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Japan assures its support to Pakistan against terrorism

Ambassador Haque appreciates China's Covid-19 response

Maryam hopes to return 'victorious and triumphant'



Briefs

Nation stands behind forces: PM

KHAYAM ABBASI



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan offered his deepest condolences and prayers on Friday for the 20 security personnel, including six army men, who were martyred in two terrorist attacks a day ago. Seven soldiers and as many security guards were martyred while fighting off a terrorist attack on a convoy of the Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) in Balochistan on Thursday, hours after six army personnel were martyred in an improvised explosive device (IED) explosion in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa.

Time has come to send govt packing

GULZAR NOSHI



LALAMUSA: PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Friday said that time has come to send 'puppet' government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) packing. While addressing a press conference in Lalamusa, the PPP leader said that incompetent government has destroyed the lives of the people in just two years. The incumbent government is unable to bear the popularity of opposition parties and their rallies, he added. Bilawal Bhutto asserted that true democratic parties are on one page. He further stated that everyone is watching the perplexed faces of Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan and his federal ministers over the opposition's drive.

Rahul praises Pakistan

DNA



NEW DELHI: In a jibe directed at the Narendra Modi-led government in New Delhi, India's main opposition leader, Rahul Gandhi, on Friday praised Pakistan for handling the coronavirus better than his own country's government managed to do. "Another solid achievement by the BJP government. Even Pakistan and Afghanistan handled COVID better than India," Gandhi said while sharing the projected growth of countries in 2020-21.

WAR AGAINST TERRORISM

Japan assures its support to Pakistan

Chargé d' Affaires reiterates that Japan is committed to continuing to support the Government of Pakistan

A.M.BHATTI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: SHINDO Yusuke, Chargé d' Affaires a.i., Embassy of Japan in Pakistan, has strongly condemned the two separate terrorist attacks on security personnel and private guards on October 16th in Gwadar district of Balochistan and the North Waziristan tribal district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. "Any act of terrorism cannot be justified for whatever reason or purpose. My deepest condolences and sympathies to the families of martyrs and I pray for the early recovery of those injured in the attack," said Chargé d' Affaires a.i. SHINDO in his condolence message here on Friday. While appreciating the efforts of Pakistani security forces in maintaining peace and stability, the Chargé d' Affaires a.i. reiterated that Japan is committed to continuing to support the Government of Pakistan and its

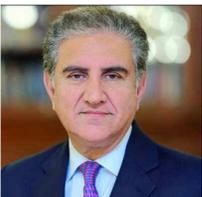
valiant security forces to combat terrorism. The Government of Japan has been supporting various projects of counter-terrorism such as the improvement of facilities and equipment of Pakistani law enforcement agencies dealing with counter-terrorism, including projects on improving airports of Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi for enhancing security measures, providing x-ray inspection equipment, installing face recognition system, and on strengthening border security management against illicit drug trafficking and cross-border terrorism. Furthermore, the Government of Japan has extended assistance to Pakistan Customs and Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) for establishment of three new state of the art Non-Intrusive Inspection (NII) Containers Scanning Terminals at East and West Warf in Karachi Port and Port Bin Qasim. These are amounting to more than USD 137 million.

FM, Saudi Minister discuss bilateral ties

FM Qureshi underlines the historic and deep-rooted fraternal ties, which form the basis of enhanced cooperation in all fields between the two countries

NAVEED MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi held a video call with Saudi Minister of Communications and Information Technology and discussed bilateral cooperation in the field of information technology. Foreign Minister Qureshi underlined the historic and deep-rooted fraternal ties, which form the basis of enhanced cooperation in all fields between the two countries. He said that the two countries shared the focus on development of information technology, which was the



need of the modern digital age. The Foreign Minister highlighted the fact that both Pakistan and the Kingdom had a significant youth bulge in their demography. He said the two countries have a wide-ranging scope of expanding ties and enhancing collaboration in this field, which could be mutually beneficial. The Saudi Minister of Communications and Information Technology reciprocated the warm feelings and echoed the sentiments of the Foreign Minister, terming Pakistan as a close brotherly country. The two Ministers agreed to enhance bilateral ties and continue close collaboration on all matters of mutual interest.

Opposition slogans force NA session to be adjourned

The assembly session started off with prayers for the 13 security personnel and seven private guards, who were martyred in separate terrorist attacks in Balochistan's Gwadar district and the North Waziristan tribal district a day earlier

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly session on Friday got off to a noisy start with opposition lawmakers chanting anti-government slogans despite the speaker's repeated appeals for order in the house. Loud sloganeering by opposition lawmakers continued as Prime Minister Imran Khan walked into the assembly along with other government members and ministers. The NA meeting, called into session yesterday, was held hours before the opposition alliance's - Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) - rally in Gujranwala, where

leaders and supporters from the country's major opposition parties are gathering in protest against the government's policies. The assembly session started off with prayers for the 13 security personnel and seven private guards, who were martyred in separate terrorist attacks in Balochistan's Gwadar district and the North Waziristan tribal district a day earlier. PM Imran left the house when the session was adjourned for 20 minutes following a ruckus by the opposition. After the sitting resumed, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Parliamentary Affairs Babar Awan presented a bill to introduce an amendment in the Election Act 2017 before the assembly.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Saudi Arabia, Nawaf Bin Said Al Malki called on Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi at NHQ. - DNA

Govt to raise petroleum levy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government has decided to increase the petroleum levy Rs 0.14 per liter. According to sources, after the 14 paise increase in petroleum levy, it has gone up from Rs 27.32 to Rs 28.46 per liter while that on high-speed diesel will remain at Rs 30 per liter. Sales tax being collected on petrol and high-speed diesel is set at Rs 15.11 and Rs 15.12 per liter respectively. The basic price of petrol has been reduced from Rs 51.50 to Rs 50.39 while the price of high-speed diesel has also been reduced from Rs 52.05 to Rs 51.92. The levies, taxes and duties being collected on petrol and high-speed diesel are Rs 53.58 and Rs 54.14 per liter respectively.

Airline fined for violating SOPs

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) of Pakistan has on Friday reportedly moved against an international airlines company for failing to observe COVID-19 related Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The civil aviation has reportedly slapped a fine of Rs100,000 on Qatar Airways for violating the set SOPs laid out by the airports and aviation regulatory body. The SOPs were designed to allow the resumption of flight operations amongst countries which had previously been halted to curb the spread of the global pandemic. According to sources, the local aviation authority's senior joint secretary has fined Qatar Airways a penalty of Rs100,000 for failing to follow through on the SOPs. Other than the penalty, the Qatar headquartered airline will be responsible for conducting COVID-19 tests of all the onboard passengers and will bear the expenses of quarantining them alongside the miscellaneous that incur. The CAA, just two days back, also issued a new travel advisory for the passengers that, too, in a move to contain novel virus spread.

CNS, Saudi envoy for enhanced ties

The Naval Chief and Saudi Ambassador discussed the security situation in the region and bilateral maritime cooperation

SHUJAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Royal Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan H.E Admiral (ret'd) Nawaf Bin Said Al-Maliki met with Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS) Admiral Amjad Khan Niazi in Naval Headquarters in Islamabad. According to the Spokesperson Pakistan Navy, Saudi Ambassador and Naval Chief discussed issues of mutual interest. The Naval Chief and Saudi

Ambassador discussed the security situation in the region and bilateral maritime cooperation. The Saudi Ambassador congratulated the Admiral Amjad Khan Niazi on assuming command of the Pakistan Navy. Earlier the President of Pakistan conferred Nis-han-e-Imtiaz (Military) upon Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi, in recognition of his meritorious services for defence of the country and development of Pak Navy. The special

ceremony for the award of NI(M) was held at Awan-e-Sadr, Islamabad. President Alvi congratulated the new Naval Chief on assuming office. During the meeting, the President said that the Pakistan Navy has a key role to play in defending Pakistan's maritime borders. Moreover, the President expressed his confidence that the Pakistan Navy under the leadership of Admiral Amjad Khan Niazi will achieve many more milestones as it has earned in past.

Italy starts issuing work visa for Pakistanis

Over 30,000 work visas would be issued by the Italian government to the nationals from a few non-EU countries, including Pakistan

STAFF REPORT / DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Italian government has reopened seasonal and non-seasonal work visas for Pakistani nationals under its annual schedule of work visa called 'Decreto Flussi' for the year 2020-21. Over 30,000 work visas would be issued by the Italian government to the nationals from a few non-EU countries, including Pakistan. Pakistani workers in agriculture, tourism, construction and freight forwarding sectors can avail this opportunity, according to details transmitted by the Pakistan Embassy in Italy to the Board of Investment on Thursday. Pakistan has been included in this category of visas after the lag of two years as a result of sustained efforts by its embassy in Rome. Ambassador Jauhar Saleem said on the occasion that Italy hosts the largest Pakistani diaspora in the European Union following Brexit, which has sent over \$142 million in remittances in 2019-2020. He said that the Pakistani community in Italy had been demanding Pakistan's re-inclusion in the list of countries eligible for seasonal workers visa, ever since the facility was withdrawn two years ago. The demand for Pakistani workers in the Italian market is on the rise consistently, especially in the agricultural sector, Ambassador Saleem said. It is expected that under the current scheme, hundreds of Pakistani workers would obtain gainful employment in Italy. Earlier, the Pakistan Embassy also facilitated thousands of undocumented Pakistani workers in Italy to seek legal status through a scheme launched by the Italian government in June 2020 to regularise the undocumented foreign workers. Over 18,000 Pakistanis applied for regularisation under that scheme. Despite the second wave of Covid-19, which has seen a record number of fresh cases in recent days, the Pakistan Embassy has kept its consular section, both in Rome and Milan, fully functional so as to facilitate the community in benefiting from the growing job opportunities in Italy.

Maryam hopes to return 'victorious'



ABID RAZA

LAHORE: PML-N vice president Maryam Nawaz departed for Gujranwala, the venue for the Pakistan Democratic Movement rally, saying she was doing so "as a foot soldier" of ousted prime minister Nawaz Sharif. "I embark on this mission as your foot soldier, Nawaz Sharif. I have dedicated myself to your struggle, your mission for Pakistan and its people," Maryam tweeted as she left her Jati Umra residence in Lahore for Gujranwala's Jinnah Stadium.

Pakistan facing 5th Generation Warfare



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the House in Senate Shehbaz Waseem Friday said Pakistan was facing the Fifth Generation Warfare as inimical forces were trying to instigate sectarianism and provincialism, firing at the Line of Control and making attempts to weaken its institutions, including the judiciary and the armed forces. Speaking in the Senate, he said the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader while sitting in London was talking against the institutions. The personnel of Pakistan Army were sacrificing their lives for the motherland while the sons of PML-N chief were sitting in London and protecting their wealth.

Ambassador Haque lauds China's Covid-19 response

The ambassador said over decades of close cooperation, Pakistan and China had forged a unique partnership featuring unparalleled mutual trust and respect

AGENCIES

BEIJING: Pakistan Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque Friday complimented China's progress against Covid-19 and lifting its population from the clutches of poverty. China's remarkable progress had validated the strength of its unique system giving priority to its people's well-being, he said while participating in a seminar on "Poverty Eradication and the

Responsibility of Political Parties" at the invitation of Minister of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee, Song Tao. "It was not important what governance systems we follow in our countries; our governance systems should be responsive to the people and their needs", he added. The ambassador also called the attention of the participants to strengthening of the United Nations and promoting



multilateralism. He called for collective and effective response to narrow-minded efforts aimed at the politicization of the pandemic. "Instead of being deterred by temporary headwinds or the criticism of detractors pursuing their own agenda and vested interests, we must adhere to the long-term mission of serving the people." The ambassador said over decades of close cooperation, Pakistan and China had forged a unique partnership featuring unparalleled mutual

trust and respect. China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which was a flagship project of President Xi's Belt and Road Initiative, had laid a sound foundation for modernization of Pakistan's economy, expanding its scope to socioeconomic development by providing benefits to our people. Concluding remarks, the ambassador said Pakistan looked forward to working with China and the international community to share experiences for the common benefit of the people.

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Briefs

CM, Corps Commander visit Khyber

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Mahmood Khan accompanied by Corps Commander Peshawar, Lieutenant General Nauman Mahmood on Friday visited district Khyber where the Chief Minister laid foundation stone of 35 kilometer Dawatoid road.

He also inaugurated a hostel at Tirah Education Complex and addressed the tribal elders of Khyber district.

In his address the Chief Minister said the KP government was totally aware of the problems of tribal people. The tribal people boldly rendered countless sacrifices in war against terrorism. He said the rapid progress and prosperity of tribal districts was among the topmost priorities of the Pakistan Tehrik e Insaaf government adding he was raising voice on every forum for the rights of tribal people. The Chief Minister maintained that provision of funds amounting to Rs 100 billion for the development of tribal districts per year will be ensured at all cost. To address the problems of tribal people, he said tribal Jirga would be called on every sub-division level besides, he added the former system of tribal Jirga would also be maintained.

