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ADP approves USD 300 million emergency loan for Pakistan

Pakistan needs more investments FDI: diplomat

RCCI urges FBR for input on budget: Saboor



PANDEMIC FIGHT

ADB okays \$300 mln loan for Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Tuesday approved a \$300mn emergency assistance loan to boost the country's response to the coronavirus pandemic, as Pakistan has reported more than 43,000 cases of the virus so far. "The COVID-19 pandemic is having a significant detrimental impact on the health and economic prospects of the people of Pakistan," a press release from the ADB quoted its

Vice-President Shixin Chen as saying. "Financing through this project will fast-track ADB's assistance to strengthen Pakistan's public health capabilities, provide immediate support to vulnerable women and their families, and facilitate knowledge sharing with Pakistan's neighbors and other countries in the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation region," it said further. The ADB said that the loan will be used to purchase medical supplies

and personal protective equipment for hospital staff and their training, purchase of emergency vehicles, and strengthening COVID-19 awareness among marginal communities with limited television or internet connectivity. The ADB said that it would provide direct cash assistance to for the benefit of women in poor households via the Ehsaas Emergency Cash Assistance Package, launched in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. "These payments are de-

signed to meet the basic food needs and necessary living expenses of poor and vulnerable women and families, which are the bedrock of Pakistani society," said ADB's Project Administration Unit Head and co-team leader of the project Zheng Wu. "Unconditional cash transfers help improve the nutritional intake of poor households and boost women's economic empowerment. This project will build Pakistan's capacity to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic and other health emergencies."



ISLAMABAD: Japanese Ambassador to Pakistan his Excellency Matsuda Kuninori calls on Federal Minister for Railways Sheikh Rashid Ahmed. – DNA

Japanese ambassador meets Sh. Rashid

Japanese railway companies keen to invest in Pakistan Railways: Matsuda

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Railways Sheikh Rashid Ahmed Tuesday thanked the Government of Japan for extending financial support and providing testing kits to Pakistan to combat COVID-19. During meeting with Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan Matsuda Kuninori at the Ministry of Railways, both discussed the development projects of Pakistan Railways and measures being followed to control coronavirus spread. Sheikh Rashid informed that Pakistan had restored the limited passenger train operation in the country so that the masses could celebrate their Eid-ul-Fitr at their native towns without any difficulty.

Japan envoy extends condolences

ISLAMABAD: Matsuda Kuninori, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan has expressed his profound grief and sincere condolences over the loss of precious lives of the Frontier Corps soldiers in two separate attacks in Balochistan on May 18. "I was deeply shocked and would like to express my condolences and sympathies to all the bereaved families. – DNA

PAYMENT OF MEDIA DUES

APNS dismayed over Govt's indifference

The All Pakistan Newspapers Society has requested the Prime Minister Imran Khan to personally intervene and help the media workers

DNA

KARACHI: The APNS has expressed its dismay on the consistent indifference of the Federal Government in making payment of media dues before Eid despite clear instructions by the Prime Minister Mr. Imran Khan. Hameed Haroon, Present and Mr. Sarmad Ali, Secretary General of All Pakistan Newspapers Society in a statement have stated that the Committee on Media Issues headed by Senator Shafiqat Mahmood

which held its meeting on April 16, 2020, had decided to effect payment of outstanding dues to media houses, so that the newspapers could pay salaries of their employees before Eid. It must be noted that the PID has verified an amount of Rs.1.25 Billion approximately as payable to Print Media but so far only a payment of about Rs.7 Million has been released on account of advertisements in newspapers. From this negligible amount the salaries of employees cannot be paid. The APNS expresses its

profound concern and alarm that despite lapse of about one month, the concerned ministries and departments have not made the payments. Since there left just 3 working days before Eid and payments not being made, the media houses would not be able to pay salaries to their employees who would for the first time celebrate their Eid without bare necessities. The All Pakistan Newspapers Society has requested the Prime Minister Imran Khan to personally intervene and help the media workers.

Briefs

RCCI urges FBR for input on budget

A.M.BHATTI

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has urged Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to take stakeholders input while finalization of the upcoming budget 2020-21. Addressing a press briefing at Chamber house on budget proposals, All Pakistan Chambers Presidents declaration and economic challenges president RCCI Saboor Malik said that business community strongly believed that to meet uneven challenge of Corona Virus, FBR and Finance ministry must consult with chambers and trade representatives while formulating the upcoming budget. He said that RCCI have forwarded the budget proposals to FBR and we are very optimistic here. These proposals will serve a guidelines and a way forward for government to put the economy back on track.

Turkish firms keen to benefit from Gwadar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul called on Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Syed Ali Haider Zaidi here in Islamabad today to discuss widening the Pak-Turkish cooperation maritime sector. The new shipping policy includes tax exemptions for newly acquired ships, hence carrying a huge potential for

investment by Turkish ship liners in Pakistan. Since the Turkish Minister for Transportation Mr Cahit Turhan supported the proposal for Visa facilitation to Pakistani seafarers during his visit to Pakistan in February 2020, the matter was also brought into the discussion. Pakistan is also expected to benefit from the vast experience of Turkish shipbuilding and maintenance of pilot boats and tug boats. Fur-

ther SOPs are underway to attract Turkish collaboration in the Maritime Services company in the domain of dredging etc. Materializing the vision of Minister for Maritime Affairs to turn Pakistan into Maritime Nation, Pakistan is actively developing its industrial zones ancillary to ports hence the meeting also included discussion on Pak-Turkish cooperation in the development of the joint Industrial port city. The Turkish companies will benefit from the establishment of industrial units in Gwadar Free Zone and Bin Qasim Industrial Zone with their products having expeditious access to eastern and western China once the CPEC is fully operational.



