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Pakistan a great country to live and serve: Indonesian envoy

Palestinian envoy briefs PPP leaders

APC to be called soon, says Shahbaz Sharif



INDONESIAN AMBASSADOR SAYS

Pakistan a great country to live and serve

It was a complement for me when President Alvi told me that from now on you will be Pakistan's ambassador to Indonesia: Ambassador Iwan S Amri

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The outgoing Ambassador of Indonesia Iwan S Amri has said he wished he could stay more in Pakistan for Pakistan was indeed a great country to live and serve. He said during his four years and five months tenure he made all out efforts to contribute towards further promoting and strengthening of bilateral relations. Ambassador Amri made these remarks during a farewell lunch he hosted for the media people. The lunch was hosted at the Indonesian embassy. Ambassador Amri is leaving Pakistan next month. On Tuesday he paid a farewell call on the President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

President Arif Alvi lauds Ambassador Amri services

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi has said that the isolation of Muslims by the Indian government is a matter of grave concern and it is the responsibility of the world to hold India accountable for the repressive actions against minority groups. The President stated this while talking to the outgoing Ambassador of Indonesia, Iwan Suyudhie Amri, who paid a farewell call on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. The President said that Pakistan highly valued its ties with Indonesia, and wanted to further expand bilateral relations in areas of trade, economy and defence. He thanked the government of Indonesia for very ably steering the discussion in the UN Security Council on Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). The President also appreciated the contributions made by the outgoing Ambassador towards improving the bilateral relations between the two brotherly countries. — DNA

Minister of Foreign Affairs. Ambassador Amri told media people that President Arif Alvi asked me about my impressions and he abruptly told the President that he

wished to stay here more. "It was a complement for me when President Alvi told me that from now on you will be Pakistan's ambassador to Indonesia".

The outgoing ambassador further said during his tenure he tried to promote Indonesia in Pakistan and Pakistan in Indonesia. He noted with satisfaction that number of Indonesian students in Pakistan had increased while many Pakistani students went to Indonesia either on scholarships or thru other students' programmes. The ambassador also recognized role of media people adding whatever he achieved during his tenure with regard to promotion of bilateral relations, media had an important role to play. He hoped media would continue to extend its generous cooperation to his successor also, who is coming from London and expected to be here somewhere in November this year.



ISLAMABAD: Indonesian outgoing Ambassador, Mr. Iwan Suyudhie Amri called on President Dr Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr. — DNA

APC to be called soon: Shahbaz

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday expressed his resolve to unite all opposition parties of parliament and improve mutual consultations among them. Shehbaz Sharif, while addressing media persons after a meeting with Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman, said that encouraging discussions were carried out on political situation and other important issues of the country. Shehbaz Sharif also announced that All Parties Conference (APC) will soon be convened and all parties will be part of it. Opposition Leader of National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif also lashed out government and said that there was no shortage of sugar during his tenure and on the other hand, oil prices are at lowest level in the world but petroleum prices have skyrocketed in Pakistan.

Lankan envoy lauds SAARC bodies' role

President SAARC CCI Iftikhar Ali Malik said that apex and allied bodies of SAARC are the true representation of the people of the region

DNA

LAHORE: Vice Admiral Mohan Wijewickrama, the High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to Pakistan, Tuesday lauded the role of apex and allied bodies of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), working together to defuse the political rifts among the member countries and keeping the prime motive of regional integration alive. This was stated by him while talking to a delegation comprising Iftikhar Ali Malik, President SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, VP SAARC Chamber Pakistan chapter Senator Haji Ghulam Ali, member executive committee Zubair Ahmad Ali Malik and acting Secretary General SAARC

Chamber Zulfikar Ali Butt. He added that's at this very low political tide on regional cooperation, where the 20th SAARC Summit is suspended for the fifth year, the SAARC allied bodies and sub-committees are playing an instrumental role in taking SAARC forward. He felicitated Iftikhar Ali Malik for assuming the office of President SAARC Chamber, Senator Haji Ghulam Ali as VP and Zubair Malik as member executive committee and hoped that new leadership will deliver

to the best of their abilities for help achieving the principal objectives of SAARC. Responding to the felicitation Iftikhar Ali Malik said that apex and allied bodies of SAARC are the true representation of the people of the region and speak their mind and hearts. He added that the role of chamber is instrumental in promoting regional economic integration in South Asia and SAARC Chamber is most vibrant and active body of SAARC. He said that SAARC Chamber is actively engaged in business to business relationships, to voice the interest of private sector of region and serve to promote exchange of commercial, technical, industrial management and scientific information, education and know-how amongst its members in South Asia.



Briefs

PM can appoint anyone as adviser: IHC

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court Chief Justice Athar Minallah, while hearing a case on Tuesday pertaining to the appointment of premier's aide Mirza Shahzad Akbar, noted that according to the Constitution, the prime minister can appoint anyone as an adviser. The high court chief justice was hearing a petition filed yesterday by Advocate Pervez Zahoor that challenged Akbar's appointment as a special assistant to the prime minister. The petition urged the court to declare Akbar's appointment null and void and argued that Supreme Court judge Justice Qazi Faez Isa had also questioned the aide's credentials and his appointment as SAPM on accountability. The petition filed in the IHC further alleged that Akbar was "using political influence".

NAB chairman reviews mega corruption cases

LAHORE: Chairman National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Justice Javed Iqbal visited NAB Lahore office, where Director General NAB Lahore along with investigation teams reviewed the progress of investigations in mega corruption cases against Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar, Department excise and taxation officers and officials in issuance of liquor license to private hotel. — DNA

Palestinian envoy briefs PPP leaders

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of the State of Palestine to Pakistan Ahmed Jawad Rabi'i met at the embassy headquarters this afternoon, with a delegation consisting of three members of the Pakistani Parliament, including two members of the Senate, Senator Sherry Rahman, and Senator Raza Rabbani, Chairman of the Senate. Previously, a member of Parliament / Faisal Karim Kundi, former Deputy Speaker of Parliament. The Ambassador presented them with a picture of the latest developments in Palestine, the repercussions of the deal of the century, the



Israeli annexation plans for more of the occupied Palestinian territories, and the tripartite agreement between the UAE, Israel and the United States of America. They affirmed Pakistan's historical position in support of the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the establishment of their independent state with Jerusalem as its capital. They also affirmed the steadfast position of the government and people of Pakistan not to recognize Israel, and asked the ambassador to convey their greetings to President Mahmoud Abbas.

