



# Islamabad POST

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Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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## Briefs

### Government increasing facilities for patients

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Health Dr Faisal Sultan said on Sunday the government was enhancing health facilities in the wake of increasing corona cases in the country as well as in Punjab. Talking to the media during his visit to the vaccination centre here at Expo Centre, he expressed his satisfaction over the arrangements made by the health department for citizens at the vaccination centre. He appreciated the Punjab government and Health department for facilitating the senior citizens at vaccination centres across the province.

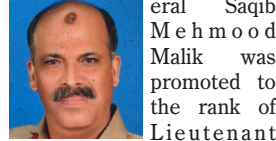


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### Maj. Gen. Saqib Mehmood promoted

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Major General Saqib Mehmood Malik was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) announced on Sunday. According to the ISPR, Lt Gen Malik has been appointed as the Chief of Logistics Staff, Pakistan Army. On November 5 last year, six major generals of the Pakistan Army were promoted to the rank of lieutenant general, a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director General Major General Babar Iftikhar said.

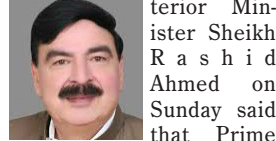


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### PM will benefit from PDM differences

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed on Sunday said that Prime Minister Imran Khan will benefit from differences between Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). Talking to media persons, the federal minister said that he is witnessing it for the first time in his life that opposition parties are issuing show cause notices to each other.



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## UK move to put Pakistan in red list flayed

### British MP Naz Shah writes to British FM, Pakistani ministers Asad Umar and Shireen Mazari also resent the move

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The decision of the British government to put Pakistan in the Red List of travel ban countries has evoked ire of not only Pakistani people but British parliamentarians as well. Pakistani ministers Asad Umar and Shireen Mazari have termed the move very sad. Federal Minister for Planning Asad Umar his his Tweet said, every country has a right to take decisions to safeguard the health of their citizens. However, the recent decision by UK govt to add some countries including Pakistan on the red list raises a legitimate question whether choice of countries is based on science or foreign policy. Federal Minister for Human Rights Shireen Mazari also agreed with Asad Umar and termed the decision unfortunate. The Member of the British Parliament Naz Shah also wrote a letter to the British Foreign Minister in which she said the decision had greatly disturbed her and Pakistani Diaspora living in her constituency. In her letter she said, "I am led to believe that Pakistan is about to enter the "red

list". I have a large Pakistani diaspora within my constituency which is why I am writing to simply ask, what scientific data is any decision being led by? She said earlier this month she had asked these same questions through parliamentary questions and received a holding response suggesting that more time is needed to answer the question, I am still waiting for an answer.

According to recent available data for the last seven days France, Germany and India have substantially higher numbers of infections per 100,000. These figures can be found below:

Pakistan: 13  
Bangladesh: 15  
Kenya: 17  
India: 24

UK: 54  
Germany: 137  
France: 403

It must also be noted that as of today the south African variant isn't a concern in Pakistan whereas this isn't the case for example in France And other countries. This begs the question why hasn't the government extended the red list to France, Germany. And India?

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## Inter provincial road travel on weekends banned

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The National Command and Operations Centre, the body that is leading Pakistan's fight against coronavirus, on Sunday announced a ban on travelling by road between provinces over the weekends. "It has been decided to ban inter provincial transport for two days a week (Saturday and Sunday) with effect from April 10, at 12 am, to April 25, 12:59am," said NCOC in a statement. It notified certain exemptions to the new restrictions, Goods, freight, medical and other emergency services will be exempted. Railway to continue to operate 7 days a week with 70% occupancy. Additionally, the ban will be reviewed by NCOC on April 20.

## CanSino vaccine from today

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) on Saturday was apprised that the single dose CanSino Covid vaccine administration would commence in all the provinces from Monday (5 April) onwards. The NCOC morning session held with Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar in chair through video link and co-chaired by

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## World economies shaken due to COVID-19: Shibli Faraz

### - Says the PML-N opposition suits to the govt because they had not any vision and strategy

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Senior Leader of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Senator Shibli Faraz on Saturday said the world economies had shaken due to COVID-19 as it had created problems for the national economy as well. Talking to a private news channel, he said situation of the world was not normal due to coronavirus pandemic. The Senator said decisions always be taken according to the ground realities and the



cabinet which was headed by the Prime Minister had right to give final approval of any decision. He said he would accept every responsibility which was given from Prime Minister Imran Khan, adding changes could be made in the federal cabinet in

coming few days. He hoped that new Finance Minister Hammad Azhar would resolve financial issues through his capabilities and competencies, adding the government was going to second phase of development of the country. Replying to a question, he said the PML-N opposition suits to the government because they had not any vision and strategy, adding the vice president of PML-N Maryam Nawaz has divided the PDM just to fulfill her personal desires.



ISLAMABAD: ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan taking calls from people. - DNA

## Why Pak not invited for climate moot?

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The US President Joe Biden has not invited Pakistan for the upcoming climate change conference. He has invited 40 heads of state of government for the mega event. The Prime Minister Imran Khan has already expressed its utmost surprise and concern, through his Twitter handle, that Pakistan had done a lot in the climate change sector.

(Detailed news on Back Page)

## PM cautions nation about virus' lethality

### Talks to people on phone; says process of action against corrupt people not to stop now

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan Sunday cautioned the nation about the lethal effects of third wave of coronavirus and advised to strictly adhere to the standard operating procedures (SoPs), especially wearing of masks. He said, "No one can predict how much this third wave will last."

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## PM felicitates Christians

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan Sunday wished a happy Easter to all Christian citizens of the country. On his twitter handle, the prime minister posted, "Wishing all our Christian citizens a happy Easter". The Christian community of the country is celebrating the Easter on Sunday. The Christian community on Sunday celebrated the Easter holiday with traditional zeal and religious fervour across the country. The festival commemorates the day followers believe Jesus was resurrected in Jerusalem 2,000 years ago.

**AIRLINK**  
AirLink Smart Phone Production Facility



### Another Milestone, Another Achievement

Airlink has established a state-of-the-art smart phone production facility in Lahore in line with 'Made in Pakistan' vision of Prime Minister which was inaugurated by Mr. Hammad Azhar, Federal Minister of Industries & Production, on 20th March, 2021.

**We want to thank our customers, business partners, financial institutions, associates and our team for their trust, confidence and for always considering Airlink as their smart device partner.**

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Iran-China deal to enhance trade, ensure regional security - Page 03

Govt asked to rationalize import tariffs on luxury goods - Page 04

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Fakhar misses out on double ton as Pakistan lose 2nd ODI - Page 06

Jordan in security sweep, army cautions king's half-brother - Page 07

Why US did not invite Pakistan for climate change moot? - Page 08

## Chinese envoy lauds Sino-Pak partnership

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Chinese envoy Nong Rong has highly commended the fast growing Sino-Pak cooperative partnership under CPEC, according to a report. He said, the upcoming meeting of the Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC), which is the apex body on CPEC, will focus on socio-economic development, industry, and agriculture to further boost the partnership. He was speaking at video conference that was organized to mark the 70 years of Pakistan-China diplomatic ties, by Pakistan-China Institute under the banner of "Friends of Silk Road."



