



# Islamabad POST

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Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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**Pak Navy a formidable force, says Army Chief General Qamar Bajwa**

**China's quick response to COVID-19 praised**

**Japan envoy grieved over loss of Army men**

## Briefs

### 92 Covid hotspots identified

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) has identified 92 Covid-19 hotspots in 20 cities across the country, which cover some 40% of all the active cases nationwide, Planning Minister Asad Umar said on Sunday. The minister, who heads the NCOC - the nerve centre of the country's unified efforts against the spread of the deadly contagion, said in a tweet that an effective smart lockdown in these hotspots could make a decisive difference. "NCOC has identified 92 hotspots in 20 cities, which cover 40% of all active cases & effect only 3% of Pak population. We can have substantial impact on disease spread while minimizing disruption in livelihood of citizens. Effective hot-spot lockdown can make a decisive difference," Umar tweeted.

### Islamabad sectors to be put under lockdown

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Commissioner Islamabad on Monday planned to seal the Sectors G-6/2, G-6/1, G-10/4, G-7/2 and Ghouri Town. There were more than 40 cases/area in last few days. There were more than 25 deaths reported. Residents were requested to plan accordingly.

### Senate body for hike in FED on cigarettes

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Finance has approved a recommendation for an increase in the Federal Excise Duty (FED) on cigarettes, media reported. The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senator Kalsoom Perveen recommended a 100 percent increase in FED on cigarettes in the Senate Standing Committee on Finance meeting, chaired by Senator Farooq H. Naik here in Islamabad. The Senate standing committee also approved recommendations presented by Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif to increase tax, duty on tobacco products.

## PIA PLANE CRASH REPORT

# Pilot, air traffic controller held responsible

The minister briefed the premier about the incident, saying CCTV footage showed that the ill-fated plane hit the runway

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Aviation Ghulam Sarwar Khan on Monday presented the preliminary investigation report on the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flight PK-8303 crash in Karachi to Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan. The preliminary investigation report has blamed plane's captain, crew members and the Air Traffic Controller (ATC) for the crash, while PIA and the Civil Aviation Authority

(CAA) have also been held responsible because of their inaccuracies in preventing such accidents.

The minister briefed the premier about the incident, saying CCTV footage showed that the ill-fated plane hit the runway after which, the pilot chose to go around. Evidence of damages caused to both engines of the plane due to failed landing was also found, he told. According to the report, the plane was fit for take-off and its landing gears were also working properly. The captain and first officer of

the aircraft were well experienced and the weather at that time was also suitable for flying.

The airport administration had told that the plane was flying at high altitude at the time of landing, the report revealed. The inquiry report was prepared while keeping in view the investigation record, statements of staff and Airbus team's report. Data flight recorders, cockpit voice recorders and flight records obtained from air traffic control are also part of the report.



LAHORE: General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) speaking in Pakistan Navy War College Lahore. - DNA

### Army Chief lauds Pak Navy

DNA

LAHORE: General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) visited Pakistan Navy War College Lahore, where he laid floral wreath at Yadgar-e-Shuhada and offered Fateha. COAS addressed the participants of 49th Naval Staff Course and faculty members of Pakistan Navy War College. While appreciating, COAS said that Naval War College is a prestigious institution of Pakistan Navy, where officers of Pakistan Armed Forces and friendly countries are trained for assumption of key Command and Staff appointments.

He applauded that Pakistan Navy with proud history of valour and sacrifices as formidable force has always come upto the expectations of the nation in defending the maritime frontiers of motherland. During the address, COAS also focused on geostrategic environment, security challenges and opportunities for Pakistan.

### Japan envoy grieved over loss of Army personnel

DNA

ISLAMABAD: MATSUDA Kuminori, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives in the terrorist attack on Pakistan Army's Patrolling party near North & South Waziristan district boundary on June 21st. "Any act of terrorism cannot be justified for whatever reason or purpose. My deepest condolences and sympathies to the families of Captain Sahib and Sepoy Naveed and I pray for the early recovery of those injured in the attack" said Ambassador MATSUDA in his condolence message here on Monday.

## Pak releases two Indian HC officials

Dwimu Brahma and Paul Selvadhas, were sent back to India via the Wagah border crossing. Authorities had also found counterfeit currency

DNA

LAHORE: Authorities on Monday released two Indian High Commission officials who were involved in a hit-and-run incident in the federal capital. The two, Dwimu Brahma and Paul Selvadhas, were sent back to India via the Wagah border crossing. Authorities had also found counterfeit currency from

their possession. Brahma and Selvadhas had arrived in the country in 2017, according to the Foreign Office (FO).

The capital territory police arrested the two Indian officials on June 15 however, they were freed after the FO intervened in the matter. The two officials were accompanied by the second secretary of the Indian Embassy and the air attache, who have been summoned

to New Delhi for consultations on the current Pak-India tension.

Earlier, an FIR (First Information Report) registered at the Secretariat Police Station said the two officials ran over a pedestrian and subsequently attempted to flee.

Counterfeit currency notes were also recovered from one of the detained Indian high commission officials, the FIR added.

## Qureshi briefs Saudi FM about Kashmir

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi held a telephonic conversation with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal Al Saud and discussed matters of mutual interest, including Covid-19 pandemic, enhanced bilateral cooperation and situation in IOJ&K was discussed. The Foreign Minister underscored that the fraternal ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia were deep-rooted and multi-faceted and the strategic relationship between the two countries was growing in myriad dimensions. Foreign Minister thanked for condolence messages issued by the King and the Crown Prince of Saudi Ara-



bia over PIA plane crash. Foreign Minister Qureshi offered condolences on the loss of precious lives in Saudi Arabia due to COVID-19 pandemic and highlighted the measures being taken by Pakistan to contain the virus, with focus on saving lives and securing livelihoods.

The two Foreign Ministers exchanged views about the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic. Foreign

Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan expressed solidarity with Pakistan in its efforts to combat the outbreak.

In context of IOJ&K, Foreign Minister Qureshi shared deep concern over the continuing double lockdown as well as the intensification of military crackdown by Indian occupation forces and attempts to change the demographic structure of the occupied territory by introducing new domicile law.

## Canadian police kill Pakistani

Investigations Unit said police were called to an apartment to 'check on the well-being of a man'

MISSISSAUGA: A Canadian-Pakistani, reportedly suffering from schizophrenia, was shot dead by Canadian police in Mississauga on Sunday.

The Special Investigations Unit said that the police were called to an apartment to 'check on the well-being of a man'.