Pakistan rejects new domicile law in IOK

ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday strongly condemned and completely rejected the Indian Government's attempts to further deprive the people of Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJ&K) through "Jammu and Kashmir Grant of Domicile Certificate (Procedure), 2020."

The new domicile law is illegal and in clear violation of the relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions, international law including the 4th Geneva Convention and bilateral Agreements between Pakistan and India. The domicile law is aimed at changing the demographic structure of IOJ&K and undermining the exercise by the Kashmiri people of

their right to self-determination through free and impartial plebiscite as per the relevant UNSC Resolutions. We reiterate that such steps can neither change the disputed nature of Jammu and Kashmir recognised as such by the United Nations and the international community nor can they prejudice the inalienable right to self-determination of the Kashmiri people.

Pakistan needs favorable investment policies to attract FDI: Chinese envoy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: While attending the Webinar on "CPEC Phase II: China-Pakistan Industrial Cooperation", the Chinese Consul General in Karachi Li Bijian stressed the importance of favorable investment policies and well-developed infrastructure and facilities for Pakistan to attract foreign investments and cushion the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Organized by the Institute of Peace and Diplomatic Studies, Centre for BRI and China Studies in collaboration with Riphah

International University, the Webinar provided a platform for government officials, businessmen and scholars to exchange their views on the current status of China-Pakistan industrial cooperation and the prospect; the difficulties and challenges ahead; policies and implementation. Director General (China), the Foreign Ministry of Pakistan Mudassar Tipu; Former Pakistani Ambassador to China Masood Khalid; Prof. Mi Hong from Zhejiang University, Project Director of CPEC Liaqat Ali Shah, and over 70 celebrities from both Pakistan and China attended the Webinar.



According to Gwadar Pro, Li reiterated that as the first phase of CPEC has laid a solid foundation for the economic development of Pakistan, the second phase endeavors to boost development in agriculture, industrial cooperation, and people's livelihood. However, the rampant COVID-19 pandemic has in some

top-down measures to meet the current challenges. That will include adjusting the investment strategies, in which the government stages a platform for enterprises, especially the private ones to give full play to their capabilities. In addition, the government is obliged to strengthen social security and provide needed infrastructure and facilities in the important industrial cooperation zones including SEZs and Gwadar Port Free Zone. To create a better investment environment, the government should promulgate favorable policies that can remain consistent

in a long period. Consul General Li pointed out that the internationalization of RMB will provide the Pakistani government with more macroeconomic policy options. Compared with the quantitative easing (QE) policies generally adopted by the western world in response to crises in recent years, liberalizing RMB direct investment can avert hyperinflation, sharp currency depreciation, and asset bubbles. It will also avoid the risks of insufficient foreign exchange reserves and attract investments from China that can help promote the economic development of Pakistan.

Virus cases in Pakistan soar to 43,966

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The nationwide tally of coronavirus cases has soared to 43,966 with 1841 new cases reported during the last twenty-four hours. Overall 15976 cases have so far been detected in Punjab, 17241 in Sindh, 6230 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 2820 in Balochistan, 550 in Gilgit Baltistan, 1034 in Islamabad and 115 in Azad Kashmir.

A total of 12,489 patients have so far recovered from the virus whilst the death toll stands at 939 with 36 new deaths reported.

Rupee weakens against dollar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The exchange rate of Pakistani rupee declined by 37 paise against US dollar in the interbank on Tuesday to close at Rs 160.74 against the last closing of Rs 160.37. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan, the buying and selling rates of US dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 160.5 and Rs 161.5 respectively.

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Briefs

COMSTech project gets funding

ISLAMABAD: The capacity building project of COMSTech the Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation of the OIC (Organization of Islamic Cooperation) on the Use of New Breeding Technologies for Food and Nutritional Security has been selected for this year's project funding under COMCEC project funding scheme. The Economic and Commercial Cooperation Standing Committee of the Islamic Cooperation Organization (COMCEC) is one of the four Standing Committees of the OIC, which was established in 1981 and based in Ankara, Turkey. The project envisages institutional and human resource capacity building of Pakistan, Turkey, Malaysia, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, seven OIC member states, by conducting training courses on the introduction of New Breeding Technologies in Agriculture to achieve nutritional food security. Scientists from National Institute of Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering (NIBGE), Pakistan are among leading trainers in this project. — APP

Raids against hoarders, profiteers

RAWALPINDI: In a campaign launched by Rawalpindi District government against profiteering and hoarding, 23,006 raids were conducted in seven tehsils of the district during May and fines amounting to over Rs 6.9 million were imposed on the violators. According to a District Administration spokesman, the District Administration constituted teams to check profiteering, hoarding and rate lists of daily use items and on the recommendations of the teams, several cases were also registered. He said, the administration under vigorous campaign against profiteering and hoarding conducted total 876 raids during last 24 hours while 156 violators were imposed fines amounting to over Rs 292,000. He said, 876 raids were conducted in seven tehsils of the district. — APP

Rescue 1122 starts service

SWABI: Due to the efforts of the National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser the Rescue 1122 has resumed regular services in Topi tehsil of Swabi district on Tuesday. An official of the Rescue 1122, while talking to APP said that the emergency service Rescue 1122 has started regular operation in Topi tehsil on the demand of the people so that the resident of this tehsil could avail the facilities of Rescue 1122 to get free and immediate assistance in case of any emergency. — APP

Govt urged to allow schools to reopen after Eid

KARACHI: The All Pakistan Private Schools Federation on Tuesday appealed to the government to allow schools to reopen from June 1 under standard operating procedures (SOPs). President Kashif Mirza expressed the view that keeping schools closed until July 15 is tantamount to enmity towards education. He added it would be impossible to make up for learning loss to be suffered by 20 million students because of the closure of schools. He said dozens of education institutes will shut down permanently and one million people will be rendered jobless if schools are not allowed to reopen, adding teachers' salaries are fixed with 90 per cent of schools having rented buildings. Kashif Mirza demanded of Prime Minister Imran Khan to announce a relief package for private schools. Meanwhile, office-bearers of All Private Schools Management Associations held a press conference at the Karachi Press Club where they demanded that they be allowed to reopen schools after Eid.

