertainty it has brought.

The survey states that the overall Business Confidence Scope in Pakistan stands at a negative 50 percent, a further drop by five percent since August 2019. This is a reflection of pessimism across business sectors including manufacturing and services. Most respondents said they have declining hope in the economy. This situation affects many people, including those not directly involved in business or trade. High inflation has affected almost every household in the country and the unemployment rate continues to rise – with companies forced to reduce the number of employees, and smaller businesses such as restaurants shutting down.

According to surveys, at present even those holding PhD degrees are unable to find jobs. The situation continues to worsen for white collar workers as more and more are laid off or offered work on contract on a part-time basis. For labourers the problems began even before Covid-19 due to the rise in inflation and the consequent collapse of many sectors as uncertainty grew.

One of the issues is that there appears to be no clear-cut governmental policy to tackle the problem. Prime Minister Imran Khan had asserted in the past that he wished to protect the poor and avoid job losses. Before the elections of 2018 he had pledged a huge rise in employment numbers.

This has not happened. In addition, there are no signs of economic recovery and business continues to suffer with buying power hitting an all-time low. The lack of clarity from the federal government on what it plans to do has created further instability and lack of confidence that is shown up by the survey. The present instability will trigger a worsening situation for months to come. It is true that this is part of a global economic crash.

But even before Covid-19 hit the country was struggling to manage its economy or build faith within the business and trading community. Now, things are considerably worse. The government's economic team is yet to put forward a plan to salvage the situation, with experts warning that tax collection and other targets set in the budget will not be met. This does not augur well for the future and will have an impact on almost every sector in the country.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Fascist wave

THE founders of India who set up the state as a secular country intended to house all the groups and factions who lived there. They would probably be shocked by what is happening today. On Wednesday, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself laid the foundation of the long-disputed Ram Mandir by placing a silver brick at the site where Babri Masjid had stood till 1992. A dispute over the masjid, built in the 1500s, had existed since 1800 when it was claimed that the masjid had been built over a temple which marked the birthplace of Lord Ram. The British colonial rulers at the time had temporarily dealt with the matter by fencing off the masjid and allowing the area outside to be used for worship by Hindus. The issue of worship places built over other worship places has existed for centuries in India with successive waves of rulers commanding various territories across the region.

The latest wave of Hindu nationalism began in the 1980s, when the BJP and its hardline supporters began a new movement to construct the Ram Mandir at the site of Babri Masjid. The masjid was attacked and destroyed in 1992 by a mob led by hardline Hindu elements linked to the BJP. Since then the issue has arisen from time to time and gained ground since the election of Narendra Modi in 2014.

Modi has quite openly identified himself as a Hindu nationalist and the manifesto put forward by his party envisages an India meant essentially for Hindus rather than for all groups. It is believed Modi may have opted to go ahead with the rebuilding of the controversial Ram Mandir to coincide with the anniversary of India's annexation of Kashmir on August 5, 2019.

While India's courts have failed to speak up for a secular India and opposition parties have not opposed Modi's moves, there has been some criticism from dissidents within India.

The media however has largely backed Modi or been forced into silence. The action demonstrates the determination both over Kashmir and the future shape of India. The new map issued by Pakistan, which shows Indian occupied Kashmir as a part of Pakistan, is unlikely to have much impact on Modi's actions, nor will the voices raised by human rights watchdog bodies.

Far fiercer opposition is required from quarters within and outside India. For now, we do not see any signs that it is approaching with even Congress leaders from Ayodhya helping in the building of Ram Mandir.

India Shooting Itself in Foot

Zafar Iqbal Rawana



PM Modi's decision to abrogate Article 370 of the Indian Constitution – that gave Indian-occupied Kashmir a special status in Indian Union – was nothing less than India shooting itself in the foot. The abrogation and the subsequent offensive diplomatic maneuvers by Pakistan not only brought the Kashmir dispute into limelight but also pushed the international community to unequivocally censure New Delhi of its gross human rights violations in the disputed Himalayan Kingdom

SINCE coming to power in 2014, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has tried to shape New Delhi's foreign policy with an aim to not only dominate South Asian region but also act as a "net security provider of the region." In fulfillment of that dream – what some call it a prelude for an "Akhand Bharat" – Modi has always seen Pakistan as a stumbling block. Thus, it has been Modi's ultimate aim to "isolate Pakistan" in South Asia. In this context, 2016 SAARC summit – that was to be held in Islamabad – should be seen as India's 'peak diplomacy,' when New Delhi successfully convinced SAARC member states to boycott the summit because of rising Indo-Pak diplomatic tensions resulting from Uri attack. But New Delhi's regional diplomacy has been on a downward spiral ever since.