According to CBC Canada report, the 62-year-old man's family called police because he was not taking his medication. The report said that the victim's nephew Muhammad Choudhry told that his uncle was a 'harmless man'. - DNA

## Confirmed cases in Pak 181,000

The country also reported four news deaths, three in Islamabad and one death in AJK

ISLAMABAD: Confirmed cases in the country climbed to 181,088 in Pakistan on Monday after new cases were detected in the country. According to the National Command and Control Centre, 250 new cases were reported in Islamabad and 32 new cases were reported in the country over the last 24 hours.

The country also reported four news deaths, three in Islamabad and one death from the coronavirus in AJK. In the last 24 hours, Pakistan conducted 28,855 coronavirus tests, increasing its testing capacity to 71,780. - DNA

## Pakistan vulnerable to future changes in climate

EXCLUSIVE

DNA

JEDDHA: Pakistan is most vulnerable to devastating impacts of climate change in the next 50 to 80 years, according to new research based on the latest generation of global climate models (CMIP6). Already among the countries most impacted by climate change, Pakistan needs to take "adaptation measures" to avert associated risks posed to Pakistan's population, economy, water resources, agriculture and natural ecosystem, says a study. The study titled "Projections of Precipitation and Temperature over the South Asian Countries in CMIP6," was conducted by Professor Mansour Almazroui and his team by using the supercomputer at King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The study shows that climate change has serious threats and ad-

verse effects on Pakistan than any other country in the South Asian region and calls for urgent steps to be taken in order to prevent associated risks to the country's socio-economy. Temperature is likely to increase by as much as 6 over the northern regions of Pakistan in the next 80 years, says the study, putting these regions at "particularly high risk" to flooding from snow and glacier melting that would have severe repercussions for downstream habitats and livelihoods.

Across the country, annual mean temperatures are likely to increase by nearly 5°C under a high emission scenario by the end of the 21st century, the study says, forecasting killer heat waves over the plains of Pakistan as a result. "Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change and a large increase in projected annual mean temperature by the end of the 21st cen-



tury could severely impact the agricultural sector that acts as the backbone of the country's economy," said Prof. Mansour Almazroui. Future temperature increase could also mean more climate incidents like extreme heat waves and drought-like conditions. There is also a possibility of increased rainfall over Pakistan, during both wintertime and the summer monsoon. "A large increase in the annual and seasonal mean temperature

will cause glaciers in the northern areas of Pakistan to melt faster, which, in association with increased monsoon rainfall during summer season, could lead to enhanced flooding downstream that can affect the lives of millions of people living in this area," said Prof. Mansour Almazroui. The findings, based on output from the latest generation of global climate model simulations (from the international Climate Model Intercomparison Project part 6 - CMIP6), provide baseline forecasts for the upcoming Assessment Report on Climate Change that is expected to be published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2022. These models are state-of-the-art expressions of the current scientific understanding of how the physical climate system works. The results show enhanced future warming (1-3) as compared to the previous generation of climate

models (CMIP5), particularly in the heavily irrigated Indus basin. This is likely to have "alarming repercussions for agriculture, water reservoirs and livelihoods" in this region. The study furthermore projects increased winter rainfall over northern parts of Pakistan, including Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Kashmir, and increased summer rainfall over eastern and southern parts of Pakistan under all future scenarios. Moreover, severe flooding events in future summers are likely because of increased summer rainfall and enhanced glacier melt under the warmer climate that is projected by the end of the 21st century. The projected climate change over Pakistan raises the prospect of more frequent natural hazards such as heat waves and flooding-gare likely to occur there over the next 50 to 80 years, the study warns.

## Air Chief meets PM

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan called on Prime Minister Imran Khan at Islamabad today. Matters pertaining to Pakistan Air Force were discussed during the meeting.

## Court fixes date for Zardari's indictment

DNA

ISLAMABAD: An Accountability Court (AC) in Islamabad has decided to indict former president Asif Ali Zardari, Hussain Lawai, Anwar Majeed, others in money laundering case on July 7.

According to details, the NAB court has decided to indict the accused in a money laundering case via video link sessions due to coronavirus pandemic. The court has issued an order in this regard.

The NAB Karachi should prepare arrangements for video link session at the hospital in order to indict Anwar Majeed. "Hussain Lawai, Taha Raza and Muhammad Umair will be indicted in Adiala jail on July 7," according to a circulation released by anti-corruption body.

The NAB has asked other accused to appear before the court in person on July 7. It is pertinent to mention here that the accountability court had already announced to indict PPP leader Asif Ali Zardari in Park Lane case on June 26. Zardari, his sister and other accused are facing charges of laundering more than Rs35 billion through fake bank accounts. Zardari's close aide Hussain Lawai and Anwar Majeed have also been nominated in the scam.

Hussain Lawai, who is said to be a close aide of former president Asif Ali Zardari, facing inquiry in an Rs35 billion money laundering case, was arrested by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on July 6 in 2018.

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**Briefs**

**NIC to hold online webinar**

ISLAMABAD: National Incubation Center(NIC) is holding an online webinar on June 24 entitled "Building a successful online Brand in Pakistan". The main aim of the webinar was to know how to build different ways of earning and building customer loyalty online. An organizer of the event on Monday told APP that the webinar will feature many aspects of online business to creating a brand identity that stands for something and is backed by great customer service. He said that the webinar will cover areas including 1) to change consumer behavior and the rise of online businesses; to create a branding strategy and following it consistently across different platforms; and 3) how to differentiate your brand from the competition. He said that webinar will also tell that how to integrate various digital tools to deliver a seamless customer experience and opportunities and challenges for online brands during the current pandemic. - APP

**'Strict action against black marketers'**

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Health, Dr Zafar Mirza Monday informed that sufficient amount of Dexamethasone is now available in the market and warned to take strict action against elements involved in over-charging or black marketing of life-saving drugs used by coronavirus patients. In an interview on a private news channel, Zafar Mirza said the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) has been directed to ensure availability of medicines used for management of COVID-19 patients. Dr Zafar Mirza said public is encouraged to inform DRAP on its Toll-Free number 0800-03727 in case they are being over-charged for the injections. Replying to a question related to Eid ul Adha's and cattle markets' SOPs, he said that the federal ministers, Ulama and Mas-haikh were holding meetings. - APP

**COVID-19 threat is exaggerated: survey**

ISLAMABAD: A new survey by Gallup Pakistan has found that nearly 55% Pakistanis believe that the COVID-19 threat is exaggerated. The Coronavirus Attitude Tracker Survey by Gallup Pakistan is about changes in public perception, attitude and behaviour since the beginning of the lockdown in Pakistan; public response and behaviour towards coronavirus initiatives and preventive measures; and the overall changes and impact of the lockdown on the daily lives of ordinary Pakistanis and businesses. The survey found that 57% of respondents and those from Sindh (65%) are most likely to agree that the threat of coronavirus is exaggerated.