Dr Ishrat unveils govt's economic revival plan in wake of COVID-19

"Keeping balance between the lives and livelihoods would be important for the government while responding in the existing crisis," Dr Suleri opined

DNA
 ISLAMABAD: Adviser to Prime Minister on Institutional Reforms & Austerity Dr Ishrat Hussain has said that the government has devised and implemented a well-crafted strategy in wake of COVID-19 enabling the most vulnerable segments of the society to absorb the economic shocks whereas the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are being given support in order to tackle a disruption in the economic activities. He was delivering a keynote speech at an online dialogue titled: 'Managing Economy in the aftermath of COVID-19: A keynote session with Dr Ishrat Hussain, Advisor to Prime Minister on Institutional Reforms & Austerity' organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here on Monday. Among others, national

and international experts on economy, diplomats, academicians and the development experts made their participation in the webinar. Dr Hussain said that the largest cash grant in the history of Pakistan targeting 16 million household across Pakistan is being provided to most vulnerable groups in the wake of the pandemic. Almost eight million people living below the poverty line have already been benefited whereas four million more households that are feared to slip into this category and four million others that have lost the employment during this crisis would also be provided this cash grant, he added. "The SMEs are being provided relief through several measures, including the arrangement of subsidies on the loans by the government," he said, adding that measures are also being taken to revive



the agriculture sector. It's being done through supporting the small farmers and Rs 56 billion are being allocated to provide subsidies on agricultural inputs, including seeds and fertilizers. He further said that the job creation is another key consideration of the government to respond to growing unemployment resulted in the aftermath of coronavirus. Therefore, he maintained, keeping in view the potential of construction sector in the creating of employment opportunities, subsidies and incentives are being announced for the important sector of the economy.

Dr Ishrat said that a number of measures are on the offing for the performance evaluation of civil servants under the institutional reforms. "These reforms are directed towards the aspects of induction, recruitment, training, performance management, career planning, promotion, compensation, early retirement and finally retirement. He said now it would be mandatory for the Grade-19 and over officers to produce at least two research papers in their relevant fields for their promotion in the next grade. He said the cabinet has already approved the institutional

reforms plan and it will be implemented in next promotions. The e-governance initiatives were introduced even before the arrival outbreak of the pandemic and would be strengthened further now as an ongoing process, he said. Regarding microfinance banking institutions, he said, they are regulated by the Central Bank while the others are regulated by the SECP. He recommended that the regulatory framework of microfinance institutions should come under the State Bank. Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Executive Director, SDPI, earlier said that in the time of uncertainty about the future at every level, it's important for the people to know about the measures and policies being worked upon by the government to meet the challenges posed by COVID-19. "Keeping balance between the lives and livelihoods

would be important for the government while responding in the existing crisis," Dr Suleri opined. Therefore, he said, it's important for all the stakeholders to remain updated on various policy initiatives being taken by the government to overcome the challenges. While responding to a question, Dr Ishrat Hussain said that the existing taxpayers wouldn't be burdened further to reduce the revenue shortfall. He said that the focus would be on bringing new potential ones into the tax net. To another question on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), he said that we have to watch the situation as it emerges, since The UN will have to take decision and revisit the SDGs, for instance climate and environment related SDGs could be achieved quicker now due to less emissions while generating employment will take long time.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Mayor Islamabad Zeeshan Naqvi inspecting cleanliness drive in the suburban areas of the Capital. — DNA

CTP implementing special traffic plan

DNA
 RAWALPINDI: In order to avert traffic jams on city roads, City Traffic Police (CTP) Rawalpindi are implementing a special traffic plan, especially devised for last 'Ashra' of Ramadan-ul-Mubarak. A comprehensive plan to control traffic was evolved besides other arrangements, which had been made to regulate traffic load in commercial areas of the city, said Chief Traffic Officer, Rawalpindi Syed Ali Akbar. He said traffic squads were deployed at all main intersections of the city whereas a helpline was also set up at Racecourse traffic office with deployment of special squad. The helpline was working 24-hour and providing help and assistance to the citizens, he added. He said the Rawalpindi Traffic Police were striving hard and making effective measures to control one-wheeling and violation of other traffic rules. The CTO said special arrangements were made to control the traffic jams so that the citizens could easily reach at their destinations within shortest possible time.

Majority going for ready to wear clothes

DNA
 ISLAMABAD: Since opening of the markets after ease in the lockdown, majority of the customers are thronging the garments shops to buy ready to wear clothes after refusal of tailors to stitch clothes owing to the heavy workload. A number of customers visited the tailors in twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad soon after opening of their shops to get their clothes stitched before Eid-ul-Fitr. However, they faced refusal from the already over-burdened tailors who have stopped taking more orders due to the limited time before Eid and short working hours.

Women throng markets for Eid shopping

DNA
 ISLAMABAD: large number of women on Tuesday throng federal capital markets for Eid shopping, as Eid approaching fast. After relaxation in COVID-19 lockdown, although some people were still managing to order online shopping and avoid to go out in markets amid risk of coronavirus pandemic. Number of online websites of different brands are offering a variety of accessories to facilitate customers Naila Yasmeen, a housewife said, "I have made online orders of clothes for me and my family to avoid going out in markets amid risk of COVID-19. "The shops at various markets have adopted SOPs to prevent the spread of coronavirus," said Amina Ansari while talking to APP. Saifur Rehman, a retailer said that it was essential to adopt set SOPs in current situation, adding that they are aware of government's efforts to contain further spread of coronavirus. He said that government had relaxed the lockdown to provide an opportunity to the people to make shopping for Eid, but the customers' health should be our priority.