Consider. First of all, the recent diplomatic tensions with Nepal – previously considered a client state of India – have made the officials in South Block wonder what went wrong. In May, 2020, Indian Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh inaugurated a road-link between Dharchula and Lipulekh – a disputed territory between New Delhi and Kathmandu. Later, Nepal's Foreign Ministry expressed "regret" at India's "unilateral act." It further added that according to 1816 Treaty of Sugauli, Nepal claimed all territories to the east of Mahakali River, including Limpiyadhura, Kalapani and Lipulekh. On June 13, 2020, Nepal's Parliament unanimously passed a constitutional amendment to the country's constitution by officially re-drawing Nepal's political map to include the aforementioned disputed territories. Later, on June 21, 2020, reports emerged in media that Nepal's radio stations near the Indian border were airing anti-India speeches and songs – which could be heard in Indian state of Uttarakhand. Furthermore, speaking at an event on June 27, 2020, PM Oli accused Indian government of conspiring to topple his government. He said, "Listen to the media in Delhi. Activities have been stepped up in hotels and at the Indian mission. If anyone dreams of unseating the prime minister of this country for publishing the map and including the map in the constitution.

Don't even think of it." In addition to that, PM Oli's Communist Party is ideologically inclined towards Communist Party of China. This led to President Xi Jinping's historic visit to Nepal and Kathmandu's growing tilt towards Beijing away from New Delhi.

Second, the bilateral relations with Bangladesh took a serious hit when India amended its Citizenship Act, 1955 to provide path for Indian citizenship to illegal immigrants of Hindu, Parsi, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain and Christian minorities in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. The bilateral relations with Dhaka hit rock bottom when Indian politicians and leaders made sweeping statements regarding alleged torture of Hindus in Bangladesh – so much that they fled the country and sought refuge in India. As a sign of protest, Bangladeshi officials canceled three high-level visits to India. The simmering tensions also led Modi to cancel his visit to Bangladesh on Sheikh Mujib's centenary celebrations. Dhaka also claimed that many Muslims from Indian state of Assam – fearing religious persecution in India – have illegally entered Bangladesh, thus creating a refugee crisis.

Third, since 2019 elections in Sri Lanka that brought Rajapaksa brothers to power, there has been a mark shift in relations between New Delhi and Colombo. In his first visit to India after assuming the office of prime minister, Mahinda Rajapaksa argued for revival of SAARC – that laid dormant since 2016. Despite, New Delhi's diplomatic push for Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) – that is effectively SAARC without Pakistan – Colombo took a stand that is arguably in support of Islamabad. Moreover, Colombo's presence as an important node in Beijing's "21st Century Maritime Silk Road" has made it a proverbial battle ground between India and China – a clash in which Beijing seems to be winning. Fourth, with the signing of US-Taliban deal in Doha, New Delhi's – diplomatic, moral and economic – investment in Kabul is under serious threat. Since the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, New Delhi has been supporting Northern Alliance – and every other anti-Pakistan element in Kabul – to sandwich Islamabad between two