**300 Kites Confiscated**

ATTOCK: Police confiscated 300 kites, string rolls and other material used for kite flying. According to a police spokesman, On Monday the police also rounded up two kite seller. Police team of Attock Kurd Area Police confiscated 300 kites, 04 string rolls and material used for kite flying and also arrested kite seller Ahmed Khan and Ali Raza.



ISLAMABAD: A view of rain water harvest project - DNA

**Australian High Commissioner endorses rainwater harvesting**

Pakistan and Australia have a long history of working together on effective management of water resources. The Australian Government through its SDIP is helping Pakistan implement Australian expertise and technology in efficient water management and build its local capacity in integrated water resource management.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Just before the start of the Monsoon season, the Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Dr Geoffrey Shaw took to twitter to share a picture of two rainwater tanks during their construction at his residence.

The underground tanks, which are now operational, have 741,000 litres of rainwater storage capacity and the water collected is now used at Dr Shaw's residence and the Australian High Commission in Islamabad.

"Water conservation can be key in tackling water shortage and climate change in Pakistan," Dr Shaw said. "Australia is helping Pakistan manage this valuable natural resource by sharing Australian expertise," he added.

Pakistan and Australia have a long history of working together on effective management of water resources. The Australian Government through its Sustainable Development Investment Portfolio (SDIP) is helping Pakistan implement Australian expertise and technology in efficient water management and build its local capacity in integrated water resource management.

The project is led by Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) as part of a 12-year program, funded by the Australian Government.

**HBL, Serena Extend their meals offering Initiative for Frontliners**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Habib Bank Limited (HBL) and Serena Hotels have pledged to continue providing high-quality meals to front-line medical professionals in the COVID-19 designated hospitals in seven cities nationwide where Serena Hotels are located.

HBL and Serena had launched the joint initiative "Jazba e Khidmat" in early April to pay tribute to the medical professionals including doctors, paramedics and nurses actively playing a role in battling the COVID-19 pandemic. The meal boxes are delivered daily for lunch and dinner to almost 20 hospitals and health camps in the cities of Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, Swat, Quetta,



Gilgit and Khaplu. The extension of the initiative, which was decided upon in light of the continuation of the COVID-19 crisis, will lead to 80,000 meal boxes being delivered as a goodwill gesture to the frontliners till end of June.

The idea behind Jazba-e-Khidmat is to recognize and salute the services of medical staff who are battling to keep the society safe during the pandemic by serving them quality nutritious meal.

Federal Health Minister Zafar Mirza, while announcing the initiative in April, stated that the Ministry appreciated "their admirable thought by Serena Hotels and HBL for the medical workers".

Being Pakistan's largest bank and leading hotel chain respectively, HBL and Serena Hotels are playing their role as responsible corporate citizens, and have undertaken a range of positive initiatives in light of COVID-19 pandemic to support the Government and society.

**AIOU 'End-term assessment' papers on June 27**

Post-Graduate programs include courses relating to B.Ed (New), BS, M.A, MSc and M.Com

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) on Monday announced that it will upload its 'End-term assessment' papers for Post-Graduate programs (semester autumn 2019) on June 27 as a part of its new exam policy in wake of COVID-19. Meanwhile, 'End term questions papers' will also be sent to enrolled students by post at their given addresses. It will be mandatory for the students to send back

the solved papers of their relevant courses to their concerned regional office by July 20, said Controller Exams Dr. Malik Tauqir Ahmad Khan. The Post-Graduate programs include courses relating to B.Ed (New), BS, M.A, MSc and M.Com. As per the policy formulated keeping in view the current crisis, COVID-19, the exam for the semester is taking place in form of 'End Term Assessment'. The students will solve questions through their own hand-writing from their home. Their own

handwriting will be verified by matching it with their previous assignments or papers. If copying or plagiarism was found in their contents, the students will liable to face an Unfair means case (UMC). The students will be required to send solved copy of the questions in an envelope to their respective regional office, through registered post or courier service. Answer copy, if received after the expiry date will not be accepted. By hand delivery is also not allowed.

**Rescue 1122 begins operations in Bara**

ISLAMABAD: The second Rescue 1122 station for tribal districts has been established in Bara tehsil of Khyber district and newly established Rescue 1122 station has started operational services in the area, director general of rescue 1122 said on Monday. Talking to PTV news, he said after first Rescue 1122 station in Jamrud tehsil of Khyber district the second Rescue 1122 station in Bara tehsil was successfully established to counter emergencies. - APP

**PepsiCo partners with PM's Ehsaas program**

FIJAZ CHAUDRHY

ISLAMABAD: PepsiCo's Millions of Meals program joined hands with the Ehsaas ration program to deliver millions of meals to those affected by the COVID-19 outbreak across Pakistan. The MoU was signed at the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) headquarters. The signing ceremony was followed by a briefing to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister appreciated the efforts of PepsiCo other companies that have partnered on this important initiative. PepsiCo and The PepsiCo Foundation, the philanthropic arm of PepsiCo, have committed a funding of over \$1.4 million to provide Millions of Meals to those in urgent need of nutrition. PepsiCo Pakistan has partnered with on ground charitable organizations to execute the program. So far, over 5.2 million meals have been distributed with the help of some of the most respected charities in the country including; RIZQ and Association for Gender Awareness & Human Empowerment (AGAHE) in Punjab.

**Govt to facilitate return of Pakistanis**

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistanis Sayed Zulfikar Abbas Bukhari (Zulfi Bukhari) Monday said that in line with the directives of the leadership the government was harnessing available resources and capabilities to facilitate return of Pakistani stranded abroad in a phases. All credit goes to Prime Minister Imran Khan, who took concrete measures to bring back Pakistanis stranded in various countries, he said this while speaking to Radio Pakistan's current affair programme. There are hundreds and thousands of Pakistani workers and students stuck



in different countries, he said, adding that the overseas Pakistanis working abroad, including Middle Eastern countries, have become jobless during the last three or four months due to COVID-19. Earlier, "We were bringing back around ten to fourteen thousand stranded people a week, which was not enough to meet

the demand of people that needed to come back", he mentioned. "We have not opened up our flight operation completely, he said, adding that the government is trying its best to bring back the maximum number of vulnerable Pakistanis who stuck abroad", he said. He said medical screening of passengers would be done before taking the flight. Only asymptomatic passengers would be allowed to travel. During the journey, all these passengers would have to follow SOPs, such as the health protocols, issued by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

**Pakistan introduces digital driving license**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: For the first time in Pakistan, a 'Digital Driving License' system is being introduced for citizens in Punjab, simplifying the process of obtaining a driving license.

This digital driving license system, which has been introduced in collaboration with Punjab Information Technology Board and Police Officer Rawalpindi, will ease the hassle of citizens by issuing driving licenses only on Identity Cards (ID) cards instead of a long cycle of paperwork.