Nong Rong said, China has so far invested \$ 25.4 billion in Pakistan under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and created more than 75,000 jobs for the Pakistanis, Chinese ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong said. Those who also addressed the event included General Ehsanul Haq (retd), former chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Mushahid Hussain, chairman, Pakistan-China Insti-

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## Briefs

## ATC judge killed along with wife, children

DNA

SWABI: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) judge was on Sunday killed along with his wife and children after unidentified men opened fire on his vehicle in Swabi district of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province.

According to police, the vehicle of the ATC judge was targeted by unidentified men near Ambar interchange in Swabi, which led to the death of the judge, his wife, and two children.

"Two security guards in the judge's convoy also sustained wounds in the attack," they said adding that the judge was traveling from Swat to Islamabad when his vehicle got under attack. The bodies and the injured were shifted to a nearby hospital for medico-legal formalities and treatment respectively. The security forces and police cordoned off the area and started collecting evidence from the scene for forensic analysis. Aftab Khan Afridi was an ATC judge in Swat and was posted two months back. The Swat Bar Association has announced to protest against the attack on Monday (tomorrow). "No one will appear before the courts tomorrow," said the president of the Swat Bar Association.

## Easter: Signifying victory of truth

DNA

LAHORE: Christian community across Pakistan celebrated Easter today (Sunday). Easter commemorates Resurrection of Jesus Christ on the third day of his burial after Crucifixion by the Romans. This festival falls on the first Sunday after the ecclesiastical full moon which happens between March 22 and April 25 every year. Eastern Christianity and this year this day falls on April 04.

Easter, also known as Resurrection Sunday, is culmination of Passion of Jesus (short final period in the life of Jesus Christ which stands for suffering and patience) and is preceded by Lent – a 40-day period of fasting, prayer and penance. In Easter traditions, Eastertide, also known as Easter Season, starts on Easter Sunday and ends with coming of the 40th day which marks the Feast of Ascension – when Jesus Christ ascended to the heavens. As per Christian traditions, Jesus Christ was crucified by the Romans on Good Friday, buried the same day and he was resurrected from the dead on the third day i.e. Easter Sunday when he appeared among his disciples for the next 40 days before ascension into the heavens.

## 4 injured in road mishap

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: A passenger bus turned turtle near Khurrianwala on Sunday, leaving four passengers seriously injured. According to police, a rashly driven bus hit another passenger bus near Khurrianwala. Resultantly, the driver of a bus lost control and it overturned leaving four passengers seriously injured. The injured include- Muazzam, Abdul Rasheed, Abida Bibi and Surriya Bibi. Rescue-1122 shifted the injured to Allied hospital for medical treatment.

Minister inaugurates desilting drive Provincial Minister for Chief Minister's Inspector Team, Muhammad Ajmal Cheema has inaugurated desilting drive of Paharang drain near Chak No.195-RB here on Sunday. Speaking on the occasion, the minister said that this drain was 22 kilometers long and its desilting work would be completed with an estimated cost of Rs.3.4 million. Desilting of Paharang drain will resolve sewerage related problems of this area, he added. Assistant Commissioner (AC) Sadar Umar Maqbool and others were also present on the occasion.



LARKANA: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari offering fatiha on the grave of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, on the occasion of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's death anniversary. – DNA

## Plea bargain is admission of corruption: NAB chief

The officers are being conveyed about their strengths and weaknesses in order to have better performance but also told to overcome their shortcomings

KHAYYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Corruption is mother of all evils and is the main challenge being confronted by the country posing a potential hurdle to the progress and prosperity of the country. National Accountability Bureau established in 1996 to eradicate corruption and recover looted money from corrupt and deposit in national exchequer. The incumbent chairman Honorable Justice Javed

Iqbal soon after assuming the charge of Chairman NAB, adopted the policy of "Accountability for All." NAB under the dynamic leadership of Chairman NAB worked hard and apprehended the culprits, besides recovering a whopping Rs. 487 billion in three years from 2018 to 2020 and Rs. 714 billion from the corrupt directly and indirectly which is a record achievement. Chairman not only vowed to ensure accountability of all but also successfully im-

plemented his policy across the board. He has persistently monitored the performance of NAB Headquarters as well as all Regional Bureaus of NAB. The officers are being conveyed about their strengths and weaknesses in order to have better performance but also told to overcome their shortcomings. NAB had already fixed ten months time to complete the process of initiating complaint verification, inquiries and investigations to

filing a reference. NAB has further activated prosecution and operation divisions of NAB by appointing new investigation officers and law officers and provided them training on modern lines in order to inquire and pursue all mega corruption cases vigorously in learned Courts. An accused can apply for plea bargain as per clause 25-B of NAB ordinance. NAB receives his receipt of plea bargain request, examines the plea bargain application as per law.

The liability of the accused is determined on the basis of his looted money with markup and after determination of total liability of the accused, NAB forwards the request of Plea Bargain of the accused along with his total liability for final approval of the respective Accountability Courts. The learned Accountability Court approves the request for a plea bargain of the accused. It is not correct that NAB approves plea bargain applications of the accused. After approval of the plea

bargain from the learned Accountability Court. Plea bargain is deemed conviction. The accused requesting plea bargain not only confesses his guilt in writing before the learned Accountability Court but also agrees to return all looted money. Therefore it is a totally wrong impression which is being given in some sections of the media that after approval of plea bargain from learned Accountability Court, plea bargain means leaving the corrupt elements scot free.

## CDA starts work on beautification of Islamabad

CDA has completed the work of curb stoning and curb stone painting of 1468 km of main roads and other highways

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) administration is working on road infrastructure and beautification across the city. In this regard, during the last few months, the CDA has completed the work of curb stoning and curb stone painting of 1468 km of main roads and other highways. Completed highways in Sector I-8 include Tipu Sultan Road, I-8 Markaz, Nusrat Fateh Ali, Rehman Baba, Street No. 1,4,8,11,45, Sangam Market, Pakiza Market,

Hajveri Market, Pakiza Market, I-8, Interchange, Roundabout, including others, in Sector H-8, Sufi Tabassum Road, Faiz Ahmed Faiz Road, Patras Bukhari Road, SR West, East, North, South Road, Street No. 6,8, H-8 Interchange and Zero Point H-8, Graveyard Road, Sector H-9, Street No. 6,13, SR East, West, North and South, Sector Ring Road, Sohni Road, Mazar Road and SR East in I-9 Markaz,

SR East, Sector IT, Srinagar Highway, Jinnah Avenue, Khayaban-e-Iqbal, Seventh Avenue, Faisal Avenue, Ninth Avenue Peshawar Junction to Shaheen Chowk, Nazimuddin Road, Fazlullah Road, Parbat Road, Suhrawardy Road, Aga Khan Road, Parveen Shaker, Hill Road, Service Road F-10 & G-10 West, South, East, Service Road G-11, G-9, G-10

East, Sohan Road, Rohtas Road, Mangla Road, Neelam Road, Chaman Road, AK Brohi Road, Waris Shah Road, Saddar Road, Yasmeen Road, Shaheed Millat, School Road, Kohsar Road, Post Office Road, Luqman Hakim Road, Ataturk Avenue, Shahrah-e-Jamhuriyat, Diplomatic Enclave, College Road F-6, Ibn Sina Road G-8, G-9, G-10, G-11, Judges Enclave, Munster Enclave, Gulshan Jinnah G-5, Khushal Khan Road, Curb stone working and painting of Major Roads of Park Road, 4th Avenue, Pir Sohawa, Faisal Masjid Car Parking, F and G series have been completed.

