



# Islamabad POST

Friday, May 29, 2020

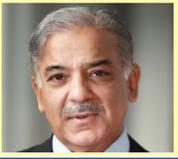
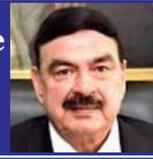
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**Azerbaijan-Pakistan friendship time-tested, says Ali Alizada**

**Imran taking wise decisions, says Sheikh Rasheed**

**Shehbaz lauds Nawaz Sharif leadership**



## Briefs

**Senate session on June 5**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The President has summoned the session of the Senate in the Parliament building here on Friday, June 5, 2020 at 10 a.m. According to a Senate Secretariat notification, the President called the session in exercise of the powers conferred by clause (1) of article 54 of the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

**RCCI pin high hopes on budget**

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has welcomed the release of refunds by the FBR. RCCI President Saboor Malik in a statement said that the refunds would help in retaining jobs and meet the liquidity shortages. He hoped that those who have not yet been given sales tax and income tax refunds would also be released soon. While referring to RCCI's delegation meeting with Chairperson FBR Nosheen Javed Amjad, he said that we shared the proposal document where all points were discussed in detail with the Chairperson.

**KP's first death of journalist**

DNA

PESHAWAR: A journalist passed away from COVID-19 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, confirmed Health Department's Focal Person on Coronavirus Zain Raza on Thursday. He was a senior journalist on 92 News. He had been undergoing treatment for the virus in Peshawar's Hayatabad Medical Complex.

## PM Imran says

# Plane crash report to be made public

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday said all facts about the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) plane crash in Karachi would be made public. Chairing a high-level meeting, he directed the authorities concerned to do their best for a thorough probe into the incident and also ordered making public the inquiry reports of all the plane crash incidents occurred in the past so that the people could know facts about them. The prime minister also directed for provision of all possible facilities and compensation to the fam-

ilies of martyrs, besides preparing a compensation package for all those whose houses or assets were damaged due to the crash. Imran Khan said for making the air travel safe, the process of reforms in the Civil Aviation Authority, PIA, related departments and the things related to air travel should be fast-tracked. The prime minister was given a detailed briefing about the plane crash investigations, and hiring the services of local and foreign experts for the purpose. Expressing deep grief over the loss of precious human lives in the plane crash incident and sympathy with their bereaved

families, he said it was a great tragedy for the nation on the occasion of Eid ul Fitr. He said there was no substitute to a human life, however, the government shared the grief of the affected families, assuring that all the requirements of justice would be fulfilled. The meeting was attended by Minister for Aviation Ghulam Sarwar Khan, Information Minister Shibli Faraz, Special Assistant to the PM on Information Lt. Gen.(ret) Asim Saleem Bajwa, Special Assistant Dr Shahbaz Gill, Secretary Aviation Division Hassan Nasir Jami, PIA Chief Executive Officer Air Marshal Arshad Mahmood Malik and senior officials.



PESHAWAR: German NGO GIZ distributing ration among needy Afghan refugees. -DNA

## Place crash: Cockpit voice recorder recovered

PIA spokesperson said the recorder had been handed over to the team investigating the incident

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: The cockpit voice recorder from the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flight PK-8303 plane crash incident in Karachi on May 22 has finally been recovered, a spokesperson for the airline confirmed today. The cockpit voice recorder was recovered from the rubble in the residential area where the plane crashed. The equipment will greatly help the inves-

tigation and will provide important clues about what happened in the moments preceding the crash. The PIA spokesperson said the recorder had been handed over to the team investigating the incident. A day earlier, the process of removing the wreckage of the plane that crashed last week in the metropolis' Model Colony started, with the exception of the airliner's engine, landing gear, and avionics. Removal of the wreckage

commenced after permission from the Airbus investigation team that had arrived in Karachi on Tuesday. The experts have collected crucial evidence from the crash site as well. Trawlers, heavy machinery, and various other vehicles were being used to move the pieces - including its cabin and tail - of the crashed plane; however, its engine, landing gear, and avionics were left behind until the Airbus' team of experts completed their work.

## Shehbaz lauds Nawaz's 'decisive' leadership

DNA

LAHORE: In his message on the occasion of Youm-e-Takbeer, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) president and Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif said former premier Nawaz Sharif displayed "decisive" leadership and made the country's

defence invincible. "Youm-e-Takbeer: A day when Pakistan emerged as first nuclear power in Islamic world. In the face of threats, intimidation & inducements, PM Nawaz Sharif displayed decisive leadership & made the country's defence invincible," he tweeted. "This was a decisive period for our national survival, security and future."

## Virus death toll in Europe 175,000

PARIS: The coronavirus death toll in Europe crossed 175,000 on Thursday, according to an AFP tally from official sources at 08h10 GMT. With 175,011 dead from 2,084,058 cases, Europe has suffered more than other continents from COVID-19 infections. Britain has registered 37,460 dead, Italy 33,072, France 28,596 and Spain 27,118. The global number of fatalities has reached at least 355,548. - APP

## Bilawal warns against locust attack

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has urged the federal government to take steps to check the imminent attack of locust swarms in Sindh and other provinces as clouds of locusts have landed in different parts and are destroying the standing agriculture crops and fruits. In a statement issued here, Bilawal said that he had repeatedly warned the central government about the threat of locust attack posed to economy. - APP

## REKODIC MINES PAYMENT CASE

# Pakistan, TCC reach an accord

Payment schedule for the settled amount is quite stringent and Pakistan may have to pay USD 3 billion within a year

NEHAL MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has reached agreement with Tethyan Copper Company over its dispute of the lease of Rekodic mines by agreeing to pay half the amount that was originally awarded to company by The International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) of World Bank. Sources claimed that the

out of court negotiations with TCC continues for almost a year but this was kept out public view so that things could move smoothly. The original award was for USD 6 billion that if forced to pay would have damaged Pakistan's economy for many years to come. The dispute between TCC and Pakistan started when in 2011 Pakistan refused to grant mining lease to TCC, citing various irreg-

ularities in the original award to BHP that later joined hands with Antofagasta to form TCC. Our sources however claim that the payment schedule for the settled amount is quite stringent and Pakistan may have to pay USD 3 billion within a year. To further ease this pressure the negotiators from the government are trying to find a middle way with TCC.