With this new system, citizens whose driving licenses have expired will also be able to get their licenses back through this digital platform.

**Pak earns \$443 mln from travel services**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan earned US \$ 443.994 million by providing different travel services in various countries during the first ten months of ongoing fiscal year 2019-20. This shows growth of 24.34 percent as compared to US \$ 357.090 million same services were provided during the corresponding period of fiscal year 2018-19, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) said. - APP

**Amjad Sabri's death anniversary**

ISLAMABAD: Famous Sufi qawaal and Naatkhuwan Amjad Sabri was remembered on his fourth death anniversary on Monday. Born on December 23, 1976, Amjad Sabri used to participate in chorus in his father and uncle's group, "Sabri Brothers." He started working as supporting vocalist after death of his father. Later, he started his own group. Four years after martyrdom, Slain Amjad Sabri was still living in the hearts of people. The great Sufi Qawaal, Naatkhuwan, and singer Amjad Farid Sabri were murdered near Liaqtabad underpass. Amjad Farid Sabri was a proponent of the Sufi Muslim tradition. Son of Ghulam Farid Sabri and nephew of Maqbool Ahmed Sabri of Sabri Brothers, he emerged as one of South Asia's most prominent qawwali singers. Like his elders, Sabri dedicated his life to keeping alive the tradition of Sufi qawwali that dates back over seven centuries. Amjad used to recite poetry's sung by his father and uncle. His other works included Main Nazar Karoon Jan e Jigar, Allah Allah, Dhoom Macha Do, Kaab Ki Raun-aq, Kaash Yeh Dua Meri, Ali Mera Dil, Phir Dikha De Haram, Tuloo-e-Sahe Hai Shaam-e-Qalandar. His Qawwalis Tajdar-e-Haram and Bhar Do Jholi immortalized him in the hearts of his fans. - APP

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## Covid-19 and overseas Pakistanis

HERE is no doubt that Covid-19 has hugely impacted our lives and livelihoods in many ways. Thousands of people have lost their loved ones, while the rest are in shock and agony as they helplessly see their kith and kin fighting for their lives against this pandemic. In this lingering agony, no one's grief and pain can be under-estimated. However, the agony through which our overseas Pakistani brothers and sisters, especially our labour diaspora in the Middle East, are passing is beyond comparison. To suffer amidst one's loved ones is painful, but to suffer alone in foreign lands, away from one's dear ones, is doubly painful. Protracted lockdowns, continuing travel restrictions and ever-growing sense of isolation have physically exhausted and emotionally devastated Pakistani labourers in the Middle East and their relatives back home. To make matters worse, they have been confined to their places of residence, and thus effectively rendered jobless. Their humble earnings are exhausted. They are facing severe resource constraints that make their situation even more agonizing.

An estimated 10 million Pakistanis are spread across the globe. The biggest number of expatriates and migrant workers, an estimated 4.7 million, is in the Gulf Cooperation Countries. Saudi Arabia and the UAE are the leading destinations for the Pakistani labour diaspora.

The documented numbers of immigrants are 2.7 and 1.5 million in KSA and UAE respectively. Many of those living in the Western countries have acquired citizenship, assimilated in those societies, and are relatively better off. Similarly, those working on work or student visas have much more humane environment, better working conditions and access to legal protection.

But Pakistanis working in the Middle East do not have those privileges; they are disadvantaged and marginalized. Human rights organizations have repeatedly raised concerns regarding the non-implementation of international human rights treaties with covenants. Many of them have no access to basic health facilities. Work laws are often discriminatory in these host countries. Getting an investor's status is extremely difficult, requiring huge financial resources. Those working as skilled and unskilled labourers are at the mercy of their sponsors.

They cannot do any business in their name, and have to use the name of their sponsor. Resultantly, the business is without legal cover and can be easily taken over by the sponsor. If a business is taken over by the sponsor, the poor victim is always a loser in the court of law. Investors are required to employ a huge percentage of the human resources from the local people, while the actual work is done by the expatriates. Our labour diaspora is often working under excruciating circumstances. Such are the conditions under which our Pakistani citizens work in the Middle East.

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## VCRs, iPhones and face masks

GROWING up, I spent the early and mid-90s in Beijing. The Beijing of that time was a lot grimmer, a lot less shiny and just very different overall from the metropolis I found when I visited again almost two decades later. One of the many memories that I still have from those days is that of the ubiquitous 'citizen monitors,' chosen from local neighborhoods and communities, who were identifiable by the red armbands with text on them. Ensuring compliance with every law in a city as populous as Beijing is not a job for the police force alone. Dealing with criminals has to be prioritized above fining litterers and jaywalkers. This job fell to citizen monitors, who did not have the authority to arrest anyone, but were able to fine people for misdemeanors. Nowadays, the citizen monitors have likely been replaced by China's mass surveillance system that feeds into its Social Credit System that went operational in 2014.

Little surprise then that as medical professionals gradually began recognizing the efficacy of face masks in stemming the spread of the disease, human and automated surveillance was brought into the service of ensuring compliance with new guidelines. To be fair though, people in most far East countries (China, South Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Thailand, etc) trusted the advice from their experts and did not need to be told twice and quickly and voluntarily adopted the recommended guidelines.

Moreover, wearing masks was an ordinary sight in these countries even pre-Covid. In her June 6 article ('Is the Secret to Japan's Virus Success Right in Front of Its Face?'), Motoko Rich of the New York Times described her experience of moving to Tokyo. She recounts an experience from 10 years ago, how she had picked up a cough on the flight there. Not used to wearing masks, a family friend politely nudged her and introduced her to the cultural expectation of wearing one, particularly when showing signs of illness.

Japan presents an important case study for the effectiveness of wearing masks in public to control Covid. Japan dragged its feet on lockdowns and shutdowns, making many social distancing measures voluntary. Yet, despite a slow response and voluntary measures and an old population, Japan saw fewer deaths per million than many countries that took drastic measures to contain the pandemic, likely attributable to the one thing it did do right - the widespread use of face masks.

Meanwhile, at the culturally opposite pole of the globe, in the United States and its West European allies, people were getting largely the same news coverage and advice. But over there people are still stuck in a debate about whether mandating the wearing of masks infringes on freedoms.

We have seen videos circulating showing customers getting abusive or violent when told by retailers to mask up. Then there is us: an over-populated, under-resourced, under-educated, and under-informed developing nation, but with the same will to buck authority as the free world, even if it costs us and our families our lives. Now that even our prime minister seems to have come around to the need of wearing face masks, the question is, how can we ensure people take this guideline seriously?