## Hasty decisions, confusion hitting the fragile economy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Sunday said frequent transfers of important ministers, special assistants and advisors are sending wrong signals and shaking foreign as well as local investors. The sudden and unexpected decisions have not improved the situation rather contributed to deterioration therefore this practise should be stopped, it said. The decision regarding import of cotton, yarn and sugar was changed within hours resulting in a shock and uncertainty while providing relief to hoarders which now include owners of some textile and spinning

mills, said Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President PEW. Hasty decision without proper debate will never help stabilise the economy or reduce inflation therefore the matter should be considered, he added. Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that the first finance minister of the government was removed amid negotiations with IMF, the second finance minister was removed unceremoniously amid a bond auction while third was forced to take back his statement regarding import from India within hours. Some export sectors were promised cheap energy which remained on papers which has prompted investors to hold investment decisions, he said.

## Police committed to serve public

MEHBOOB AHIR

SARGODHA: Assistant Sub-Inspector Mehr Mohammad Yousuf and Constable Mohammad Nawaz, in-charge of the police post at Civil Hospital Sargodha, said that action against criminals in the hospital is our top priority. Maintaining law and order is one of our top responsibilities. Patients in the hospital and their relatives who come to the hospital are informed about the use of masks in

view of Corona's condition.

He further said that the situation of Corona pandemic in Sargodha is very bad. Therefore, it is very important to wear a mask and keep a social distance from each other and no negligence will be tolerated in this regard. We desperately need public support and the support of the journalistic community to deal with this situation in Corona. He added that caution should not be missed in Corona.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Chaudhary Fawad Hussain talking to media at Lahore. – DNA

## CPEC progressing fast under current govt: Asad

NAZIR SIYA

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar on Sunday said the projects under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) were progressing with fast pace during the tenure of incumbent government. The way government handled pandemic situation and made efforts to contain the spread of pandemic COVID-19, it would also continue working day and night for the success of the CPEC, he said while addressing the reception ceremony of first consignment, carrying equipment and machinery for Century

Steel at Karachi Port, for setting up of a steel mill in Rashakai Special Economic Zone. The Minister termed the occasion as another manifestation of exceptional relation between Pakistan and China. Asad Umar said the CPEC was now entering into the most important second phase. The projects were now not limited to infrastructure only. He informed that CRBC, a Chinese firm had entered into an agreement with Pakistan under CPEC to promote foreign investments for development and marketing in Rashakai Special Economic Zone (SEZ). He said the work for the provision

of basic necessities including electricity and others at Rashakai SEZ was underway at fast pace. He said the Century Steel, a Chinese firm with the investment of US \$ 240 million, would set up a steel mill in Rashakai SEZ which would produce about 1.5 million tons of steel. The firm would also employ over 600 Pakistanis during construction phase while in second phase over 1000 people would be provided jobs. Asad Umar said the bilateral relation of Pakistan and China was not new and whenever Pakistan needed a friend China was there. Chinese Consul General in Karachi Li Bijian speaking on the oc-

casation said due to the concerted efforts of the government of Pakistan, the economy of the country was strengthening and gaining momentum despite the negative effect of global pandemic, especially the construction sector had been witnessing faster growth and the demand for steel had increased. Because of the brilliant efforts from both sides China and Pakistan, the first phase of the CPEC had completed, he said. Li Bijian said, "We are quite confident to attract more and more investments in Rashakai SEZ". The Consul General thanked the federal government particularly CPEC Authority Chairman for his

support and efforts. He said it was an honor for him to witness the reception of first consignment carrying equipment and machinery for Century Steel was only a beginning. On the occasion, Chairman CPEC Authority Asim Saleem Bajwa, representatives of Century Steel, officers of KPT and other were present. Meanwhile in his tweet, Asad Umar said the first industrial unit was being set up in the Rashakai SEZ in KP. "The CPEC is moving practically into the exciting phase of industrial cooperation with foreign investment transferring technology & creating jobs", he added.

## Pak making progress under Imran's leadership

DNA

KHANEWAL: Federal Minister for National Food Security Syed Fakhar Imam has said Pakistan was making progress under leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan.

While paying visit at Deputy Commissioner office here, he said the time was not far off when the country would be ranked among developed countries in the world.

He said that prime minister himself was supervising measures to relieve masses at gross root level. First time ever in the history, it happened that action against land mafia was unleashed across the board, he remarked.

Declaring growers as backbone of the state, the minister informed that solid steps were taken to put agricultural goods under control to relieve farmers maximum level.

He assured that the government would provide relief worth billions of rupees to provide edibles at subsidized rates in upcoming month of Ramadan. Wheat purchase drive would be carried out transparently, he maintained. District Police Officer Muhammad Ali Waseem gave briefing briefing over law and order situation, while DC Agha Zaheer Abbas Sherazi was present on the occasion.

## Coronavirus claims 23 more lives in KP

DNA

PESHAWAR: In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 23 people died from coronavirus in 24 hours, an official of the Health Department confirmed.

The official said that out of the total 23 people, 12 were died only in Peshawar. The death toll from Covid-19 in the province has risen to 2440. A total of 1177 cases of coronavirus were reported in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the official said, adding that the total number has reached 91,439.

However, 640 Coronavirus patients recovered in 24 hours in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and with this the number of people recovering from Covid-19 in the province has risen to 78,290, the official of the health department said. In Peshawar, 505 new cases of coronavirus were reported in the last 24 hours and the number of cases in Peshawar has reached to 37,464, the health department said. He also confirmed that 1306 people have died from coronavirus in Peshawar.

## KP CM greets Christian community on Easter

DNA

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan on Sunday congratulated the Christian community on the occasion of Easter and said provincial government had taken all out steps to extend facilities to them.

In a message on the occasion of Easter, he expressed hope that the Christian community in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while performing religious services in churches would care themselves and their families in present situation of coronavirus outbreak.

"I congratulate the Easter of all our Christian citizens with heartfelt feelings. We attach great importance to all citizens regardless of their faith, religion, sect and ethnicity to freely practice their religion, culture and tradition in our country, as members of a deep-rooted civilization based on mutual respect and love, a civilization which views differences as a wealth," he said.

The provincial government shares in the joys of the Christian community as they have been playing a vital role in the development of the country, he added. Islam and the Constitution of Pakistan guarantee the protection of the rights of minorities. The present government was taking concrete steps to ensure the protection of the rights of the minority community, Mahmood Khan said. He said, the present provincial government will protect the rights of all the minority communities living in the province and ensure their religious freedom in all respects.

## Briefs

### Operation against SOPs violators continues

KHAYAM ABBASI

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi District Administration including Regional Transport Authority (RTA) on the directives of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi Anwar ul Haq has accelerated its ongoing operation against coronavirus Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) violators and conducting raids at Public Service Vehicles (PSVs). According to a district administration spokesman, the authorities concerned conducted 134 raids at different routes and impounded 110 Public Service Vehicles (PSVs) besides imposing fines amounting to Rs 226,000 on those violated SOPs issued by the Punjab government to contain spread of coronavirus. The administration had conducted a large number of raids at PSVs at different routes to check implementation of the SOPs.