hostile governments. Furthermore, Afghanistan was effectively used as a safe haven for India-sponsored anti-Pakistan terrorists. In the last two decades, India has used first Hamid Karzai and then Ashraf Ghani to spew venom against Pakistan. The 29-February agreement between US and Taliban has brought New Delhi's "House of Cards" crashing down. Not only was New Delhi kept at arm's length during Afghan peace process, the Taliban – the government-in-waiting – also castigated India. Sher Muhammad Stanikzai, the chief Taliban negotiator in Doha, said, "India has always played a negative role in Afghanistan. India supported traitors in the country." Lastly, PM Modi's decision to abrogate Article 370 of the Indian Constitution – that gave Indian-occupied Kashmir a special status in Indian Union – was nothing less than India shooting itself in the foot. The abrogation and the subsequent offensive diplomatic maneuvers by Pakistan not only brought the Kashmir dispute into limelight but also pushed the international community to unequivocally censure New Delhi of its gross human rights violations in the disputed Himalayan Kingdom; even India's strategic partners – US and France – felt cornered by Islamabad's aggressive diplomacy on Kashmir, and subsequently expressed their concerns on the deteriorating situation in the region. Several reports from international human rights organizations reprimanded New Delhi for its fascist actions in Indian-occupied Kashmir; and western publications – like New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post and Guardian etc – wrote numerous articles critical of Modi's heinous actions in Indian-occupied Kashmir.

In short, the proverbial tables have turned; Modi's sinister designs to "isolate Pakistan" have been ripped into shreds; New Delhi is gradually moving towards regional and global isolation. In order to arrest this downward spiral, Modi government is trying to buy its way out – without knowing that its economy is also facing a slowdown and that soon New Delhi won't be in a position to buy shiny new defence hardware from developed countries to get them to not censure Modi's fascist policies.

– *The writer is a retired government servant*

Heat and Humidity Hit the Heart

Prof Dr. Nusrat Ara Majid



Headaches, profuse sweating, fatigue, muscle cramps, Cold and clammy skin. Swollen feet and ankles also indicate that you are getting too hot. If you experience any of these symptoms, move immediately to a cooler place, drink lemonade water, take shower with cool water and lie down

HOT weather can lead to dehydration, heat exhaustion and heat stroke, but danger increases when humidity is added to this mix. When the temperature rises above 70 °C and humidity registers more than 70% one needs to be on alert.

Who are the people at risk:

1- People with high blood pressure, Heart disease [angina and previous heart attacks] lung disease and kidney disorders are the most vulnerable.

2- Elderly people – any one above 50 years of age.

3- Obesity, poor circulation, salt restricted diet, alcohol intake affects body's ability to cool itself.

4- Medication-diuretics, sedatives, tranquilizers and the medicines to control blood pressure.

Exercising in humid weather:

All those at increased risk should discuss the potential impact of exercise with their doctor.

Since body generates heat during exercise, humidity can affect the heart rate even at cooler temperature.

In humid weather, sweat evaporates slowly, so the body temperature continues to rise.

Fluid loss by sweating decreases blood volume, so the heart has to work harder and faster to get that smaller amount of blood to exercising muscles. That is why it is very important to re-

plenish the fluids lost by drinking plenty of water, but it is not the water alone that is being lost, it carries electrolytes like sodium and potassium in it.

It is a common mistake to replace water only, which leads to lethargy and aches and pains all over the body.

The best is to take water with half a teaspoonful of salt, sugar and fresh lime. We must learn the warning signs of excessive sweating, which are; Headaches, profuse sweating, fatigue, muscle cramps, Cold and clammy skin. Swollen feet and ankles also indicate that you are getting too hot. If you experience any of these symptoms, move immediately to a cooler place, drink lemonade water, take shower with cool water and lie down.

Indications to seek help:

If there is no improvement or the symptoms progress to include nausea, dizziness, confusion, rapid heart rate and fainting or warm dry skin with no sweating.

High blood pressure is the commonest cardiovascular problem all over the world. BP may be affected in summers because of the body's attempt to radiate heat, this coupled with humidity can cause more blood flow to the skin, which imposes a burden on heart, it has to beat faster and harder.

Risk is greater during covid-19 pandemic as the virus also affects the heart, lungs and the kidney.

It is very important to visit your cardiologist during this weather to adjust the dosage of BP controlling medicines. At each visit the doctor should ask for the following blood tests;

- 1- Serum Electrolytes [sodium, potassium].
- 2- Uric acid [dehydration tends to raise it].
- 3- A routine examination of urine, especially in females, as it can cause urinary tract infection.
- 4- Kidney function test-especially Creatinine [dehydration is very unkind to kidneys].