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Dr Sohail appointed new Karachi Commissioner

DNA

KARACHI: The Sindh government on Tuesday appointed Sohail Rajput the new Karachi Commissioner after transferring Iftikhar Shalawani, who was serving as the city's commissioner, to the post of secretary Local Government & Housing Town Planning Department. Chief Minister Sindh Murad Ali Shah approved Rajput's appointment, who is a Grade 21 officer, as Commissioner Karachi. A senior government officer who joined the civil service in 1991, Dr Rajput was serving at the post of additional secretary at the Ministry of Finance before his appointment as commissioner of the Karachi Division. He has previously been appointed to the posts of secretary local government Sindh board, secretary finance Sindh.

Peshawar-Torkham section included in ML-1 project

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan approved to expand the ML-1 project till Torkham via Peshawar on the request of Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Sahibzada Noor-ul-Haq Qadri. The spokesman of the ministry told media on Tuesday that the construction of Peshawar Torkham section was included in the ML-1 (Mainline-1) railway project of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) worth \$6.8 billion. Minister for Railways Sheikh Rashid Ahmed also supported inclusion of the new section in the dream project. Sheikh Rashid will present a detailed report before the cabinet on the expansion of ML-1 project to Torkham. The Mainline-1 railway project of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) worth \$6.8 billion would be constructed on cost-sharing basis between the govern-

ments of China and Pakistan. The ML-1 project includes the dualisation and upgrading of the 1,872-km railway track from Peshawar to Karachi and is a major milestone for the second phase of CPEC. The package-1 of the ML-1 will be completed between January 2021 to December 2024 and will cover the construction of the 527-km long track between Peshawar, Rawalpindi and Lahore. Package-2 will be completed from January 2022 to December 2026 and will upgrade the 521-km long track from Lahore to Hyderabad. Package-3 will upgrade the 740-km Rawalpindi-Peshawar and Hyderabad-Multan track. Under the project, the existing 2,655-km long track will be upgraded. The speed of passenger trains will increase from 65 to 110 km/hour to 165 km/hour and the line capacity will increase from 34 to 137/171 trains each way per day.

Govt to restructure Ruet-e-Hilal Committee

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has decided to restructure country's premium moon sighting body, the Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee (RHC). Sources privy to the development said that the ministry of Religious Affairs has finalized its draft of recommendations for restructuring of the RHC. The draft has been sent to the ministry of Law and Justice. According to the draft, the current chairman and members of the Ruet-e-Hilal Committee would be changed and new chairman and the members would be appointed. Furthermore, fines have also been recommended over announcement in contradiction with the government committee. The Ruet-e-Hilal Committee was set up in 1974 under a resolution passed by the National Assembly of Pakistan, and no rules and regulations for the functioning of the committee have been drafted till date.

Israeli negligence endangers life of Palestinians

In an alarming trend, Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem comprise some 50 percent of the 4,000 verified new COVID-19 patients in the city, according to recent data from Israel's Jerusalem Municipality

DNA

JERUSALEM: In response to a renewed COVID-19 outbreak in Jerusalem, which now appears to be more severe than the first wave, Adalah — The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel has taken a new series of legal actions to compel Israeli authorities to protect the health of Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem. In an alarming trend, Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem comprise some 50 percent of the 4,000 verified new COVID-19 patients in the city, according to recent data from Israel's Jerusalem Municipality.

Forty-one percent of East Jerusalem Palestinians recently tested for COVID-19 have been verified as infected; this is more than 11 times the national rate. The Jerusalem Municipality reported on 13 August 2020 that the number of newly-verified infections in East Jerusalem during the preceding 24 hour-period reached 188. Adalah took three urgent legal actions this past week in response to the renewed COVID-19 outbreak in East Jerusalem. Lack of COVID-19 test centers for Palestinians beyond Jerusalem Separation Wall. The COVID-19 testing centers that were opened in Shuafat refugee camp and Kufir Aqab during the first

Israeli authorities order Palestinians to stop work in Hebron area

HEBRON: Israeli authorities ordered today a number of Palestinian residents to stop work on their lands in the village of Birin in the southern West Bank district of Hebron, according to a local activist. Coordinator of the popular and national committees in southern Hebron, Ratab al-Jabour, said Israeli forces stormed the village of Birin and handed five residents notices ordering them to stop work on their lands. The activist said that Israeli authorities' measures in the said village aim at forcing residents to leave their land in order to seize it for the benefit of expanding nearby illegal Israeli settlements. Earlier today, Israeli settlers set up a new outpost in the village, which is usually a prelude to building a new illegal settlement. — DNA

wave of the outbreak, following Adalah's Israeli Supreme Court petition, were

shut down after several weeks and never reopened. But there are now more

than 300 verified COVID-19 patients in these two neighborhoods alone, according to data from the Jerusalem Municipality. Adalah sent an urgent letter to the director-general of the Israeli Health Ministry on 16 August 2020 demanding that it reopen COVID-19 test sites for Palestinians living in these neighborhoods. Due to poor infrastructure and limits on the quantities of water sold from Israel's Mekorot national water carrier, the Ramallah-Al Quds company has been supplying water to Palestinian residents of Kufir Aqab and the surrounding East Jerusalem neighborhoods. This company, which has operated

in these areas even prior to the 1967 Israeli occupation of East Jerusalem and the West Bank, can only supply water to these areas three days a week. The 70,000 Palestinian residents living in these neighborhoods are therefore forced to store water under unsupervised conditions which do not allow the implementation of standards recommended by the World Health Organization guidelines for combating the spread of COVID-19. Adalah sent a letter to Israeli authorities on 16 August 2020 calling on them to ensure a regular supply of water to the residents of Kufir Aqab and surrounding neighborhoods, as mandated by law.

Pakistan gas demand to be three times its production

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will be facing a huge shortfall of 4,800 million cubic feet per day in local production of gas and its demand by fiscal year 2027-28. The country's demand for natural gas will approximately reach 6,700 mcmcf, said the report 'State of the Regulated Petroleum Industry 2018-19' shared by Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority. The indigenous gas supply will stand at approximately 1,900 mcmcf during fiscal year 2027-28. The possible gap can be bridged through enhancement in indigenous gas exploration and production through incentivizing this sector.