### Efforts afoot to cleanse capital's nullahs

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Sanitation Department of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) was making concerted efforts to remove garbage and unwanted material from multiple nullahs of the federal capital, said its senior official on Sunday. Talking to media, he said heavy machinery was being used to cleanse nullah on regular basis to ensure clean and green environment in the capital city. He added that the nullahs of F series' sectors were cleaned, whereas the cleansing of other areas remains was underway. The senior official said dumpsters of various sizes were placed in slum areas, while the teams of sanitation department were educating the residents on using those facilities to avoid littering in nullahs.

### NIFTH issues guideline for visitors

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (NIFTH) management on Sunday issued a guideline for museum's visitors. According to NIFTH, the management has taken various measure to minimize the exposure to COVID-19 at museum. The management has made Mask mandatory for visitors before entering in the museum. The NIFTH directed visitors to use hand-sanitizer before and after visit. While the temperature would also be checked before entering museum. Heritage Museum, also known as LokVirsa Museum is administered and managed by NIFTH.

### 2 booked on violation of marriage laws

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Police have arrested two persons for violating marriage laws at a wedding party and recovered fireworks from their possession, informed police spokesman here on Sunday. During course of action Westridge Police have arrested two persons identified as Nauman Ali, and Hamza on the violation of marriage laws. Police have registered separate cases against all of them. City Police Officer CPO Muhammad Ahsan Younas appreciated the performance of police team adding that strict action must be taken against those involved in mischievous activities. CPO said that operations should be carried out against those who endangered the lives and property of the people through fireworks and also against those who were setting off fireworks and selling firecrackers.



ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed receiving the symbolic key of two ambulances and 20 bikes donated by World Health Organization to Municipal Corporation of Islamabad through Country Representative Dr. Piliethas. – DNA

## Iran-China deal to enhance trade, ensure regional security

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The expert speaking at an international webinar on Saturday termed the China-Iran 25-year long new cooperation framework a historic milestone to further strengthen the Chinese influence in the region and Middle East. It will not only extend the Chinese market for trade and economic growth but also be feared to disturb the balance of power in the MENA region. The \$400 billion financial cooperation will help Iran to dilute its isolation and enhance trade ties with China and Middle East countries. At a time when Iran is struggling with the

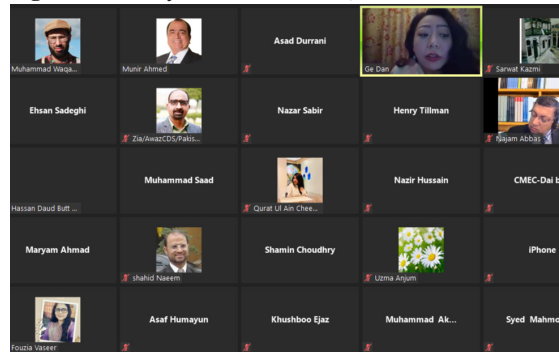
US sponsored restrictions and the devastating impact of Covid-19, this development is a welcome relief. The panelists also questioned if this deal would lead to a win-win situation for all. Beijing has not only secured an alternative access to hydrocarbons but has also further strengthened its influence across the Indian Ocean. This deal might come as a surprise for many given the Indian investments in Iran. China has nurtured friendly bilateral relations with Iran over the decade and have signed over 17 agreements worth USD 18-20 billion and promised to increase trade relations between the two countries in the next 10 years to

US\$ 600 billion. This would be a bid dent to the US interests in the region. Development Communications Network (Devcom-Pakistan) organized the webinar on the theme "China-Iran new framework of cooperation – prospects for regional security and economic growth". The panel of expert included former ISI chief and strategic analyst Lt General (Retd) Asad Durrani, Senior Research Fellow at the Chengdu Institute of World Affairs Dr. Dan Ge, CPEC Expert & CEO KPBOIT Hassan daud Butt, Research Fellow at

the Tehran International Studies and Research Institute (TISR) Dr. Ehsan Sadeghi, Research Fellow, East-West Institute (London) Dr. Najam Abbas, and Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed. Among others who spoke on the occasion included Dr. Azhar Aslam (London), Henry Tillman, Hussain Askary, Dr. Khushboo Ejaz, Ambassador Rehmatullah Javed, Umar Khayyam, and Sarwat Kazmi.

Lt. General (Retd) Asad Durrani said the world is a chessboard where strategic moves keep on rolling for new alliances and partnerships based on the win-win strategies. The China-Iran cooperation agreement is

one of the strategic moves that would have a significant impact in the region by curtailing the US influence and increasing Chinese trade and strategic collaboration in the region. He said China was already buying oil from Iran and with the major collaboration that was in the process for a decade would bring about a significant change in the region. It would be a deep dent to the US-India common interests in the region, and may help Iran to bring the US back to the nuclear deal that the US had already opted out unilaterally. Dr. Dan Ge termed the China-Iran deal an inevitable outcome of the decades old friendly ties between both countries.



## NCGSA announces Rs 15m research fund in space technology domain

ISLAMABAD: National Center of GIS and Space Applications (NCGSA) has invited proposals from faculty members and researchers to conduct research with focus on sustainable socio-economic development of Pakistan through Space Science, Technology and its Applications. NCGSA, a project of Higher Education Commission (HEC) led by Institute of Space Technology is a consortium of seven research laboratories in seven universities of Pakistan.

According to an official source, the research proposals have been invited from faculty members and researchers of Higher Education Institutions and Research and Development organizations of Pakistan. The research grant will be provided on competitive basis in the different domains resulting in sustainable products/ prototype/solutions with potential of commercialization and leading to contribution in the socio-economic development of Pakistan. The

research domains include Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Science; Small Satellite Technology; Positioning, Navigation and Timing; Astronomy, Astrophysics and Astrobiology, Space Popularization and Outreach and Advanced Systems. Full time faculty members/researchers of public or private HEIs or Research and Development organizations of Pakistan are eligible to apply for the research project. The funding amount

for the research project will be up to Rs. 15 million and duration will be up to two years, the source informed. The proposals shall be academia-industry joint projects leading towards sustainable socio-economic growth. The proposals can be submitted only on prescribed format available at <http://ncgsa.org.pk/ncgsa-research-fund/> with all attachments completely filled till April 23. Submissions can be done through email, hard copy and website, the source added. – Agencies

## RCCI lauds decrease in POL prices, urge Govt to pass benefits

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) President Muhammad Nasir Mirza while lauding the move Government to reduce petroleum prices. In a statement, he said the government should ensure that the impact of the cuts must be shifted to the masses. Petrol and diesel prices have a direct impact on transportation costs. According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), the inflation rate in March was nine percent. The government will have to take emergency measures to control inflation. Ramadan is approaching and we urged the Government to take immediate steps to control the food inflation and all relevant departments must be directed to put a check on the balance between supply and demand. The president added that more than 800 million had flowed into Roshan digital account. This is a good govt scheme. This will help the government to reduce the budget deficit. However, President Nasir Mirza has expressed grave concern over the growing trade deficit. According to the Ministry of Commerce data, the trade deficit has risen to close to around \$3 billion in March this year, compared to \$1.5b in March last year. – DNA

## CM Punjab taking revolutionary steps

FAISAL MUNIR

ATTOCK: Provincial Minister for Revenue Malik Muhammad Anwar Khan said that Chief Minister Punjab Usman Buzdar is taking revolutionary steps for the welfare of people and making efforts to solve their problems at their door steps. He was inaugurating Computerized Land Record Centers in Malal and Khaur and BHU Khaur Road and Dhok Mela Road. DC Attock Ali Anan Qamar, AC Fatehjang Azim Shaukat Awan and AC Pindigheb Haidar Abbas were present on the occasion. Provincial Minister Anwar Khan said that after establishment of these land record keeping centers, the land related problems of the people of these areas will be solved nearest to their home towns which will ultimately save their precious time and finances. He said record keeping centers has been established in revenue department while reforms are also being introduced to facilitate people.