He said in Khyber district work on various projects of road infrastructure was underway. Besides, he said a separate law with regard to minerals has been enacted for tribal districts and the lease for these minerals will only be allotted to local tribal people. The Chief Minister informed that work on rehabilitation of Jabba Dam has been started while for construction Bara Dam, a feasibility study would soon be conducted. With construction of these dams the issues relating to potable water and electricity in tribal areas would be addressed to a great extent. — APP

'Accession of Kashmir will be decided by people of Kashmir'

DNA

RAWALAKOT - The Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) President Sardar Masood Khan has said that Pakistan would never take any decision which is detrimental to the UN resolutions on Kashmir or weakens the stand of the people of the state. "We want accession of the whole of Kashmir to Pakistan and this will be decided by the people of Jammu and Kashmir collectively," he stressed. Addressing a public gathering at Berri village near here on Friday, he said that the people of the liberated territory including Berri had shed their blood for freedom and to become part of Pakistan, but their mission is still unaccomplished. He said that we must understand that Kashmir was being disintegrated by not Pakistan but India which on 31 October 2019, first bifurcated Kashmir into Ladakh and Jammu-Kashmir declaring them part of the Indian Union, and the very next day, it released fake maps showing Azad Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan as parts of India.

2 arrested over selling counterfeit drugs

DNA

KARACHI: Two accused persons have been arrested by Li-aquatabad police officials on a tip-off in Karachi over charges of selling fake and expired medicines and vaccines for children. Senior Superintendent Police (SSP) Central told media that two persons were arrested for playing with the lives of innocent children by selling counterfeit and expired medicines and vaccines.

Arif Aslam Rao revealed that the 'criminals' used to supply fake drugs to private and government hospitals. He said that a police team raided a flat in Gulshan-e-Iqbal area after being spotted by a detainee Ali Arif where a huge quantity of paediatric vaccines and medicines were recovered. The counterfeit drugs were being supplied for the treatment of typhoid, tuberculosis (TB), rabies, anti-viral, flu, pneumonia and other diseases, said the police officer. It is exposed by the police investigators that the criminals used stickers of multinational medicine company for selling the fake drugs. The recovered medicines and vaccines were inspected by a drug officer who has confirmed its expiry and forgery.

RCCI urges for political and economic stability

Special stimulus packages should be announced for all sectors and also urged government to lower cost of production. Additional funds should be released for development projects



DNA

RAWALPINDI: The President of Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) Nasir Mirza has said that the government should provide a conducive environment for the development of the country's economy, end the uncertainty. Speaking at an interactive session with a delegation of the Economic Journalists Forum (EJF) at

the Chamber House, he urged government to move forward with consensus and resolved issues amicably for political stability. The business community in Corona has been the most affected. Special stimulus packages should be announced for all sectors and also urged government to lower cost of production. Additional funds should be released for development projects, he added. Former president and group leader and well-known industrialist Sohail

Altif said that the current political temperature has increased the uncertainty which is detrimental to the country's economy. He also recounted the recent meeting of a group of industrialists with the Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan in which they shared feedback on issues facing the business community, inflation, development projects, FBR tax system and the current political situation. He said that it was brought to the notice of the Prime

Minister that no mega project of any kind has been launched for the city of Rawalpindi in the last two years. I told the Prime Minister that the Ring Road project is an important project which also includes economic zones. With the establishment of industrial zones, Rawalpindi could become a hub for commercial activities. The Prime Minister should take personal interest and complete it on priority basis. On the occasion, Azhar Jatoi, President of the Economic Forum,

said that the purpose of the forum was to enhance engagement with the business community and to advance the suggestions of stakeholders for the development of the country's economy so that the government could effectively formulate policy making. Senior Vice President Osman Ashraf, Vice President Shahraiz A Malik, executive members, Chairman regional trade Khurshid Berlas, EJF members, among others, were also present on the occasion.

FIEDMC chief inaugurates industrial monitoring lab

DNA

LAHORE: Faisalabad Industrial Estate Development and Management Company (FIEDMC) Chairman Mian Kashif Ashfaq Friday inaugurated a state-of-the-art industrial monitoring and automation lab (INMAL) at Information Technology University (ITU) which will meet ever increasing demands of the clusters of in-

dustrial hubs in the country. Briefly speaking about the occasion, Mian Kashif appreciated the endeavours of teachers of the varsity for conducting the high class research and developing software to address the multiple technical complications being confronted by the industry for modernisation of the plants to curtail and minimize the cost of production to meet the challeng-

es of global markets. Mian said that now progress and development of every country mainly depends on the use and application of modern Information Technology in every sphere of life especially in industrial sector. He maintained Information Technology has brought revolutions in the whole world what we need in Pakistan is its immediate use in all sectors. He said that present government attached great

importance to promotion of IT and all necessary funding was also being made available to feasible projects especially in industrial and education sectors. He said that FIEDMC would take full advantage of the services of INMAL for up-gradation and automation of industrial units. He hoped that INMAL would play key role in addressing the issues of industrial sector for better and effective use of electricity and other allied.



LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Usman Buzdar inspecting the Punjab Food Authority's motorway bike squad, supply of lacto scan machines, free testing and inauguration of the body cam surveillance system. — DNA

School students protest against illegal construction

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD : Large number of Students of Two Schools and an Orphan Home of Dawood Colony, Faisalabad, staged a big Demonstration and took out a Protest Procession demonstrating against the construction of an illegal "Pumping Station" adjacent to these Educational Institutions for disposal of Waste Water of the Vicinity which was emitting "Bad Smell" and could become instrumental for spread of chronic diseases in this populous Residential Area. The demonstrating Students and their Teachers told the MEDIA that the Director General, Environment Protection Agency, Government of the Punjab, have already cancelled the construction of this Refuse Water Pumping Station by

WASA Faisalabad which was obtained by the Director Construction WASA by submitting mischievous statement. As this No Objection Certificate was obtained by the WASA in Violation of law, through concealment and misrepresentation, and hence the WASA Authorities should restrain from carrying-out the construction work at this site. They demanded of Prime Minister, Imran Khan and Chief Minister, Punjab, Sardar Usman Buzdar, that the site of this Pumping Station be vacated from the WASA and appropriate immediate orders be issued for stoppage of construction work of this illegal Pumping Station of the WASA. The demonstrating students suggested that after vacation of this Site from WASA, the Government should develop a Park for Recreational purpose at this place.

UAF to utilize rare elements for High-Tech

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: The University of Agriculture Faisalabad scientist Dr Sadia Ilyas in collaboration with Jeonbuk National University Korea has made a breakthrough to utilize rare earth elements for the development of high technology in Pakistan that will redress the import bill worth billions of rupees. The pilot research project was carried in Korea and it would be replicated in Pakistan. Dr Sadia Ilyas said although Pakistan is exploiting its rare earth reserves at present but

the newly developed technology can be applicable to the low grades ores which remained unexploited till date and will help contribute in the economy of Pakistan. She said that rare earth elements were critical components in many high modern and environmental technologies. Pakistani rare earth resources are weather crust and low grade so need efficient technological development. The technology is developed involving bio assisted leaching followed by solo chemical recovery process for the exploitation of Korean monazite.

RIU arranges five-day workshop

SWABI: Riphah Institute of Systems Engineering of Riphah International University (RIU) arranged a five-day "Hands-on Network Security Training and workshop at Women University, Swabi, from October 12 to 16. The workshop was aimed to train women network engineers of Pakistan in network security. The workshop is the second in series in the project "Network Security Training and Workshop across selected Women Universities in Pakistan. Syed Muhammad Sajjad, senior lecturer RISE, and the Principal Investigator of the project discussed

the vulnerabilities in protocols and their exploitation in-depth to provide students with a better understanding of how to secure their data on the internet from hackers. The participants were also guided about the use of public-key cryptography and Infrastructure. The speaker emphasized that Network Access Control must be used in academic campuses and enterprises to control illegitimate users' access over the organization network. The use of Firewalls and Intrusion Detection and Prevention Systems for safety and security was also discussed in depth. — APP

SHO caught red-handed extorting money

LAHORE: The station house officer (SHO) of Lahore's Shahdra police station was taken into custody after being caught in the act of extorting money from the complainant of a murder case.

Muhammad Gohar Nafees, the Director General of Punjab's Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE), said Aamir Nazir Cheema took a Rs50,000 bribe from the complainant to arrest people nominated in the case. He said the arrested police officer had asked the complainant for a bribe to the tune of Rs200,000. The SHO has been arrested and a first information report (FIR) registered against him, the DG said. Last year, the Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) Punjab had caught a policeman red-handed for receiving a bribe from a woman. Giving detail of the first case, the ACE said the anti-graft body acted on a complaint filed by a person claiming that an assistant sub-inspector (ASI) of police was demanding bribe for appointment on naib qasid post from his sister. The ACE authorities along with the complainant carried out the raid and arrested the accused red-handed. — APP

659 new Coronavirus cases reported

ISLAMABAD: The total active COVID-19 cases in Pakistan on Friday were recorded 9,421 as 659 more people tested positive for the deadly virus during the last 24 hours. Seven corona patients, who were under treatment died in hospital on Thursday, according to the latest update issued by the National Command and Operation Centre (NCCOC).

No COVID affected person was on ventilator in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Balochistan, while 74 ventilators elsewhere in Pakistan, out of 1,884 allocated for COVID-19 patients, were occupied.

Some 33,901 tests were conducted across the country on Thursday, including 9,687 in Sindh, 11,678 in Punjab, 5,330 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), 4,985 in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), 1,029 in Balochistan, 518 in Gilgit Baltistan (GB), and 674 in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). Around 305,835 people have recovered from the disease so far across Pakistan making it a significant count with over 90 percent recovery ratio of the affected patients.

Since the pandemic outbreak, a total of 321,877 cases were detected so far, including AJK 3,322, Balochistan 15,621, GB 4,016, ICT 17,781, KP 38,521, Punjab 101,367 and Sindh 141,249. About 6,621 deaths were recorded in country since the eruption of the contagion, including 2,568 Sindh among two of them died in hospital on Thursday, 2,283 in Punjab two of them died in hospital on Thursday, 1,265 in KP one died in hospital on Thursday, 193 in ICT two of them in hospital on Thursday, 146 in Balochistan, 90 in GB and 80 in AJK. — APP

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Briefs

LSM grows 3.66% in two months

ISLAMABAD: The Large Scale Manufacturing Industries (LSMI) production grew by 3.66 percent during first two months (Jul-Aug) of current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding period of last year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported Friday.

LSMI Quantum Index Number (QIM) was recorded at 130.91 points during July-Aug 2020-21 against 126.28 points during same period of the preceding year. The highest increase of 1.96 percent was witnessed in the indices monitored by the Ministry of Industries, followed by 1.37 percent increase in indices monitored by the Provincial Board of Statistics and 0.34 percent increase in the products monitored by the Oil Companies Advisory Committee (OCAC). Meanwhile, on year-on-year basis, the industrial growth witnessed increase of 1.19 percent in August 2020 when compared with the indices of August 2019, the PBS data revealed. Meanwhile, the major sectors that showed growth during July-August 2020 included textile (1.79%), food, beverages and tobacco (15.50%), coke and petroleum products (5.71%), Pharmaceuticals (10.03%), chemicals (9.70%), non metallic mineral products (23.05%), paper and board (9.83%), and rubber products (4.69). On the other hand, the LSM industries that witnessed negative growth, included automobile (18.81%), iron and steel products (10.39%), fertilizers (0.80%), electronics (24.63%), leather products (37.50%), engineering products (38.66%), and wood products (70.45%). - APP

FIR ordered against accused doctor

ABBOTTABAD: Additional Session Judge II, Abbottabad Friday ordered to register a case against the accused doctor's negligence which took the eyesight of 9 patients at Ayub Teaching Hospital (ATH) during treatment. According to the details, eyesight lost patients filed a petition of 22-A before the court of Additional Session Judge II Abbottabad against the non-registration of FIR in the police station where after hearing both sides the court in its verdict ordered police to register a case against the accused doctor. On the other side, Save Abbottabad Movement (SAM) has also announced for lodging a suit against the ATH administration in Peshawar High Court (PHC). Two weeks earlier, Speaker KP Assembly Mushtaq Ahmed Ghani distribution of relief cheques of 9 million rupees amongst 9 people who had lost their eyesight during the treatment in ATH. On the occasion, he said the KP government would take strict action against the concerned found guilty in 9 people's eyesight lost case at ATH Abbottabad. The speaker said that he will receive the investigation report, he would submit it to the chief minister KP and Prime Minister of Pakistan to bring the accused before the court and provide justice to the affected. - APP

Police nets 3 POs

RAWALPINDI: Police on Friday claimed to have arrested three proclaimed offenders (POs) of B category, allegedly involved in different crimes. According to Rawalpindi police spokesman, special raids on the directive of City Police Officer (CPO) Muhammad Ahsan Younas were conducted by Rawalpindi police to net POs, Court Absconders and other outlaws. He said, Pirwadhai police arrested three B category POs namely Muhammad Zakar, Muhammad Bilal and Mazhar Khan who were POs and wanted in a murder case. He said the police crackdown against criminals would continue and the outlaws would be sent behind the bars. He said the CPO had directed the police to launch a crackdown against POs and strict action in accordance with the law should be taken against criminals particularly most wanted. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Members of CGSS posing for a group picture with Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada during an award giving ceremony held to give certificates to members of the internship program. DNA

India stuck in odd position in IIOJK, says Moeed

The SAPM emphasised that the pre-conditions, set by Pakistan, were the benchmark for any dialogue process with India, if it was serious to hold talks on Kashmir

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on National Security and Strategic Policy Planning, Dr Moeed Yusuf on Friday said India was stuck in a difficult position in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and "unable to figure out what to do." "Its move of August 5, 2019 had expectedly backfired and it had lost Kashmir for all practical purposes, Dr Moeed said in his exclusive interaction with media. He said: "The future of Kashmir dispute is that India will have to hold plebiscite as per the United Nations (UN) Resolutions to give Kashmiris their just right to self-determination as there is no other workable solution to the issue." "There is a list of things (pre-set conditions) that India will have to do by force, due to Kashmiris or do it voluntarily and come to the table and have a conversation so that both countries can

move forward." The SAPM emphasised that the pre-conditions, set by Pakistan, were the benchmark for any dialogue process with India, if it was serious to hold talks on Kashmir. The first question to any such Indian proposal was that either it was serious or not and if India could fulfill the pre-requisite. To a question, he said: "We stand on our principled stance about the 73-years old dispute and no overnight change could be expected on IIOJK. But, we are aggressively countering the narrative that India used to sell to the world which is not being accepted now." He said the sort of pressure India is under and the negative publicity it has received in western media had not happened for many decades. "The efforts by Pakistan and Kashmiri diaspora are bearing fruit and things are changing in a propitious way."