# Elusive vaccine and challenges ahead

Abbas Sarwar Qureshi

**Emboldened by the initial deafening response of the international community, the siege of Kashmir wasn't enough for Prime Minister Modi. Instead, it played favourably for providing him an opportunity to give free rein to his deep-seated hatred towards Muslims. Just four months after the colonization of Kashmir, another plot was hatched to reduce Muslims to second-grade citizens within their homeland. Longstanding fear of the Indian Muslims to become stateless within a state came true**

THE world is on pins and needles, waiting for the magical drug to step into a post-Covid era leaving an awful chapter written in pain, sorrow and fear behind. A coveted slot next to Louis Pasteur, Edward Wright and Green Morton is vacant for another Messiah who would rescue millions from horrible lockdowns and thousands more from being ended up on ventilators.

In the absence of an effective vaccine, however, nations have been relying on lockdowns and confinements to counter the surge of virus. It has helped but at a very high cost. Two months long lockdowns have wreaked havoc on economies; crumbling markets and surging unemployment besides a number of other factors have caused an unprecedented global recession.

On the other hand, lockdowns have taken a serious toll on mental well-being of the people. Reportedly, psychological illnesses leading to suicides, domestic vio-

lence and separations among the people locked-in have multiplied. The world has realised that lockdown is not a permanent solution to virus; even benign and brief lockdown is not healthy as it is unnatural and contrary to man's very make-up as a social animal.

Surprisingly, on the same planet, a community of 8 million people has been braving an inhuman lockdown since 5th August, 2019 when RSS inspired BJP Government in Delhi annexed Jammu and Kashmir. The special and disputed status of the Indian Occupied Kashmir, recognised by international law and Indian constitution both, was changed unilaterally to a union territory of India ensuring unfettered powers to the Union Government to control the already besieged valley. A comprehensive enslavement plan encapsulating sweeping administrative changes aiming at altering the demographic structure of the IOK and stripping its people of their rights was devised and enforced brutally. The constitutional rampage began with abrogation of Article 370, which accorded a special status to Jammu and Kashmir and continued with revocation of Article 35 (A); division of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories; and most recently revision of Hereditary State Subject laws and implementation of Domicile Certificate Rules 2020. With these substantive and undemocratic changes, the IOK has been reduced to a colony ready to receive tens of thousands of Hindus poised to neutralise Muslim majority in the valley.

Since the start of the illegal annexation of Jammu and Kashmir in August 2019, the beleaguered people of Kashmir have been undergoing most brutal suppression by 900,000 Indian occupation forces. Communication black-out, night raids, physical torture, sexual assault, forced disappearances and indiscriminate use of pellet guns against the unarmed people raising voice for their legitimate right to self determination and liberation from perpetual tyranny of Indian fascism are a few cruel tactics employed by the ultra-national BJP Government to eliminate Kashmiris from international screen.

Emboldened by the initial deafening response of the international community, the siege of Kashmir wasn't enough for Prime Minister Modi. Instead, it played favourably for providing him an opportunity to give free rein to his deep-seated hatred towards Muslims. Just four months after the colonization of Kashmir, another plot was hatched to reduce Muslims to second-grade citizens within their homeland. Longstanding fear of the Indian Muslims to become stateless within a state came true when the Citizenship Amendment Act, contrary to the 14th Article of Indian Constitution, was introduced in December 2019 depriving only Muslims among all minorities from citizenship.

The discriminatory Act sparked nation-wide protests, confronted brutally by the Government, the protests resulted in the worst communal riots seen in decades in India. RSS trained bigots embarked on a killing spree butchering and torching Muslims and their prop-

erty wherever seen. As many as 40 Muslims were murdered only in Delhi, whereas, hundreds were critically injured, houses burnt and razed to rubble.

This time, however, the Government remained unlucky to escape world's eye. International community along with several Human Rights Organisations lambasted Indian Government's discriminatory policies. Amnesty International termed CAA as a "bigoted law that legitimises discrimination on the basis of religion". Human Rights Watch published an 82-page report "Discrimination Against Muslims under India's New Citizenship Policy", detailing how violence against Muslims was callously allowed to happen by the local administration. India's spiralling discrimination against Muslims has received even harsher criticism in the 'International Religious Freedom Report' for 2019 released by the US State Department. The report says "Mob attacks by violent Hindu groups against minority communities, including Muslims, continued throughout the year" in India and "Issues of religiously inspired mob violence, lynching and communal violence were sometimes denied or ignored by lawmakers". British Parliament echoed with scathing criticism of Indian highhandedness towards minorities. In addition, six resolutions were tabled in the European Parliament highlighting discriminatory policies of Indian Government with reference to implementation of CAA, the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam and the security lockdown and detentions in Jammu and Kashmir.

Regrettably, all this fell on deaf ears. Standing non-chalance, the Government's agenda to completely disenfranchise Muslims in India by subjecting them to unprecedented religious persecution is continuing unabated. Under Government's shadow, cow vigilantes are lynching Muslims with impunity on daily basis. Labeled as "Traitors" and "Cow Eaters" Muslims have become aliens in their own country while the Indian media continues to regale India as a secular state. The quick succession of anti-Muslim events in Indian occupied Kashmir and India especially, during Modi's 2nd term as Prime Minister and the frenzy behind these activities is a matter of grave concern. Putting things into their right perspective, demolition of Babri Masjid in 1990, Gujarat program in 2002 when Modi was Chief Minister of Gujarat, annexation of Kashmir and the current escalated brutal persecution of Muslims in India reflect systemic cleansing of Muslims to achieve a long cherished objective of RSS to establish a "Brahminical State" purported by Sadhvi Saraswati that India would be "Hindu Rashtra" by 2023. The flurry and scheme of events show that with the annexation of Kashmir, the march towards that end has entered the final and decisive phase.

Muslims have been once again, after 72 years, left with two choices: either to live under a perpetual Hindu domination and sustain a heavy curtain of painful saffron torture or leave the country. A large group of European

Parliamentarians has already voiced a similar concern through a resolution tabled in the EU Parliament which reads that "CAA has the potential to create the largest statelessness crisis in the world" which would have catastrophic consequences for the entire region.

Equally worrisome is India's heightened pursuit of regional dominance by destabilising and bleeding neighbouring states. Pakistan has long been a victim of Indian clandestine operations being carried out by RAW agents like Kulbhushan Jadhav who was arrested in 2016 in Pakistan being involved in subversive activities. At the same time, India's role of a peace spoiler, evident in the ongoing Afghan peace process, her consistent arms build-up and aggression on borders pose a continuous threat to the regional peace.

The big question is, are we ready for another major crisis amid the Covid-19 pandemic? Instead, a consensus is emerging among leading European countries for a course correction and sculpt a coordinated strategy to save humanity from future crisis. Through an excruciating experience of Coronavirus pandemic, nations have learnt that any progress devoid of human element is no progress.