## President for media role

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi on Thursday urged the media to play its role in promoting nation building and societal norms and values. He stated this during a meeting with Federal Minister for Information & Broadcasting, Syed Shibli Faraz, and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information & Broadcasting, Lt Gen (R) Asim Saleem Bajwa, who called on him at Aiwane-Sadr.



The President stated that the media had greater contribution in creating awareness among the people and it required to focus on educating the people about various social issues like health, education and particularly women's rights to inheritance.

## 'Nawaz was against N. tests'

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Information Minister Fayyaz-ul-Hassan Chohan has claimed that former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was not in favor of conducting nuclear tests. According to details, Fayyaz-ul-Hassan has claimed that Nawaz Sharif was willing to get monetary benefits from world powers in exchange of not conducting the tests. He further said that Nawaz Sharif's foreign minister Gohar Ayub, in his book, has said that Nawaz Sharif was against nuclear tests.

## Uzbek President briefed about tourism projects

Hotels will be given subsidies in the amount of 10 percent of the cost of the services they provide. In addition, they will subsidize up to 10 percent of payments on loans allocated to working capital

DNA

TASHKENT: President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev got acquainted with the presentation of projects in the fields of tourism and the privatization of state assets. The coronavirus pandemic negatively affected the tourism industry. According to the forecast of the World Tourism Organization, by the end of 2020, international tourist trips will be reduced by 89 percent, 74 million jobs will be reduced, and the total losses in the industry will amount to US\$800 billion. As you know, from 16 March, our country is closed to foreign and local tourists. As a result,

more than 1.5 thousand tour operators and 1.2 thousand hotels have suspended their activities. This seriously affected the income of more than 250 thousand people, including guides, artisans, workers of architectural monuments and spa facilities, catering facilities, transport and others. To mitigate the effects of the pandemic, a number of preferences were also provided to the tourism industry. In particular, 1,750 entities were granted privileges on property tax, land and social taxes in the amount of about 60 billion soums. But these benefits and preferences are temporary. For continuous sustainable development, it is necessary to learn how to work



in a pandemic. In this regard, foreign experience has been studied. A system of sanitary and epidemiological safety for tourists "Uzbekistan. Safe travel guaranteed". The head of state reviewed the presentation of this project. Information is also provided on

plans for the restoration and development of domestic tourism. The President emphasized that for starters it is necessary to allow domestic tourism between regions with a green status. Instructions are given for organizing recreation centers in mountainous areas and on the coast of lakes using lightweight structures. Together with the khokims, the deployment of recreation centers will be determined, the relevant data will be posted on the electronic portal. At the second stage, it is necessary to create a list of countries with a stable situation on coronavirus and gradually restore tourist relations with them, the meeting indicated. To resume tourism, first of all,

there must be a clear answer to a number of fundamental questions. For example, how hotels will work, how will they receive tourists at the airport, how to organize their movement within the country? Defined rules should be simple and at the same time sufficient to prevent the disease. It is necessary to develop a system that does not require quarantine of the entire hotel due to one infection, said Shavkat Mirziyoyev. Tourism entrepreneurs who have suffered losses due to the pandemic are unlikely to cover them in the next 1-2 years. In this regard, the President emphasized the need to provide additional benefits and preferences for this industry.

## Rain alert for KPK

DNA

PESHAWAR: Provincial Disaster Management Authority, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has issued an alert about thunderstorm rains in different areas of the province from Thursday to Tuesday. The alert, addressed to all district administrations in the province, has advised to remain alert in view of a forecast of Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) about heavy rainfall with thunderstorm. The administration officials have also been advised to take all precautionary measures in order to avoid losses and damage to property.

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## Briefs

### Five killed in various incidents

DNA

ATTOCK: Five people were killed in different incidents in attack.

In the first incident, two cousins who came to their relatives' home drowned in a mini dam in Dhoke Seelu in the limits of Fatehjang police station. The dead were identified as 9 years old Naqeeb and 10 years old Amir Khan.

Local divers retrieved the bodies and handed over to their heirs for burial.

Meanwhile, 14 year old Zain who along with his other family members had come from Peshawar to with his relatives drowned in Akhori dam in the limits of Attock Saddar police station.

Later, his body was flushed out by local volunteers.

In another incident, a man was shot dead while his other relative was injured when two groups attacked each other over a trivial issue in Malhu village in limits of Hazro police station.

In the same police station's limits, a motorcyclist died when he lost control due to over speeding on GT road near Hattain.

Police registered separate cases and started further investigation.

### QAU Alumni establishes blood donors network

ISLAMABAD: A team member of Quad-e-Azam University (QAU) Alumni Association has established a countrywide network of blood donors and supporters. Malik Muhammad Irfan is an active member of the Core Committee of QAU Alumni who along with his dedicated team has established the network.

The network is known as Blood Donors Forum Pakistan, which has its chapters now opened and functioning in 34 cities, said a press release on Wednesday. QAU Alumni Association really appreciates this noble initiative and offers every possible support and cooperation for it.

The Quaidians are requested to support this mission and save human lives, the Association said. The QAU Alumni members can send messages through WhatsApp message at 03335325845 for any assistance, coordination or further expansion of the network. — APP

### NDMA teams conducting locust operation

ISLAMABAD: National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has constituted 1,127 teams to conduct locust control operation in effects districts of the country. According to spokesman, the NDMA has completed the poisonous fumes spray of over 4,200 hectare and survey of 290,000 hectare locust swarm hit area of the country in the last 24 hours. Both ariel and ground spray of various districts was being continued right now. Sharing details of the ongoing efforts to kill locust swarms, he said the spraying of 1,500 hectare area of Balochistan and 8,00 hectare area of Punjab have been completed in the last 24 hours. The treatment of 700 hectare area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and 1,200 hectare area of Sindh have been finished in the last 24 hours. A total of 60 districts of the country were affected by locust attack, including 31 districts of Balochistan, 9 of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 10 each districts of Punjab and Sindh have been hit by the locust attacks.— APP

### Lok Virsa to hold two-day webinar

ISLAMABAD: The National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (Lok Virsa) will hold a two-day long webinar on culture of Balochistan from June 6 to 7 to celebrate the beautiful customs and traditions of Balochistan. In collaboration with institute of Arts Hast-o-Neesht, the two day webinar will feature Balochistan contingent including craftspeople, folk artists, folk musicians and dance groups. Baloch culture and its significance will be highlighted and strategies will be discussed for safeguarding and conservation of Balochistan culture, an official said on Thursday. He said that master artisans, Handi crafts, folk artists, rural musicians and exotic craft bazaar from Balochistan will participate to make the event colour full. He said Balochistan is a distinct land with distinct folk heritage and it is also a cradle of world's oldest civilization. — APP

### CNG station catches fire

DNA

ATTOCK: A CNG station in the limits of Jand police station caught fire however no human loss reported because of timely reaching of Rescue 1122 team on the site of occurrence and controlled the fire.