83 virus testing labs are functional: Chairman NDMA

DNA
 ISLAMABAD: Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Lieutenant General Muhammad Afzal Tuesday said that NDMA was providing the medical equipment to the provinces equally, more than 4,200 ventilators and 83 testing laboratories were made functional. Talking to a private news channel, NDMA chairman explained that there were total 4,200 ventilators in the country, and 109 of them were for coronavirus patients only, adding, we have equipped our country hospitals and coronavirus centers to provide best treatment facilities to our patients. He also said that the relief organisation has around 500 ventilators in its warehouse which are a strategic reserve and will be handed over to provinces as per their needs. The NDMA chairman said that the government is not limiting itself to procuring ventilators, but is also taking measures to equip its doctors to use them where government will also launching online training for doctors, paramedical staff and support medical staff at every district level on how to use a ventilator, and treat and care for patients who are on ventilator. He said there was a shortage of ventilators in the international market, however, the number of ventilators was not currently an issue in Pakistan.

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Relief budget

THE upcoming budget-making exercise is going to be a major challenge for both the federal and provincial governments. Though the government is reported to be working on a relief-oriented budget, with duty cuts on imported raw items and reduction in other regulatory duties, it remains to be seen how much it can turn around the traditional budget-making which has almost never been people-friendly. The proposed duty reduction is supposed to help in economic revival in the aftermath of Covid-19. A major issue for the government right now is to convince the IMF to revise the tax collection target downwards to Rs4.8 trillion. In all likelihood this is going to be the worst year in Pakistan history in terms of economic activity, industrial production, and in tax collection. In the past seven decades it will be the first time that the GP growth rate will plunge into the negative. Even during the years that were affected by wars, Pakistan managed to show at least some positive growth. This unprecedented economic decline which is essentially the result of the past two years of bad macroeconomic policies and fiscal mismanagement – compounded by Covid-19 – calls for a fundamental rethink in the way the government has been handling the economy. Since 2018, the primary objective of this government has been to reduce imports, and now suddenly there will be yet another U-turn if major reductions in customs and regulatory duties are allowed. Though these reductions will reportedly apply to only raw material and intermediary goods, these duty cuts will have a far-reaching impact on the national exchequer in the upcoming financial year. Of course it is the government's prerogative to regulate duties as it deems appropriate, but more than this what the people would like to hear about is how relief-oriented the budget will be. We can take a clue or two from the Sindh government that has clearly announced that the provincial budget this year will use a new strategy under which priorities will be given to health services, employment generation, social security, and innovation in the education sector. Some of the problems that both the federal and provincial governments are facing include increase in expenditures due to the coronavirus emergency and a decrease in government revenues. This will further aggravate with a decline in exports and unemployment which will result in loss of purchasing power. These problems cannot be addressed unless a new strategy is developed, and to date the federal government has not been able to announce any new strategy apart from standalone measures such as duty cuts. These are not normal times and if the usual old patterns of budget-making are followed, they will not deliver anything new. It is the responsibility of both federal and provincial governments to not only fight the pandemic but also restore economic stability that was there before 2018.

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Helping labour

THE decision by the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) to provide cash assistance to the labourers whose livelihoods have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, is timely. The prime minister had earlier announced that the government would use the amount collected through the PM's Covid-19 Relief Fund 2020 to assist the labour force. The one-time assistance of Rs12, 000 will be made through the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) whose payment mechanism will be used for eligible applicants. In addition to the four provinces of the country, AJK, Gilgit-Baltistan, and ICT will have their allocated quota in the Ehsaas labour assistance per their population share. The total amount for this purpose is reported to be Rs75 billion in emergency cash package. The details of the disbursement are being worked out by the Finance Division and BISP, but so far the most disturbing part is that the applications will be received only through Ehsaas Labour portal for inclusion of beneficiaries. This is confusing, as on the one side the government is saying that cash disbursements will be made through the existing payment mechanism of BISP, and on the other it is asking deserving people to get registered on the Prime Minister Office website. The prime minister's special assistant, Sania Nishtar, has announced that around 34, 000 applications have already been received and the disbursement will start in the coming week. This highly centralized nature of the entire mechanism is not at all labour-friendly, neither is it likely to facilitate the illiterate and the poor who are the worst affected lot at the moment. This is people's money and it must be disbursed with care and with the involvement of provincial and local governments who are the best places to collect applications, scrutinize and verify them and then disburse the amount. Ideally, if the BISP mechanism is already in place with up-to-date data sets of all the deserving people in the country, this new requirement of online registration is bizarre. If the government has decided to disburse Rs75 billion, it should either use the BISP mechanism without any new requirement of online registration, or the amount should be handed over to provincial governments so that they can manage its disbursement in a decentralized manner. The illiteracy rate among the labour force in Pakistan is between 70 and 80 percent. The percentage of labour force with a smartphone, with enough credit in their phone and with uninterrupted connectivity and who are able to fill out online forms, is anybody's guess. There must be a better system for all this.

Pakistan-China relations: new heights and prospects

Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani



The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 opened a new chapter of consultation and collaboration between China and Pakistan. The two countries were in total agreement that the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan posed a great threat to the security of the entire region and prepared to co-ordinate their policies to face the challenge. Support to Pakistan's security was the major feature of China's Afghan policy because they wanted to honour their often repeated commitments. Regarding recent developments in Afghanistan, China and Pakistan have a close understanding of each other's point of view

China had shown to the world its ability to deal with the challenge and set an example for other countries, which were facing the corona virus outbreak.