Post-Covid would be an era where state's power would be determined by its capacity to protect the people from man-made and natural calamities, not in its power to inflict harm to humanity. Nations' character would be primarily judged by its response to injustices around them; not by the quality of its infrastructure. While the countries are now limping out of the lockdowns, 8 million people of Kashmir should not be left caged in, at the mercy of ferocious Indian occupation forces and fascist BJP Government. While the best efforts and billions of dollars are being invested to develop corona vaccine let the protracted wounds of humanity may not be neglected whose cures are already available.

Interestingly, vaccine for the world's oldest dispute was invented a year after the emergence of the dispute in 1947. The UNSC passed a Resolution ensuring a fundamental right of self determination to the people of Kashmir by organising a plebiscite under UN auspices. The people of Kashmir are longing for the same vaccine which has been buried under the heavy piles of narrow political and economic exigencies. Braving the long night of unprecedented oppression and torture, Kashmiris are still hopeful for a sunny day which would bring an end to their seven decades old legitimate freedom struggle. It is about time that world's major nations reorganise their national agendas as stated by French President Macron while speaking about climate change "It's clear that economy is no longer the priority, when it's a matter of humanity, women and men but also the ecosystems in which they live." Let us put humanity on the top of our agendas before the lessons of the coronavirus pandemic be forgotten.

*The writer is Pakistani Diplomat, Posted at Paris. He can be reached @abbas\_qureshi\_*

# Is social media affecting our mental health?

Shujaat Hamza



**Obviously, where there is affection and care, there is always mental connection too. This shift of our daily engagements from in-person to internet has bestowed both positive and negative effects on our mental health. We get feelings of love, cheer, jealousy, disappointment, and betrayal from our internet social circle**

SOCIAL interaction and acceptance is a basic human need. The fields of social interaction dramatically changed in the past 2 decades or so with the evolution of internet and social media. About 2 decades ago, people had their social circle revolving around family, friends from high schools or colleges and work colleagues. Since the evolution of social media, the social circle has increased significantly from just daily life friends and colleagues to people the entire world. In a mere 4 or 5 years since the introduction of social media specifically, internet family has become a thing. The role of proximity in our social relationships is gradually ending.

Obviously, where there is affection and care, there is always mental connection too. This shift of our daily engagements from in-person to internet has bestowed both positive and negative effects on our mental health. We get feelings of love, cheer, jealousy, disappointment, and betrayal from our internet social circle. There hardly passes a day without us checking on Facebook posts or twitter trends. According to Statista, a normal person spends on average about 2 and a half hours daily on social media engagements. This amount of time investment will surely have an impact on your mental health and personality. Recent studies have shown that a high percentage of young adults and grownups who excessively use social media suffer from depression.

There are multiple factors that affect our mental health. An important factor is feeling of jealousy and insecurity. It can come from our friends or even random people. It is never a

welcome sight to see our friend posting photos with their new affiliations. This is so irritating that it can severely affect our mental health. It may arise by seeing new engagements of our friends or feeling of betrayal.

Social media can even create a feeling of loneliness and being unwanted. Studies have shown that if a person spends most of his time on social media, he is more likely to suffer from loneliness and depression. In the recent survey sponsored by The Cigna Health Insurance Company, 46% of respondents reported sometimes or always feeling alone.

How big of a role does a social medium play on these high loneliness figures? That depends on how you interact with the Internet. Studies suggest that using Facebook, Snap chat, Instagram and similar social media apps to keep in touch with friends and forge off-line connections can add vitality and communion to your life.

But if you are spending hours every day using social media mainly as a substitute for real connection, your feelings of loneliness and inadequacy will likely worsen. We compare ourselves with others and get this feeling of loneliness. Every other person seems happy in their social media updates.

Meeting your friends in person and spending good time with them lessen the chances of being loneliness and having depression. Social media use, and closely related screen addiction in general, is probably just one of the many reasons people are feeling more isolated these days, our modern lifestyles, at least in certain countries, don't exactly

lend themselves to maintaining a meaningful social life.

Social media has escalated the level of impatience among people in an unprecedented way. People don't hold back their emotions and anger even if their words are damaging to next person's self esteem. It has been noticed that most people don't care about the effect their online behavior can leave on other people's personality and mental health. Netizens (Term used for the people on internet) tend to ignore the consequences of their words and tone used with others.

This is an alarming situation created by the internet and social media. We might say anything bad and indecent to other people without even knowing what affect can our remarks and comments have on their mental health and personality.

It is a need of time to counter this type of cyber bullying and harassment to make a good use of social media. A healthy society comprises some norms of respect and patience. Intolerance is a major headache for a society. And sadly, our society suffers from this headache now more than it ever did.

Person to person social engagements have always proven to be a stress reliever. Especially in these difficult times, most people have fallen into dark valleys of depression because of the fact that they can't meet their friends in person.

As glamorous as social media might look, it certainly cannot fill the social deprivation of many adults.

*The writer is a staff member.*

## Briefs

### Putin to host Russia WWII parade

MOSCOW: Thousands of Russian troops will march in Moscow on Wednesday as President Vladimir Putin brushes off virus fears to host a World War II commemoration ahead of a crucial vote on his rule. The military display in Red Square to mark 75 years since the Soviet victory in World War II had been scheduled for May 9 but the Kremlin postponed it citing requests from veterans, as coronavirus cases shot up. Putin rescheduled the event as soon as lockdown measures eased, keen to move on from an outbreak that has hit his country hard. With more than 8,000 recorded fatalities and around 580,000 confirmed COVID-19 infections, Russia has the pandemic's third largest caseload after the United States and Brazil. - APP

### Malawi braces for presidential rerun

MALAWI: Malawians return to the polls on Tuesday for a rerun of the presidential election five months after the constitutional court annulled the results of a disputed vote last year. Incumbent President Peter Mutharika had initially been declared the winner of the May 2019 election with a slim victory of 38.5%. But opposition leaders challenged the results in court citing massive irregularities. Judges agreed with them and nullified the results in February and ordered a repeat of the election. The opposition has now united under a single candidate and will take on President Mutharika - who is running for a second term in office. - APP

### Shibli grieved over demise of Talib Johari

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz on Monday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the sad demise of eminent religious scholar Allama Talib Johari. In a tweet, the minister said his services for religion would be remembered for long time. He prayed to Allah Almighty to rest his soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this loss with fortitude.