Reportedly the administration of this CNG has been involved in illegal decanting of gas and in this regard a detailed report was also filed by DSP Jand Ghulam Asghar Chandia in February which stated that Asstt Commissioner Jand Hasan Nazir in a written complaint informed police that management of (S. L.CNG) so involved in illegal decanting of gas and also misbehaved with him and threatened him of dire consequences.

Later police in a secret enquiry/probe by DSP Jand Ghulam Asghar Chandia found the allegations of the AC Jand based on facts as police found the administration of the CNG involved in illegal decanting of gas through a container since long which was not only illegal but also a great threat to the life of the people. The report was sent to the concerned authorities but no action was taken



LALAMUSA: A pigeon quenches his thirst as mercury has gone up. — Khurshid Nadeem

## Pak Navy continues relief operations across Pakistan

Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi in his message on the occasion of Eid ul Fitr wished peace, progress and prosperity for the country and urged countrymen to reflect mutual sacrifice and brotherhood in this testing time of COVID-19 pandemic

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy relief operations continued in various part of the country. The operations are aimed to support deserving families during Corona Virus Pandemic. Pakistan Navy troops reached out to urban, far-flung rural towns/ villages and distributed necessary commodities including safety items to the underprivileged populace. Protective suits were also provided to related authorities/ hospitals.

In Sindh and Balochistan Provinces, thousands of families were provided ration bags, protection masks and disinfectant material. Ration was distributed at various localities in Coastal and Creeks Area, prominently in Ormara Town, Hub Goth, Gaddani, Mirpur Sakro, Sujawal, Saidpur, Goth Shah Abdul Latif Jandani and Goth Muslimabad. Pakistan Navy is also persistently supporting the vulnerable families located at seashores of Karachi including Hawks Bay, Manora, Salhabad, Younisabad Kemari



Town, Shanti Nagar, Gonjani, Pehelwan Goth etc. Wide-reaching relief activities were undertaken in Punjab Province where thousands of ration bags were distributed in various cities including Baha-

walpur, Multan, Khanewal, Faisalabad, Chiniot, Sahiwal, Sargodha, Lahore, Daska and Sialkot. Additionally, medical and personal safety equipment including masks, gloves and protective suits were provided to

local authorities and district hospitals in various small towns and cities. Pakistan Navy Women Association (PNWA) also aimed to restore hope, educate community about safety precautions and extended donations to low-income and daily wages personnel. Ration bags were also distributed by PNWA to the distressed families in adjoining villages of Islamabad, Bani Gala, Bhara Kahu and Murree.

Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi in his message on

the occasion of Eid ul Fitr wished peace, progress and prosperity for the country and urged countrymen to reflect mutual sacrifice and brotherhood in this testing time of COVID-19 pandemic. The Naval Chief expressed solidarity with COVID-19 sufferers and their families. Pakistan Naval authorities also reached out and paid tribute to Shuhada families and ensured their wellbeing. Pakistan Navy midst challenges of corona pandemic is standing together with the nation to reflect commitment, unity and resolve.

## AIOU launches MS-program in Library

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has launched MS-program in Library and Information Sciences (MLIS) for semester Spring 2020.

The last date for taking admission in this merit-based program is June 5, it was stated here on Thursday.

According to Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, the MLIS program

is aimed at providing an opportunity to enhance the knowledge and skills as well as qualifications in the field of Library and Information Sciences. It was being offered keeping in view the need of AIOU graduates and others who are already in the field and intend to promote their professional skill.

There are many LIS graduates of AIOU who are working in various libraries of the country and innumerable graduates of

other universities having little opportunities to have master degree in the subject as regular student and they desire to have it without leaving their homes and the place of work.

The desiring applicants have been asked to apply for the admission through Online by the stipulated date.

The University has recently digitalized its learning management system to provide education to its post-graduate students through Online system.

## Raids against hoarders, profiteers

RAWALPINDI: Under a campaign launched by Rawalpindi District government against profiteering and hoarding, over 26,000 raids were conducted in seven tehsils of the district during May and fines amounting to over eight million rupees were imposed on the violators.

According to a District Administration spokesman, the Administration 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, the teams checked hoarding and profiteering and those found indulged in violation of 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. — APP

## Imran taking wise decisions

The PTI-led government has taken a landmark step by exposing sugar mafia to set an example: Sheikh Rasheed

ISLAMABAD: Railways Minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad Thursday said that the Prime Minister Imran Khan was taking strict wise decisions to control spread of the pandemic and to overcome the economic crisis engulfing the country.

Talking to a private news channel, Minister Railway claimed that the federal government has taken corrective measures as compared to Sindh government in order to contain the spread of Coronavirus.

The government has taken acknowledge able steps keeping in view the health safety of people and economic situation of the country which was appreciated globally, he mentioned.

He said that all political parties should cooperate with federal government to contain the spread of Coronavirus.

Sheikh Rasheed said that we needed to form a joint strategy to eliminate this natural diseases, otherwise all segments of society; the common people, the government and opposition would be equally vulnerable to it.

"To fight for diseases we need to shut down politics for some period of time," he emphasised.

Replying a question, the railways minister said whosoever was involved in the sugar and wheat crises should get an exemplary punishment.

The PTI-led government has taken a landmark step by exposing sugar mafia to set an example, he added.