How to prevent humidity related health crisis:

- 1- Stay hydrated, with water, fruits and vegetables with high water content, such as cucumbers, water melon, berries, green leafy vegetables and tomatoes.
- 2- Avoid mid day heat. Humidity usually reaches peak between noon and 4pm.
- 3- Wear a hat with a brim to shield the face.
- 4- Eat smart-Avoid caffeinated beverages and alcohol.
- 5- Apply sun screen.

These measures can save you especially if you have high blood pressure and heart disease.

Angina patients should be very careful in using nitroglycerine spray, it may lead to fainting.

Briefs

Trump bans
TikTok and
WeChat

DNA

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump issued executive orders that would ban the social media app TikTok and WeChat from operating in the US in 45 days if they are not sold by their Chinese-owned parent companies. The orders, which use similar language, do not state that a certain amount of money from the sale needs to be sent to the US Treasury Department, which the President has been insisting on for several days. The order regarding TikTok prohibits after 45 days "any transaction by any person, or with respect to any property, subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, with ByteDance Ltd.," the Chinese company that owns the social media platform. The move turns up the pressure on negotiations over the popular video app's future through a potential sale. The dramatic back and forth began when Trump said last Friday night that he would ban TikTok from operating in the United States using emergency economic powers or an executive order.

'ML-I project
to strengthen
Pakistan,
China ties'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Railways Minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed on Friday has said that ML-I railway project will further strengthen relationship between Pakistan and China. Talking to Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing in Islamabad, the minister said that the project will be the first step toward modern railway system in Pakistan that will also bring economic development to the country. He said a new railway track of 1872 kilometer will be constructed between Karachi and Peshawar at an estimated cost of 6.8 billion dollars. He said the project will provide direct or indirect job opportunities to one hundred and fifty thousand people. Felicitating over approval of Pakistan's historic railway project ML-I under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor framework.

Beirut: Anti-
government
protests
break out

DNA

BEIRUT: Protesters clashed with Lebanese security forces at anti-government demonstrations in Beirut on Thursday. Officers deployed tear gas on dozens of people near parliament. Demonstrators were angered by Tuesday's devastating blast, which officials said was caused by 2,750 tonnes of ammonium nitrate stored unsafely since 2013. Many in Lebanon say government negligence led to the explosion, which killed at least 137 people and injured about 5,000 others. The explosion destroyed entire districts in the capital, with homes and businesses reduced to rubble. Dozens of people are still unaccounted for. The state news agency says 16 people have been taken into custody as part of an investigation announced by the government this week. Since the disaster two officials have resigned. MP Marwan Hamadeh stepped down on Wednesday, while Lebanon's ambassador to Jordan Tracy Chamoun stepped down on Thursday, saying the catastrophe showed the need for a change in leadership. Earlier on Thursday, French President Emmanuel Macron also visited the city and said Lebanon needed to see "profound change" from authorities. He also called for an international investigation into the disaster.



BEIRUT: Lebanese activists take part in a campaign to clean the damaged blast site and surroundings.— DNA

270 Chinese technicians to arrive
for Suki-Kinari project on Aug 12

The Chinese government had asked for special NOC accommodate their experts, and as such Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has already given a especial permit for the Air China plane CA555/6 to land in Islamabad on August 12

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Two hundred and seventy Chinese technicians are expected to arrive in Pakistan to provide expertise for the Suki-Kinari hydropower project, which is being built alongside Kunhar River in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. As per the details, around 270 Chinese technicians from Chengdu – the capital city of China's south west Sichuan province, will arrive in Pakistan via Air China's chartered plane CA555/6 on August 12

to assist and offer their technical expertise in the construction of Suki-Kinari hydropower project in the KP province. The Chinese government had asked for special NOC accommodate their experts, and as such Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has already given a especial permit for the Air China plane CA555/6 to land in Islamabad on August 12. Chinese officials have reassured that strict COVID-19 preventive and screening measures will be carried out and all passengers will be tested before departure from China. The