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Briefs

NDMA issues rain advisory

DNA
ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority has issued a list of instructions following the Met department's rain prediction for the week. It issued an advisory to ensure precautions are taken to avoid loss of life or property during the rains. The Pakistan Meteorological Department has issued an alert regarding urban flooding in Karachi and several other areas in Sindh and Balochistan. It has forecast heavy rains in Karachi, Hyderabad, Thatta, Badin, Shaheed Benazirabad, Dadu, Tharparker, Nagarparker, Mirpurkhas, Islam Kot, Umar Kot, Sanghar, Sukkur and Larkana from Monday to Wednesday. Rain/thunder-showers are also expected in Lasbella, Khuzdar, Awaran, Barkhan, Zhob, Loralai, Kohlu and Sibbi during Monday and Tuesday, according to the PMD. NDMA said strict COVID-19 guidelines should be followed in case of any mass gathering or rescue operations. It has said tourists should be told about the weather condition.

Medicinal imports increase 11.60%

ISLAMABAD: The imports of medicinal products witnessed increase of 11.60 during July 2020 as compared to the corresponding period of last fiscal year. Pakistan imported medicinal products of worth US \$ 89.337 million during July 2020 as compared to the imports of US \$80.048 million during July 2019, showing growth of 11.60 percent, according to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). In terms of quantity, Pakistan imported 2,083 metric tons of medicinal products during the period under review as compared to the imports of 1,836 metric tons during corresponding period of last year, showing increase of 13.45 percent in term of quantity. On month-on-month basis, the medicinal imports however witnessed decrease of 19.87 percent during July 2020 as compared to the imports of \$111.495 million in June 2020, the PBS data revealed. - APP

NCHD striving to empower people

ISLAMABAD: National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) is striving to empower the people at the grassroots level to become the agents of social change. According to NCHD senior official, "We are deeply committed to promoting learning for all people especially for the most vulnerable adults and children who are most difficult to reach". - APP



ISLAMABAD: The Millennium Education signs a Memorandum of Understanding with ISE Tower REIT Management Company. CEO / Founder Ch. Faisal Mushtaq TME and team visited ISE Tower and met Chairman ISE Towers Mr. Zahid Latif Khan and team. Both the parties agreed to work for the mutual benefit for both institutions whereby TME offered discounts for shareholders and employees of ISE REIT Management Co. - DNA

Ahmed Faraz never compromised on principles, says Shibli Faraz

While paying tribute to Ahmed Faraz, Chairman of the Pakistan Academy of Letters Dr. Yousuf Khushk said that late Ahmed Faraz was ambassador of entire Pakistan's literary circle

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz said on Tuesday that famous Urdu poet Ahmed Faraz was a courageous person who never compromised on his principles and ideology. Talking to media after offering fateha at the graveyard of the great poet on the occasion of his 12th death anniversary, he said that he had dedicated his life for a cause and he never deviated from that cause. Shibli said that the love and affection that his father Ahmed Faraz

received from the people of Pakistan was unprecedented. He said that the constituency of the late legendary poet was humanity, love and peace and he raised his voice against oppression in all parts of the world be it Kashmir, Palestinian or any African country. He had universal approach but focus of his thoughts was Pakistan. The minister said that poetry of great poets had many layers of meanings and we should try to understand the hidden message of those writers. He has always tak-

en guidance from the poetry of his father, he added. He said that he was thankful to the people of Pakistan who also gave him love and affection due to his father Ahmed Faraz. While paying tribute to Ahmed Faraz, Chairman of the Pakistan Academy of Letters Dr. Yousuf Khushk said that late Ahmed Faraz was ambassador of entire Pakistan's literary circle. He said Ahmed Faraz was founder of the Pakistan Academy of Letter. Earlier, the minister laid wreath

at the grave of late poet Ahmed Faraz and offered Fateha. Later speaking at a ceremony at Academy of Letters to pay homage to late Ahmed Faraz, he said that on the occasion of the birth and death anniversaries of literary figures, their contribution should be discussed and highlighted. He said that writings of poets and other literary figures are a reflection of the times in which they live. Their writings not only highlight the problems and issues of their times but also provide solution to them,

Shibli said. He said that unfortunately the society had been degenerated and ethics and values had lost their importance and wealth had become the criterion of respect. He said he had emotional attachment with Academy of Letters because its founder was his father and expressed the hope that it would expand its canvass. He said that Ahmed Faraz was a unique literary personality who had a strong bond with the common man and whose message was love and sincerity. - APP

E-commerce can create 2 mln jobs in next two years: RCCI

RCCI President remarked that Pakistan has a huge participation in the global mobile market, with over 160m mobile phone subscribers and around 150m Internet users

RAWALPINDI: E-commerce in Pakistan has a huge potential for creating 2 million jobs and boosting the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) up to the level of \$ 40 billion in next couple of years. Transformation is required to promote the Information, Communications and Technology sectors to reposition Pakistan in the digital economy. The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) President Saboor Malik in a statement urged the government of Pakistan to adopt new dimensions of economy as the Digital platform has been rapidly growing around the world and countries like Pakistan are still far behind in this race. The federal cabinet had already approved the E-commerce policy for promoting the digital culture and paperless trade to help enhance the trade volume. However digital platforms for e payments is the hour of need. More than 66 percent of payments for e-shopping are being made as Cash on Delivery (COD) which does not reflect the true sense of digital platform, he added. RCCI President remarked that Pakistan has a huge participation in the global mobile market, with over 160 million mobile phone subscribers and around 150 million Internet users. Digital transactions are increasing rapidly and have already reached 20 percent of overall transactions in the developed economies. Digitalisation will have a serious impact on jobs transformation, he cautioned. He suggested that the government must overhaul the whole banking infrastructure and encourage businesses, retailers, petrol pumps, PIA, Railways ticketing, superstores, schools and colleges to introduce payment gateways and banks should offer credit cards to businessmen. - DNA

Ayesha appointed IFA Women wing president

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Futsal Federation (Women Wing) Chairperson Dr Afshan Malik has appointed Ayesha Aslam as the President of Islamabad Futsal Association (Women Wing). Ayesha was appointed on the recommendation of Islamabad Futsal Association (IFA) Chairman Chaudhry Saleem Zia, said a press release issued here. Dr Afshan Malik and Chaudhry Saleem Zia have expressed hope that the appointment of Ayesha Aslam would promote women's football in the federal capital. - APP

Police launch search operation

RAWALPINDI: Police on special directives of CPO Rawalpindi on Tuesday launched a special search operation in Dhoke Ratta and adjoining areas in the jurisdiction of Ratta Police Station, said a police spokesman. The spokesman said the search operations to net criminals and proclaimed offenders were regularly being conducted. - APP

Founder group expected to clean sweep ICCI polls

DNA
ISLAMABAD: As per schedule elections of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry has entered into its final phase. The final voter list will be published today. Papers will be given on August 28 between 9 am and 4 pm after paying non-refundable fee of Rs 25,000. Nomination papers to be submitted during office hours on September 1. Six

members of both associate class and corporate class will be elected. Polling will be held on September 19. Total number of voters of associate class is 1333 while 987 voters of corporate class will cast their votes. Members of Executive Committee will elect the top executives of ICCI. General body's meeting will take place on September 30 where elected officials take their oath. The founder group and

united group are contesting in elections. In last three elections founder group did a clean sweep whereas united group doesn't have enough candidates and they are trying to make an adjustment with the founder group. But again a clean sweep victory founder group is expected. United group may not perform well even in these elections, for they do not have a leadership that could ensure victory for them.