He further said the Prime Minister Imran Khan has launched an inquiry against his own party members. This is one of the major development, but there is still a long way to go. — APP

## ICCI for new Industrial Estate in Capital

ICCI President said that an industrial zone has also been proposed to be set up in Islamabad under CPEC project but the CDA has made an excuse that it does not have space to set up an industrial zone in Islamabad and the federal government could direct Punjab to set up an industrial zone

FLAZ CHAUDHRY

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Ahmad Waheed, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has called upon CDA to re-allocate Sector I-17 for establishment of new industrial estate in Islamabad that would boost industrial development in the region and create jobs. He said that there was no scope for setting up new industry in the existing industrial estates in Islamabad. He said that

Prime Minister Imran Khan had announced new incentives for the construction industry that would also be beneficial for establishment of new industrial estate in the federal capital, which was the dire need of the hour. Muhammad Ahmed Waheed said that about 10 years ago, an industrial estate was announced in Sector I-17 of Islamabad and for this purpose the locals were paid the price of land but due to some unknown reasons I-17 The sector has been de-notified for industrial estate.



However, this move has disappointed the potential investors who were interested in setting

up new industries in Islamabad. ICCI President said that an industrial zone has also been proposed to be set up in Islamabad under CPEC project but the CDA has made an excuse that it does not have space to set up an industrial zone in Islamabad and the federal government could direct Punjab to set up an industrial zone.

He further said that plots in the existing industrial sectors in Islamabad have become so expensive that the cost of setting up a new industry has increased

manifold making it impossible to set up new industries in these sectors.

He said that the condition of existing industrial sectors of Islamabad has also deteriorated while Kahuta Industrial Triangle was still deprived of basic amenities despite the passage of many years. He appealed to the Finance Advisor Dr. Hafeez Sheikh to re-allocate Sector I-17 for Industrial Estate to promote industrialization in the area and allocate funds in the next budget for its establishment

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Vol: 01 Issue: 57

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## Lockdown again?

**C**ORONAVIRUS cases in Pakistan have now reached nearly 60,000, with over 1,225 deaths in the country, leading the Prime Minister's Special Advisor Dr Zafar Mirza to warn that the government could impose a new, stricter lockdown to curb the sharply rising trajectory. Pakistan is not alone in its struggle. But we have to say our attempts to combat the virus which causes serious disease and in a small number of cases death have been particularly chaotic. The country dithered from the very beginning in whether or not to impose a lockdown. The confusion between a curfew and a lockdown persisted, and the little lockdown there was in place was lifted before Eid, after which we saw people in mosques and markets. Pakistan's curve of coronavirus cases has shown a consistent surge in the past couple of weeks. This upward trend is alarming and we may end up experiencing a Brazil-like mushrooming in the number of deaths. The WHO has also expressed its fears about a second wave of the virus as its epicenter, or so to say, is moving from the developed countries of Europe and America to developing and emerging countries such as Brazil, India, and even Pakistan. Had Pakistan been able to lockdown more forcefully and gain greater cooperation from its people in the first place, we may not have been in the situation we now confront. A new lockdown will certainly be met with hostility from traders, given that their pressure was a factor in the easing of the first so-called lockdown while social distancing was virtually not observed at all despite the protocols agreed to for mosques and other places. As many had predicted, we now have a curve which shows a sharp rise in the number of cases occurring daily. Some suggest the actual number could be higher given the rate of testing and differences in how provinces are conducting this. Perhaps we could have saved people from death or at least a great deal of suffering had a proper lockdown been enforced. A new lockdown will be tough on people as life is disrupted for an indefinite period. But this time, there must be greater effort to unite on the matter and send out a message that shows agreement between all the provinces and all the leadership. The confusion seen in the past did nothing to help. It simply confused people and we now have a situation in which people believe the virus is no longer a threat. While the government and the NDMA have promised enough protective equipment and ventilators, this is not the point. We should have been able to avoid reaching this stage. The constant see-sawing could lead us straight into an abyss of terrible disease and disaster, worst of all affecting the poor whom the prime minister has consistently said he wishes to protect. Instead, the easing of the lockdown has most benefited industrialists, businessmen and traders. We now need to think of the people. No lockdown can be effective if people don't understand why this is necessary and cooperate with the tough measures that can change life in the country.



## Crippling poverty

**T**HE coronavirus pandemic has brought at least some realization that there is a need to build a fairer society and an economy that can sustain opportunity for more people, especially those left behind too long. But there are disturbing signs that this may not happen. The president of the World Bank has warned that up to 60 million people will be pushed into 'extreme poverty' by the coronavirus. Extreme poverty is described as living on less than \$1.90 per person per day. President of the World Bank David Malpass noted that millions of livelihoods have been destroyed, jobs lost and businesses failing, poorer countries feeling the brunt of this. Malpass also said that he was 'somewhat frustrated' by the slow pace exhibited by some commercial lenders in offering debt relief to the poor. The World Bank and IMF are working together on a scheme, according to Malpass, to allow poorer countries to request debt relief on loan repayments owed to G-20 members until the end of this year. While the World Bank is offering \$160 billion in grants and low-interest loans to help poor countries deal with the crisis and 100 countries, home to 70 percent of the world's population, have already been granted emergency finance, the fact is that economists point out that World Bank schemes have in the past not drastically changed the lives of people in any meaningful manner. In some cases, they have added to the pressures the poor face particularly in developing nations. We hope that with the World Bank predicting a five percent shrinkage in global economic growth this year resulting in an eradication of the poverty alleviation achieved in the past three years, there will be a wider recognition that more needs to be done to help poorer nations survive the crisis. Loans from the IMF have proved to be a poor solution for many nations, as more and more of their GDP goes into debt servicing rather than human development. Right now, the world is in crisis mode. All nations must come together to devise a plan which can both provide immediate relief and set up greater sustainability for the future, with developing nations also considering what they can do to attain a higher degree of self sufficiency and thus less dependence on debt.

## Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy's Achievements

Dr Mehmoood Ul Hassan Khan



*The Azerbaijan issue was discussed at the Council of Allied Powers on 2 May 1919 for the first time. On 23 May 1919 a member of the British delegation, L. Mallet, met Topchubashov and they discussed political, military and economic issues*

achievements of its foreign policy.

The ADR succeeded to clinch crucial support on different issues of economic productivity, national survival and greater connectivity. Especially central powers i.e. Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, and Bulgaria were starting giving importance to ADR. Moreover, rigorous participation in the "Paris Peace Conference" was the turning point in its foreign policy.