With regard to the domicile issue in IIOJK, Dr Moeed categorically stated that Indian move to provide domicile to non-Kashmiri residents was illegal which the UN framework did not allow, adding, "If a plebiscite is held tomorrow, none of them will be considered and any plebiscite would be carried out on the position when there were no forced demographic changes in IIOJK. The UN is responsible for ensuring free and fair plebiscite." In his comments on National Security Threat, he said such issues were based on timelines as they vary from short-term to long-term scenarios. He said: "If the question is of present (in the short-run), then India and lack of peace in Afghanistan are national security threats to Pakistan." In the long-run while moving forward, climate and security, food and energy and water were the perils to

national security, he added. Dr Moeed Yusuf said that there was a trust deficit in Afghan leadership where Pakistan also remained skeptical at times as there had been issues because Afghans did not pay heed to its narrative. "India has been employing Afghan territories against Pakistan and created misunderstandings but now Pakistan has managed to improve the situation. The Afghan leadership has come to realize that it was only Pakistan that could have helped get the Intra-Afghan Peace process to its present shape and would assist in its meaningful conclusion." When asked about issue of firing from Afghan side on Pakistani check posts, the SAPM said the matter was raised at relevant forums from the day one where all parties including the US and interlocutors of peace process were apprised. "It is just a senseless loss of lives that takes place

whether there has been any issue or not because only innocent people have been killed." Due to Afghanistan's history which for the past four decades remained in war including the Soviet conflict, civil war and the US occupation that turned the situation so fluid, that everyone involved in the Afghan region, tried to take advantage of the situation. "India's main ambition was to undercut Pakistan which we knew and therefore India seeped into Afghan institutions and started initiating hostile activities against us." Since, India was a major country in the region and approached the US against Pakistan and to exploit the Afghan government that gained power after ousting the Taliban regime. "India is still conspiring to harm Pakistan's peace and security and I have given its proofs a day earlier to the Indian journalist Karan Thapar," he added. - APP

SSGC to meet increased demand

ISLAMABAD: The Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC), which is mainly responsible for supplying gas in Sindh and Balochistan provinces, has evolved an effective strategy of injecting additional RLNG in its transmission network to meet the increased commodity demand during the upcoming peak winter season. "This year, around 160 MMCFD (Million Cubic Feet per Day) gas is expected to be short supplied from the fields and the SSGC will face [overall] shortage of around 250-300 MMCFD gas this winter. This shortfall will be met by injecting RLNG in the system," according to an official document available with APP. During the last winter, the SSGC was getting an average 1,145 MMCFD gas supply from its 25 operational fields, which has reduced to 985 MMCFD in 2020-21 due to depletion of the hydrocarbon deposits, curtailing the supply by 160 MMCFD gas. Keeping in view the increased gas demand, the company has started implementing its winter plan as 200 MMCFD Regasified Liquefied Natural Gas (RLNG) has already been injected in the system. Besides, it commenced work on laying a

17-Kilometer pipeline after getting Right of Way (ROW) from the Sindh government, for which the federal government has been requesting for the last one-and-a-half years. The 30-inch dia pipeline would be laid from the Custody Transfer Station (CTS) of RLNG at the Bin Qasim [Qasim Port Karachi] to Sales Meter Station Pakland where the SSGC transmission network is available for injecting the RLNG. Currently, as many as two LNG terminals were operating in the country and injecting around 1200 MMCFD gas in the national transmission system, which greatly helped in bridging the gap between demand and supply of the gas. Pakistan's indigenous gas production is around 3.7 Billion Cubic Feet per Day (BCFD) against the demand of 6 BCFD, while the existing reserves are depleting at the rate of 9.5 percent annually and unfortunately oil and gas Exploration & Production companies made no significant discovery since long. Realizing the present and future needs of gas, the government is encouraging private sector players in the LNG business under its ease-of-doing-business plan. - APP

Profiteers to be punished: Riaz Mahsood

ABBOTTABAD: The Commissioner Hazara Division, Riaz Khan Mahsood Friday directed all concerned to take stern action against the profiteers/hoarders, check the stock position of Utility Stores and submit reports on daily basis. He also directed the district administrations to involve intelligence agencies for detecting the hoarders etc. and depute respective magistrates for monitoring all the 31 flour mills in Hazara Division. Chairing a special meeting in compliance with the directives of the Chief Minister and Chief Secretary KPK at his office, the Commissioner tasked the administrative officers of all the districts to ensure plentiful availability of essential edible items in the markets on prescribed rates besides the display of government rate list at a conspicuous place in the shops, markets and malls. - DNA

Jazz to provide high speed Internet to AIOU students

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) and Jazz Business signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) under which Jazz Business will provide high speed data bundles to the university students on discounted rates. As per MoU, Jazz Business will also provide Jazz cash services to facilitate them to deposit their fee. MoU signing ceremony was held yesterday at the main campus of the university, Islamabad. Prof Dr Zia Ul Qayyum, VC, AIOU, Deans of various faculties, professors and administrative officials participated in the MoU signing ceremony. Moreover, various representatives from Jazz Business were also present on the occasion including chief business officer, Ali Naseer, regional business head, Us-

ma Javed and various other prominent figures. Prof. Dr. Zial Ul-Qayyum, while addressing the participants, said that in the present scenario, the need and importance of the use of technology in the filed of education is multiplied. He further added that this MoU is highly significant as a vast majority of the students of AIOU belong to less developed areas of Pakistan with limited or virtually no internet services who would now be provided high speed internet facilities at their doorsteps to utilize all online services offered by AIOU. He, also, announced that AIOU would collaborate with other telecom companies to facilitate students so that they can choose any telecom company of their interest. - APP

Eight year old boy reunited with family

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Karachi Company police on Friday reunited eight-year old boy with his family who went missing from its area, a police spokesman said. According to details, Wazir Khan lodged report with Karachi company police station that his eight year old son Sohial had been missing from Karachi company area following which SP (Saddar) Muhammad Sarfraz Virk constituted a special team to trace him. This team headed by DSP Abid Ikram including Station House Officer of Karachi company police station Sub-Inspector Saleem Raza and others started efforts to trace the boy and finally succeeded. Police reunited the boy with his family and his parents thanked Islamabad police team for its extraordinary efforts to trace him. IGP Islamabad Muhammad Amir Zulfikar Khan and DIG (Operations) Waqar Uddin Syed have appreciated this performance of police team.

Commissioner directs to combat dengue

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Rawalpindi Capt® Muhammad Mehmood Friday said that prevailing weather was suitable for breeding of dengue larvae and there is need to combat it on emergency basis as dengue larva is being found in large number during indoor and outdoor surveillance. Chairing a weekly meeting to review anti-dengue arrangements, he directed the officials to make maximum arrangements for the treatment of dengue fever patients, besides all possible preventive measures to meet any eventuality. The Commissioner directed to create awareness among the residents about the use of mosquito net or mosquito repellents like mats and coils. He called upon the residents to keep an eye on junkyards, schools and under construction buildings which leads to the spread of dengue larvae and to leave no place wet or with stagnant water. - APP

Bootlegger arrested, liquor seized

RAWALPINDI: Police in their crackdown against anti-social elements have arrested a bootlegger besides recovering 192 bottles of liquor and 400 kupias, a police spokesman said on Friday. According to a police spokesman, Kalar Syedan police conducted a raid and managed to arrest a bootlegger namely Shakeel Ayub with 192 bottles of liquor. In another raid, Saddar Wah police acting on a tip-off conducted a raid and recovered over 400 liquor kupias from a car while driver managed to escape from the scene. Separate cases have been registered against accused and police started further investigation. City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Muhammad Ahsan Younas appreciated performance of divisional Superintendents of police and SHO's and directed the police officials for high vigilance and monitoring against those involved in anti-social activities, the spokesman added. - APP

Poultry training program from October 19

RAWALPINDI: Poultry Research Institute (PRI), offered week-long free poultry training programme from October 19 at Shamsabad Rawalpindi. According to an official, the course would continue till October 25 and applications may be submitted in the office till October 19. Interested men and women can apply for the course and prospectus may be obtained from the office of PRI. - APP

ICCI demands Media-cum-Tech city in capital

Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan said that Media-cum-Tech City would provide a good platform to our young media and IT professionals even from remote areas to show their creativity for launching new businesses and thus contribute towards better economic development of the country and promotion of exports

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) said that Pakistan has abundant IT & media talent and tremendous potential to promote export of content, IT and software products, therefore, he called upon the government to consider establishing a Media-cum-Tech City in Islamabad in order to develop an ecosystem for promotion of media and IT sectors. He said this City could accommodate the media and ICT related houses and give a boost to business activities. He said this while addressing a delegation of



National Press Club Islamabad that visited ICCI led by Senior Vice President Arshad Waheed and Secretary

General Anwar Raza to congratulate the newly elected team of ICCI. Group Leader Afzal Butt, former Presi-

dence Tariq Chaudhry, Finance Secretary Sagheer Chaudhry, Siddique Sajid Baloch, Azhar Jatoti and others

were in the delegation. Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan said that Media-cum-Tech City would provide a good plat-

form to our young media and IT professionals even from remote areas to show their creativity for launching new businesses and thus contribute towards better economic development of the country and promotion of exports. He said that the government should also introduce a relief package for start-ups to foster an ecosystem of entrepreneurship in the country. He further said that many countries have made drastic cuts in interest rates with the aim to support businesses to combat the Covid-19 pandemic and urged that SBP should also reduce the policy interest rate bringing it down to 2-3 percent that will give a boost to SMEs and help accelerate economic activity in the country.

Briefs

CCoE for ensuring domestic demand

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Cabinet Committee on Energy (CCoE) directed the Ministry of Energy to plan for meeting the industrial and residential demand fully during winter months, without any curtailment of load. The CCoE further directed the ministry to ensure that the utilization of all other fuel sources, including renewable and coal, is maximized before assessment of furnace oil requirement. The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar, said a press release.

Girls education through truck art drive in full swing

ISLAMABAD: The awareness campaign on girls' education through truck art, launched by Ministry of Human Rights, is in full swing. The campaign was launched to create awareness among the masses about the significance of girls education through truck art, said an official on Friday. She said since last year, 20 brightly painted trucks had traversed up to 5,600 km on weekly basis to spread a positive message across the country. She said this year's theme is "My voice, our equal future". Giving our girls a safe and equitable environment to grow and flourish would move Pakistan forward towards a brighter, prosperous future for all, she added. She said education was their basic right which should be given without any discrimination. She said girls constitute more than half of the population so their healthy state of education was must. She said an educated mother could give her child a better future so Ministry of Human rights was doing her best to create awareness about their right to education. — APP

"Color Rave Festival" to be held on Oct 24

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A musical night blended with beautiful tunes titled "Color Rave Festival", arranged by Maha Event Management, will be held to enthral the music lovers on October 24 at Open Air Theater Shakar Parian. Emerging singers and famous Tik Tokers will fire up the stage with their outstanding performances, an official said on Friday. The event will also include much more activities including, Water balloons, Color War, Unlimited dance, Live Singin, Live DJ's performance and games. Well known singer Faizan Haider will fire the stage with his melodious voice and outstanding performance. Different restaurants will also place stalls of continental, Chinese and desi food. He said that it would be a family ambience event that has specifically been arranged to enhance the musical activities and provide healthy entertainment to citizens.

USC to launch mobile stores in Rawalpindi Region

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Utility Stores Corporation of Pakistan has formally launched its mobile stores services in Rawalpindi Region in order to directly benefit and facilitate the general public from the steps taken by the government. Regional Manager of the corporation said that government had provided essential commodities on controlled rates during lock down period of COVID-19 outbreak, adding that government had provided subsidy on flour, ghee, rice and pulses in order to ensure provision of all these commodities on controlled rates. He said that the corporation was taking measures to ensure supply of adequate commodities to far off areas and started mobile stores services to facilitate them.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan inaugurating N-Ovative health technologies facility at National University of Science and Technology (NUST). — APP

Pakistan's NUST to locally produce cardiac stents

PM Khan said that the federal government is making maximum efforts to bring investment and businesses to Pakistan for improving the economy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has inaugurated the cardiac stent manufacturing unit at the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) which will turn Pakistan becoming the 18th global state for locally manufacturing stents. PM Imran Khan paid a visit to the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) Islamabad where he has inaugurated the cardiac stent manufacturing unit,

N-Ovative Health Technology Facility. Pakistan becomes the second country among Muslim states for being capable of locally manufacture cardiac stents. While addressing the ceremony, PM Imran Khan said that the mortality rate of cardiac diseases is very high in Pakistan and it is a praiseworthy decision to locally manufacture stents. The establishment of a facility for stents' manufacturing is major progress, said Khan. The premier said that there was a lack of direction and role of the past governments in different fields which are very important to

put a country on a path of development. The trade deficit is a big burden on the national economy and no country could survive the crisis and reduce inflation until improving its income. He highlighted that there was also a lack of coordination among institutions as compared to the 60's era when the country was moving ahead in a good direction and its exports were gradually increasing. It is important to set the direction and mindset of the country, he urged. A few countries around the world are manufacturing cardiac stents and

its local production will visibly reduce the medical treatment cost of patients in Pakistan, said Imran Khan. PM Khan said that the federal government is making maximum efforts to bring investment and businesses to Pakistan for improving the economy. Regarding overseas nationals, he said that the Pakistanis residing in foreign countries could serve the country by their skills. "We have to make a pleasant environment for overseas Pakistanis here in the country as they are our precious asset. Our major issue is about being unaware of

our capabilities and a vision is needed to explore the potentialities. Being just an Asian Tiger is not a vision, we can be anything as the human capabilities are unlimited." Among South Asian countries, cardiac stents will be manufactured in Pakistan after India. In March 2020, the Drugs Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) had allowed the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) to produce heart stents locally. The DRAP had issued a license to the NUST to produce heart stents domestically.