ISLAMABAD: A view of construction work of interchange at Rawal Chowk during development work in the city. – DNA

## MoST plan to register Pakistani scientists

This database would help update database of scientists annually and would serve as a valuable source of information for the decision makers for different purposes like promotions and award of fellowships

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Federal Ministry of Science and Technology has planned to register Pakistani scientists to formulate database carrying information about their respective fields and give them recognition. According to an official source, a plan to register scientists in the analogy of registration of medical doctors and engineers by the ministry is under consideration. This database would help update database of scientists annually and would serve as a valuable source of information for the decision makers for different purposes like appointments, promotions and award of fellowships. There were around 3639 Produc-

tive Scientists of Pakistan of international repute in the country as per the last compiled data; however, the registration process will further identify more scientists in the country. Listing the scientific interventions taken during the recent years, the source revealed that as many as four centers of disruptive technologies have been established at the cost of Rs5 billion. The centers in-



clude National Center for Artificial Intelligence (NCAI), National Center in Robotics and Automation (NCRA), National Center for Cyber Security (NCCS) and National Center in Big Data and Cloud Computing (NCB-D&CC). Around 45 labs are affiliated with these centers. Currently, 32 mainly technology driven projects with portfolio of Rs 57 billion are ongoing in Ministry of Science and Technology Public Sector

Development Programme. The source also conveyed that the ministry since its revitalization had been focusing on Demand Driven Technology Development including import substitution industrialization, civil-military interaction for technology development, establishment of linkages among academia, Research and Development organizations and industry for technology development, encouragement of FDI in technology products manufacturing and establishment of Science and Technology Parks in Small Economic Zones. The ministry had also prepared a draft of Pakistan National Quality Policy (PNQP) 2021 for the establishment of standards/quality and accreditation regime in the country, the source added.

## Distt admin conducts 6000 raids, impose Rs 10m fine

RAJA PERVAIZ

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi District Administration on the directive of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi Capt (retd) Anwar ul Haq launched a vigorous campaign against profiteering, hoarding and imposed fine over Rs 10 million on 5603 shopkeepers this year and 22 violators were sent behind the bars.

According to a district administration spokesman, the administration was regularly conducting raids against hoarders and profiteers. He said that fine imposed on the violators in seven tehsils of Rawalpindi district during last three months. Teams conducted over 6000 raids in seven tehsils of the district during the period and imposed fines on 5603 violators, he added.

He said the administration also lodged 22 FIRs against the violators and the profiteers were sent behind the bars during the operations. The administration had constituted teams to check profiteering, hoarding and rate lists of daily use items while on the recommendations of the teams, several cases were also registered. Following the directives of the Punjab government, teams checked hoarding and profiteering and those found violating the law were sent behind the bars while several persons found involved in profiteering, not displaying price lists and violating hygiene standards were also issued warnings, he added.

## Plan underway to make Islamabad beggar-free

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) police in collaboration with experts are working on an action plan to curb beggary for once and all by taking inclusive initiatives. The issue of beggary was discussed at length during a meeting, held here with Inspector General of Police Qazi Jameel-ur-Rehman in the chair, an official source privy to the development told media.

During the meeting, he said the experts floated multiple proposals to root out beggary and called for making the rehabilitation centers in the federal capital fully functional to ensure protection of children and women.

National Commission for Human Rights' member Muhammad Shafique told the meeting about three recognized rehabilitation centers in Islamabad including Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Center, Pakistan Center and Child Protection Center. The source said the member pointed out absence of law for beggars' detention and their period of retention as a major issue for detaining a child or woman involved in beggary. He said on the occasion, NCRC member from ICT Dr. Robina apprised the committee about the capacity and existing facilities of the recognized rehabilitation centers in Islamabad.

## Effective mechanism to monitor prices of goods

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi capt. (R) Anwar ul Haq on Sunday said that an effective mechanism was in place to monitor the prices of essential commodities in order to provide relief to the consumers during the holy month of Ramadan. Dc made it clear that quality and quantity of goods would be ensured at any cost. He said strict action would be taken against shopkeepers and retailers who would not follow the government's directives. He directed all his subordinates to ensure provision of essential supplies for the general public at government approved rates. He said control room would also be setup to register complaints against overcharging and profiteering by shopkeepers.



## UK travel ban

**T**HE United Kingdom has made a worrying announcement—the British High Commissioner Christian Turner in Islamabad stated that the UK added a number of countries to its travel “red list”, which bans entry to people arriving from those countries unless they are British or Irish nationals. That list includes Pakistan, along with Bangladesh, Kenya and the Philippines.

This is not surprising. The third wave of the coronavirus in Pakistan is at a peak—with the country reporting 5,234 cases in 24 hours. Pakistan’s vaccination programme has also faced a host of problems—the vaccination drive is still far behind that of many countries.

According to Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Health Dr Faisal Sultan, only 0.8 million doses of the Covid-19 vaccine have been administered. So far, only health workers or those aged 60 and older have received the vaccine, and that too has faced some resistance from vaccine sceptics, even from healthcare workers. There is also the looming problem of shortage of the vaccine. There have been some positive developments on that aspect—Pakistan is set to receive another batch of 500,000 doses of the Chinese-developed Sinopharm coronavirus vaccine, bringing the total number of doses procured in the last 24 hours to more than a million.

As the world moves towards vaccinating its citizens, vaccination numbers will become an important measure of a country’s security from the virus. Pakistan was praised in 2020 for successfully containing the pandemic from spiralling—yet now, it is not the infection rate that matters but the vaccination numbers. This is the way with every disease—Pakistan needs to speed up its vaccination drive to keep us off any further travel lists.

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## Industrial growth

**T**HE All Pakistan Cement Manufacturers Association’s (APCMA) data states that the cement industry reported a monthly growth of 44.30 percent for the month of March, 2021—the highest it has ever been. This entails that domestic use and exports have gone up substantially, deeming the strategy of providing incentives to the sector successful as a result. According to the information released, a total of 5.373 million tonnes of cement was dispatched in March alone. When compared to last year’s 3.722 million, this is an extraordinary achievement. Now, further improvement can come in the form of addressing and resolving the concerns of the APCMA members about access to cost-effective energy resources. Even consolidating gains at this point is important considering that the incentive strategy is still in its initial phase and the potential to reap dividends is high as the rate of exports has spiked tremendously. If the end goal of transforming this sector into one of the many profitable sectors of the economy is to be achieved, a greater focus must be placed when determining what step to take next.

Rising international trade ensures that there is a steady flow of revenue through which our government can embark upon developmental projects domestically. Harnessing almost twice the level of productivity, as in the case of the cement sector, must be encouraged across the board—especially sectors of the industry relating to construction raw materials. Through associating the raw material industry to the success of the cement industry, much more can be accomplished to improve our potential exports and economic standing as a whole.