The Azerbaijan issue was discussed at the Council of Allied Powers on 2 May 1919 for the first time. On 23 May 1919 a member of the British delegation, L. Mallet, met Topchubashov and they discussed political, military and economic issues. On 28 May Topchubashov met a member of the US delegation, Henry Morgenthau, during the first half of the day and President Woodrow Wilson during the second half [1].

The memorandum of Azerbaijan was presented to the president of the USA. The government of the USA noted that cooperation with Azerbaijan would be effective. In late June 1919 the British government adopted a decision on the withdrawal of troops from Azerbaijan.

The ADR established/developed diplomatic relations with many states, including the UK, with 16 overseas embassies being opened. On 20 March 1920, Iran de jure recognized Azerbaijan and in a short time an embassy was opened in Tehran, a consulate-general in Tabriz, vice-consul's offices in the cities of Rasht, Anzali and Mashad, and consular agencies of Azerbaijan in Khoy and Ahar.

Moreover, the Azerbaijani parliament adopted a law on the establishment of diplomatic missions in the United Kingdom, France, Italy, the United States, Switzerland, Poland, Germany and Russia. Representative offices of the UK, Greece, Belgium, Georgia, Armenia, Denmark, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Iran, USA, Ukraine, Finland, Sweden, Italy and Switzerland were opened in Baku. The Republic of Azerbaijan (RA) and Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (ADR) primarily followed a "balanced", "pragmatic" and of course "independent" foreign policies which enabled to achieve the desired goals of "national security", "socio-economic prosperity", "regional integration", "international cooperation" and "strong military capabilities". Its foreign policies have been "guarantors" of its "greater energy connectivity", "geopolitical prominence", "political recognition" at various international forums and above all "international partnerships".

The "strategic orientation" of its foreign policy successfully protected its strategic vested national interests. Achieving a "strategic balance" between the US and

Russia is one of the biggest achievements of its diversified foreign policy. Maintaining "crucial equilibrium" between Muslim Countries and the European Union (EU) has been cornerstone of its dynamic foreign policy. Projecting and protecting treasures of "multiculturalism" and "ethnic diversity" has been successfully showcased through its holistic foreign policy.

Conflict Resolution Based (CRB) foreign policy of Azerbaijan created various "strategic cushions" for "political maneuvering", economic swapping, social cohesion, clinching of regional support and seeking of international partnership at various times. Contract of the Century revolutionized "concept of engagement" "international cooperation" and utilizing of a natural resource/energy for protecting its vested national interests. Afterwards, crisis was converted into opportunity, geographic and political isolation into international integration and above all despairs into sustainable development.

Humanistic foreign policy of Azerbaijan has succeeded to achieve regional as well as international support against Armenia genocide, aggression and illegal occupation of 20 percent territories. The UN, NAM, OIC, OSCE, European Council, NATO and European Union has adopted respective decisions and resolutions in favour of Azerbaijan. Moreover, various other important international organizations have now accepted Azerbaijan rights against Armenia "unjust" stance towards illegal occupation of Azerbaijan's areas.

Furthermore, it pursued an independent foreign policy for lessening of national as well as regional security threats. Its "de-escalation" policy has reduced tensions in its regional as well as international engagements. Through human wisdom and nationalism it defeated enemies of disinformation and hybrid war. Flexible, pragmatic and balanced multidimensional foreign policy has created various comfort-zones of "soft power" and "good-will environment" for Azerbaijan which prevented and neutralized the threats and dangers coming from abroad. Due to its successful foreign policy Azerbaijan has become an island of stability and security in the region. Azerbaijan's independent foreign policy has been guarantor of its national sovereignty. Priorities of Azerbaijan's foreign policy are based on maximum consideration of state interests and specifics of modern geopolitical situation. It is the dividend of its foreign policy that Azerbaijan has become ideal model for economic prosperity, national dignity, and regional connectivity for regional states. It has developed dynamically in all areas, and its

international prominence is ever growing.

Azerbaijan's foreign policy promoted its soft power image due to which it has now become connecting hub for humanities, businesses, technologies, innovations and cultures. Azerbaijan regularly hosts various international events. Baku hosts annual "World Forum for Intercultural Dialogue" and its 5th event has been held on May 2-3, 2019. Azerbaijan has initiated "International Humanitarian Forum". Baku was named "Islamic Culture Capital" in 2009 and last but not least the capital city hosted "Eurovision" song contest in 2012. Last year NAM conference was held in Baku. Moreover, Azerbaijan has also assumed the chairmanship of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). Cooperation with international economic organizations, provisioning and execution of energy projects, performing as the transportation corridor between two continents are among other foreign policy priorities and achievements.

Trans-Anatolian gas pipeline (TANAP) attests to Baku's capability to pursue independent energy policy which is the byproduct of its successful independent foreign policy. Azerbaijan stands ready to protect its interests with defiance and resolution. Its meaningful energy policies and projects showcase its capability to serve as a bridge of peace and cooperation between Europe and Asia which reaffirms Azerbaijan's foreign policy substantial benefits for the regional cooperation. It has sustainable diplomatic/bilateral relations with the U.S., European countries, Russia, Turkey and Iran is pursued to resolve the Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno Karabakh conflict. Diversity of its foreign policy has reached to new levels. Its cooperation with the US and the EU has deepened in energy and security areas. Azerbaijan continues its active engagement with the EU through European Neighborhood Policy and Eastern Partnership format. Its relations with Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Islamic Cooperation Organization (OIC) and Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (CCTSS), diplomatic have sub-merged with a new phase. Azerbaijan manages to adjust its activity within those institutions and European and Euro-Atlantic structures.

Presently, Azerbaijan boasts 74 diplomatic missions abroad, including 55 embassies, 5 permanent missions at the international organizations, 9 general and 5 honorary consulates which all shows elements of diversity and dynamic in its foreign policy. Meanwhile, Azerbaijan hosts 53 embassies, 3 general consulates, 12 honorary consulates and 20 international organizations' offices.