Past governments provided unfunded subsidies: Senate told

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Industries and Production Hammad Azhar on Friday informed the Senate that the past governments had provided unfunded subsidies without any proper budgetary allocation. Replying to a question in the Senate, the minister said that the present government was efficiently working to improve the economic condition of the country and the IMF programme was being implemented for economic stability.

In a written reply to a question, Minister for Finance and Revenue said that the government was implementing a home-grown economic

reforms programme with the support of the IMF. The reforms aimed to stabilize the country's economy by addressing deep-seated structural imbalances and lay the foundation for sustained and inclusive growth, he added. He said these measures were largely directed towards achieving fiscal consolidation, reducing external sector vulnerabilities, broadening of tax base, improving the country's competitiveness, reforming and improving governance in state-owned enterprises, strengthening the anti-money laundering and terror financing regimes. — APP

Chairman Senate chairs HBAC meeting

DNA

ISLAMABAD: House Business Advisory Committee (HBAC) of the Senate met here at the Parliament House on Friday. The Committee, presided over by Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrami, discussed in detail legislative business to be transacted during the 304th Session of the Senate. Besides legislative business, the session would take up discussion on current situation of important national and international issues. The HBAC decided that the current session would continue for two weeks. The meeting was attended by Leader of the House Senator

Dr. Shehzad Waseem, Leader of the Opposition Senator Raja Muhammad Zafar ul Haq, the Parliamentary Leaders of the Political Parties in Senate including Senator Sherry Rehman, Senator Siraj ul Haq, Chief Whip in Senate Senator Sajjad Hussain Turi, Senator Mushahid Ullah Khan, Senator Mir Kabir Ahmed Muhammad Shahi, Senator Dr. Jehanzeb Jamalidini, Federal Minister Azam Khan Swati, Advisor to the Prime Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Babar Awan, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan, Secretary Senate Dr. Syed Pervez Abbas and other senior officers of the Senate Secretariat.

CRTF to fill human resource gap: Usman Dar

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Youth Affairs Usman Dar Friday said Corona Relief Tiger Force (CRTF) was working as a facilitator to fill the gap of human resource in administrative affairs. Addressing to a press conference here, the SAPM said Prime Minister Imran Khan will give future course of action to the CRTF in controlling artificial inflation in the country at a ceremony held at convention centre tomorrow (Saturday).

Usman Dar said development of youth was top priority of the present government and the Prime Minister has provided opportunities to the youth in national level activities. The SAPM said the government had developed a portal to facilitate the CRTF volunteers, enabling them to report the hoarding, artificial price hike and non-display of the official rate lists in markets of their respective union councils through Geo-tagging technology.

The government had conducted a successful test-run of the portal-tigerforce.gov.pk—that will also be launched tomorrow, he said, adding that CRTF volunteers had started registering themselves on the website. He said the members of tiger force, during the pandemic's peak time, had made tremendous efforts to ensure implementation of the anti-coronavirus standard operating procedures (SOPs) such as social distancing and 'No Mask No

Service' campaign at hospitals, utility stores, mosques and Ehsaas Emergency Cash Centers. Dar regretted that the opposition was targeting the volunteers, who exhibited great responsibility and performed various tasks without any greed and monetary gains during the trying times. "Tiger force is a name of an ideology as its members came forward with a national spirit and the sense of duty," Dar remarked. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Denmark to Pakistan Lis Rosenholm visiting Danish IT company TEO office. She admired Pakistani IT expertise to develop customized softwares on Microsoft, Android, Apple platforms. — DNA

Evidence-based policy action must for tackling hunger: Amin Aslam

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Promoting awareness and boosting evidence-based policy actions for those who suffer from hunger and for the need to ensure healthy diets for everyone is vital to tackling global challenges of hunger and malnutrition. This was stated by Malik Amin Aslam, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Climate Change in a press statement marking World Food Day on Friday.

"In our world of abundance, one person in nine does not have enough to eat for various reasons and many sleep without having adequate food for normal healthy living," he highlighted quoting from United Nations' global studies on food security. Malik Amin Aslam remarked that however with this year's theme, "grow, nourish, sustain. Together, our actions are our future.", the world community need to launch information campaigns globally

to amplify one message: achieving zero hunger by 2030 is possible, provided we "join forces" for global action against global hunger. The World Food Day is an international day celebrated every year on October 16 by United Nations member countries. This year's World Food Day highlights an idea of looking towards the future the world need to build together where hunger is eliminated altogether. The PM's special assistant Malik

Amin said that as countries continued to deal with the widespread effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, World Food Day 2020 had come an opportunity to highlight how food and agriculture are an integral part of the COVID-19 response. He stated that "the COVID-19 crisis has been a time to ponder over things we truly treasure and our most basic needs for sustainability of our lives and the world as whole. These uncertain times of the pan-

dem have indeed made many of us rekindle our appreciation for a thing that some take for granted and many go to bed without it: food". "Food is the essence of life and the bedrock of our cultures and communities. Preserving access to safe and nutritious food is and will continue to be an essential part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for poor and vulnerable communities, who are hit hardest by the pandemic and result-

ing economic shocks," Malik Amin stressed. He, however, urged the global community enhance global cooperation and solidarity to help the most vulnerable to recover from the crisis., calling on countries to build back better by making food systems more resilient and robust so they could withstand soaring COVID-19 related volatility and fallout of climate change, deliver healthy and sustainable diets for all, and decent livelihoods for food system workers.

IESCO issues 2-day power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Friday issued 2-day power suspension programme for Saturday and Sunday for 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 on Saturday from 08:00 AM to 12:00 PM, Jinnah Road, Karsal, Mail, Vanhar, Gawalmandi, City, DHQ, Chakri, Arsalan Poultry Farm, SPD, Priyal, Sector IV, APHS, Rehmatnabad-1, VVIP, PAF, Chaklala, MES, Tamasnabad, Dhok Hakmadad, Sihala, RCCI-1, RCCI-2, RCCI-3, Bahre-Kalial, Kohar, Patehpur, Captain Nisar Feeders, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Shahpur Feeder, 07:00 a.m. to 01:00 p.m. Sagri, Basali, HPT-1, HPT-2, New Kalyan, Old Kalam Feeders, from 05:00 to 11:00am Jamrut feeder, from 09:00 a.m. to 04:00 p.m., HC-1, G-9 Express, G-9/2, G-9 Markaz, AIOU, G-8/1, PTCL, Al-Noor, G-9/3, T&T, I-8/2, I-8/3, G-9/4, People Colony, Captain Amir Shaheed, Lalazar, Qasim Base, Radio Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Colony Feeders. On Sunday from 08:00 AM to 12:00 PM Fuji Foundation, Morgah, Park View, Mehboob Shaheed, Pindi Board, Car Chowk, Jail Park Feeders, 05:00 AM to 11:00 AM, Bakrala Feeder, 08:00 AM to 02:00 AM, Basali, HPT-1, HPT-2 Feeders, 09:00 AM to 05:00 PM Pindi Point, Barin, Company Bagh, Public Health, Ghari-1, PAF, Upper Topa, Patriata, Cecil, Kohala, Sunny Bank, Kaldana, PC Bourbon, HCM, TDCP (Chairlift), Lora, Lora-2 Abbasi, Dheer Kot, Chaman Kot, Rangla, Minhasa Sohawa, Nimbal, Beirut, DESTO, PAEC Feeders, 09:00 am to 04:00 pm Parliament House, Filtration Plant, Frontier House, Embassy, Pak Seat No. 2, Parliament Lodges, Awan Sadr, PM House, Islamabad Club-II, Adiala, Jhawra, Shah Jeewan, Azizabad. — APP

IRSA releases 121,900 cusecs water

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 121,900 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 70,800 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1529.68 feet, which was 143.68 feet higher than its dead level 1386 feet. Water inflow in the dam was recorded as 40,300 cusecs and outflow as 58,000 cusecs. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1218.20 feet, which was 178.20 feet higher than its dead level of 1040 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 6,600 cusecs and 40,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 64,300, 67,100 and 22,500 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River a total of 8,700 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 4,000 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala.

4 Afghan nationals held for involvement in dacoities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Shahzad Town Police on Friday arrested four Afghan nationals for their alleged involvement in dacoities and recovered four mobile phones, artificial jewelry, and weapons from their possession, a police spokesman said. He said that Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Muhammad Aamir Zulfiqar Khan had ordered crackdown against criminals specially involved in street crime. Following these orders, DIG (Operations) Waqar Uddin Syed asked all zonal officers to accelerate their efforts to curb the crime in the city and no laxity would be tolerated in this regard. Following these directions, SP (Rural) Farooq Amjad Butar constituted special team under supervision of SHO Usman Tipu including ASP Shahzad Town Police Station Sub-Inspector Tipu Sultan, ASIs Muhammad Noman, Aamad Shah, Fayyaz Akber, Muhammad Ishaq, Ifthakhir Ahmed, Head constables Muhammad Zubair, Muhammad Akhtar, Muhammad Imran, Wajid, Khadam Hussain, Mumtaz Ahmed, along with other officials.

United in protest

A Number of groups came together in Islamabad on Wednesday to protest various issues that affect their livelihoods and their lives. From the All Pakistan Labor Unions to the Young Doctors Association to the Punjab Teachers Union to the very overworked and under-appreciated Lady Health Workers to the Goods and Transporters Group to the All Pakistan Clerks Association, D-Chowk saw another kind of protest – the kind that just cannot be dismissed by the government under the pretext of ‘political agendas’ and ‘foreign narratives’. The demands may vary but they are all connected in one way or the other with either apathy by the government or a lack of understanding of just what the working and middle classes are going through in this time of crippling inflation. For example, the huge protest by lady health workers is only demanding what in any other world should not even be up for debate: proper service structure, pensions and due payment for additional duties. The lady health workers have been told that they come under the provincial government and should therefore return and stage their protests in their provinces. The LHWs however say that the federal government is in charge of polio vaccination and other similar campaigns, and should take control of their fate. They have also said that without a decrease in food prices they will not be able to survive – much like the rest of the working and professional class. These protests are a very real gauge of just how desperate the times are for the people of the country that they are ready to take to the streets themselves even when policemen in full riot gear and shields stand before them, and when they have no political clout at all. The government has brought up the Covid factor, but that doesn’t go down well when the same government has been holding large gatherings itself. All this is happening as the opposition’s first large combined rally is set for today. The fact is that the government cannot and should not ignore the Islamabad protests. It would be an unwise move to try and do that because the anger is palpable and sentiment of betrayal and helplessness strong. The demands of the people – whether they are trade unionists or lady health workers of medical and nursing staff – have to be heard with the respect and seriousness they have earned. These are citizens of the country. Without many – in fact, all – of them and their work, we would all be much the poorer.

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Digital surveillance

THE stage is steadily being set for increased internet surveillance in the country. The government has a clear target for which it is silently laying the groundwork, but the preparations are all taking place without the input of key stakeholders from the tech industry. A report published in this paper yesterday revealed that this lack of transparency has set off alarm bells for the big technology companies who will be the direct targets of this regulation and surveillance. Represented by the Asia Internet Coalition, major social media platforms including Google, Facebook, Twitter and Apple have published a letter written to Prime Minister Imran Khan expressing deep concern about the lack of consultation in drafting the Removal and Blocking of Unlawful Content (Procedure, Oversight and Safeguards) Rules, 2020. The letter goes so far as to say that the companies have lost trust in the “non-transparent and abbreviated” consultation process. While this has been said publicly, in private and on condition of anonymity, top executives at these tech companies are said to have revealed even more startling developments which indicate that there is far more at stake than is made public. It was also revealed that the government wants to further restrict and control what is published on social media, with a demand to block and regulate content. The rules, under which these sweeping powers would be legalised, have so far been kept secret, with the coalition even stating that, despite multiple requests, no draft of the revised rules has been shared with industry stakeholders for input or feedback. That the government is diligently laying the foundation for the large-scale digital surveillance of citizens is deeply unsettling. What is more disturbing is the secrecy with which all of this is being done, with even the tech companies complaining that they have been left in the dark. The clandestine nature of these rules and the key demands of the government to these tech companies suggest that something sinister is at play. That the authorities want citizen data to be stored in Pakistan so that they can access it without going through a legal process speaks volumes for the state’s desperation to monitor citizens’ movements online. Such a hawkish approach to digital companies makes a mockery of both the prime minister’s dream of a ‘digital Pakistan’ and his claim of “I am democracy”. The dogged tracking of citizens, the eagerness to access their data and the desire to proactively block certain kinds of content reeks of paranoia and is shameful behaviour in a democracy.