CTP launches campaign against signal violators

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi City Traffic Police (CTP) has launched a campaign to check traffic signal violations and imposed fines on the rules violators. According to a police spokesman, CTP on the directives of Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Rawalpindi Syed Ali Akbar launched the campaign and imposed fines on 810 violators.

Special campaigns were also run last month while under a campaign, the citizens were also being educated regarding traffic rules and road safety, he said adding, Education Wing of Traffic Police was making efforts to spread awareness so that the road journey could be made safe and sound. He said, the CTO had directed the Education Wing

of CTP to accelerate the awareness campaign about traffic rules and road safety. He said, the road users should strictly observe traffic signs, signals, all other traffic rules and regulations. The CTO said, the citizens during awareness campaign should be guided that the use of mobile phone while driving was dangerous which must be avoided. - APP

Albayrak's special cleanup operations underway

RAWALPINDI: Albayrak Waste Management is carrying out special cleanup operations to ensure cleanliness in and around Imambargahs and on procession routes. Mechanical sweeping and washing as well as manual sweeping is being carried out in the surroundings of mosques and Imambargahs. Albayrak has deployed water bowsters in the field for washing operations whereas the sanitary staff ensures the sprinkle of lime, a spokesman said. Rose water would also be sprinkled while extra workers would be appointed to clean waste containers by using heavy machinery and also to clean nullahs, he said. The organizers of Majlis-e-Azza and mourning processions are also being requested to co-operate with the Company besides the leaves of the workers have been cancelled to perform operation efficiently to maintain cleanliness. Albayrak Operations Department and other relevant staff would remain in the field so that the participants of Muharram processions would not face any inconvenience regarding cleanliness on 9th and 10th of Muharram, added the spokesperson. - APP

PNCA starts online musical evening series

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA) have started an online series of musical evenings titled 'ur Sajjan' for music lovers where regional and national singers will perform in live sessions on Facebook. This initiative has been taken on the directives of DG PNCA Dr Fozia Saeed in which every evening there will be a different celebrity guest who will perform their famous songs in regional or national language. This program will be held on Friday evenings where famous folk and national singers will perform for the audiences in different languages. These music performances will broadcast through live sessions on PNCA's official Facebook pages. The aim of these live concerts is to provide entertainment to the home bound people and help the lockdown artists of remote areas. - APP

IRSA releases 251,000 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 251,000 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 308,400 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1546.50 feet, which was 150.50 feet higher than its dead level 1386 feet. Water inflow in the dam was recorded as 180,300 cusecs and outflow as 134,600 cusecs. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1238.90 feet, which was 198.90 feet higher than its dead level of 1040 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 21,700 cusecs and 10,000 cusecs respectively. - APP

Unified syllabus to be implemented, says Shafqat Mehmood

The govt had adopted a comprehensive policy for containing corona pandemic and it was succeeded for the purpose as its smart lockdown policy was being acknowledged at international level

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Shafqat Mehmood on Monday said the government was making a unified syllabus for all and it would be implemented on government and private institutions at the same time. Talking to a private TV channel, he said the government had taken services of the best people of the country who had great expertise for formulating the syllabus. The minister said primary education should be given in the mother language or national. He said when the government came in to power the

big challenge o save the country from declaring to bankruptcy, adding the government inherited fragile economy and destroyed institutions as well. He said the government was making its all out efforts to make strengthen the national economy and now the international organisations including Moody's were being acknowledged that the national economy was strengthening day by day. Replying to a question, he said the present government had decreased current account deficit from \$20 billion to three and increasing foreign remittances during

the COVID-19 pandemic. He said Rs of 150 billion had distributed among the poor and needy people under the Ehsas Programme during coronavirus pandemic and save the lives of the masses from deadly virus and hunger at the same time. The government had adopted a comprehensive policy for containing coronavirus pandemic and it was succeeded for the purpose as its smart lockdown policy was being acknowledged at international level. To another query, he said the government had nothing with National Accountability Bureau (NAB) official

affairs but it would not make any compromise over the issue of accountability of corrupt people, adding those who had looted national wealth with restlessly they must face the punish. He said the present government first time held investigations against sugar mafia and public the report about the matter. He said Nawaz Sharif should return and face the cases which were registered against him otherwise the government would take legal action in that regard as it could adopt different ways for returning him back. - APP

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Islamabad POST
11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza,
G-8 Markaz, ISLAMABAD-PAKISAN
Ph: 051-2261960, 051-2266165



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Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.comWebsite: www.islamabadpost.com.pk

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad

Strategic implications of China-Iran deal

MUHAMMAD OMAR IFTIKHAR

THE 25-year strategic deal between China and Iran will be viewed with great interest by key South Asian countries especially Pakistan and India. This USD \$400 billion deal will see China and Iran collaborate in telecommunications, banking, infrastructure, and sharing military intelligence. The China-Iran nexus will possibly have positive impacts on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). While India will be witnessing the China-Iran deal with caution, the US and its incoming President and his administration will also diligently observe how this relationship flourishes. China is not using its military might to exercise its influence over the world. It is using economic ambitions to build commercial ties with the world's leading countries having geopolitical and geostrategic importance. The CPEC, China-Iran deal, and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) are key examples in this regard. With the China-Iran deal, the Chabahar Port in Iran will have a renewed importance. It is quite possible that the Chabahar Port and Pakistan's Gwadar Port will not strive for a one-on-one competition but will work in collaboration. Pakistan-Iran ties may also be bolstered now that Iran has signed a strategic deal with China. It is expected that under the China-Iran deal, China will buy Iran's oil at a cheap price to help it fuel its growing industries. On the other hand, Iran will receive monetary backing from China. While China and Iran deal will have major effects on China's ties with the US and India, there is another player – Russia. Recently, Russia-China ties may have become a bit sour. This happened when Russia sold arms to India. Furthermore, reports suggest that India desires Russia to become a part of the US-led Indo-Pacific Initiative. This may be done to counter China's increasing economic impact in the region and over the West. It is also likely that Iran may be included in the CPEC that will add stimulus to the project while expanding its geographical outlook.