## Libyan retreat hints at repercussions for Russia in Syria

Dr. Dania Koleilat Khatib



*The US position on Libya could be sending signals to Russia over Syria. The White House has not so far taken a confrontational attitude toward Moscow on this front. Even James Jeffrey, the US special envoy to Syria, said in a recent interview with Asharq Al-Awsat that the Russians were exempt from America's demand that all foreign forces should leave Syria*

**H**UNDREDS of Wagner Group mercenaries fighting with Libyan Field Marshall Khalifa Haftar were evacuated from combat zones south of Tripoli to an unknown destination over the weekend. Haftar's offensive to capture the capital, which began in April last year, has ended up with his retreat and the evacuation of the Russian mercenaries supporting him. While the Turkish media praised Ankara's military prowess, claiming Turkey had changed the balance of power in Libya, this would not have happened were it not for American support.

The US, which had been watching from a distance and urging the two sides to enter into negotiations, took a firm stand. A week ago, the US and the UK denounced Russia's actions in Libya. The Government of National Accord, supported by Turkey, then captured towns and a strategic air base from Haftar's Libyan National Army. It was also able to destroy several of Haftar's Russian-made air defense systems. After a phone call between Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Donald Trump on Saturday, the latter took a more assertive position, calling for a "rapid de-escalation" in order to avoid a retaliation by Haftar's forces.

The US position on Libya could be sending signals to Russia over Syria. The White House has not so far taken a confrontational attitude toward Moscow on this front. Even James Jeffrey, the US special envoy to Syria, said in a recent interview with Asharq Al-Awsat that the Russians were exempt from America's demand that all foreign forces should leave Syria, as they have been present since before 2011. However, Russia has recently been allowing Iranian aircraft to land at Hmeimim air base. The Iranians probably want to land there to avoid being hit by Israeli airstrikes, which have been increasing over the last few weeks.

Israel, which has claimed that Iranian forces are starting to pull out of Syria, is adamant on upping the pressure in order to avoid a reversal of the situation. Hence,

any Russian-Iranian cooperation that protects and facilitates Tehran's operations is totally unacceptable to Israel and the US. The Libya episode could well be a prelude to the repercussions that Russia might face in Syria.

So far, NATO has expressed "full solidarity" with Turkey over airstrikes on its forces in Syria, but it has offered no commitment to involve itself in an air campaign in the case of a confrontation. The support that the US has offered to Turkey has been limited, consisting of its Patriot missile defense system – as long as Ankara keeps its Russian S-400 system in its boxes. However, this might change. The US might take a more aggressive stance toward Russia if the latter is not able to contain Iran in Syria. If NATO shows it is serious in using its firepower against Russia, it is unlikely that Moscow will produce an act of defiance and protect the Iranians. Iran and Russia have diverging long-term goals in Syria. To start with, Moscow has no appetite to join a fight against Israel.

Russia is not in a very favorable position. It has apparently chosen to cut its losses in Libya and evacuate the Wagner Group mercenaries. However, a loss in Syria would undermine President Vladimir Putin's standing domestically. Nevertheless, he realizes that he cannot win with Bashar Assad.

In addition to Assad's cousin Rami Makhlof publicly criticizing the Syrian president, Eyad Al-Husseini, a journalist close to Russia's "favorite Syrian warlord" Suheil Al-Hassan, also attacked Assad on social media. He said there is no economic solution in Syria and that the situation will only get worse with the enforcement of the US Caesar Act in June.

Al-Husseini also said that the economic situation would not improve as long as sanctions are in place, and they will not be lifted unless there is a political solution, which is not possible under Assad. He said that all Assad is willing to offer is a show at peace talks in Gene-

va and he has no intention of making any concessions aimed at reaching a political solution while the "money mafia" controls the country. The value of the Syrian pound has been in freefall. If the country's economy crashes, will Russia be able to manage it?

Moscow should envision a situation where NATO is ready to support a Turkish offensive in Syria, and where regime areas reach total breakdown, while Assad lives in his own bubble and his wife amasses wealth and continues her exorbitant shopping. The US might take a more aggressive stance toward Russia if the latter is not able to contain Iran.

Putin pushes the limits, but he makes calculated risks. Amid the recent Turkish-Syrian regime clashes, he did not want a face-off with the Turks so he called for a truce and signed the cease-fire on March 5. Now that the US is showing it is serious in containing Russian ambitions in the region, it is better for Putin to seek a deal while he has something to negotiate with. If a total breakdown happens, Putin will have no cards to play and will be scrambling for the exit.

Assad has reached a dead end. He is stretched and cracks are emerging in his own house. However, to drive Putin to the negotiating table, the West should offer a full-fledged proposal that preserves Russia's interests in Syria. Putin would never let go of his foothold on the Mediterranean. And Russia would also want to recoup some of the costs it has incurred. It cannot leave the fight empty-handed. But Putin is reasonable and he understands very well that he might have reached a tipping point in Syria.

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# Azerbaijan-Pakistan friendship time-tested, says Ali Alizada

Message of Mr. Ali Alizada, Ambassador of Azerbaijan on the occasion of the National Day of Azerbaijan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan Ali Alizada has said relations between Azerbaijan and Pakistan are from cordial to excellent adding these relations have grown and strengthened with the each passing day.

The ambassador expressed these views on the occasion of National Day of Azerbaijan. He further said 28th of May is the National Day of Azerbaijan, the day of the establishment of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic and a historic event when a democratic republic was created for the first time in the Muslim world in 1918. The Government and state institutions, armed forces of Azerbaijan were created, a democratically-elected Azerbaijani parliament was formed, official state attributes of Azerbaijan - the national tricolor flag and anthem were adopted, Azerbaijani language was declared the official language. The first majority-Muslim state Azerbaijan was also one of the first countries in the world to extend equal political rights to women in 1918. The Azerbaijan Democratic Republic managed to do a lot, but did not last long and 23 months later, the republic fell by the occupation and annexation of the Soviet Union. Azerbaijan left an indelible mark in the history of national statehood with its rich state building experience and prepared a good basis for the future independence of Azerbaijan. Annexation of Azerbaijan to the Soviet Union in 1920 shows again that it is even more difficult to maintain independence than to obtain it. As the successor of ADR, Azerbaijan once again regained its independence in 1991 and when Azer-

baijan was again at the verge of civil war and loss of independence, Heydar Aliyev, National Leader of Azerbaijan assumed the responsibility of the country, saved the state and the nation of Azerbaijan from the hard and strict tests of history and Azerbaijan embarked on the path of development, ensured stability and the country began to confidently move forward.