COVID-19 impact on Pakistan’s hotel industry

Munaza Kazmi

Coronavirus attacked Pakistan in late February 2020, from there onwards its hotel industry has confronted with damaging consequences from mainly lockdowns & quarantine. These results have affected each & every stakeholder in the hotel chain. Starting from the travel bans & prolonged quarantine, it ended with the cancellation of bookings & tourist’s unwillingness to travel due to the fear of virus. These cancellations have eventually led to cut their costs even to the risk of survival. It was reported that many of the small & medium hotels went to complete shutdown & closure of business which affected the bread & butter of many poor people

DUE to the COVID-19 outbreak, industries have been troubled by ambiguities & uncertainties & this scenario is quite evident in the tourism & hotel industry, which is based on human interaction. It can be said the hotel & tourism industry is the main receiver of the catastrophe & its consequences. The Impact of COVID-19 on Pakistan’s Hotel Industry: Coronavirus attacked Pakistan in late February 2020, from there onwards its hotel industry has confronted with damaging consequences from mainly lockdowns & quarantine. These results have affected each & every stakeholder in the hotel chain. Starting from the travel bans & prolonged quarantine, it ended with the cancellation of bookings & tourist’s unwillingness to travel due to the fear of virus. These cancellations have eventually led to cut their costs even to the risk of survival. It was reported that many of the small & medium hotels went to complete shutdown & closure of business which affected the bread & butter of many poor people. There are approximately 12,000 hotels in Pakistan that directly & indirectly employ 2.5 million families, moreover tourism & hospitality is Pakistan’s second largest contributor in economy & foreign reserves. Furthermore, this scenario resulted sharp decline in the market value in the stock exchange. As reported by Asian Development Bank in the worst-case scenario, Pakistan Hotels may face loss of \$ 253.7 million whereas in the moderate case, the loss would be around \$ 0.67 million. I would say Pakistan is under the era of slow recovery & lies between moderate to worst case since hotels still have not started operating as before, moreover the influx of international tourist is still near to zero, though Prime Minister Imran Khan has lifted the restrictions on tourism industry, but almost more than half of the nations are still under border restrictions. The scenario will persist, since the loss has not just incurred on the economy only but to the physical as well mental health of the people, it raised numerous fears & anxiety issues, the concerns for infection, these concerns can have negative impact on the industry, though the industry will revive slowly & for that Pakistan must gear up for tomorrow. Preparing for tomorrow: It was observed that the industry of tourism & hospitality has been under a persistent crisis & disaster since the beginning of 21st century. The pandemic of coronavirus comes under the same category, as it is neither predictable nor avoidable & effecting the working & operations of entities round the globe. **COVID-19 Disaster Management Framework for Hotels: PHASE Pre-event**

- 26 February 2020 when two cases were reported.
- Prodromal**
- 15-25 March 2020, more cases reported, & it was registered that the spread had happened.
- Lockdown in Pakistan was made in less than a day.
- The operations of big hotels started affecting in response of travel bans & shut downs.
- Restaurants receiving lockdown notices from government.
- Cancellations of bookings have been recorded which drastically have stroke the cash flows of hotels.
- Emergency**
- April 15 June 2020.
- Cases reached on its peak with 6,825 new cases.
- Shutdowns & closures to protect the people.
- Pakistan’s Hotel industry entered in the emergency phase.
- Hotel industry undergone a disastrous decline.
- Intermediate**
- Late June 2020 the number of cases stabilized.
- Smart Lockdown.
- Tourism bans were lifted with strict SOPs.
- Hotel business started showing some early signs of performance recovery.
- The hotel industry shifted its focus from anti-pandemic to business restoration measures.
- Recovery**
- Beginning of July 2020 there came a significant decrease in the confirm cases.
- Domestic tourism recovered, but foreign incoming was dropped since most of the countries had closed their borders.
- The overnight rate of Pakistan’s incoming passengers declined intensely, the situation convincing the luxury & upper-class hotels to seek new markets & segments. Most of them focusing on domestic clients & offering reasonable rates & packages.
- Healing.
- Resolution**
- As of 20 September 2020, the recovery rate in Pakistan positions at 95.6%.
- Domestic market is improving but the international global situation & mobility.
- Perhaps, 2021-2022, phase is expected to last for 2 years or more till discovery of vaccine & conclusion of the COVID-19
- STRATEGIES**
- Visualization**
- An effective team under a good manager.
- Potentiality of disaster & its probability of occurrence
- Planning & Communication
- Risk analysis
- Proactive planning

- Awareness
- digital communication network.
- Making, recording & communicating disaster management strategy.
- Mitigation**
- Reduce vulnerability
- Business Continuity Management
- Ensuring the wellbeing of staff, clients & property
- Reduce non-essential labor costs flexibility
- Multitasking
- Online sessions
- Using annual leave & reduction in working hours.
- Review & revise marketing
- Contingency Management**
- Safety
- Emergency services
- Loss Sharing
- Refunding or re-scheduling cancellations
- Intense cleaning & its marketing
- Provide contactless services
- CSR activities
- Closely monitor marketing
- Rehabilitation**
- Damage assessment
- Beginning of restoration
- Modification in marketing
- Restoring**
- Restoration of normal business operations
- Improvement in customer services & other facilities
- Extensive advertising & campaigns
- Seek aid from government & insurance companies if required.
- Encourage mutual support with all stakeholders
- Discover new horizons**
- Resolution or post disaster phase aims to ensure that adequate reflection critical examination of the lessons learned. There should be focus on day to day action with mind mapping for discovering the new horizons, since COVID-19 had caused enduring changes in customer preferences & consumption behaviors. Hence, hotels should identify those needs & develop state-of-the-art products e.g., concern for hygiene, health, & sustainability.
- The hotels must renew services by reviewing & reconstructing existing products, marketing strategy, distribution channels, delivery methods, & consumption points.
- Develop Disaster Management Standard Operating Procedure
- It is hoped that such an approach would lead to a better understanding of disaster planning, reduction & readiness & the development of suitable policies & initiatives from hotel enterprises to facilitate more effective management.

Why is Bint-e-Hawa deprived of protection?

Attiya Munawer



The present govt makes a lot of claims to provide security to the people, there is talk of legislation, but the ground realities are just the opposite. If we look at the number of sexual assaults from Zainab to the motorway incident, the administration looks completely inactive. The highest rate of cases across the country is in Punjab and KPK

FOR the last thirty years, the unstoppable chain of abduction and murder of innocent girls has been going on for a long time. At the same time, incidents of collective and individual abuse of women are also on the rise. Some incidents are reported, but most do not even register an FIR for the sake of their family’s honor and dignity. These young girls and women who are victims of brutality get rid of their lives by committing suicide. Such incidents that happen on a daily basis have frightened girls and women. Poor and middle class women are being called under the pretext of employment and their dignity is being tarnished while somewhere on public highways, they are being sexually abused after looting. In the state of Medina, Bint-e-Hawa is nowhere safe and rulers are merely consoling the people with rhetoric claims of making criminals a warning sign. Pakistan is an Islamic country; where things can get better if the perpetrators of child and women abuse are punished according to Islamic principles. We have to set an exemplary hanging such beasts in public without coming under the pressure of the West; otherwise, our fate will be the same as that of the people of Lut. There is no denying the fact that it is the responsibility of the government to protect the lives, property, honor and dignity of the people. Cruel beasts in human form are carrying out fearless and dangerous incidents, but the government has not taken any serious, drastic and immediate steps for effective prevention. Whenever a new tragedy in the country oc-

curs, members of the government, the opposition gets silenced by making strong condemnatory statements and the traditional rhetoric of bringing the accused to justice. No effective legislation has been enacted in this regard nor a common strategy is being worked out to protect the people. For so many years, the so-called democrats have been in power, yet women are not secure and innocent children are being killed after being abused. The present government makes a lot of claims to provide security to the people, there is talk of legislation, but the ground realities are just the opposite. If we look at the number of sexual assaults from Zainab to the motorway incident, the administration looks completely inactive. The highest rate of cases across the country is in Punjab and KPK, while these two provinces have PTI governments. The government has issued an alert in the name of Zainab, the innocent daughter of Kasur, but it has not been of any use. Has such showy measures ever eradicated crime? All this is nothing but a ploy to throw dust in the eyes of the people. There is no doubt about the intention of Prime Minister Imran Khan, he wants to set a precedent for criminals by preventing crime, but in practice the government seems to have completely failed to protect the lives, property, honor and dignity of the people. It is the major responsibility of the federal and provincial governments to curb the rising crime and sexual abuse of women in the country, but the extent to which this responsibility is being met can be gauged from the growing proportion of incidents.

Unless the concept of crime and punishment is put into practice in this country, such incidents will not be prevented. Hearings will be postponed due to weak police investigation in police stations, absence of lawyers and accused in the courts leading to an increase in crime. Such incidents can be greatly reduced if law enforcement agencies carry out their duties with due diligence and do not delay the delivery of judicial decisions. There is no doubt that the government is facing many challenges, but the nation has not been tolerant in tolerating such incidents, by justifying the situation in the country. The incidents with women and girls are proof that there is a lack of justice in the society. The lack of justice in society occurs only when the government starts supporting the oppressor instead of the oppressed. Not providing justice is the biggest injustice of the government. Hazrat Ali (R.A.) says that “society can survive with kufr (infidelity), but not injustice”. PTI government should ensure the delivery of justice; improve the police system and its efficiency. The hearing of cases of abuse of children and women should be expedited and those involved should be hung in public squares as a warning sign. We have to follow the Islamic laws and make the best possible legislation, If the rulers who wanted to make Pakistan a state of Medina, need to come out of the pressure of the major world powers and move towards the implementation of real Sharia law in Pakistan, then not only Bint-e-Hawa will get full rights with protection, but also our entire society will improve.

Briefs

Egyptian army begins Radaa 2020 military drills

DNA

CAIRO: Radaa-2020 (Deterrence-2020 drills), carried out by units from the Egyptian Central Military Region with the participation of the branches of the Egyptian Armed Forces, is underway. The drills will continue for several days as part of the annual plan for combat training of the Egyptian Armed Forces' formations and units, in conjunction with the celebrations of the country and the armed forces of the 47th anniversary of the October war.

The drills include training in the preparation and organization of battle, moving and conquering and then pushing the main force to attack the front border of the hostile defenses, and completing the attack to achieve the planned tasks using the MILES simulation.

Mohamed Farid Hegazy, chief of staff of the Egyptian Armed Forces, addressed a number of commanders and officers participating in the project about the way to carry out the tasks assigned to them. He imposed a number of emergency tactical situations to ensure their ability to take the right decision to face sharp and rapid changes during the course of the battle. The Egyptian and Russian navies are conducting joint exercises in the Black Sea until the end of this year. During the exercises, the warships of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Navy and the Egyptian Navy, with the support of aircraft, will train to defend sea lanes against various threats. Troops will be deployed to organize communications and resupply at sea, and participants in the exercises will conduct searches for suspicious ships.

Japan 'to release contaminated water into sea'

MONITORING DESK

TOKYO: Japan is to release treated radioactive water from the destroyed Fukushima nuclear plant into the sea, media reports say.

It follows years of debate over how to dispose of the liquid, which includes water used to cool the power station hit by a massive tsunami in 2011. Environmental and fishing groups oppose the idea but many scientists say the risk it would pose is low. The government says no final decision has been made. The release of more than a million tonnes of water, which has been filtered to reduce radioactivity, would start in 2022 at the earliest, according to Japanese media outlets including national dailies the Nikkei and the Yomiuri Shimbun. The water would be diluted inside the plant before release so it is 40 times less concentrated, the Yomiuri Shimbun said, with the whole process taking 30 years. An official decision could emerge by the end of this month, said Kyodo news agency. There has been growing urgency over what to do with the water as space to store the liquid - which includes groundwater and rain that seeps daily into the plant - is running out. Most of the radioactive isotopes have been removed using a complex filtration process. But one isotope, tritium, cannot be removed so the water has been stored in huge tanks which will fill up by 2022.

1st Tunisian satellite to be launched in March 2021

DNA

TUNIS: The first Tunisian satellite Challenge One will be launched on March 20, 2021, Tunis Afrique Presse (TAP) reported Friday.

"This date will coincide with the celebration of the 65th anniversary of Tunisia's independence," Telnet Group, initiator of this project, was quoted by TAP as saying. The group confirms that it has successfully completed all functional tests. Challenge One, made by 100-percent Tunisian resources and skills, will be launched from a base in Kazakhstan aboard the Russian Soyuz-2 rocket. Between 2018 and 2019, Telnet Group signed a series of cooperation and partnership agreements with the Russian space agency Roscosmos as part of a new strategy based on the investment in space technologies.



KABUL: Ambassador of Pakistan to Afghanistan Mansoor Ahmad Khan called on Afghan Minister of Industry & Commerce Nisar Ahmad Ghoryani and discussed strengthening of bilateral trade, transit and connectivity. – DNA

UK ready to walk away without 'fundamental change' from EU

The summit outcome appeared to rule out a comprehensive, Canada-style free trade agreement between the EU and Britain, Johnson said, accusing the 27-nation bloc of failing "to negotiate seriously" in recent months

DNA

LONDON: Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Friday kept the door open to more Brexit talks but insisted Britain was ready to slam it shut unless the EU offers "fundamental change" in its tactics, as the clock ticks down to a potentially messy divorce.