Smog season ahead

THE masks may not come off as yet in Pakistan even if the Covid-19 threat that has loomed large over the world subsides. Wide parts of the country are once again in danger of walking into the misty, foggy phase, referred to as the fifth season in the calendar of acutely suffering places such as Lahore. The reference is of course to the infamous smog that descends around October-November. Mugginess has been on the increase, leaving masses of people demanding rescue action and leading to calls locally and internationally for emergency measures. A case filed in the Lahore High Court has drawn attention to the environmental risk involved. It is part of a campaign in which individuals and groups – from students to Amnesty International – have urged life-saving action against the deadly annual smog. During the proceedings last week, the court asked all Punjab's deputy commissioners to ensure a ban on the burning of stubble in the winter. Stubble-burning, which is undertaken to spruce up the ground for the cultivation of the next crop, has been identified as a major contributor to the smog. Pakistanis have blamed India for releasing pollutants into the atmosphere. It is said the direction of the wind is such that the particles come towards Pakistani territory, and that farmers in India resort to stubble-burning as the most convenient if not the only technique to rid the soil of the unwanted remains of the previous harvest. Together with this claim, there is evidence that the burning of bushes etc by growers on this side too is a major cause, hence the directions to the deputy commissioners – who should have the authority at their disposal to block unwanted releases into the environment. The court's message must also act as a reminder to everyone concerned to act in advance. There is no reason for any authority, which can take some preventive measures now, to behave in November as if it has been struck by the smog out of the blue.

Goodbye Prof Dr Malik Hussain Mubbashar

Khalid bin Majeed

It was very easy for him to live a comfortable life in England after completing his education yet he decided to come back and dedicate his life to serve his own community and train a whole generation of psychiatrists. With his departure, we have lost a symbol of courage and continuous struggle, who would teach others how to behave even in the most adverse circumstances

SOME people come into our lives and leave footprints on our hearts and minds. You don't come across many of them and when you do, they leave a lasting impression. Prof Dr Malik Hussain Mubbashar was one of such very few people I have come across in my life. I first met him in year 2015 when he joined Pakistan Red Crescent Society to head its National Ambulance Service College in Islamabad. During the last six years, there has not been a single time when I didn't enjoy speaking to him, listening to his insightful and real-life observations and creative ideas, and feeling upbeat by his inspirational remarks filled with message of hope and optimism. Sorrow has filled my heart as Prof Dr Malik

Hussain Mubbashar silently closed the door of life and departed for the final abode on Aug 10. Just days before his death, he called me and expressed his desire to complete his 'mission' of setting up a 'National Disaster Management University' for the Pakistan Red Crescent Society as well as reviving the National Ambulance Service College. However, the destiny had something else for him in store.

Born in 1945, Prof Dr Malik Hussain Mubbashar did his MBBS from King Edward Medical College in 1968 and MRCP and FRCP from UK. He was Fellow National Academy of Medical Sciences, New York Academy of Sciences, American Psychiatric Association and Royal Society of Medicine. He received Companion of Honour, Council of University of Manchester, Queen's Anniversary Prizes (UK), in 1999. The Government of Pakistan awarded him with Sitara-i-Imtiaz in recognition of his outstanding research work and achievement in the field of medicine in 1986, and later with Hilal-e-Imtiaz in 2002. In recognition of his meritorious services in the field of mental health, he was conferred as Honorary Lieutenant Colonel in Armed Forces of Pakistan in 1987. During his professional career, Prof Dr Malik Hussain Mubbashar has been Vice Chancellor of University of Health Sciences, Lahore; Director, WHO Collaborating Centre for Mental Health Research and Training, Rawalpindi; Chairman, Global Mental Health Network; Member, International Neurosciences Faculty, Copenhagen; Member, WHO Expert Committee on Mental Health & Drug Dependence, WHO Headquarters, Geneva; Dean, Faculty of Psychiatry, College of Physicians and Surgeons, Pakistan; Visiting Professor, Institute of Psychiatry, University of London; and Advisor, National Institute of Psychology, Islamabad.

Prof Dr Malik Hussain Mubbashar also served on Editorial Advisory Board of several reputed journals, like Journal of American Medical Association, New York; Journal of Mental Health, Oxford, United Kingdom; Medicine International,

al, New Zealand and Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal; London. He also has the honour of being author of 28 books related to medical field, like "Mental Health in New Millennium: Freud, Freedom and Future", "Al-Junun: Mental Illnesses in Islamic World", "Psychiatry in Developing Countries", "Common Mental Disorders in Primary Care", and "Reproductive Health- A Manual for family Physicians".

A highly acclaimed psychiatrist, academician, research scholar and medical educationist with over 40-year experience of teaching and practicing psychiatry, Prof Dr Malik Hussain Mubbashar was a multifaceted personality and a source of inspiration for many in and outside Pakistan. Being a professional par excellence, he was frequently termed a 'giant' in the arena of international psychiatry. It was he who made mental health recognized in Pakistan and it was through his efforts that psychiatry departments

were established at many of the government-run hospitals in Pakistan. Today, more than 80 per cent of psychiatrists in Pakistan are his students. PRCS Chairman Abrar ul Haq had a special place for Prof Dr Malik Hussain Mubbashar in his heart. He had recently included him in the Advisory Board of the PRCS to benefit from his professional excellence, commitment and dedication towards humanitarian cause.

Besides being a world-acclaimed psychiatrist, Prof Dr Malik Hussain Mubbashar was also a spiritual soul and an extraordinary human being, a very caring father and a humane professional. He wrote his autobiography titled 'Meem Bashar', which tells the story of integrity and honesty of a person even in the toughest times of his life. The book is about confronting his demons and his struggle to rediscover himself after a career as a professional psychiatrist and educationist.

He would often describe how much painful for him was to see the poor patients being forced to buy costly medicines and undergoing expensive laboratory tests prescribed by doctors, terming the situation 'empatho anaemia' or 'ethico anaemia'. According to him returning to age-old cultural values and traditions of East could revitalize society though it would result in closure of most of the clinics of medical practitioners.