In the early years of establishment of the Sino-Pakistan diplomatic relations, Pakistan remained inactive as it was an ally of the West. The period between 1957 and 1969 witnessed an important phase in the history of the Sino-Pakistan relations. During this period, historical changes took place in bilateral relations, which changed the lukewarm attitude of Pakistan. This gesture opened a new chapter in the relationship and in the 1970s; steady developments were made to strengthen friendly cooperation between the two governments and their people. Since 1990, drastic changes have taken place on the international horizon; however, China and Pakistan has further developed. The success & strengthening of these relationship also remembered the important role started from His Excellency Mr. Han Nian Long first Chinese Ambassador who served from 1951-54 till to Widely respected & friendly Ambassador Yao Jing who assumed the office in November 2017 likewise Pakistan first Ambassador H. E. Maj. Gen. Nawabzada Agha Muhammad Raza from 1951 to 1954 till our present Ambassador Naghmana Hashmi Sahiba who took the office in 2019 while She also served as DCM in China from 2003-2007. She is doing a great to further strengthen this relationship & explore more avenues which is really need of the hour. The Sino-Pakistan both plays a central role in Asia's geopolitics, from India's rise to the prospects for a post-American Afghanistan, from the threat of nuclear terrorism to the continent's new map of mines, ports and pipelines. China is Pakistan's great economic hope and its most trusted military partner. Pakistan lies at the heart of China's geostrategic ambitions, from its take-off as a global naval power to its grand plans for a new silk road connecting the energy fields of the Middle East and the markets of Europe to the mega-cities of East Asia. China and Pakistan have witnessed steady growth in mutual investments in recent years. In the last few years, China invested more than USD..... billion in Pakistan. A large number of Chinese companies are presently working in Pakistan in different sectors. Chinese goods are very much in demand in the Pakistani markets. Their experience of growth in trade is positive due to convenient trade flows and openness measures. China has become one of the top five import sources of Pakistan. Bilateral trade had reached around USD..... billion in 20' 18 and is on the rise. The balance, however, is in favour of China due to lesser exports by Pakistan.

Tensions between the US and Pakistan over the presence of Osama bin Laden in Pakistan, and a speedy US withdrawal from Afghanistan are likely to reinforce Sino-Pak ties. China is the only country that has taken a supportive stand for Pakistan after the Bin Laden operation. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 opened a new chapter of consultation and collaboration between China and Pakistan. The two countries were in total agreement that the Soviet military

operations in Afghanistan, China and Pakistan have a close understanding of each other's point of view.

In the recent past, a 100-member youth delegation of Pakistan visited China for a week long visit. Chinese Government also regularly inviting youth & young people from various walks of life from Pakistan to visit China as a response, the Pakistani government also invited Chinese youths to Pakistan. Being launched in 2007, the youth exchange program is aimed at increasing mutual understanding between the people of the two countries.

There are many opportunities of collaboration between the two countries in the realm of higher education. The largest number of students of Pakistan are now studying in Pakistan. There is close cooperation between the Universities of China and Pakistan. High level delegations are reciprocally exchange visits. Recently a seminar on, "Pakistan and China Relations" was organized by China Study Centre University of Peshawar in July 2019. A delegation from China Embassy Islamabad under the leadership of Ms Bao Zhang, Director General Political & Media Affairs participated in the seminar.

Ms Bao Zhang while speaking said that China and Pakistan relations are higher than mountains, deeper than oceans and sweeter than honey. Pakistan and China are iron brothers. Pakistan and China relations became stronger when President Xi Jinping visited Pakistan in 2015. Pakistan supported China on many global and regional issues and appreciated the completion of early harvest projects of CPEC and optimistically underlined that the second phase of CPEC will boost industrialization in Pakistan. She also highlighted the important role of the business community in the economic development of the country. Ms Bao said that China has helped Pakistan to overcome its energy problem and recently it has also helped Pakistan in addressing the problem of forex reserves. Prof Dr Zahid Anwar, Director, China Study Centre, University of Peshawar said that came into existence, recently with the support of China Embassy Islamabad. The China Study Centre (CSC) endeavours to enrich understanding between China and Pakistan through research, learning, institutional linkages, and people to people contacts.

This is high time to properly utilize the services of various groups of Friends of China in Pakistan. In order to increase awareness for this friendly relationship among the youth of both countries, the vital role played by Pakistan-China Friendship Association, Listeners of Urdu Services from China Radio and the Urdu Department of Peking University must be appreciated for their result oriented efforts and to use these informal channels for further awareness.

As a part of 70th Anniversary of Founding of the People's Republic of China last year 2019, the Pakistan-China Friendship Association – Khyber Chapter & Radio China Listener's Club (a group of listeners of Urdu Service from CRI) organized many specially focused events to highlight the importance of the occasion, The Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing along with Mr. Chen Xian-Director Pakistan CRI donated books