Today, thanks to the wise policy of the National Leader, Azerbaijan successfully continues its dynamic development under the leadership of President Ilham Aliyev. A thought-out and long-term policy is implemented in Azerbaijan at the highest level. Despite the impacts of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the occupation of our lands by aggressor Armenia, economic growth of Azerbaijan has been secured and indicators are very positive. Only in 2019 foreign exchange reserves of Azerbaijan have increased by \$6.4 billion to reach a record high of \$51 billion. Azerbaijan's external public debt is at a very low level - 17 percent of the gross domestic product. According to this indicator, Azerbaijan is in ninth place in the world. The World Bank included Azerbaijan in the list of 20 most reforming countries. As the successor of Azerbaijan Democratic Republic the modern, emerging, stable, prosper and peaceful Azerbaijan lives in stability today, which is the main condition for the development of the country and continues its friendly relations with all nations which was determined as one of the main foreign policy priorities.

Even in this difficult time when the global COVID-19 pandemic has a negative impact on all countries, along with the measures taken by the Government of Azerbaijan to



mitigate the spread of coronavirus in the country, Azerbaijan has also makes its contribution in the global arena as well.

We are very pleased that the relations of Azerbaijan with fraternal country Pakistan also steadily accelerate and both countries always enjoy longstanding warm and cordial relations. Many projects and productive cooperation between the two countries are continued in economic, military, military-technical, defence industry, security, cultural, media, science, education, energy and humanitarian-social fields. Only in past 2019 year several mutual visits of government and military officials have been implemented from both sides. The President of Pakistan has visited Azerbaijan at the end of 2019, for the first time ever Azerbaijani military contingent led by Minister of Defence of Azerbaijan attended Pakistan National Day Parade 2019, very warm and successful meeting between PM of Pakistan and President of Azerbaijan was held in January of this year in Davos. The mutual attendance of entrepreneurs in different exhibitions and the B2B meetings of

businessmen were held, the special attention were given to the strengthening of cooperation in the energy and tourism sectors, the establishment of direct flights was and is one of the main aims in our relations at present time and many works have already done in order to start operations of direct flights from 2020. The global COVID-19 pandemic affected the world countries has also not allowed the completion of some successful projects between our countries as well and forced to postpone many of them, but even in pandemic time Azerbaijan and Pakistan as two brotherly countries are continued to support each other.

Humanitarian-social works of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation of Azerbaijan are continued in Pakistan during this pandemic time too and the Government of Azerbaijan has also allocated financial humanitarian aid to Pakistan for prevention of the spread of COVID-19 and elimination of consequences of pandemic in Pakistan. Pakistan has also supported the efforts of Azerbaijan to fight coronavirus pandemic and President of Pakistan attended the online Summit meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement under the motto "United against COVID-19" which was held by the initiative of the President of Azerbaijan on May 4, 2020.

The Presidents of two countries had also a constructive telephone conversation on May 8, 2020 where they hailed the importance of the NAM online Summit in terms of strengthening efforts to combat the pandemic and its significant contribution to consolidating solidarity and international cooperation between the countries. The heads of state expressed also their confidence that the two countries will continue to support each other's stance at the inter-

national level. The support of both countries to each other on Nagorno-Karabakh and Kashmir issues based on UN Security Council resolutions are also continued and discussed in every meetings.

No any country has recognized the so-called "Nagorno-Karabakh Republic", the world's leading organizations and many countries have also reacted harshly and negatively to the illegal elections held there in this year and Pakistan is also among these countries which stands by fair position of Azerbaijan unrecognizing Armenia as an independent state and condemning this aggressor country because of its occupation of the 20% of internationally recognized Azerbaijani territories. The Government and people of Azerbaijan highly value this brotherly and fair approach and Azerbaijan considers Pakistan its close fraternal country and will continue to support it at every forum.

Azerbaijan and Pakistan are bound by the relations strong friendship and strategic partnership which reflects the will of our fraternal nations and we remain committed to further strengthen our relations with brotherly Pakistan. This year we are not able to solemnly celebrate the date "May 28 - National Day of Azerbaijan" in Pakistan due to coronavirus pandemic, but we have already received many congratulations letters, calls, messages of solidarity from the people and Government of Pakistan which give us immense pleasure and honor. I thank the Government and people of brotherly Pakistan for continued cooperation, support and interest to further expand and strengthen our relations and congratulate all my countrymen on the occasion of National Day "May 28 - Republic Day of Azerbaijan".

*Pakistan-Azerbaijan Dosti Zindabad!*

## Briefs

### US virus death toll tops 100,000

WASHINGTON: The United States has now recorded more than 100,000 coronavirus-related deaths, Johns Hopkins University reported Wednesday - a somber milestone and by far the highest total in the world. The country reported its first death about three months ago. Since then, nearly 1.7 million infections have been tallied nationwide, according to the Baltimore-based school. The actual number of deaths and infections is believed to be higher, experts say. In the last 24 hours, the death toll was on the rise once again, with 1,401 deaths added, after three straight days of tolls under 700. The full death toll stood at 100,396. - APP

### Nissan closing Barcelona factory

MADRID: Japanese car-maker Nissan has decided to shut its factory in Barcelona where 3,000 people are employed, the Spanish government said on Thursday.

The decision came despite government efforts to keep the plant open, Foreign Minister Arancha Gonzalez Laya told the national radio station.