Chinese embassy had asked for a special waiver of coronavirus SOPs to accommodate the passengers. The embassy has also said that nucleic acid testing for COVID-19 will be conducted for all passengers before departure and only those who test negative will be allowed to travel. The Suki-Kinari hydropower project is being constructed on the Kunhar river in Kaghan valley located in Mansehra District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Suki-Kinari project will generate 870 megawatts of power when it will be completed in 2022. It is

one of Pakistan's largest private sector power development projects and is being constructed as part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor's 'Early Harvest' projects. The dam is expected to be 54.5 metres high and 336 metres wide when completed. The reservoir will span over 3.1 kilometres in length and will have a capacity to store 9 million cubic metres of water. It will constitute two spill ways and four 218 megawatts turbines. The total cost of the project is \$1.9 billion and it is being developed on the Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT)

model – which implies that the Chinese would operate it for 30 years after which the project would be transferred to the KP government. Once completed, the project will add 884 megawatts to the national grid and all four units are expected to become fully operational by 2022. The completion of this hydropower plant will play an important role in promoting Pakistan's industrial development and economic recovery. The project is expected to cost around US\$ 1.9 billion and is scheduled to be operational by year 2022.



ISLAMABAD: Gen Saad Khattak, Pakistan high commissioner to Sri Lanka meets DG ANF. – DNA

MoST to launch two
programs: Ch. Fawad

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Chaudhry Fawad Hussain Friday said the Ministry of Science and Technology will launch its next two programs related to the fields of Medical Engineering and Agriculture this month with the approval of the Prime Minister, Imran Khan. In a tweet, the federal minister informed that the first program is related to medical engineering. "We want the whole district of Sialkot to be given the same status as Gwadar in order to increase the export of 400 million dollars up to two billion dollars in the next two years", he said. Listing the other initiative, Chaudhry Fawad said the second program is to set up Hi-Tech agricultural farms ranging from two acres to twelve acres. These agricultural farms, equipped with the modern technology, will change the way of cultivation for the small farmers. Along with this, "We will also change the whole environment of our agriculture", Chaudhry Fawad said. – APP

Vaccine nationalism will
not help us: WHO

DNA

GENEVA: The World Health Organisation (WHO) warned Friday that "vaccine nationalism" will not save the world, stating that rich countries who do come up with a vaccine for coronavirus will not be able to benefit by hogging it and keeping the anecdote from poor nations. WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said

it would be in wealthier nations' interests to ensure that any vaccines eventually produced to protect against the new coronavirus were shared globally. "Vaccine nationalism is not good, it will not help us," Tedros told the Aspen Security Forum in the United States, via video-link from in Geneva. "For the world to recover faster, it has to recover together, because

it's a globalised world: the economies are intertwined. Part of the world or a few countries cannot be a safe haven and recover. "The damage from COVID-19 could be less when those countries who have the funding commit to this," he said. "They are not giving charity to others: they are doing it for themselves, because when the rest of the world recovers and opens up, they also benefit."

Lawmakers
concerned
over IIOJK
situation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Two influential United States lawmakers have expressed concern over the prevailing situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) in the backdrop of abrogation of special status by the government of India in August last year. The Foreign Affairs Committee of US Congress, in a letter to Indian Foreign Minister S Jaishankar, expressed concern over the situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The letter was written by Chairman of US House Committee on Foreign Affairs Elliot Engel on 5 August, the first anniversary of Indian illegal action of revoking the special status of the territory. The committee while expressing concern over conditions in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir termed situation in IIOJK as devastating. Referring to his last year visit to India, the senator Robert Menendez, another Ranking Member of the Committee said he had expressed his concerns over Kashmir situation with senior Indian leadership.