great alma mater of North of Pakistan is evident from the fact that he has visited several times to this institution since he has taken charge of the office. Ambassador visited the Institute of Peace & Conflict Studies and had a fruitful interaction with research students and galaxy of experts on Afghan affairs to share views on the Afghan peace process and regional integration. The Mass Media's dynamic role Strengthening the Pak-China Relations & further understanding among the peoples of both countries can not be over looked and with each passing day their role become more and more vital like Urdu Service from China Radio International since August 1955 and recently successfully launching of FM 98-Dosti Channel with the cooperation of Radio Pakistan First in Islamabad, later Lahore & Karachi successfully improving the noble cause of this exemplary relations and as mentioned by Director CRI & FM-98 Dosti Mr. Chen with Urdu name Shaheen, proudly mentioned that FM-98 Dosti networks day by day increase across the country shows height of people to people heart to heart relationship. Director Urdu Service Section, China Radio International (CRI) Madam Zhao Qiao (Mahvesh –Urdu name) while speaking termed mass media a key player in widely spreading the message of BRI and CPEC's. Ms Zhao Qiao said, Media significantly contributed in highlighting benefits of BRI and CPEC to regional countries and clearing the misconceptions about the vision. Mass Media informed people that through BRI's economic cooperation and communication skills, Chinese leaders are determined to share their fruits of prosperity with regional countries. Director CRI Pakistan, Chen Xiang apprised that via FM 98 Dosti Radio Channel in Islamabad, Lahore, and Karachi and Beijing's Urdu Service in China have built a liaison to interact with the local community. Like wise print media and official news agencies of both Pakistan & China are doing great and updating their peoples about latest specially in recent past in COVID 19 all of them play their role in the best interest of masses which great appreciated. Recently, the government of China had also established China Media Group (CMG) headed by senior leader Mr. Shen Haixiong as First President of CMG, to provide in time and accurate information to the masses across the world. China Media Group would comprise the CCTV, China National Radio and China Radio International.

There is a lot of potential for trade between Pakistan and China. In the present geo-political and geo-strategic dynamics, Pakistan and China need each other more than ever. The economic ties between China and Pakistan need to be strengthened on a war footing and beyond rhetoric. We need to identify areas of priority, where mutual growth can take effect efficiently.

For example, China can practically guide Pakistan in increasing its economic growth rates just as it has doubled its GDP in a record 10 years, while it took USA almost 50 years, to achieve the same growth rate. It can provide technical assistance to Pakistan in policy and planning. Furthermore, there should be a free and facilitated exchange of business persons between the two countries. Pakistani companies should be encouraged to develop joint ventures with multinational Chinese countries, which would help penetrate the Chinese market as well as the global market. These joint ventures will also help in transfer of technology, management skills and improve innovation in products and services. China has vast and valuable experience in development of its agricultural sector. Pakistan can achieve monumental strides in development of its agricultural sector by following successful Chinese methodologies. Another very important area for cooperation from China is the education sector. Pakistan has a very high section of its population in the 15-24 age category, and the overall literacy rates are not very encouraging. China and Pakistan can form 'sister universities' for the promotion of education and research. China can offer some seats in its universities for deserving students and Pakistan can facilitate Chinese students likewise. Finally, China's influence as a growing economic power, can wield substantive support to Pakistan in the decisions of the international financial institutions. Such support can go a long way in helping Pakistan fight its way out of its financial distress, and in getting the desired foreign investment.

(The writer a Media Consultant, the President of Radio China Listener's Club & Secretary-General Pakistan-China Friendship Association Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. President, Radio China Listener's Club. His email is syeed.gilani@gmail.com)



presence in Afghanistan posed a great threat to the security of the entire region and prepared to co-ordinate their policies to face the challenge. Support to Pakistan's security was the major feature of China's Afghan policy because they wanted to honour their often repeated commitments. Regarding recent devel-

to the Central Libray UoP in on behalf of the CRI. The book donation has led to the establishment of a Chinese Corner.. On daily basis hundreds of student come and take benefit from these books and get to know about the time tested relations that both the countries enjoy. The love of Amb. Yao Jing for this

Briefs

Russian PM back to work

MOSCOW: Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin is returning to work after fighting off the coronavirus, the Kremlin said Tuesday. President Vladimir Putin signed a decree ordering Mishustin to resume his regular duties, which had been carried out by a deputy since April 30 while the 54-year-old prime minister was receiving medical treatment. Mishustin, who was appointed by Putin in a surprise move earlier this year, stayed in hospital but still participated in government meetings, appearing behind a desk in a suit. Putin had decreed that deputy prime minister Andrei Belousov take over his duties after Mishustin told Putin his test came back positive. — APP

'New drug can stop pandemic sans vaccine'

BEIJING: A Chinese laboratory has been developing a drug it believes has the power to bring the coronavirus pandemic to a halt. The outbreak first emerged in China late last year before spreading across the world, prompting an international race to find treatments and vaccines. A drug being tested by scientists at China's prestigious Peking University could not only shorten the recovery time for those infected, but even offer short-term immunity from the virus, researchers say. Sunney Xie, director of the university's Beijing Advanced Innovation Center for Genomics, told AFP that the drug has been successful at the animal testing stage. "When we injected neutralising antibodies into infected mice, after five days the viral load was reduced by a factor of 2,500," said Xie. "That means this potential drug has (a) therapeutic effect." — APP

UK virus toll over 40,000

LONDON: Britain's official coronavirus death toll is now over 40,000 with almost 10,000 dead in care homes in England and Wales alone, according to a statistical update released on Tuesday. Some 40,902 deaths from coronavirus were registered by May 8, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), meaning the true toll will be even higher when deaths registered over the last 10 days are taken into account. The ONS figures include deaths where COVID-19 is suspected or mentioned on the death certificate. The government's official rolling tally, which was 34,796 as of Monday, is lower because it only records deaths after positive tests. Either way, Britain is the worst-hit country in Europe, and the government has been criticised heavily for its response to the outbreak. — APP

ADB allocates US\$1.36 million grant for Uzbekistan's fight against COVID-19

The Government of Uzbekistan has reacted rapidly and decisively to deploy and mobilize resources to manage the spread of COVID-19," said ADB Country Director for Uzbekistan Cindy Malvicini. "At a time when the magnitude and rapid transmission of the disease has left governments and health care workers around the world scrambling for personal protective equipment, we stand ready to support Uzbekistan's needs—particularly as it builds up capacity in its health care system