Johnson was responding after the European Union at summit talks Thursday demanded he give ground on key stumbling blocks while also proposing a fresh round of talks next week in London. The summit outcome appeared

to rule out a comprehensive, Canada-style free trade agreement between the EU and Britain, Johnson said, accusing the 27-nation bloc of failing "to negotiate seriously" in recent months.

"They want the continued ability to control our legislative freedom, our fisheries, in a way that is obviously unacceptable to an independent country," he said in a broadcast interview.

He said that "unless there is some fundamental change of approach" from the EU, Britain's favoured approach for an all-encompassing deal was out. "And so with high hearts and complete confidence

we will prepare to embrace the alternative," Johnson said. He said Britain should "get ready" to operate on stripped-down World Trade Organization rules from January akin to Australia's relationship with the EU.

"And we can do it, because we always knew that there would be change on January 1 whatever type of relationship we had," he said, pointing to sector-by-sector arrangements in areas such as social security, aviation and nuclear cooperation. "And we will prosper mightily as an independent free-trading nation, controlling our own borders, our fisheries,

and setting our own laws." The British pound slid below \$1.29 in response to Johnson's comments but pushed the London stock market up 1.3 percent, as the weak pound lifts multinationals earning in dollars.

Johnson had set the EU summit as a deadline for a deal, but is under pressure after fresh warnings that British companies are nowhere near ready for the consequences of a cliff-edge divorce when a post-Brexit transition period ends on December 31.

Britain wants to reassert sovereignty over its waters and refuse EU legal oversight over any deal,

insisting it wants an overarching trade deal of the kind the EU adopted with Canada in 2017.

Brussels in turn stresses that Britain's economy is far more integrated with the EU's than Canada's, and that its single market must be protected from British backsliding. At their Brussels summit, EU leaders demanded Britain compromise on fair trade rules to unblock the stalled post-Brexit talks. Chief negotiator Michel Barnier also proposed more meetings in London next week and the EU confirmed it would be in the British capital to intensify negotiations from Monday.

Kyrgyzstan to hold presidential elections before Jan. 10

DNA

BISHKEK: The presidential elections in Kyrgyzstan should be held no later than Jan. 10, Prime Minister Sadyr Zhaparov said Friday. Consultations on the date for the elections will be held, Zhaparov said at an extraordinary session of the parliament. Both presidential and parliamentary elections will be held within the framework of the law, he said, adding that parliamentary elections should be held according to the party system. Zhaparov

proposed lowering the threshold to enter parliament up to 5 percent, and reducing the electoral deposit from 5 million Kyrgyz soms (62,000 U.S. dollars) to 1 million soms (12,000 dollars) as well as the number of deputies from 120 to 90 or 70. "When such a parliament comes, then we will be able to go for constitutional reform," he said. Zhaparov on Thursday declared himself acting president of the country after President Sooronbai Jeenbekov resigned hours earlier amid ongoing protests in Bishkek.

Tsikhanouskaya on wanted list in Belarus, Russia

FOREIGN DESK

MOSCOW: Belarus and Russia have added opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya to their wanted lists on charges of attempting to overthrow the constitutional order.

Belarus put opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya on its most-wanted list for alleged calls to overthrow the constitutional order, the Russian interior minister told RIA news on Friday.

In accordance with a regional bloc agreement, Tsikhanouskaya later also appeared on Russia's wanted

list. The opposition leader fled to neighboring Lithuania shortly after the disputed election in Belarus on August 9. She has since met with European leaders and called for President Alexander Lukashenko to step down. On Tuesday she set a deadline of October 25, threatening nationwide strikes if it was not met.

Anna Krasulina, a spokeswoman for Tsikhanouskaya, said that the move by Belarus "doesn't surprise anyone. It's clear the regime has no legal ways of retaining power."

Tsikhanouskaya stepped forward as the leader of the opposition challenging the president in the last

elections after her husband, who had originally intended to take that role, was arrested and charged with taking part in an unauthorized demonstration. When her husband was formally disqualified from running, she took up the mantle and quickly got the 100,000 signatures required to be on the ballot. Protests erupted following the election which the president claimed to have won, but which have been disputed by other groups. Other opposition leaders have been arrested or left the country.

Around 13,000 people were arrested during the crackdown against protests, some were later released.



RAWALPINDI: A view of cricket match between Northern and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa teams during National T20 Cup played at Pindi Cricket Stadium. – DNA

Uzbekistan expands the list of offshore zones

The document clarified the tax authorities, which receive information from the branches of banks and territorial departments of customs authorities, - territorial state tax departments and the Interregional State Tax Inspectorate for Large Taxpayers

DNA

TASHKENT: Uzbekistan has expanded the list of offshore zones. Corresponding changes were made to the Regulation on the procedure for monitoring the validity of the conduct of foreign exchange transactions by legal entities and individuals. American Samoa, Aruba, Guatemala, Dominica, Kiribati, Monaco, Alderney Channel Island, Pitcairn,

San Marino, Saint Martin (Sint Maarten), Uruguay and the Philippines were included to the list of offshore zones, foreign exchange transactions with which are subject to monitoring. The document clarified the tax authorities, which receive information from the branches of banks and territorial departments of customs authorities, - territorial state tax departments and the Interregional State Tax Inspectorate for Large

Taxpayers. According to the document, banks must report if during a calendar year the amount of transfer of a resident individual abroad to the accounts of individuals exceeds 100 million soms (previously equivalent to US\$10,000). Now the customs authorities must report on the revealed facts of unreasonable overstatement and understatement of the invoice value of goods, both during their import and export. According to Norma.uz, the

document introduced a new monitoring mechanism. When studying the information received, tax authorities rely on information from electronic information databases and other information available to them. If violations of the procedure for conducting foreign exchange transactions are detected, a request is sent to an economic entity: in electronic form to the taxpayer's personal account - it is considered received after reading, but

not later than 3 days from the date of departure; by registered mail, if the subject does not have a personal account, it is considered received 5 days after it was sent. The requested documents and information must be submitted to the tax authority within 5 working days after receiving the request. In some cases, additional information is requested from banks and customs. In the course of monitoring, measures of legal influence are not applied, the activities of

the economic entity are not suspended. If monitoring confirms the fact: committing an offense - the tax office takes measures within its powers or transfers materials to law enforcement agencies; money laundering, terrorist financing or proliferation of weapons of mass destruction - the tax authorities shall notify the Department for Combating Economic Crimes under the General Prosecutor's Office within 3 days.

National T20 Cup semifinals to turn pink

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Pakistan Cricket Board will use Saturday's high-profile National T20 Cup semifinals to create awareness about breast cancer as part of its corporate social responsibility in partnership with Pink Ribbon Pakistan. October is marked across the globe as Breast Cancer Awareness Month to help increase attention and support for the awareness of breast cancer, which is by far the most common cancer in women worldwide. According to the World Health Organization, there are about 1.38 million new cases and 458,000 deaths from breast cancer each year. To mark the occasion, players from the four semi-finalist teams as well as PCB staff and broadcasters will wear pink ribbons on their shirts to raise awareness. In addition to this, the match officials will wear pink polos, the stumps will be painted pink and all PCB's digital assets will turn pink to align with the global breast cancer awareness cause. PCB chief executive Wasim Khan: "The National T20 Cup has been the most followed and discussed cricket event on PTV Sports, delayed live-stream and other social media platforms during these unprecedented Covid-19 times.

2 Thai protesters arrested

DNA

BANGKOK: Thai police arrested two activists Friday under a rarely-used law banning violence against the queen, after thousands of pro-democracy protesters defied an emergency decree to rally on the streets of Bangkok.

The kingdom's political elite has been jolted by a youth-led movement that has demanded the resignation of Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-cha and issued a once-taboo call for reforms to Thailand's powerful monarchy. Ekachai Hongkangwan and Bunkueanun Paotthong were among activists who crowded around a royal motorcade carrying Queen Suthida on Wednesday during a large demonstration near the capital's government house.

Bunkueanun said during a Friday morning Facebook broadcast that he was surrendering himself to police.

"I am accused of trying to harm the queen," he said. "I am innocent. That was not my intention." Ekachai told media by phone he had also been charged and police later confirmed he was in their custody. Both men could face life in prison under a law that has not been used for decades and punishes any "act of violence against the queen or her liberty". It is not clear why the pair were singled out. This is the first time such a serious charge has been levelled against pro-democracy activists, many of whom have already been hit with lesser charges, including sedition and breaking coronavirus rules on gatherings.

Their movement's demands include the abolition of a strict royal defamation law - which shields the monarchy from criticism - and for the royal family to stay out of politics.

55 dead, 7 missing in Vietnam

HANOI: Floods and other natural disasters triggered by heavy downpours have killed 55 people and left seven others missing in central Vietnam over the past 10 days, the country's Central Steering Committee for Natural Disaster Prevention and Control said on Friday. The death toll increased from 40 on Thursday. The victims were mainly reported in the provinces of Quang Tri, Thua Thien Hue and Quang Nam, according to the committee's latest report. Among the dead, 13 were part of a rescue team who suffered a landslide on their way to verify reports of victims buried by a previous landslide in Thua Thien Hue's Phong Dien district. Over 30 others were swept away by floods, the committee said, adding that search and rescue is underway for the remaining missing. Between Oct. 5 to 13, heavy downpours were witnessed in central and central highlands Vietnam, with the accumulative rainfall surpassing 2,000 mm in some areas. Some 900 hectares of rice fields and over 5,500 hectares of other croplands were submerged. Meanwhile, more than 445,700 cattle and poultry animals were killed or swept away, said the committee. – APP

Briefs

Sarkozy charged over Libyan financing

MONITORING DESK

PARIS: Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy has been charged over claims he used Libyan cash for his 2007 election campaign, financial crimes prosecutors told the AFP news agency on Friday. The charge for "membership in a criminal conspiracy" was brought on Monday, and adds to charges in 2018 of "passive corruption", "benefitting from embezzled public funds" and "illegal campaign financing" against Sarkozy, who has denied any wrongdoing.

On his Facebook page, Sarkozy on Friday again said he was innocent.

The 65-year-old denies accusations by former members of Muammar Gaddafi's leadership that he took millions from the slain Libyan ruler, some of it delivered in cash-stuffed suitcases, in his successful presidential run.

The scandal came to light in 2012, when investigative website Mediapart published a document purporting to show that Gaddafi agreed to give Sarkozy up to 50 million euros (\$58m or \$67.6m at today's rates). In 2011, as NATO-backed forces were driving Gaddafi out of power, the longtime Libyan leader's youngest son Saif al-Islam, told the Euronews network: "Sarkozy must first give back the money he took from Libya to finance his electoral campaign."

Macron defends fishing rights at Brexit deal debate

WEB DESK

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron issued a statement Friday at the EU Council Summit in Brussels on the matter of fishing rights in the English Channel and northern waters between France and England. "Under no circumstance will our fisherman be the ones sacrificed for this Brexit. We did not choose Brexit; it's the choice of the British people," he said to Radio France International upon his arrival at a summit held Thursday and Friday in the Belgian capital.

Although Friday's agenda will focus on events in Africa, discussions the prior day had focused on relations with the UK, with the fishing issue being one of great importance. The UK is set to make a hard exit from the single market as of Dec. 31. Macron said as well that France is already making preparations for the deadline. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson says he will decide at the summit's conclusion whether the UK will continue discussions on his self-imposed deadline. Fishing rights is one of the three main issues to be hammered out between the UK and the EU. Top of the list is cross-channel business, with Britain insisting on doling out state aid to UK businesses if it deems it necessary. Governance and regulating future deals and agreements is another hot-button topic.

Floods submerge 350 homes in Indonesia

FOREIGN DESK

JAKARTA: Heavy rains in Tolitoli Regency in Indonesia's Central Sulawesi Province caused flooding Friday in the villages of Silondou and Janja, according to the Indonesian National Board for Disaster Management (BNPB). A total of 350 homes were damaged and a bridge was closed to traffic due to the risk of collapse.

Officials said necessary units are working in coordination to meet flood victims' needs. They are currently trying to find out whether other settlements were damaged due to the floods. The meteorology agency warned that there may be floods due to showers in various regions tomorrow, including Palu, Sigi, Donggala, Parigi, Poso, Buol and Morowali. Indonesia is located near the equator, and floods and landslides often occur, especially from October to April.

UN's decolonization agenda must include Kashmir issue

While the international community has continued to reaffirm the principle of self-determination, the free exercise of this right has been denied, so far, in certain cases, such as in Jammu and Kashmir and Palestine

DNA

NEW YORK: Pakistan told the U.N. on Thursday that its decolonization agenda would remain incomplete without settling the Kashmir dispute on the basis of Security Council resolutions that pledged the right of self-determination to the Kashmiri people. "India has, by obfuscation and oppression, denied the right of self-determination to the people of Jammu and Kashmir for seven decades," Mohammad Amir Khan, deputy permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, said in a speech to the General Assembly's Special Political and Decolonization (Fourth) Committee. "The UN's decolonization agenda will remain incomplete without the just resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute," he added.

"Negation of the right to self-determination, anywhere, generates anger and discontent, ignites conflicts and threatens peace and security," the said while participating in a general debate. "Sadly," the Pakistani representative said, "South Asia and the Middle East have witnessed and experienced this for decades."

"While the international community has continued to reaffirm the principle of self-determination, the free exercise of this right has been denied, so far, in certain cases, such as in Jammu and Kashmir and Palestine,"



Amir Khan pointed out.