### Indian troops continue operations in IOK

ISLAMABAD: Indian troops continued their cordon and search operations in several areas of Indian occupied Kashmir. According to Kashmir Media Service, the troops launched cordon and search operation at Verinag area of Islamabad district. The troops also continued their operations in Srinagar, Kupwara, Baramulla, Bandipore, Ganderbal, Budgam, Shopian, Pulwama, Kulgam, Ramban, Kishtwar, Doda, Rjauri, Poonch, Kathua and other several towns and villages of the territory. Meanwhile, an unidentified gunman shot at and injured a Dhok Defence Committee (DDC) member at Jhompri Dal in Bhandarwah town. - APP

### 5 companies to recall 14,000 vehicles

SEOUL: Audi-Volkswagen Korea, Toyota Motor Korea, Daimler Trucks Korea and two importers of motorcycles will voluntarily recall nearly 14,000 vehicles to fix faulty components, the transport ministry said Monday. - APP

# Chinese technicians return to resume work on Hydropower project

Mohmand hydropower station project is under construction of China-Pak camp, excavation & support of access tunnel for key lines and open excavation of slope at the outlet of diversion tunnel

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chinese technicians from Gezhouba Corporation, China Energy Engineering Group (CEEC) have returned to the front line of duty after the completion of the quarantine period. They will resume work in Neelum-Jhelum hydropower plant, Suki Kinari hydropower station, Dasu hydropower plant, and Mohmand hydropower plant respectively, continuing to contribute their knowledge and strength for China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), says a report published by Gwadar Pro on Monday. More than 500 Chinese staff for these projects who had returned home for the Spring Festival were stranded at home due to the pandemic, causing an acute



shortage in manpower. Also, the logistics and customs clearance of equipment and materials could not be carried out smoothly citing the same reason, hence it poses a challenge for the company to achieve

the goal of these projects on schedule. According to the arrangement, SK hydropower station is planned to complete the excavation and support of the main powerhouse and phase II closure of the dam

by 2020; The construction of diversion tunnel, underground powerhouse and other parts of Dasu hydropower station is underway, and the dam closure is planned to be realized by the end of 2021.

Mohmand hydropower station project is under construction of China-Pakistan camp, excavation and support of access tunnel for key lines and open excavation of slope at the outlet of diversion tunnel. It is planned

to complete the excavation of the traffic tunnel to the intersection of the No. 1 diversion tunnel by 2020. To ensure the progress of each project and honour the contract, Gezhouba Group of CEEC, after sorting out key positions and special work posts, dispatched 22 Chinese technicians to facilitate the projects. To ensure the safety of the returned workers and reduce the risk of infection, the company has strictly implemented the prevention measures in the process of airport transportation, transit accommodation, nucleic acid testing service, isolation and observation. They returned to work after the test confirmed there was no infection, realizing a safe flow of the first batch of Chinese personnel since the closure of Pakistan.

The hydropower projects undertaken by Gezhouba Group of CEEC will effectively alleviate the energy shortage in Pakistan, help develop its industries and improve people's livelihood. It will significantly optimize Pakistan's power energy structure, especially reduce its dependence on high-cost and high-pollution oil fuel power plants to achieve both economic and environmental benefits. Under the situation that the task of epidemic prevention and control for Pakistan is still arduous and the pressure of production and operation is huge, the staff of Gezhouba Group, CEEC return to work with a high sense of responsibility and brotherhood to push forward the construction progress and make contributions to Pakistan's energy development, the report added.

## Pakistan's local govts disconnected from citizens

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) says that local governments around the world are at the forefront of the current Covid-19 crisis, but in Pakistan these institutions are to an extent disconnected from its citizens and "saddled with a governance style which is top down, reactive and authoritative". This has led to the weaken-

ing of the essential state-society social contract leading to marginalisation, group grievances and conflict and social resilience in the country, UNDP says in its first 'Covid-19 - Pakistan Socio-economic Impact Assessment and Response Plan'. Despite efforts to provide an adequate response to the pandemic in Pakistan, results remain poor. Traders and businessmen are dissatisfied by the federal government's unilateral decisions affecting their

businesses. Similarly, the medical health professionals are highlighting the unavailability of PPE (personal protective equipment) and the lack of an efficient system of testing and tracking. The poorer segments of the population are worried as they have lost their livelihoods, with many people relying on daily wages. As the pandemic has hit almost every segment of society and in the absence of a consensus on the strategy to adopt, frustration, insecurity

and uncertainty are widespread, the report says. The UNDP report, released on weekend, says that the Covid-19 crisis is threatening social cohesion within countries, as its impact reaches deep into our society, on the behaviour of individuals, and affects well-being and mental health. Conversely, Pakistan offers a very productive avenue for further integration and assimilation of the relation between social cohesion and community resilience.

### Indian media wants to know about Ladakh disaster

ISLAMABAD: A renowned and outspoken Indian journalist Ambreen Zaidi has written an open letter to Indian Chief of the Defence Services Gen. Bipin Rawat demanding him to speak out truth about the humiliation the Indian army suffered at Ladakh border after a bloody clash with the Chinese army. She further demanded of the Indian general to make the details of Indian soldiers' casualties and the failed strategy in the bloody tussle which left her country with a bloody nose. Ambreen a well-known journalist and blogger who had won several awards for her work, further wrote that the Indian nation wanted to know about what happened in Galwan Valley. She said, "We are facing a tough time both internally as well as externally. The members of our armed forces are not in the highest of their spirits, because of your interventions to a large extent."

### Corona pandemic still accelerating: WHO chief

DUBAI: The novel coronavirus pandemic is still accelerating and its effects will be felt for decades, the World Health Organization's director-general told an online conference on Monday. "The pandemic is still accelerating," Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told the virtual health forum organised by Dubai in the United Arab Emirates. "We know that the pandemic is much more than a health crisis, it is an economic crisis, a social crisis and in many countries a political crisis. Its effects will be felt for decades to come." - APP

## Largest single day rise in virus cases

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The world saw the largest daily increases yet in coronavirus cases, with infections soaring in India's rural villages after migrant workers fled major cities. Brazil has become the second country, after the US, to register more than 50,000 deaths from Covid-19. Two health ministers - both doctors - have resigned as deaths and infections have surged.

India's coronavirus case load climbed by nearly 15,000 as of Monday to 425,282, with more than 13,000 deaths, the health ministry reported. Infections slowed in China and South Korea, suggesting they are making headway in stemming their newest outbreaks. The World Health Organization (WHO) reported the largest single-day increase in coronavirus cases by its count, at more than 183,000 new cases in the latest 24 hours.