It was very easy for him to live a comfortable life in England after completing his education yet he decided to come back and dedicate his life to serve his own community and train a whole generation of psychiatrists. With his departure, we have lost a symbol of courage and continuous struggle, who would teach others how to behave even in the most adverse circumstances. He was a lighthouse who always imparted the lesson of honesty to others. By his death, all the people who know him will miss a highly intelligent and vibrant individual with a rare friendliness and charm of personality. Human beings like him are born only once in centuries. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

– The writer is Secretary General of Pakistan Red Crescent Society.

India's hegemonic designs destabilise the region

Sajjad Shaukat



Islamabad has long accused Kabul of turning a blind eye toward TTP and other terrorists who fled to Afghanistan to escape counter-terrorist operations in Pakistan. Pakistan's concerns were supported in a recent report presented to the United Nations Security Council. According to the UN report of July 26, 2020, "The banned TTP and its splinter group JuA continue to target Pakistan from their bases in Afghanistan..."

IT is most regrettable that by ignoring the modern global trends like renunciation of war, peaceful settlement of disputes and economic development in wake of the spread of coronavirus and its negative economic consequences almost all over the world, India's hegemonic designs are destabilising the region and its peace.

Through its military and intelligence agency RAW, India has continued intervention as part of hegemonic policies vis-à-vis her neighbouring countries, including those ones with whom India does not share border. Besides supporting separatism in East Pakistan which resulted in dismemberment of Pakistan, India occupied Sikkim, subdued Bhutan, Burma and Bangladesh—also sponsored terrorism in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Afghanistan and Bangladesh. During Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rule, New Delhi has intensified meddling in the internal affairs of these countries. And Indian military and RAW have been given free hand to target these states through manipulation of political dissent, ethnic divisions and economic backwardness. On August 5, last year, New Delhi revoked articles 35A and 370 of the Constitution which gave a special status to the disputed territory of the state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). The act split the J&K which includes the Kashmir Valley and the Ladakh area, into two federal territories: Jammu and Kashmir, which will have a state legislature, and Ladakh area, which will be ruled directly from New Delhi.

Thus, Indian fanatic Prime Minister Modi's government led by extremist ruling party BJP unilaterally annexed the Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK) to turn Muslim majority into minority. India also issued a notorious map on October 31, 2019 which displayed bifurcation of the J&K and identifies Pakistani side of Azad Kashmir as well as certain areas of Gilgit-Baltistan as an Indian territory. Besides Pakistan, China also rejected the Indian malevolent acts as "unlawful and void", saying that India's decision to "include" some of China's territory into its administrative jurisdiction "challenged" Beijing's sovereignty. Despite the latest agreement to resolve the issue through dialogue, border dispute between New Delhi and Beijing, which remains unsettled, has increased tensions between the two countries. In fact, Premier Modi and the BJP in connivance with other similar outfits like RSS have accelerated anti-Kashmir moves. Implementing the ideology of Hindutva (Hindu Nationalism), Indian extremist rulers' various other measures such as continued lockdown in the Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK), issuance of domicile certificates to 40000 non-Kashmiris to bring demographic changes in the Muslim-majority area and intermittent shelling inside Pakistani side of Kashmir in relation to the Line of Control (LoC), which have killed hundreds

of innocent villagers show India's fascist policies.

In this regard, reliable sources as mentioned in Pakistan's media on August 18, 2020 disclosed that Afghanistan-based the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has merged with its splinter groups Jamat-ul-Ahrar (JuA) and Hizb-ul-Ahrar (HuA) in Afghanistan. Their sole objective is to restart terrorist activity against Pakistan, while simultaneously sabotaging efforts to restore peace and stability in its war-ravaged Afghanistan. Afghanistan's National Directorate of Security and India's Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) played a key role in their reunification. The agreement, reportedly, designated Mufti Noor Wali as the amir (Chief) of TTP, making him responsible for all planned terrorist activities inside Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Islamabad has long accused Kabul of turning a blind eye toward TTP and other terrorists who fled to Afghanistan to escape counter-terrorist operations in Pakistan. Pakistan's concerns were supported in a recent report presented to the United Nations Security Council. According to the UN report of July 26, 2020, "The banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan and its splinter group Jamaat-ul-Ahrar (JuA) continue to target Pakistan from their bases in Afghanistan...the leadership of TTP is also operating from Afghanistan, including Noor Wali Mehsud, supported by his deputy, Qari Amjad and TTP spokesperson Mohammad Khorasani, claiming responsibility for various high-profile attacks in Pakistan and has facilitated others by JuA and Lahshkar-e-Islam...the significant presence of ISIL-K (The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant Khorasan) in Afghanistan", which the UN warns "now pursues a global agenda."

In addition, the UN report warns of "a strong presence of ISIL-India in Kerala and Karnataka. ISIL-K considers Afghan territory a base for spreading terrorist influence across the wider region...The investigators found links between Indian nationals and terrorist attacks in Sri Lanka. According to diplomatic sources, there is now pressure on India to curb the financing from ISIL-India to its affiliates in line with the FTAF recommendations to prevent terrorist financing". Notably, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi met Zalmay Khalilzad at Islamabad on July 1, 2020 and warned that "Afghan peace process has entered into a crucial phase and there is a need to be cognizant of the elements that want to sabotage the peace efforts in Afghanistan". In the meeting, Qureshi reiterated Pakistan's commitment "to continue to play its reconciliatory role in establishment of peace in Afghanistan with sincerity through collective responsibility. He said that "Pakistan is ready to cooperate with regional and international stakeholders for enduring and peaceful political solution to the Afghan issue...the development of whole region depends on establishment

of peace in Afghanistan...the agreement of all sides on intra-Afghan dialogue and announcement of negotiating teams is a good omen".

Later in a statement, Foreign Minister Qureshi stated that India "has been continuously trying to destabilize Pakistan to divert attention from its own internal chaos" by adding: "India is interfering in Balochistan province of Pakistan at the same time it is also adversely affecting peace efforts in Afghanistan." In the recent past, India's Home Minister Shri Amit Shah threatened of conducting air and surgical strikes inside Pakistani territory. Reacting to Amit Shah's statement, Foreign Minister Qureshi stated: "Let me make it clear to Amit Shah that if India made the mistake, we will give a befitting response...Amit Shah should tell...Why does India not launch a surgical strike on Laddakh?...India has reached the extreme in committing atrocities in Kashmir...India wants to sabotage the Afghan peace process...New Delhi is threatening Pakistan to divert attention from its internal situation".