# Influence of Shanghai Spirit continues to grow

Vladimir Norov



The SCO members consistently adhere to the principle of openness in cooperation with all interested countries and int’l organizations, and adhere to the goals and principles of the UN. The interaction between the UN and the SCO has already become a successful example of effective cooperation between a global and regional organization. UNSG António Guterres has stressed the SCO is a strong partner of the UN, a leader in regional diplomacy

**S**CO has firmly established itself as an influential and responsible participant in the modern system of international relations. In recent years, through the joint efforts of all parties, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has successfully created a solid legal framework and effective mechanisms for multilateral cooperation in the fight against international terrorism, separatism and extremism, drug trafficking, organized crime, and ensuring information security, as well as strengthening trade, economic, cultural and humanitarian cooperation.

A fundamentally important feature of the organization is that, while fully preserving and respecting the autonomy of its members in their internal affairs and foreign policy, partnership within the SCO is based on active and cooperative interaction, joint determination of areas of overlapping interests and equal importance of opinions.

Mutual understanding, equality and coordination are the key elements defining the SCO. The organization does not pursue the goal of forming a military-political alliance, is not targeted against any third countries, and does not support ideological and confrontational positions in addressing international and regional development problems. The SCO members consistently adhere to the principle of openness in cooperation with all interested countries and international organizations, and adhere to the goals and principles of the United Nations. The interaction between the UN and the SCO has already become a successful example of effective cooperation between a global and regional organization. UN Secretary-General António Guterres has stressed the SCO is a strong partner of the UN, a leader in regional diplomacy and a promoter of cooperation in addressing the most pressing peace and security challenges facing Eurasia. The SCO Development Strategy 2025, adopted in 2015, aims to ensure the successful implementation of its programs and plans for the development of multilateral cooperation in the economy, finance, investment, trade and transport project activities are being implemented.

Work is ongoing to expand scientific, technical, humanitarian and cultural exchanges, as well as cooperation in the health and tourism sectors.

The multifaceted interaction among the SCO members is promoting the stable development and welfare of the entire Eurasian region. The creation and formation of the SCO came during a period of world history when a clear trend was emerging of the redistribution of the global balance of power, primarily due to the strengthening of new centers of development in the Asia-Pacific region. The historic decision adopted 20 years ago on June 15, 2001 by the founding countries to establish the SCO was an important step toward the active promotion of peace and joint development in the region. The SCO’s emphasis on the Shanghai Spirit of mutual consultation, mutual trust and mutual benefit has deepened the good-neighborly, friendly and partnership relations among the member states.

The era of political, economic and financial dominance of the West, stretching over the past 500 years, is gradually coming to an end. Public recognition of this objective reality can even be found in the speeches of leading Western politicians, in particular, the statement of French President Emmanuel Macron on Aug 27, 2019, at the traditional Conference of Ambassadors, which is organized every year at the Elysee Palace when he said that: “We are definitely witnessing the end of Western hegemony in the world”.

At the same time, this process is unfolding against the backdrop of escalating global political and economic tensions, with some countries adopting growing unilateral protectionist measures, and other challenges to the globalization of international trade. The COVID-19 pandemic, as we can see firsthand, has only exacerbated these tensions. In the two decades of its existence, the SCO has firmly established itself as an influential and responsible participant in today’s system of international relations and has become Asia’s main continental forum for security and sustainable development. The latter became particularly noticeable after 2017, when India and Pakistan joined the organization.

With the entry of these two countries, the SCO has acquired a transcontinental character, and in terms of total potential, the organization now encompasses the total population of almost 44 percent of the world’s population, territory, natural

resources, and almost one-fourth of the world’s GDP. It has become the largest international trans-regional organization in the world.

The SCO has transformed into an influential organization, whose voice is more and more considered in the international arena, and with which more and more states seek cooperation. Including its members, observers and dialogue partner states, the organization comprises 18 states, from Eastern Europe and the Persian Gulf to Central and South Asia. In addition, the SCO region represents a huge market for mutually beneficial trade and economic cooperation, and the implementation of joint projects covering almost all sectors of the economy.

That is why the SCO has proven to be the best platform for bridging national strategies, cross-border projects, and multilateral integration initiatives, including the Eurasian Economic Union, as well as national development strategies of member countries and China’s Belt and Road Initiative.

In addition, to various aspects of geopolitical, geo-economic and civilizational factors, the active participation in the organization of China and Russia has brought the SCO to the forefront of international politics. The enormous political, defense, economic and cultural-civilizational potential, and impressive geographical scale of the SCO from Southeast Asia to Eastern and Northern Europe is a guarantee of the organization’s active and creative participation in shaping a multipolar world.

Over the past 20 years, the organization has been able to build one of the world’s largest systems of successful alignment of national and regional interests in various areas of development, as well as multifaceted regional cooperation with a focus on guaranteeing political stability, strengthening security, expanding economic cooperation, joint development and the prosperity of nations.

— *The author is secretary-general of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The author contributed this article to China Watch, a think tank powered by China Daily. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily. If The Writer is the Secretary General of SCO*

# Coronavirus restrictions - (The complete lockdown)

Attiya Munawer



The government is right in its view that we cannot afford a lockdown, but at a time when the threat of a pandemic has become more alarming than expected, there is no choice but to take very serious and urgent measures. Only a strict lockdown for a few weeks with strict implementation of Coronavirus SOPs can stop the pandemic

**T**HE rapid spread of the third and most dangerous wave of coronavirus, the steady increase in the number of patients and the trend of citizens not following the precautionary measures (SOPs), the government has announced more stringent measures in the interest of the people to control this global pandemic. Possible steps are being taken by the government in this regard, with the re-imposition of sanctions and for the first time cases of violation of SOPs are being registered. The third wave of coronavirus is being described as more dangerous and is spreading rapidly, affecting a large number of children as well as adults. Earlier, children were considered safe from coronavirus, so not much attention has been paid to the development of vaccine for them, but now vaccine for children is in the process of preparation. Vaccine doses are not available in Pakistan according to the number of adults. Some countries have gifted vaccines to Pakistan which are in very limited quantities. The government will have to ensure the supply of vaccines as well as preparations.

When the Coronavirus catastrophe came to light last year, many countries were completely shut down, curfew-like sanctions were imposed, and we also had similar lockdown demands, which the Prime Minister continued to oppose. It was stated that the complete lockdown would force many people to go on hunger strike. The government was content with a partial lockdown and in the meanwhile a large amount of money was allocated for the welfare

of the unemployed and distributed to the deserving people. Federal and Provincial Governments have made every effort to implement the SOPs issued by the NCOC. There have been complaints of cooperation and non-cooperation in this regard. However, as the situation in Pakistan being better than many other countries, many countries appreciated Pakistan’s initiatives and have achieved remarkable results by partially locked down in the same manner. But it is not requisite that only the steps taken in the past be effective in overcoming this third wave of Coronavirus, a new strategy will have to be devised using the previous steps.

Certainly, the government is doing everything possible to stop the spread of the coronavirus, but what is being done is ‘not necessary, there is no room for further action. The government has experts’ and besides them there are people who can make better suggestions and wherever good opinions come from, it should be used. The Pakistan Medical Association has termed the government’s measures and strategy to control corona virus as inadequate and ineffective. The PMA meeting in Lahore demanded the government to stop the spread of coronavirus, including Lahore, complete lockdown in major cities and implementation of Corona SOPs should be ensured. The government is strictly following SOPs, but is pursuing a policy of avoiding lockdowns, even though the President and the Prime Minister have been affected by the third wave of Coronavirus. Despite being affected, the Prime Minister says that we do not have the resources to close the country but when it comes to

the survival of human lives then such tough decisions have to be made.