## Beijing in talks with India to resolve border conflict

BEIJING: China on Monday reiterated that it was in talks with India to resolve border standoff in Galwan valley of Ladakh through diplomatic and military channels. "China and India are in communication with each other to resolve the situation on the ground through diplomatic and military channels. I have no information to release on that," Chinese Foreign Ministry's Spokesperson, Zhao Lijian said

during his regular briefing held here. In the worst flare-up on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in more than five decades, 20 Indian Army personnel, including the commanding officer of 16 Bihar, were killed on June 15 night in violent face-off with Chinese troops in the Galwan valley of Ladakh where disengagement of troops on either side was underway. Zhao also declined to comment on Indian Minister

and former Indian Army Chief Gen (Retd) V K Singh's claim that more than 40 Chinese soldiers were killed in the Galwan Valley clash saying, he has no information to release on the issue. Meanwhile, according to an Indian media report, India and China are holding another round of Lt General-level talks on Monday to discuss ways to de-escalate tension between the two sides in eastern Ladakh. The high-level talks came a

week after 20 Indian Army personnel were killed in the violent clash between the two sides in the Galwan Valley. The first round of Lt Gen-level talks were held on June 6 during which both sides decided to "disengage" in all the sensitive areas. The disputed border covers nearly 2,200 miles of frontier that the two countries call the Line of Actual Control. - APP

## 2 killed, seven wounded in US shooting

The motive behind the incident - which happened around midnight - was unclear, and WBTV cited witnesses as saying the Juneteenth gatherings in the area all weekend had been a "happy, peaceful celebration"

WASHINGTON: Two people were killed and seven wounded in a shooting at a block party in the eastern US city of Charlotte, local media reported Monday. Five others were hurt when they were hit by vehicles during the gathering, which CBS affiliate station WBTV reported was part of extended celebrations over the Juneteenth holiday,

which commemorates the end of slavery in the United States. Police said they had responded initially to reports of a pedestrian hit by a car, but arrived to find hundreds of people scattered on the streets when shots were heard, according to WBTV. The station cited police as saying there is evidence

multiple shooters were involved. The motive behind the incident - which happened around midnight - was unclear, and WBTV cited witnesses as saying the Juneteenth gatherings in the area all weekend had been a "happy, peaceful celebration." Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department said their

detectives were investigating a homicide in Beatties Ford Road - the same street identified by WBTV. "One person has been pronounced deceased at the scene. Several other victims have been transported by Medic with gunshot wounds," the department said on Twitter, without offering more details. - APP

## China's quick response to COVID-19 praised

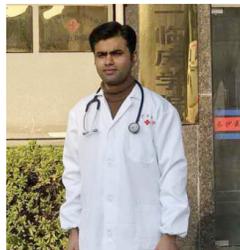
I know every year it is a time of excitement and joy. Nevertheless, under the lockdown, it was such empty outsides. It made me sad. Every day there was news that more and more people were infected with this mysterious virus and deaths were increasing, for which I was heart-broken

DNA

CHANGSHA: China's overall response to COVID-19 pandemic was extraordinary and he felt secured and protected during the crisis period in Changsha, Hunan Province," said Muhammad Usman Janjua, a Pakistani doctor who works at Changsha Medical University (CSMU). "My life is now back to normal, except for wearing mask," Usman told Gwadar Pro that as China and Pakistan are Iron-brothers, Pakistanis like China and Chinese people. China is a safe country, and it is a significant relief for my parents. "After I came here, I fell in love with this place. That is why I came back

here in 2016 to continue studies. Now I am working here," said Dr. Usman.

Like many people, Usman's life was changed by the sudden outbreak of COVID-19 in January 2020. He recalled that at the beginning of January, everyone was happy as after the exams they would go back home to celebrate the Spring Festival with their families. He said, "I know every year it is a time of excitement and joy. Nevertheless, under the lockdown, it was such empty outsides. It made me sad. Every day there was news that more and more people were infected with this mysterious virus and deaths were increasing, for which I was heart-broken." Usman said, "At that time, I wanted to help. My heart beats with my Chinese brothers. If I can offer



my services in Wuhan in this difficult hour, it would be a moment of pride for me and my country - Pakistan." Usman told Gwadar Pro that during the years in China, whenever he faced even a minor problem, Chinese friends and colleagues

helped him. Chinese people have always splendidly treated him. He has never felt like a foreigner here. "I am prepared to serve the country which has given me so much respect and love ...," wrote Usman in the application letter as a volunteer in Wuhan, then epicenter of the pandemic to the Foreign Experts Service Office of Science and Technology Department of Hunan Province. After this, many Chinese people expressed their thanks to him, which moved Usman. As a doctor, Usman feels that the Chinese government has taken "adequate and powerful" measures at the right time to tackle the virus. Chinese authorities took early decisions to impose lockdown on affected cities and the Chinese government set-up quarantine centers.

Temporary hospitals were established on an urgent basis to treat the patients. The Chinese people must be appreciated as they followed the rules strictly. Healthcare staff have been working around the clock to help the patients without caring for their safety in this dangerous situation. Another thing is, at that time when transportation was less, the Chinese government was still able to provide enough food and items of daily usage to the public. So, overall the response of China to this pandemic was extraordinary and other countries should adopt the same model, twenty-nine year-old Usman who had obtained bachelor's degree (2007-2012) and master's degree (2016-2019) added.

### Pakistan opens Ghulam Khan Terminal

ISLAMABAD: The government of Pakistan has decided to open the third border terminal at Ghulam Khan on Monday (today) for bilateral trade and to allow transit trade and import from Afghanistan through Torkham and Chaman border terminals as well. "This arrangement on trade will be in operation for 6 days a week. Saturdays will be reserved for pedestrian movement on these border crossing terminals. These steps are being taken after implementing all necessary protocols related to COVID-19 pandemic," the foreign office spokesperson in a press release the other day said. - APP



## NCHD to avail services of 2,929 volunteers for COVID-19

This project will enable individuals at grass-root level to take precautionary measures against spread of coronavirus and reinforce the awareness

ISLAMABAD: National Commission Human Development (NCHD) would avail services of its 2,929 volunteers in 16 districts to create awareness against COVID-19 pandemic. Director General NCHD, Hassan Baig said, it is a joint initiative of NCHD and Pakistan Human Development Fund (PHDF) to support government and people to fight COVID-19, said a news release. He said under the pilot project, 96,100 households of Muzaffargarh, Sargodha, DG Khan, Khairpur Shikarpur Sukkar, Mardan, Lakki Marwat, Buner, Kech, Zhob and Washuk, Kotli Muzaffarabad, Sakuru and Gilgit will receive training to prepare sanitizers at home. "This project will enable individuals at grass-root level to take precautionary measures against spread of coronavirus and reinforce the awareness among com-

munities of remote areas regarding corona virus," he informed. It is a pilot project which would benefit 672,700 community members in 1,922 locations identified in 16 districts, he said adding, 2600 goodie bags containing masks, soaps and sanitizers and 400 ration bags to needy people would also be distributed among general public under the project. - APP