DNA

TASHKENT (UZBEKISTAN): The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has allocated a US\$1.36 million grant for Uzbekistan to procure medical equipment and supplies to support the country's efforts to combat the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The grant will be used to procure personal protective equipment for health care workers and other medical supplies that will help to rapidly build up the capacity of the country's health

care system. The grant is drawn from a previously approved technical assistance—Regional Support to Address the Outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 and Potential Outbreaks of Other Communicable Diseases—and adds to an initial US \$200,000 in technical assistance allocated to Uzbekistan to acquire medical supplies in March 2020. A further US \$19.5 million in loan savings from existing ADB projects has been reallocated to enable Uzbekistan to procure 800 ventilators. "The Government of Uzbekistan has reacted rapidly and decisively to deploy

and mobilize resources to manage the spread of COVID-19," said ADB Country Director for Uzbekistan Cindy Malvicini. "At a time when the magnitude and rapid transmission of the disease has left governments and health care workers around the world scrambling for personal protective equipment, we stand ready to support Uzbekistan's needs—particularly as it builds up capacity in its health care system." ADB is working with the government and other development partners to mobilize additional resources to further strengthen Uzbekistan's health

care systems. It is also preparing countercyclical support and policy advice to help mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic. On 1 April, ADB President Masatsugu Asakawa and Uzbekistan's Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade, and ADB Governor Sardor Umurzakov discussed how ADB can support Uzbekistan in its fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. On 13 April, ADB tripled to US \$20 billion its initial package to address the immediate needs of its developing

member countries, including Uzbekistan, as they respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. ADB also approved measures to streamline its operations for quicker and more flexible delivery of assistance. The \$20 billion package includes about US \$2.5 billion in concessional and grant resources. Visit ADB's website to learn more about our ongoing response. ADB is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty. Established in 1966, it is owned by 68 members—49 from the region.

Two thalassemia patients die due to non provision of blood



MUHAMMAD TAHIR

FAISALABAD: Two innocent children suffering from the disease of Thalassemia died in Faisalabad due to non provision of blood. People were donating blood to innocent children because of the

epidemic of Faisalabad but now because of coronovirus people have stopped donating blood. They are now reluctant to donate blood due to which the lives of innocent children are at stake. Two children have died due to non provision of blood include 13-year-old Khadija son of Muhammad

Sarfraz Faisalabad resident and 10-year-old Mudassar son of Munir Ahmed who was a resident of Chak No. 68 JB. The mother of the dying child said that my baby needed blood every fortnight. When I saw a shortage of blood, I donated my blood, but doctors refused to take my blood. My baby died in front of my eyes she moaned. Ali Zeb Foundation Coordinator Madam Saima Siddique said that there are about 3,000 registered patients in Faisalabad. There has been a 50% reduction in blood donations in view of the Karna epidemic by blood donors, about 100 sick children in Faisalabad who need blood every 15 to 20 days. Donations from blood donors have declined in the wake of the Corona epidemic. In these circumstances, donate blood to donors, taking all precautionary measures to save the lives of Children.

Durrani, Rukhsana's son on NAB radar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) authorised filing reference against foreign ministry officials, investigations against Akram Khan Durrani and son of Rukhsana Bangash for inflicting huge losses to national exchequer by abusing their authority. The Executive Board Meeting (EBM) of NAB, chaired by Chairman Justice (Retd) Javed Iqbal authorised filing a reference, conducting five inquiries, an investigation, a complaint verification and referring back the ongoing inquiry being conducted against the officials of FBR to NAB, Rawalpindi for further perusal.

Akmal appeals against ban

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board said on Tuesday that banned test cricketer, Umar Akmal has appealed against his three years ban imposed by PCB's independent disciplinary panel. Justice (retired) Fazal-e-Miran Chauhan, the panel's chairman, has imposed a ban of three years for each of the two charges of violating the PCB Anti-Corruption Code, which will be deemed to have come into effect from the date of Umar's suspension on February 20, 2020. Both periods of ineligibility will run concurrently. — APP

Pak student passes online thesis

DNA

WUHAN (China): Pakistani student Faheem has qualified his Ph.D. thesis defense online, and become the first international student that has went through his higher studies from China University of Geosciences (CUG) in 2020. According to China Economic Net, Faheem was a doctoral candidate at the School of Environmental Studies of CUG. He has been studying in Wuhan since 2017. He returned to Pakistan for the winter vacation at the beginning of 2020. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Faheem had to stay at home and wrote his thesis under the remote guidance of his supervisors in China, Faheem has completed on



time his research article for graduation purpose. Then, he was worried about the Ph.D. thesis defense. Fortunately, CUG rolled out a customized policy in a timely manner which allowed the students to make online thesis defense. Faheem has finally succeeded in completing his thesis defense via a video conference call. "I was very happy when I got the good news that I had successfully passed my Ph.D. thesis defense. I am very grateful for the school's online defense policy for graduates during this special period so that we can graduate as scheduled," said Faheem.