Both the government and the people seem to be in a state of turmoil. In view of the threat of a third wave of coronavirus, the people want to follow the SOPs, but the economic situation forces them to violate it.

The government is also saying that we cannot afford severe lockdowns, but lockdowns are also being announced in areas with a positive case rate of more than 12%, so there is a need to get out of this dilemma with a clear and unequivocal policy to prevent and combat the third wave of coronavirus. The growing number of corona cases poses a serious threat that the available medical facilities will fail to cope with the large number of patients in large cities like Lahore where already life-saving equipment and facilities are running out, and delays in making quick and drastic decisions by the government could mean a major medical crisis. The government is right in its view that we cannot afford a lockdown, but at a time when the threat of a pandemic has become more alarming than expected, there is no choice but to take very serious and urgent measures. Only a strict lockdown for a few weeks with strict implementation of Coronavirus SOPs can stop the pandemic. The spread of COVID-19 pandemic is also demanding from the government, concerned agencies and the general public that everyone should play their role responsibly for the prevention of this coronavirus because a single failure in the prevention of Corona can be a prelude to great loss.

## Briefs

## Brazil surpasses 330,000 COVID-19 deaths

DNA

DNARIO DE JANEIRO: Deaths from COVID-19 in Brazil surpassed 330,000 on Saturday after 1,987 new fatalities registered, bringing the country's death toll to 330,193, the Ministry of Health reported. Besides, 43,515 new cases were registered, bringing the national count to 12,953,597. Brazil is currently the global epicenter of COVID-19, ranking second in terms of deaths and cases worldwide, after the United States. Sao Paulo, the most populated state in Brazil, has also been hardest hit by the virus with 2,520,204 cases and 76,750 deaths, followed by Rio de Janeiro, with 657,139 cases and 37,629 deaths. Brazil has been experiencing a new wave of COVID-19 since January, which has in recent weeks overwhelmed the healthcare systems in most of the 27 states of the country. As of Friday, Brazil has vaccinated over 24 million people against COVID-19. Among them, 18.8 million, or 8.9 percent of the population, received the first dose and 5.2 million, or 2.49 percent, received both doses.

## France claims EU green light for more aid

PARIS: The French government said Sunday it has reached a deal with the European Commission allowing it to inject fresh money into flagship airline Air France, whose finances are creaking under the impact of coronavirus restrictions. The agreement follows weeks of negotiations with the EU's executive, which must ensure that state aid does not give companies an unfair advantage. "We have an outline agreement with European Commissioner Margrethe Vestager about new financial aid for Air France," Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire said on the RTL/LCI/Le Figaro political broadcast "Le Grand Jury". Air France, of which the French government owns 14.3 percent, will have to give up "a certain number" of slots at Orly, Paris's second-largest airport after Charles de Gaulle, in return for the green light from Brussels, Le Maire said. - APP

## UK move to put Pakistan in red list...

From Page 01

Given the data it would be fair for me to conclude the following: - The government doesn't have a coherent strategy in dealing with the red list - The government isn't serious about protecting the British public as its applying decisions led by politics not data. Contrary to what the government is saying, it is clearly not making decisions led by science/data. Further, it is knowingly and consciously discriminating against Pakistan and the Pakistani diaspora community. She asked the minister can you confirm whether you have attended any of the most recent 'Covid O' meetings as clearly your presence is very important to understand the international context and direction of travel?

## CanSino vaccine from today

From Page 01

National Coordinator NCOC Lieutenant General Hamood Uz Zaman Khan. The Forum emphasised that all Covid Vaccination Centers should ensure to facilitate above 65 years age individuals who already have been allowed walk-in vaccination facility. The Forum was informed that keeping in view the increasing Covid-19 disease spread, 594 more oxygen beds have been added to dedicated Covid health facilities with special focus on Swat and Peshwar. The Forum also decided to enhance monitoring mechanism to check violation of preventive COVID SOPs. The Forum also discussed the establishment of call centres at District level to pursue registered senior citizen for vaccination to further enhance the efficacy of this reach-out drive.



JOHANNESBURG: Pakistani player Fakhar Zaman playing short in 2nd ODI match against South Africa. Zaman scored 193. - DNA

## Fakhar misses out on double ton as Pakistan lose 2nd ODI

SPORTS DESK

JOHANNESBURG: Fakhar Zaman missed out on a double ton as Pakistan lost to South Africa by 17 runs in the second ODI in Johannesburg on Sunday. The three-match series now stands level at 1-1. **South Africa innings:** Babar Azam, having won the toss again, decided to bowl first again. Shaheen Afridi and Mohammad Hasnain shared the new ball, whereas Quinton de Kock and Aiden Mark opened the innings

for the hosts. The start to the South Africa innings wasn't unlike their last one, with both their openers kept quiet by Pakistani pacers. Things came alive in the 8th over when Markram cracked Hasnain for a pair of boundaries before nicking one back. The ball was heading to Shadab Khan in the first slip but Rizwan came swooping in, getting a hand to the ball but eventually dropping what was rightfully Shadab's to take. Markram (39), growing in confidence, hit a pretty six

to Faheem over extra cover in the 9th over before targeting the same area the next ball and depositing a catch into the hands of Asif Ali. Captain Temba Bavuma and De Kock were then pegged back, with runs at a premium and South Africa 76-1 after 15 overs. The hundred for the hosts came in the 20th over, with the duo still at the crease. At the halfway mark, the hosts were 132-1 and on course for a 300 or so figure. In the 31st over, De Kock,

having made 80, played a Haris Rauf deliver on to his stumps as Pakistan broke the 114-run partnership. Bavuma cracked Rauf for a four to bring up his maiden ODI half century as the team captain. Rassie van der Dussen's stroke-filled 60 off 37 came to an end when Hasnain had him caught. Bavuma missed out on his hundred in the 47th over, getting holed out for 92. In the end, David Miller's unbeaten 27-ball 50 at the death helped South Africa to 341-7.

**The run chase:** Fakhar Zaman and Imam-ul-Haq opened the innings for the tourists. Imam perished at the start in the innings, forcing Babar Azam to join the run chase early. Zaman and Babar took the story to 71 before Arnrich Nortje removed the captain as well as Mohammad Rizwan in the 11th over. Nortje struck once more, taking the wicket of Danish Aziz, while Tabraiz Shamsi took care of Shadab Khan as the hosts tightened their grip on the match. A 66-run partnership be-

tween Fakhar and Asif Ali gave Pakistan a glimmer of hope but as always the latter vanished when the team needed him the most. From that point on, Fakhar was a man on a mission as he single-handedly kept Pakistan in the hunt and could have went on to complete a second ODI double ton, if it wasn't for a freak run out in the final over. He ended his innings with 192, just eight shy of what would have been his second ODI double century. Pakistan eventually finished 324-9.