Earlier, the DG of ISPR Maj-Gen. Babar Iftikhar said: "Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa warned India... [saying] We will respond any aggression with full might... India faced great humiliation in the recent military standoff with China...faced embarrassment in map issues with Nepal as well...India is meddling in issues [of countries] where it doesn't even have a border...India is facing many internal challenges especially after the emergence of coronavirus... many issues have emerged in India after the August 5, 2019 move, which revoked the special status of Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir...There is an emergence of Islamophobia in India. Now they [India] think the best way is to divert the attention towards Pakistan...The situation on the LoC...1229 ceasefire violations by India have been committed since start of this year...while their quadcopters have also violated airspace [of Pakistan] on different occasions". Addressing a news conference on August 13, this year, DG of ISPR said: "We are ready to fight even India may buy 500 Rafale fighter jets. India is involved in terrorism inside Pakistan...India has been taking hegemonic steps and spreading the fire of communal hatred. This along with their military spending has made their expansionist policies quite clear to everyone. Pakistan has been working towards ensure peace in Afghanistan...Peace in Afghanistan means peace in Pakistan." Nonetheless, instead of cooperating with the South Asian countries to promote peace, India's hegemonic designs are destabilising the entire region.

– Sajjad Shaukat writes on international affairs and is author of the book: *US vs Islamic Militants, Invisible Balance of Power: Dangerous Shift in International Relations*, Email: sajjad_logic@yahoo.com

Briefs

Uzbekistan to temporarily halt foreign services

DNA

TASHKENT: Uzbekistan will temporarily stop the public procurement of some foreign goods and services starting from Nov. 1 to support domestic producers, the Uzbek Justice Ministry said Tuesday.

The government will draw up the list of foreign goods and services which will not be allowed to participate in public procurement tenders, and managers should study the possibility of purchasing them from local producers, the ministry said. President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has instructed the government to prepare the draft of the new law on public procurement and submit it to the country's parliament within a month, according to the report. Starting from Nov. 1, companies with 50 percent state shares will have to submit their procurement documents to the special government supervisory board for approval if they plan to buy foreign goods worth more than 1 million US dollars, it said.

Four Afghans held for lacking travel documents

DNA

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: The Daraban police arrested four Afghans travelling without documents at Darazinda checkpoint and registered a case against them. Police officials said they stopped the suspects at the checkpoint and demanded documents from them regarding residence and travel in Pakistan, but the suspects could not produce the same.

The arrested men were identified as Sultan, Dawood, Habibullah and Sajid. Meanwhile, the police have finalised security arrangements for the mourners' processions. According to a statement issued on Monday, the police sealed 18 streets and roads for the mourners' processions. The police also set up a district control room, and the central wireless control room at Ejaz Shaheed police lines. They have also set up special checkpoints at Chashma Barrage, Dera Darya Khan Bridge, Hathala, Ramak, Chunda and Darazinda.

Over 32 mln children reached with essential polio vaccine

ISLAMABAD: Polio Eradication Programme on Tuesday said that more than 32 million children under the age of five were vaccinated in 130 districts across Pakistan during the immunization campaign. According to the National Emergency Operations Center for Polio Eradication, a total of 32,100,802 children were vaccinated against polio virus while in addition to polio drops, children of age between 6-59 months also received Vitamin-A supplements during the campaign started on August 13.

A total of 225,000 trained vaccinators were deployed and went door-to-door for vaccination defying the harsh weather. All vaccinators were trained on preventative measures, especially handling of children during vaccination in the context of COVID-19 pandemic, while they were provided with face masks and hand sanitizer for added protection.

"We have managed to achieve impressive coverage despite the challenging context of the COVID-19, hot weather and heavy rainfall. Our valiant trained front line workers work hard to reach eligible children across the country," Coordinator of the National Emergency Operations Center, Pakistan Polio Eradication programme, Dr Rana Muhammad Safdar said. He said the children were also administered Vitamin-A supplements to strengthen their immune system for greater protection against diseases during this campaign. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Members of Pakistan-China Friendship Association presenting a souvenir to Ambassador of China Yao Jing. - DNA

CPEC projects moving on a clear direction: Officials

The credit goes to China's sincerity and seriousness of purpose and credit also goes to the people, the government and institutions of Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: As the global economy is still combating the adverse effects of Covid-19, Pakistan is poised to enter a phase of quick, solid recovery via the cooperation with its iron brother, the People's Republic of China. According to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Tuesday, the credit goes to China's sincerity and seriousness of purpose and credit also goes to the people, the government and institutions of Pakistan for developing consensus on enhancing multifaceted economic cooperation with the time-tested, all-weather friend, China. Almost all the pivotal sectors of

Pakistan's economy, polity and society are on the same page in this regard as all of them are convinced that Pakistani economy is going to benefit tremendously from China's financial support, technological expertise and experience and, above all, from China's commitment to strengthen Pakistan, especially through CPEC which has entered its second phase of implementation. Some days ago, CPEC Authority Chairman Lieutenant General (retired) Asim Saleem Bajwa, the focal person of the project in Pakistan, expressed optimism on the basis of the good pace of work on CPEC projects as he stated that the situation in the region was getting better and that the country

was in a position to take full advantage of the work going on in full swing under the umbrella of CPEC. What is more inspiring is the CPEC Authority Chairman's recent statement that the direction was very clear. It clearly means that all kinds of hiccups and bottlenecks have been removed and that the CPEC has re-started moving in a clear, better direction. There is immense sincerity and concern for Pakistan among the senior functionaries of China that included top guys from many important organizations like Metallurgical Corporation, Huaneng Shandong Power Plants manufacturing company, Railways giant NORINCO and others. Now the world has started believ-

ing that the US-led opponents of CPEC and China were wrong in their propaganda that China is laying a debt trap for its partners in Belt & Road Initiative (BRI) and CPEC. As regards the situation in Pakistan, on the China-Pakistan economic front, it is quite satisfactory now. The revolutionary Railways project titled ML-1, is starting in full swing. And work on Gwadar, one of the biggest deep seaports in the world, is picking up pace. Ships have started cargo service which is going to expand to a large extent in the days to come. Work on Special Economic Zones (SEZs) is also going to gain momentum and yield tremendous

benefits. Pakistani authorities in general and Prime Minister, Imran Khan, in particular, are giving full attention to CPEC projects. The Prime Minister has recently passed instructions to the CPEC Authority to ensure that the work on CPEC projects doesn't get slowed down. The CPEC Authority officials have been allowed to approach the Prime Minister directly to get rid of any bottlenecks. It is also noteworthy to mention here that Pakistan's military leadership is extending its full support to CPEC. A full-fledged security division is working to secure the CPEC projects besides providing protection to the Chinese experts and workers staying and working in Pakistan.