PAF welcomes Sindh HC orders

ISLAMABAD: Directorate of Estate Projects, Air Headquarters, Pakistan Air Force has welcomed the orders passed by High Court of Sindh for commencement of immediate refund to the affectees of Fazaia Housing Scheme, Karachi as per its insistence and persistent efforts. Throughout the process, the Directorate of Estate Projects, Air Headquarters, PAF has made substantial efforts in securing the interest of Fazaia Housing Scheme. — DNA

Pak students welcome letter from Xi Jinping

DNA

BEIJING: Pakistani students studying in China rejoiced with the response letter from Chinese President Xi Jinping, stating that it motivated them to contribute more in promoting Sino-Pak friendship. Fifty two Pakistani students who study in University of Science and Technology Beijing (USTB), including Masters and Doctoral students, had written a letter to Chinese President Xi Jinping last month. According to China Economic Net (CEN), last

Sunday, Xi replied to this letter, encouraging them to communicate more with their Chinese peers. In his letter, the President said, learning that the students have enriched their knowledge and made quite a few Chinese friends while studying in China, Xi said he felt happy for the achievements they have made. Pakistani students of USTB told CEN and the Economic Daily that they are so glad and excited to receive president Xi's reply. Ali, an Information and Communication doctoral student of USTB, said that dating to February, they had an idea on writing letter to president Xi. The cooperation between Pakistan and China on fighting against COVID-19 has shocked them. Ali said, "strengthening the friendship between Pakistan and China is our responsibility." Since the beginning of setting up this idea, Pakistani students of USTB have participated to write the joint letter enthusiastically. "We heard that there was an idea to write a letter to president Xi, we were so excited. Most of us immediately decided to take part in such a good thing.

No new tax in budget: Hafeez

NEHAL MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance, Dr. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh says the government would not introduce any new tax in the upcoming budget to facilitate the industrial sector. Talking to a private news channel, he said the government would have to do work hard in coming days to reduce the budget

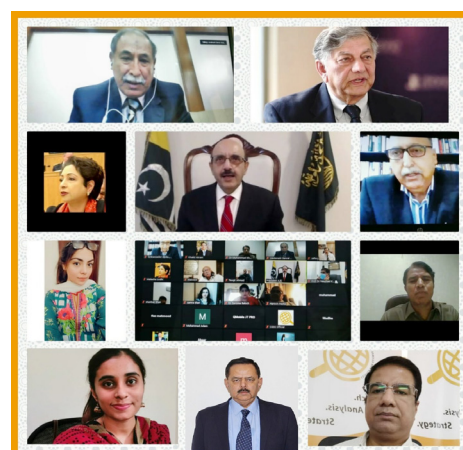
deficit to nine percent. He said the negative impact of coronavirus was also affecting our national economy like other countries and the government is trying to reduce its expenditures by adopting austerity measures. He said basic objective of the government is to provide relief to the people in the next budget and duties going to be decreased on many things in the budget.

Predictions regarding Indian aggression in Kashmir have become true: Masood

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Masood Khan - President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir stated on Tuesday that predictions regarding Indian aggression have become true. India has introduced a law that enables the non-nativest to reside in Kashmir. This law gives them permission and further facilitates the non-natives in acquiring permanent residence in Kashmir. He expressed these views during a seminar organized by Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS) on the topic, "Latest Situation in Kashmir Vis-Vis Indian Policies". This Webinar was organized to examine the prevailing situation in Kashmir while analyzing the Indian strategies and what can be the possible policy options for Pakistan. According to our calculations, around 2 million Hindus will be settling in Kashmir in the first wave. In this way, Kashmir will be turned into a Hindu sate and Muslim majority will be reduced. Kashmir is under a triple lockdown. The 5th August act is a siege and its purpose is to kill people. India has violated the ceasefire at the LOC a number of times while targeting the civilians, which has caused damage to the infrastructure also. Crimes that are being committed

there can be listed as crimes against humanity, genocide war crimes and ethnic cleansing. So the International Community of the multilateral institutions are directly relevant here. Therefore, we must engage them because this lack of engagement is making India prevalent. Lieutenant General Khalid Maqbool HI(M), (Retd) - Former Governor of Punjab shared valuable insight regarding latest situation on the LOC and possibility of a military conflict. He stated that the grand strategy of India is to destabilize Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. We can expect increased activities on the Line of Control through ceasefire violations in which our civilian population would be primarily targeted. Dr. Maleeha Lodhi, HI - Former Pakistan Representative to UN stated that the pandemic has given an opportunity to the Indian Government to further intensify the repression and take even more draconian steps at a time when the world is preoccupied by fighting COVID-19. At this time, countries and human rights organizations are distracted and the media attention is fixed particularly on the health crisis. Facing a health emergency with hands tied and lips sealed each one of us can now directly feel some of the pain of a lockdown as we ourselves have been practicing some degree of social isolation. The International Community has a responsibility



to address this dire situation but Pakistan holds the major responsibility. The Kashmiri's look to us and we cannot let them down. Our policy has to be consistent need consistency in our diplomatic circle. Kashmir today lives in a state of multiple deprivations since last many years that has taken away their fundamental liberties and prevented them from exercising their right to self-determination. Ambassador Riaz Khokhar - Former Ambassador of Pakistan to India stated that Kashmiri's must be saluted, they have made enormous sacrifices. Modi is committed to a policy on which they may

not have a national consensus but this incremental genocide policy is being supported by the majority. Ambassador Abdul Basit - Former High Commissioner of Pakistan to India stated that Hindutva is nothing new. We need to pursue a consistent policy on Kashmir as it has cost us and the Kashmiri's to a large extent. Kashmiri's are determined and have never given up and will continue to do so. Pakistan requires coherent efforts and come up with a consolidated Kashmir policy. In this pandemic, India is taking advantage by pursuing illegal policies aimed at targeting the right of self-determination of Kashmiri's. The point is how Pakistan should be countering these Indian policies and need clarity in this regard. Dr Muhammad Khan - Professor, Department of Politics and IR, International Islamic University stated that Pakistan has been frequently warning International Community about India's False Flag Operations in Jammu and Kashmir. In 21st century, India conducted small and large scale false flag operations against Pakistan. The broader objective of India with regard to these false flag operations was to malign the image of Pakistan, both regionally and globally. There is a specific objective pertaining to each false flag operation, but different depending upon situation in the design of this the broad objective.