## Akshay Kumar tests positive

MUMBAI: Bollywood star Akshay Kumar said Sunday he has tested positive for Covid-19, becoming the latest Indian celebrity to contract the virus as the vast nation battles a new wave of cases. India reported 93,249 new daily infections on Sunday, according to health ministry data, the highest since September, taking the total known cases to almost 12.5 million. "I wish to inform everyone that, earlier, I have tested positive for Covid-19," the 53-year-old actor tweeted. Kumar said last year that he drinks cow urine daily to stay healthy - a practice some Hindus believe has medical benefits, including against the coronavirus. He tweeted that he is now under home quarantine and has "sought necessary medical care". Saturday also saw Indian spin star Axar Patel announce he had tested positive and was in isolation ahead of the start of the lucrative Twenty20 IPL tournament. - DNA

## Pakistan wins Triangular Blind Cricket Tournament

SPORTS DESK

DHAKA: Pakistan have won the final of the triangular blind cricket tournament by beating arch-rivals India by 62 runs. India could only manage 112 for seven in the allotted 15 overs in pursuit of Pakistan's 175. India's Sunil Ramesh scored 39 while Pankaj made 23 runs. Pakistan's Sajid Nawaz picked two wickets while captain Nisar Ali bagged one wicket. Earlier, Pakistan posted 174 for the loss of three wickets. Captain Nisar Ali played an unbeaten inning of 69 runs while Zafar Iqbal made 24-ball 48. In-



dia's Ajay Kumar took two wickets. It must be noted that hosts Bangladesh was the third team in the triangular tournament. The tournament was rescheduled to a two-day affair after rising cases of COVID-19 in Dhaka.



LONDON: Liverpool's Mohamed Salah skips over Arsenal's Gabriel Magalhaes during the Premier League match between Arsenal and Liverpool at the Emirates Stadium in London, Britain. - DNA

## Chepngetich breaks half-marathon record

SPORTS DESK

NAIROBI: Kenya's Ruth Chepngetich has smashed the women's half-marathon world record in a time of one hour, four minutes and two seconds. On Sunday, the marathon world champion sliced almost half a minute off the previous best mark of 1:04:31, set by Ethiopia's Ababel Yeshaneh in February last year. Chepngetich, 26, was followed across the line in Istanbul by Ethiopian Yalemzerf Yehualaw (1:04:40) with Kenya's Helen Obiri third (1:04:51) - the fastest debut half-marathon in history. Winning the race for a third time after 2017 and 2019, she pulled clear of Yehualaw in the final stages to seal her place in the record books. This was the first time three women have finished inside 65 minutes in a single half-marathon. World record-holder Kibiwott Kandie won the men's race in a course record of 59 minutes and 35 seconds. Kandie held off the challenge of compatriot Geoffrey Kamworor to claim victory by three seconds, with Roncer Kipkorir finishing third.

## Fashion show held to introduce Pak costumes

Pakistani fashion costumes with their strong local style and ornate decorations attract Chinese visitors. According to CFA: "Different from fashion in the usual sense, Pakistani costumes combining contemporary fashion with national traditional characteristics brought a new view and a visual feast to Chinese audiences

DNA

BEIJING: As the China Fashion Week drawing to close, a special fashion show, 70th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between Pakistan and China: Introducing Best of Pakistani Fashion Trends, has intrigued Chinese fashion insiders to learn about Pakistani costumes. "We should value not only our own culture, but also the cultures of others,

especially our friends," Zhang Qinghui, Chairman of China Fashion Association (CFA), said at the event. To celebrate the 70th anniversary and enhance communication between Pak-China in fashion sector, this show was held by CFA and Pakistani Embassy in China. As many as 14 Pakistani famous fashion brands, including Maheen Khan, Tabassum Mughal, Umsha, Kalah, Sundus Talpur,



Sanabbas, Shamsha, Aleena Fareena, Diners, Sadaf Malaterre, Delhi, Sameer Sain, GOGI, and ZAAVIAY, were invited to participate in online AW 2021 China Fashion Week to introduce Pakistani fashion trends and shows to China, China Economic Net (CEN) re-

ported on Sunday. Pakistani fashion costumes with their strong local style and ornate decorations attract Chinese visitors. According to CFA: "Different from fashion in the usual sense, Pakistani costumes combining contemporary fashion with national traditional characteristics brought a new view and a visual feast to Chinese audiences. AW 2021 China Fashion Week is a part of cultural exchange between Paki-

stan and China. Through Pakistani models dressed in elegant and colourful garments, we hope the unique Pakistani fashion can be recognized by more Chinese people, then enhance the Sino-Pak communication in this field." Zhang Qinghui also presented a Partner Certificate to Counsellor Awaiz Ahmed Khan on the occasion, and called for further cooperation and communication with Pakistani fashion industry.

## SA fined for slow-over rate

SPORTS DESK

CENTURION: South Africa men's cricket team have been fined 20% of their match fee for maintaining a slow-over-rate against Pakistan in the first ODI. The Match Referee imposed the sanction after Proteas were one over short of the target after time allowances were taken into consideration on Friday. South Africa skipper Temba Bavuma has pleaded guilty for the offense levelled by Andrew Pycroft of the ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees, and therefore there was no need for a formal hearing. Umpires Marais Erasmus, Adrian Holdstock, Allahudien Paleker and Bongani Jele had leveled the charge against the hosts. Remember, Pakistan won the first ODI of the three-match series by three wickets at SuperSport Park, Centurion.

## PM cautions nation about...

From Page 01

The government had so far placed small restrictions to control it, he said and warned that "God forbids, if it spreads, the government will be forced to take harsh decisions." In that case, he said, the poor segments of society would be affected, and the government wanted to save them economically. The prime minister responded to different questions during a live broadcast conversation with the general public. Imran Khan said the poor people all over the world had been worst affected due to the lockdowns. According to an estimate, 150 million people across the globe were forced to live under the poverty line, he added. He said his government had saved the vulnerable segments of society during the previous corona waves. Allah Almighty, he said, had saved Pakistan from the most difficult time so far as the deadly virus had devastated the economies of Europe, the United States and Brazil. The prime minister referred to the dismal situation in India and certain European countries where despite vaccination, the governments were forced to impose lockdowns. "I urge you (the people) to wear masks whenever you go out," he stressed.

## Chinese envoy lauds Sino-Pak...

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He said, no Pakistani worker was laid off during the pandemic from any CPEC project. He said Pakistan was the first country to get a donation of Chinese COVID-19 vaccine and said the bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) will narrow trade deficit and deepen economic cooperation. He also said 100 million Chinese had benefited from the elimination of rural poverty in China. Former chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Ehsanul Haq (ret'd) termed "security cooperation as a significant core area of Pakistan-China relations". He said "75-80% of Pakistani defence equipment comes from China and Pakistan accounts for 35% of China's military exports". Former Under Secretary General of the UN and president of the China-Pakistan Friendship Association, ambassador Sha Zukang said "Pakistan is the most important country in the region for China" and he said "Pakistan-China relations will blossom in today's world, where changes not seen in a century, were occurring". Pakistan's ambassador to the UN, Munir Akram termed "China the pivot of Pakistan's foreign policy" and "this pivot will remain" and Pakistan is the strongest defender of China's territorial integrity. He said "Pakistan-China policies are completely aligned in South Asia, in the Indian Ocean, in Central Asia, in the Asia-Pacific region". Former ambassador of Pakistan to China, Masood Khalid said "China's rise is an established reality" and he also narrated how 50 years ago, "despite China's own difficulties during the Cultural Revolution, China provided invaluable support to building Pakistan's heavy industrial base worth almost \$300 million".