The persistence of colonialism and foreign occupations is a "travesty" of the universal principle of political and economic freedom for all peoples, the Pakistani representative said.

Referring to India's so-called "final solution" initiated in occupied Jammu and Kashmir on Aug. 5, 2019, that saw elimination of the disputed state's special status, imposition of a siege and changing of its demographic

composition, Amir Khan said those measures constituted flagrant violations of the UN Charter, the relevant Security Council resolutions, and international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention.

During the last fourteen months, he said, India has imprisoned all Kashmiri political leaders, illegally detained 13,000 Kashmiri youth, tortured many of them, summarily executed young boys, put down protest violent-

ly, including the use of blinding pellet guns, and imposed collective punishments demolishing and burning entire neighborhoods and villages.

"The international community must hold India accountable for egregious violations of human rights of Kashmiris, and ensure the implementation of the Security Council resolutions prescribing a plebiscite to enable the people of Jammu and Kashmir to exercise their right to self-determination,"

the Pakistani representative said. Dealing with UN peacekeeping operations, he urged the world body to consider ways and means to strengthen the UN Military Observers Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), and enable it to effectively perform its mandated role for monitoring and reporting ceasefire violations.

In this regard, Amir Khan pointed out that despite the UN Secretary-General and the Security Council call for a global ceasefire, India intensified its violations of the ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) in the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir. "Due to the intensified Indian ceasefire violations, and threats of aggression against Pakistan, the role and importance of UNMOGIP, has become increasingly important," he emphasized. "As a major troop-contributing country, with a proud history of professionalism, competence and honour, we welcome discussions for improving performance and outcomes of peacekeeping, he said, calling it UN's flagship enterprise. "As the first member state to endorse the Action for Peacekeeping (AAP) declaration of shared commitments, we firmly believe that we are all stakeholders in this endeavour and thus have a shared responsibility to ensure its success." "We look forward to working with all stakeholders for our common objective of improving peacekeeping outcomes."

Syria Kurds free more than 600 ISIL fighters

MONITORING DESK

Kurdish-led authorities released hundreds of ISIL (ISIS) fighters imprisoned in northern Syria as part of a general amnesty in the region controlled by a United States-backed militia. Amina Omar, the head of the Syrian Democratic Council, told reporters at a news conference in the town of Qamishli that ISIL members who were released have "no blood on their hands" and have all repented joining ISIL at some point. "They are people who can be reformed," Omar said shortly before the men were freed.

The Syrian Democratic Council said the 631 prisoners were released Thursday while 253 others will have their terms cut in half. Omar added all those freed are Syrians who have served at least half of their prison sentences. The releases came after re-

peated calls from the Arab tribes that dominate much of the region administered by the Kurds, including the areas near the Iraqi border where ISIL made its bloody last stand in 2019. AFP news agency correspondents outside the Alaya detention facility on the outskirts of Qamishli saw dozens of detainees leave the premises and reunite with relatives who had come to meet them. "My brother has been in jail for eight months for women trafficking in Al-Hol camp," Ahmad al-Husseini said, in reference to the largest detention facility in the region. Kurdish authorities currently operate more than two dozen prisons scattered across northeastern Syria, holding about 10,000 ISIL fighters. Among the detainees are some 2,000 foreigners whose home countries have refused to repatriate them, including about 800 Europeans.

Kashmir's political parties unite for autonomy

KASHMIR DESK

SRINAGAR: Kashmir's main political parties have announced a grand alliance to seek a peaceful restoration of its autonomy days after India released the last key Kashmiri political leader from a lengthy detention. "Our battle is a constitutional battle. We want the government of India to return to the people of the state [of Kashmir] the rights they held before August 5th, 2019," Farooq Abdullah, former chief minister of Indian-administered Kashmir, said on Thursday. Abdullah was talking to reporters after a meeting of the disputed region's main parties - the

National Conference, the People's Democratic Party, the People's Conference, the Awami National Conference and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) - was held at his residence in the main city of Srinagar. On Tuesday, the government ordered the release of another former Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti after a 14-month detention and she and other leaders promptly called for a campaign to restore Indian-administered Kashmir's special rights. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government revoked the Muslim-majority region's special status last year, cracked down on opposition and rounded up hundreds of people to forestall protests.

UNHCR's Rohingya fund half a billion dollars short

FOREIGN DESK

NEW YORK: Less than half the \$1bn in aid meant for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh this year has been raised and the lack of money has made it difficult for them to provide the food, basic healthcare and other support the Rohingya need, the UN refugee agency or UNHCR said on Thursday as it announced plans for a large donor conference next week. The online event will take place on October 22 in an effort to close a "significant funding gap," the UNHCR said. "Solidarity with the Rohingya people means more than just meeting their basic needs," Filippo Grandi, the UN high commissioner for Refugees, said in a statement. "Refugees, like everyone else, have a right to a life of dignity and the chance to build a safe and stable future."

European powers condemn Israel's settlement approvals

FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: European powers on Friday condemned Israel's decision to approve thousands more settlements in occupied Palestinian territory, calling it a "counterproductive" move that undermines regional peace efforts. "The expansion of settlements violates international law and further imperils the viability of a two-state solution to bring about a just and lasting peace to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict," said a joint statement from the foreign ministers of Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy and Spain. "As we have emphasised directly with the government of Israel, this step furthermore undermines efforts to rebuild

trust between the parties with a view to resuming dialogue," they said, urging an immediate halt in settlement construction. This week, Israel approved the construction of more than 3,000 settler homes across the occupied West Bank, ending an eight-month lull in settlement expansion. Under international law, settlements are considered illegal. Palestinian officials and much of the international community view them as the main obstacle to a viable two-state solution. The latest approvals raised the number of settlement homes to be advanced this year to more than 12,150, according to Peace Now, the settlement watchdog group. "These approvals make 2020 the highest year on record in terms of units in settlement plans promoted since Peace

Now began recording in 2012," the watchdog said in a statement. The European ministers said pushing ahead with more settlements would be a "counterproductive move in light of the positive developments of normalisation agreements reached between Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain". The UAE and Bahrain in mid-September set aside decades of enmity with Israel to sign a US-brokered deal to normalise ties. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo also urged Saudi Arabia to recognise Israel, in what would be a strategic boost for the country. But Riyadh said the focus should remain on the Palestinian-Israeli peace talks before any formal rapprochement between Israel and Saudi Arabia.



BAKU: Ombudsperson of Azerbaijan, Sabina Aliyeva received the Ambassador of Pakistan in Azerbaijan, Bilal Hayee at the Ombudsman Office and gave broad information about the armed attacks of Armenia against civilians in Azerbaijan- DNA

International community urged to condemn Armenian attack on children

The ministry stressed that for almost three decades hundreds of thousands of children in Azerbaijan suffer from the ongoing aggression of Armenia and its long-lasting effects

BAKU: Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry calls the international community, the relevant international organizations to react publicly to the deliberate targeting by Armenia of children and educational facilities in Azerbaijan and take effective actions to stop the climate of impunity lasting for three decades.

In the statement, ministry urges the international community to refrain from the actions, such as rendering political, financial and especially military support to Armenia which contributes to the grave violations committed by this country against the children in Azerbaijan. "Children represent the future. If the international community fails today its universal moral obligation to protect the future generation and provide

them with safe haven, ignoring the decades-lasting plight and suffering of the whole generation, and failing to secure justice and rule of law which sow the seeds for conflicts to continue," the statement reads. The ministry stressed that for almost three decades hundreds of thousands of children in Azerbaijan suffer from the ongoing aggression of Armenia and its long-lasting effects. During this period, Armenia ignoring moral imperatives and legal responsibilities, deprived the Azerbaijani children of their inherent rights defined in the international documents, and their right to be brought up in the spirit of the ideals proclaimed in the United Nations Charter, in particular in the spirit of peace, dignity, equality and solidarity as described in the

Convention on the Rights of the Child. Moreover, Armenia has been using acts of genocide as a means to instil fear and to terrorize the entire population and force them to flee. It was noted that only in Khojaly massacre 613 civilians of whom 63 were children were brutally killed and many were maimed by the armed forces of Armenia in 1992.

The ministry underlined that 1 million Azerbaijanis, one third of whom are children were forcefully expelled and driven away from their homes in contrary to Article 49 of IV Geneva Convention. "For almost 15 years the larger part of the forcefully displaced children in Azerbaijan had to live in tent camps and villages consisting of luggage vans on railways which were subsequently abolished as a result of the tremen-

dous efforts and budget resources allocated by the Government of Azerbaijan. The internally displaced children in Azerbaijan still cannot realize their right to voluntary return to their lands in safety and dignity despite the provisions of relevant documents, including the UN Security Council resolutions 822, 853, 874 and 884 adopted in 1993," the statement says. Furthermore, the ministry emphasized that the ongoing armed aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan has inflicted serious damage upon the infrastructure for children in Azerbaijan, in contrary to the Article 50 of the IV Geneva Convention which provides that the occupying power shall facilitate the proper working of all institutions devoted to the care and education of children.

"Armenia which presents itself as one of the 'advocates' of the Safe Schools Declaration is responsible for total destruction of 1107 educational facilities and 855 kindergartens in the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan. As a result of the ethnic cleansing policy, all Azerbaijani schoolchildren and students have been expelled from their native lands. Tens of thousands of Azerbaijani children continue to realize their right to education under serious challenges stemming from their continued displacement. Many others along the line of confrontation attend their classes under the constant threat of being attacked by the indiscriminate bombing of the armed forces of Armenia," the statement reads.

Mexico minister arrested in US on 'drug charges'

FOREIGN DESK

NEW YORK: Former Mexican defence minister Salvador Cienfuegos has been arrested in the United States on undisclosed charges, Mexico's foreign minister said on Thursday.

Cienfuegos, who was defence chief from 2012-2018, was reportedly on a trip with his family when he was arrested at Los Angeles airport. "The consul in Los Angeles will inform me of the charges in the next few hours. We will offer the consular assistance to which he is entitled," Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard wrote on Twitter.

The Mexican investigative magazine Proceso, quoting unnamed sources at the US Department of Justice, reported that the arrest was the result of a long-standing investigation into corruption involving drug traffickers. The Wall Street Journal newspaper, quoting an unnamed senior Mexican government official, said Cienfuegos was arrested at the request of the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). There was no immediate confirmation from the US authorities.

Bolivia set to vote for president

LA PAZ: Bolivians will vote for a new president on Sunday and for the first time in two decades the name of Evo Morales will not be on the ballot paper. Yet not only does the shadow of the landlocked country's first ever indigenous president loom large over the poll, he is the reason it is taking place at all.

Morales stood for, and won, an unconstitutional fourth term in a controversial election last year that sparked weeks of protests against his victory. An Organization of American States audit subsequently found clear evidence of fraud and Morales resigned before fleeing into exile.

Now living in neighboring Argentina, he is barred from standing but his hand-picked successor as the Movement for Socialism (MAS) candidate, Luis Arce, leads opinion polls. According to analysts Eurasia Group, "polls point to a very close race with... Arce within reach of a first round victory." A Ciesmori poll released last week put Arce ahead with 30.7 percent of votes compared to his main challenger, the centrist former president Carlos Mesa with 24.7 percent.

To win outright in the first round, Arce would need to poll 40 percent with a 10-point advantage over his nearest challenger. - APP

Thai premier refuses to resign, free protesters

FOREIGN DESK

BANGKOK: Thai prime minister on Friday rejected calls by pro-democracy protesters to resign and refused to release detained demonstrators as demanded by human rights groups, saying they had broken the law. "What did I do wrong? I am asking you," Prayut Chan-o-cha said at a news conference broadcast by local Voice TV. Thailand declared a state of emergency in Bangkok on Thursday as security forces cleared demonstrators from outside the prime minister's office. Prayut said that the Foreign Ministry would explain to diplomats that the state of emergency was imposed in Bangkok to restore stability in the country. "The government cannot allow lawlessness to continue," he said, blaming media for keeping eyes only on political conflicts while ignoring other issues. The former general, however, said he would not force media to report news according to the government's wishes. Earlier, police closed Bangkok's Ratchaprasong Intersection, where tens of thousands of protesters had gathered since Thursday. Thailand's six opposition parties opposed the government's decision to impose a state of emergency banning pro-democracy protests. "The Prime Minister must immediately cancel the state of emergency declaration as the move violates human rights," said a joint statement by the opposition parties.

Briefs

CAA traces lost wallet of passenger

ISLAMABAD: A porter of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has set another example of honesty by tracing and returning a lost wallet to its owner at the Bacha Khan International Airport (BKIA), Peshawar. "The wallet was full of foreign and Pakistani currency," an Aviation Division news release said here on Friday. Irshad Ullah, a passenger who arrived at the BKIA on a flight EK-636 from Dubai, had forgotten his wallet in the aircraft. Later, the porter traced the owner and handed over his wallet, who praised the CAA efforts in finding and returning his lost valuable. The organization would also give appreciation certificates to the porter for his honesty and trustworthiness. — APP

'Previous govt provided unfunded subsidies'

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Industries and Production Hammad Azhar on Friday informed the Senate that the past governments had provided unfunded subsidies without any proper budgetary allocation.

Replying to a question in the Senate, the minister said that the present government was efficiently working to improve the economic condition of the country and the IMF programme was being implemented for economic stability.