"Three Gorges" drives development: Cheng Xizhong

DNA

BEIJING: Chinese scholar Prof. Cheng Xizhong said "Three Gorges" Dam will play an important role in Pakistan's overall socio-economic development. In an article carried by Gwadar Pro on Friday, he said after successful construction, Diamer-Bhasha Dam, 272 meters high, will become another large hydropower project in Pakistan after Tarbela and Mangla hydropower projects. Construction of the dam will be jointly undertaken by Power Construction Corporation of China and Frontier Works Organization (FWO) of Pakistan. It is planned to be completed in 2028 with a to-

tal installed capacity of 4.5 million kilowatts, which can deliver 18 billion kilowatts of electricity to the State Grid every year. According to Cheng, for many years, construction of Diamer-Bhasha Dam in Pakistan has been an issue of public concern. Due to well-known reasons, the list of 22 major projects in the first phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) could not include the project. In 2013, Pakistan's Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) issued a request for proposal to American, British, German companies, and after that, also asked the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the United States and China for



financing assistance. In July 2018, Pakistan established a fund to raise funds for the project at home and abroad. Some years ago, some Pakistani officials suggested that this project might be included in the list of CPEC. In his view the projects entering the list of the CPEC need

sufficient preliminary feasibility studies. Diamer-Bhasha Dam is located in a steep terrain with great technical difficulties. Therefore, technical studies are particularly required. In the absence of feasibility and technical studies, the two sides were unable to have specific project discussions, nor could the project be included in the CPEC list. Diamer-Bhasha Dam will be the largest water conservancy project in Pakistan. When construction is completed, it will be the world's highest and largest roller compacted concrete (RCC) dam project, known as Pakistan's "Three Gorges". The Chinese scholar further said that the construction of Diamer-Bhasha hydropower project has

at least six major benefits. First, it is conducive to local drought and waterlogging prevention and improvement of hydrological environment. Second, it will produce a large amount of low-cost and environment-friendly electricity to alleviate the local power supply shortage. And third, it will promote the local economic development and improve living conditions of the local people; fourth, it will promote the development of steel, cement and construction industries and create a large number of jobs. Fifth, it will promote the development of tourism in northern Pakistan and sixth, it will drive the development of the entire northern part of Pakistan.

China
sentences
another
Canadian
to death

DNA

BEIJING: China sentenced another Canadian to death on drugs charges Friday, the second in two days to be handed the punishment, as tensions soar between Beijing and Ottawa. The Foshan Intermediate People's Court in the country's southern Guangdong province said Ye Jianhui had been sentenced for trafficking and manufacturing drugs, and would have all his assets confiscated. According to the state-run Global Times, authorities seized more than 217 kilograms of white crystals containing MDMA from Ye and five others in 2016. The rest of the group were also sentenced on Friday and one other death sentence was issued, while the others were given lesser penalties. It comes a day after a court in the provincial capital Guangzhou handed a death sentence to Canadian national Xu Weihong on a charge of making drugs.

NAB
constitutes
Special Cell
for white
collar crimes

ISLAMABAD: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Friday constituted a Special Cell for conducting effective investigations of White Collar Crimes. According to reliable sources, the Cell comprising experts in their respective fields included investigation officers, bankers, chartered accountants, income tax lawyers, forensic and financial experts to assist NAB in the white collar crimes investigations. They will also help Cell in effectively dealing with legal lacunae in white collar crime probes. The Special Cell would also get help of Security and Exchange Commission of Pakistan, (SECP), Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and other relevant departments in white collar crime investigations. – APP

FIA, PTA
tackling
fraudsters,
Committee
told

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senate Committee on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety in its meeting was given list of the 2700 officers who themselves or in the name of their spouses were drawing money from the Benazir Income Support Programme. The Committee was told that officers working in BISP have been terminated from service and complete list has been shared with FIA to carry out an investigation in their cases. The Committee also asked the department as to what action is being taken against the fraudulent messages being circulated in the name of BISP. The Committee was told that in coordination with FIA and PTA around 3000 phone numbers have been blocked, 440 FIRs have been filed and there is a cybercrime working group under which vigilance exercises are being conducted. The Committee appreciated the work of the ministry and department in this regard. The Committee was also given a briefing about the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) and its schemes. The Committee was told about the Grant programme and loan programme of the Fund working for people below poverty line. Poverty, human development, and food scarcity work as indicators where the fund is to be dispersed. As first step associations are established in community which help to determine needs and areas. Currently 38,000 schemes of PPAF are underway in different areas. Under the Assets Transfer programme a total of 180000 people will be given assets to run their livelihood and 25000 have already been given the money.