Jamat-e-Islami chief meets Palestine ambassador

ISLAMABAD: Ahmed Rabei, Ambassador of the State of Palestine to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, received in his office a member of the Senate and Emir of the Islamic Jamat-e-Islami Siraj Al-Haq. The ambassador briefed them about latest political developments and the violations, incursions and raids carried out by the Israeli occupation forces against the Palestinian people, their cities and holy sites. On the other hand, a member of the Senate and the Amir of JI Siraj Al-Haq, affirmed Pakistan's permanent position for all governments to support the Palestinian people to obtain their legitimate rights and establish a Palestinian state with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital. - DNA

70% of Pakistanis believe COVID-19 is exaggerated: survey

DNA

KARACHI: The risk of the coronavirus spreading among the public is still present but it looks like the people have started becoming less serious about the threat from the disease, as revealed in a recent survey by Gallup Pakistan. Comprising more than 1,300 respondents from all over the country, the survey was conducted between July 9 and August 10, 2020. The survey found how the number of people who have doubts and suspicions about the coronavirus pandemic and who consider it to be a hoax has risen considerably. The number of people who believe that the coronavirus pandemic is an exaggeration and the threats it posed not real shot up from 55% in a prior survey to 70% at present.

On the other hand, worryingly, the Gallup Pakistan poll found that the number of those who deem the risks from coronavirus to be real has come down from 41% to 26%. The proportion of Pakistanis who consider the coronavirus pandemic to be a foreign conspiracy more than doubled from 23% in March 2020 to 55%, while the number of those who did not deem it so dropped from 72% to 33%. The poll revealed that 54% of Pakistani supported the idea that the coronavirus made in a laboratory, while 31% disagreed. Three out of five, or 59%, respondents stated that although they were following the standard operating procedures (SOPs), they believed that the coronavirus was not real, while 32% said they consider it to be real and 10% declined to comment.

Anti-locust operation in 1,120,798 hectares

ISLAMABAD: National Locust Control Centre (NLCC) had completed anti-locust operation over 1,120,798 hectares across 61 swarm effected areas during last 6 months and protected the agriculture land from the harmful impact of the pest. The joint teams of the Ministry of National Food Security and Research, provincial agriculture departments and the Pakistan Army had conducted a comprehensive survey and control operation against the locusts in effected districts and succeeded to minimize its threat from 61 districts to only 2 district. According to details released by NLCC on Tuesday the green Hooper were completely eliminated from the provinces of Punjab and KPK. The NLCC further added that no locust presence was reported from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab during last 24 hours. - APP

China, US agree on enhancing trade

DNA

BEIJING: The United States and China say they're optimistic about the state of their trade agreement - even as the two superpowers fight over a slew of other issues, including technology and national security. High-level authorities from both countries - including US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Chinese Vice Premier Liu He - spoke by telephone Monday evening US time, according to statements released by their respective governments. "Both sides see progress and are committed to taking the steps necessary to ensure the success of the agreement," Lighthizer's office said in a statement, referring to a "phase one" trade deal reached earlier this year. China's Ministry of Commerce called the talks "a constructive dialogue" in its own statement, adding that the countries agreed "to create conditions and atmosphere to continue pushing forward" the deal.

Minister of IT signs MoU with NED University

Syed Junaid Imam, CEO Ignite said realizing the need for a robust innovation ecosystem in Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Incubation Center (NIC) Karachi held a ceremony in which 19 high growth startups incubated under 2nd and 3rd cohort made the graduation walk. Over the course of their incubation, these startups took part in various training programs and activities to nurture as businesses besides networking with potential investors and industry experts of both public and private sector. Syed Amin Ul Haque, Federal Minister for IT and Telecom gracing the event as chief guest applauded the graduating founders for choosing the entrepreneurial path for a better tomorrow. He said, the cultural shift to transform Pakistan into a startup economy cannot be achieved without the enthusiasm and drive of our youth. He vowed that IT Ministry fully backs young entrepreneurs who have the innovative ideas to unlock the economic potential of



Pakistan. On this occasion Mr. Shoaib Ahmad Siddiqui Secretary IT & Telecom and Dr. Sarosh Hashmat Lodi VC NED University signed a MoU under which MOITT can engage requisite resources of NED University (both teachers and students) on different policy initiatives, research studies, industry analysis and group discussions. Whereas NED University will be provided with an opportunity for students and researchers to work on real time industry scenarios/ challenges/ case studies etc. Syed Junaid Imam, CEO Ignite said realizing the need for a robust innovation ecosystem in Pakistan, we are engaging with all key stakeholders through a multitude of interventions for building a robust innovation ecosystem for startups and entrepreneurship. He said startups are the epicenter of innovation and are fueling the growth of economies worldwide by creating new jobs, financial inclusion, reducing the income divide, contributing to the GDP and raising the standard of living.



JEDDAH: Ambassador of Pakistan to Jeddah Rizwan Sheikh presenting best photojournalist award to Chairman Pak Media Journalist Forum Jehangir Khan during a ceremony. - DNA

Houthi commanders killed in airstrike

DNA

AL-MUKALLA: Several high-ranking Houthi military commanders were killed and numerous others injured when Arab coalition forces bombed a convoy in northern Yemen, military officials said on Monday. Rabia Al-Qurashi, Yemeni army spokesman in Jof province, told Arab News that militia chiefs, including Houthi minister of defense Mohamed Al-Atefi, were visiting Al-Khanjer military camp in Khab and Al-Sha'af district on Saturday when coalition warplanes struck, leaving a number of commanders dead, dozens wounded, and six vehicles destroyed. "The fate of Houthi minister of defense is unknown. But the warplanes caused carnage among Houthi fighters," Al-Qurashi said. Houthi official media on Monday mourned the death of Gen. Azi Salah Mutleq Dahwa, a senior officer at the 6th Military Region, and Gen. Ruhallah Zaid Ali Musleh, a Houthi military ideologue and the son of a founding member of the Houthi movement.

Argentina: record cases and deaths

DNA

BUENOS AIRES: More now from Argentina where health officials have confirmed a record 8,713 new cases of coronavirus and 381 more deaths over 24 hours. The health ministry has warned that although quarantine measures have been tightened in the capital Buenos Aires and its suburbs, cases are now increasing in other regions. The province of Buenos Aires saw 5,656 of the new infections with Jujuy province the next worst affected with 352. Santa Fe had 209, Córdoba 208, Mendoza 172 and Entre Rios 124. In total, Argentina has seen more than 350,000 infections and 7,366 deaths, according to Johns Hopkins University.