In a written reply to a question, Minister for Finance and Revenue said that the government was implementing a home-grown economic reforms programme with the support of the IMF. The reforms aimed to stabilize the country's economy by addressing deep-seated structural imbalances and lay the foundation for sustained and inclusive growth, he added. He said these measures were largely directed towards achieving fiscal consolidation, reducing external sector vulnerabilities, broadening of tax base, improving the country's competitiveness, reforming and improving governance in state-owned enterprises, strengthening the anti-money laundering and terror financing regimes, addressing energy sector imbalances and strengthening the autonomy of the State Bank of Pakistan. One major component of reforms was to ensure social protection for the poorer sections of the society, he added.

No shortage of wheat in country

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of National Food Security and Research (MinNFSR) here on Friday categorically cleared that sufficient wheat stocks are available in the country to tackle with domestic requirements.

A press release issued by the Ministry said that Pakistan is wheat secure country till next harvest and claims of shortage are fallacious. It said that public sector wheat stocks stood at 4.883 million metric tons (MMT) and Provincial Crop Reporting Services informed MinNFSR that there is shortage of 1.6MMT. The shortfall was decided to be met through import of wheat with 3 pronged strategy, including importation through public, private and GTG basis. It said that public sector is importing wheat through GTG basis in two ways and PASSCO will bring 180,000 MT of GTG wheat in November. While TCP got clearance from ECC yesterday, to import 340,000 MT of GTG wheat in coming month. The imported quantities will be distributed amongst PASSCO, Punjab and KPK in proportion to what they have demanded. On the other hand public sector is importing wheat through Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) was provided a schedule of 29 vessels that will arrive till January 2021 bringing outsized amount of wheat in the country. — APP

GM Marriott hosts poolside dinner for diplomats

The diplomats who attended the reception praised the initiative of the Marriott Hotel and the General Manager who provided them with an opportunity of interacting with their colleagues, especially the new comers



ISLAMABAD: General Manager Islamabad Marriott Hotel Maurizio Romani hosted dinner for the newly arrived ambassadors and high commissioners. A large number of the diplomatic community attended the dinner. Seen in the picture are members of the diplomatic corps cutting cake to mark independence days of those countries that could not hold receptions due to COVID 19. (Full coverage of the event shall be carried in the coming issue of CENTRELINE magazine). — DNA

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: General Manager Islamabad Marriott Hotel Maurizio Romani hosted a poolside dinner for the newly arrived

Ambassadors and High Commissioners of various countries. A large number of diplomats attended the reception.

The General Manager speaking on the occasion welcomed the new ambassadors and hoped

they would enjoy their stay in Pakistan. Mr. Romani said due to COVID 19 no diplomatic function was held for last many months. The Marriott Hotel therefore arranged a cake cutting ceremony. The diplomats

present on the occasion cut the cake along with the General Manager.

The diplomats who attended the reception praised the initiative of the Marriott Hotel and the General Manager who provided

them with an opportunity of interacting with their colleagues, especially the new comers.

The guests were served with continental, Pakistani and regional cuisines which, they enjoyed very much.

Pak, Hungary companies must go for joint ventures

These views were expressed by Pakistan ambassador in Hungary Dr. Muhemmed Aejaaz, while addressing a webinar organized by APBF

DNA

ISLAMABAD: WITH a view to further promote Pakistan-Hungary bilateral trade, the Embassy of Pakistan in Budapest is on the look for new opportunities and ways to enhance investments from Hungary to Pakistan; identify opportunities for promoting Pakistan's quality exports; and pin-point most potential sectors for joint ventures between suitable Hungarian and Pakistani companies for technology transfers.

These views were expressed by Pakistan ambassador in Hungary Dr. Muhemmed Aejaaz, while addressing a webinar organized by the All

Pakistan Business Forum. He said Pakistan was one of the important trade partners of Hungary and both countries have the ability to further strengthen mutual trade and economic ties. Among other leadership and office-bearers, APBF President Syed Maaz Mahmood, APBF founding chairman and Chairman PIEDMC Syed Nabeel Hashmi, Mian Haseeb Safdar, Amir Munir, Amir Ata Barry, Haroon Ali Khan, Muhammad Naeem, Yaqoob Saifi, Dr. Saman Yazdani, Mian Haseeb Safdar, Salman Asif, M.S. Baber, Asif Rafiq Rajwana, Faisal Saleem, Manzoor ul Haq Malik and Mr. Zeeshan Sandal also participated

the seminar. The Pakistan Ambassador in Hungary appreciated the APBF board members and gave a comprehensive briefing about the significant business opportunities existing between Pakistan and Hungary. The Ambassador said that under the vision of Foreign Minister of Pakistan Shah Mahmood Qureshi to use all available economic diplomacy tools to make Pakistan economically self-reliant, he has been engaging with leading Hungarian authorities and business entities on a regular basis. Dr. Muhemmed Aejaaz said efforts were required to transform cordial and brotherly relations into two-way trade for

enhancing economic prosperity in both countries. Ambassador informed that Hungary has made impressive progress in agriculture sector by introducing modern technology, research and good agricultural practices. He said that Pakistan Embassy in Hungary is focused on a wide range of programs to collaborate with Hungarian business community including trade, education, public diplomacy, culture, gender equity, and development to seek good partners. Dilating on the similarities between Pakistan and Hungary, Muhemmed Aejaaz informed that like Pakistan, agriculture remains the foundation of Hungarian economy.

JCC to consider road projects in CPEC

ISLAMABAD: The government Thursday decided to take up new road projects to be included in China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in the annual meeting of Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) on CPEC that is scheduled to be held in Beijing next month.

This was decided in a consultative meeting to review the preparations for the upcoming 10th JCC meeting. Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar chaired the meeting.

All the conveners of the respective Joint Working Groups (JWGs) under CPEC framework including Secretary Planning, Chairman CPEC Authority, Secretary Communications and Secretary Foreign Affairs attended the meeting. Officials from line ministries and representatives from all relevant departments also attended the meeting. The conveners of the JWGs and their representatives briefed the minister on the agenda and proposed deliverables for the 10th JCC.

The minister expressed satisfaction over the preparations and suggested deliverables for the JCC. Under the JWG on Transport and Infrastructure, Asad Umar agreed to take up DI Khan-Zhob highway project with the Chinese side for funding in the meeting of the respective JWG.

The meeting also agreed that new projects will be considered in the next JCC after approval of the PC-Is including Swat Express Way Phase-II and Peshawar-D I Khan Motorway. Greater Peshawar Mass Transit was also discussed and it was decided that the project will be taken up with the Chinese side after the completion of feasibility study.

Progress on prioritized CPEC SEZs including Rashakai, Dhabeji, Alama Iqbal Industrial City (M3) was also reviewed. Discussing the progress in industrial cooperation sector under CPEC, Asad Umar stressed the need to take immediate actions to encourage the Chinese investors to invest in SEZs.

He emphasized to enhance industrial competitiveness of business in Pakistan, through technology transfer, world class managerial and industrial practices and skills transfer from China.

Asad Umar directed Ministry of National Food Security and Research to select need based specific projects for agriculture to take up with Chinese counterparts and Foot and Mouth Disease free zone for Balochistan should also be the part of upcoming JCC. Asad Umar would convene follow-up meetings on industrial cooperation, agriculture, Gwadar and Socio-economic development sector in the coming week to further refine the deliverables for the 10th JCC. — DNA

'PML-N allied with parties they claimed to drag'

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to the Prime Minister on Accountability and Interior Barrister Shahzad Akbar on Friday said expediences of politics have forced Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) to make alliance with former President Asif Ali Zardari — the person once they publicly claimed dragging on the roads of Larkana. The advisor tweeted that Vice President Maryam



Habib Jalib respectively. "But today it is obvious that Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will edge past both Maryam and Shehbaz in Gujranwala rally," he said. Retorting Maryam's statement, he said the government had already allowed the opposition to hold the public meeting at the venue of their choice. Likewise Maryam was allowed to join the 'Jalsa' from Lahore on route of her choice and now she should hold the rally.

Court puts off NAB plea

LAHORE: An accountability court in Lahore adjourned on Friday the NAB plea to close a two-decade-old inquiry against PML-N president Shehbaz Sharif over alleged illegal allotment of twelve plots. The court put off the hearing due to the presiding officer of the court being on leave. It directed the lawyers representing parties to the case to turn up in court on Saturday to forward their arguments. The anti-corruption watchdog shelved the inquiry pending for the past 20 years for want of evidence. — DNA

Health Corridor, enrichment of CPEC: Chinese scholar

The construction of the China-Pakistan Health Corridor and the cooperation between China and Pakistan in the field of health can directly benefit the people's livelihood in Pakistan

DNA

BEIJING: China-Pakistan's ongoing efforts of building Health corridor will enrich CPEC for the well-being of the people of the two countries, said Chinese scholar Prof. Cheng Xizhong in an article published by China Economic Net on Friday. Recently, China and Pakistan agreed to make joint efforts to boost the China-Pakistan Health Corridor. China-Pakistan Health Corridor is a very good and wide-ranging concept. Initially, the two sides were devoted to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Later, the economic corridor expanded to the cultural corridor and the tourism corridor. "Now we are talking about the Chi-

na-Pakistan Health Corridor, and I believe there will be other corridors in the days to come. This shows that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is constantly enriching and developing. The construction of the China-Pakistan Health Corridor and the cooperation between China and Pakistan in the field of health can directly benefit the people's livelihood in Pakistan. This shows that the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is becoming more and more pragmatic." Prof. Cheng noted that China and Pakistan have cooperated in the field of health for many years. As far back as 2006, the health authorities of China and Pakistan signed a cooperation document in the field of health, which stated that the two sides would strength-



en cooperation in the fields of clinical training, traditional medicine, public health care, prevention of viral diseases, and surveillance of infectious diseases. "This year, the novel coronavirus pneumonia is unprecedentedly spreading worldwide. For joint prevention, control and treatment, the central governments, local governments, medical institu-

tions, enterprises and non-governmental organizations of China and Pakistan have carried out close cooperation, which fully reflects the special friendly relationship between the two countries.

In building the China-Pakistan Health Corridor, I advocate giving full play to two initiatives: one is the initiative of the governments; the other is the initiative of medical institutions. In addition to the efforts by the two governments, the medical institutions of China and Pakistan should carry out close cooperation.

Recently, Chinese and Pakistani enterprises decided that they will jointly establish a medical laboratory. The incidence rate of cancer in Pakistan is very high, especially in lung cancer and liver cancer. However, due to the current med-

ical and health conditions in Pakistan, patients cannot get proper treatment. As a result, the strategic agreement between China and Pakistan on precision medical laboratory for cancer was signed in Beijing last month.

According to the agreement, Beijing Anlong Gene Medicine Technology Company and Life Rehealth Technology Pakistan will jointly establish a cancer precision medical laboratory. Under this framework, Chinese and Pakistani enterprises will jointly carry out cancer medical research, and Chinese enterprises will share medical technology with their Pakistani partners. Another important content for the China-Pakistan Health Corridor is the development of medical tourism industry.

Punjab govt directed to upgrade hospitals

NIHAL MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar has directed the Punjab administration to upgrade Tehsil and District hospitals under PSDP and prepare its PC-1.

Chairing a high level meeting on the status of development programs and funds related to Health sector in Punjab, through video link on Friday, he assured the assistance of Federal government in this regard.

On the occasion, Punjab Health Minister Yasmeen Rashid apprised the Minister of the plan to set up an integrated Communicable Disease Center on the pattern of National Institute of Health. Yasmeen Rashid said at the time of Corona Pandemic such a center is a matter of urgency.

Asad Umar was also apprised about the constructions of Mother and Child Care Hospitals and other ongoing Health projects in Punjab. It was informed that Punjab government is fully prepared to construct six Mother and Child Care Hospitals in the province.

Aleem Khan contracts coronavirus

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Provincial Minister Abdul Aleem Khan is the latest member of Punjab government to test positive for the coronavirus on Friday, following two more ministers on Saturday.

On Friday, Punjab Food Minister and Senior PTI leader Abdul Aleem Khan was tested for coronavirus after he became unwell. After confirmation of the contraction, Aleem Khan quarantined himself.

On Friday, it was reported that two Punjab cabinet ministers, Minister of Industries, Commerce & Investment Mian Aslam Iqbal and Hussain Jahania Gardezi have also contracted the virus. Apart from them, Chairman P&D, Secretary Punjab Assembly Muhammad Khan Bhatti and Secretary Food Asad Gilani are also Covid positive.

Ijaz Shah rejects PDM allegations

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Ijaz Shah on Friday rejected allegations of arresting Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) workers ahead of public gathering in Gujranwala. In his statement, Ijaz Shah said that containers are placed only to stop the movement of the vehicles at the jalsagah route. No one is being stopped from going to Jinnah Stadium, he said.

The interior minister observed that such allegations are levelled by the opposition, whenever they hold public rallies. Shah said no development has been made over the closure of cases registered against one of the coalition partner of the PTI government, Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) leaders.

Will act on the Prime Minister Imran Khan's advise in this regard, he maintained.

Earthquake of 5.6 magnitude jolts KP

DNA

PESHAWAR: Earthquake tremors were felt in different cities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) including Sibi, Swat, Lower Dir, Shangla and its suburban parts on Friday. According to the Met department, the intensity of tremors recorded 5.6-magnitude at Richter Scale. However, no casualty or damage was reported. Seismological reports stated that the depth of the quake was 242-kilometre with epicentre in Hindukush Mountain range in Afghanistan. Earlier on October 8, a moderate intensity earthquake had jolted Mingora in Swat and adjoining areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.