"We regret this decision by Nissan to leave not just Spain but Europe... to concentrate its business in Asia, despite the enormous efforts by the government to keep the business going," she said. Spain's car industry is the European Union's second-biggest after that of Germany, accounting for 10 percent of the country's GDP. - APP

## US, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan vow to deepen cooperation

They also discussed the construction of railways linking Uzbekistan with ports in Pakistan and beyond, in particular, discussion of the feasibility of construction of railways along the Mazar-e-Sharif-Herat-Bahramcha and Mazar-e-Sharif-Kabul-Torkham took place

DNA

TASHKENT: The text of the following statement was released by the governments of the United States of America, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan on the occasion of the inaugural U.S. - Afghanistan - Uzbekistan Trilateral Meeting. Representatives of the governments of the United States of America, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan convened via video teleconference for the inaugural United States - Afghanistan - Uzbekistan Trilateral meeting. The meeting was co-chaired by American Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs David Hale, Afghan Foreign Minister Mohammed Haneef Atmar, and Uzbek-

istan Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Kamilov. Participants reaffirmed the importance of trilateral discussions to address mutual issues of concern including political, security, economic, and human development matters. To this end, participants: Committed to greater cooperation among themselves, and called on countries of the region and the broader international community, to promote the Afghanistan peace process and to support the goal of a durable political settlement preserving the gains of the past 18 years to end the war in that country; Welcomed the conclusion of the May 17 political agreement to form an inclusive Afghan government and to create a High Council for National Reconciliation, both of which should help move the peace process forward;

Affirmed the urgency of starting intra-Afghan negotiations to discuss a comprehensive ceasefire and a political roadmap for Afghanistan's future; Welcomed the historic Eid ceasefire and the decision by Afghan leadership this week to expedite the release of Taliban prisoners, including the more than 900 prisoners released since that decision was taken, and urged the continued release of prisoners by both the Afghan Government and the Taliban consistent with the U.S.-Taliban agreement of February 29; Encouraged the continuation of the Eid ceasefire; noted the necessity of Afghanistan not returning to pre-ceasefire levels of violence; and noted the urgency of eliminating civilian casualties in order to create an environment conducive for peace and

delivery of essential life-saving services to fight the COVID-19 pandemic; and Took note of the U.S.-Afghanistan Joint Declaration and the U.S.-Taliban agreement of February 29 and affirmed Taliban and Islamic Republic of Afghanistan commitments to prevent any international terrorist groups or individuals, including al-Qa'ida and ISIS, from using Afghan soil; to this end, the sacrifices of the Afghan National Security Forces and its international partners are greatly appreciated. Developing security cooperation and intensifying joint efforts to combat cross-border threats along the frontier between Uzbekistan and Afghanistan, and to address issues such as terrorism, drug and precursor trafficking, smuggling, illegal migra-

tion, human trafficking, and wildlife trafficking throughout the region; Improving rail connectivity, including increasing the volume of freight transit traffic between Uzbekistan and Afghanistan and beyond, with a view to the uninterrupted delivery of food, essential goods, medications, especially in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, and improving regional transit integration. Promoting trade between Afghanistan and Uzbekistan by reviewing and improving legal frameworks, policy reforms, sharing of information, use of appropriate technology, risk management, investment in infrastructure and human resources and removing constraints and bottlenecks, including through the development of the Free Economic Zone at the Termez border crossing;

Discussing the construction of railways linking Uzbekistan with ports in Pakistan and beyond, in particular, discussion of the feasibility of construction of railways along the Mazar-e-Sharif-Herat-Bahramcha and Mazar-e-Sharif-Kabul-Torkham routes; Mitigating the consequences of COVID-19 on food security; Supporting regional energy projects such as CASA-1000 (the Central Asia South Asia Electricity Transmission and Trade Project), Central Asia Regional Electricity Market (CAREM), multi-lateral development bank electricity transmission projects, the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) Pipeline, and the construction of the 500 kilovolt Surkhan-Puli-Khumri (Khoja-Alvan) power transmission line.

## Qasim power station generates 3.5 billion kWh energy



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Qasim coal-fired power station has generated a total of 3.5 billion kWh of energy in 2020, with the cumulative generating capacity exceeding 20 billion kWh, reports Gwadar Pro.

As a project under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework, this achievement of Qasim power station could be a grand gift for the 69th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China. The annual generating

capacity can meet the electricity demands of over four million households in Pakistan, according to PowerChina, an investor of the power station. Qasim power station has played an important role in improving Pakistan's energy structure and boosting its socioeco-

nom development. In addition, Qasim power station also did well in fulfilling the corporate social responsibility especially amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the outbreak of the coronavirus, Qasim power station has taken strict anti-pandemic protection measures to ensure the power supply. Besides taking good care of both its Chinese and Pakistani employees, Qasim power station has launched donations for National Disaster Management Authority to fight against the pandemic. The power station's work staff also provided masks, protective garment and other anti-epidemic materials to the police.

## Shibli Faraz slams Maryam

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz said on Thursday that Pakistan had the honour of becoming the only nuclear power in the Islamic world on this day. In a tweet, the minister said that Pakistan's nuclear power was the guarantor of the safety and security of the country and its people. The Minister said that national dignity and integrity was paramount for the nation which stood united for its defense and development of the country. He asked Maryam Nawaz not to associate the hard work and efforts of a generation that made Pakistan a nuclear power with her

family. The nation was aware of those who leave their workers alone and run away from the field every time, he said adding those who could not remain faithful to their narrative, how could they be expected to fulfill promises made with the people. The loyalty of the PML-N leadership was not with soil but with money. Manifestations of their loyalty could be seen all over the world in the form of Avani field and other properties. Shibli Faraz said that the nation will never forgive those who ruin the future of the nation's children and make their own children's lives. - APP

## India bans 4G internet in IOK

ISLAMABAD: In Indian Occupied Kashmir, the Indian authorities have extended ban on 4G internet service in the territory to victimize the freedom-loving Kashmiris who are already suffering immensely due to military siege and coronavirus outbreak. An order issued by Shaleen Kabra, Principal Secretary Home Department of occupied Kashmir said that the gag on 4G Internet connectivity would continue till 17th June or until further orders, Kashmir Media Service reported. Although, the Indian government claims that landline phones and 2G internet services have been restored in the occupied territory but the residents continue to suffer immensely due to absence of prepaid mobile and 4G internet connectivity, particularly after the spread of coronavirus, which has wreaked havoc across the globe. - APP

## Russia's death toll tops 4,000

MOSCOW: Russia said Thursday that its death toll from the coronavirus has risen above 4,000 as the daily toll equalled a record set earlier this week. The authorities said 4,142 people have now died in Russia from the virus, with 174 new deaths over the last 24 hours. The number of new deaths equalled Russia's highest daily death toll recorded Tuesday. Officials have predicted a higher death toll for May than April, attributing this to the deaths of hospital patients who were admitted during the peak of the epidemic several weeks ago. President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday hailed a trend towards stabilisation in the country's virus situation and Thursday's number of new cases was below 9,000 for the fifth day running at 8,371. - APP