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Hands of Modi stained with Muslims' blood: PM Imran Khan

Army Chief thanks Japan for help in COVID-19

Iranian envoy welcomes PM Imran statement



Briefs

PML-N leadership in confusion, says Shibli

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz said on Friday that ever since the sugar commission report was made public the PML-N leadership had been in a state of confusion. In a tweet, the minister said PML-N leader Ahsan Iqbal advocated for the sugar mafia today. He said that PML-N leaders know that the sugar mafia was led by their leadership. Shibli Faraz said that within three months everyone involved in sugar scam would be exposed and the masses would know how they were robbed. He expressed the hope that soon the consumers would get sugar at cheaper rates. — APP

Khawaja Asif skips NAB appearance

ISLAMABAD: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on Friday served a fresh summons on Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Khawaja Muhammad Asif after he failed to turn up in the Sialkot housing society case today. The anti-graft watchdog directed him to appear on July 3 along with relevant documents at NAB's Lahore office. A lawyer appeared before the bureau on behalf of the PML-N leader stating that his client can't appear today because he will be attending a post-budget session in the National Assembly.

'CPEC peak of Pak-China friendship'

ISLAMABAD: The Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, Yao Jing, called on the Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue, Dr Abdul Hafeez Shaikh in Islamabad Friday. Several matters of mutual interest were discussed during the meeting. He also informed the Ambassador of the initiatives that were being undertaken to stimulate the economy in these difficult and uncertain times. Mr. Jing said that China placed the highest value on its fraternal relations with Pakistan and thanked the Adviser for his consistent support. *Picture on Back Page*

Hands of Modi stained with Muslims' blood

Torture and other atrocities on innocent people of Occupied Kashmir are being perpetrated in a systematic way: Imran

DNA
MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Friday that Indian extremist government of Narendra Modi has intensified its atrocities on people of Occupied Kashmir. He said use of pellet guns, abduction of youth, mass graves and other heinous crimes are increasing. The Prime Minister said the torture and other atrocities on innocent people of Occupied Kashmir are being perpetrated in a systematic way. The Prime Minister was addressing a gathering in Muzaffarabad. He said the hands of Narendra

Modi are stained with the blood of Muslims in India. He said current government is following the ideology of RSS that was founded after inspiring from the violent and racist ideology of Nazism. The Prime Minister expressed fear of genocide of Kashmiri Muslims by extremist government of India. Imran Khan said the Hindutva mentality of Indian government considers minorities as low class and inferior people. This thinking will ultimately lead to destruction of India. The Prime Minister said he as ambassador of Kashmir has been highlighting the plight of Kashmiris at all

international forums. He said during his meetings with various heads of state and governments, he effectively raised the issue of the dangers posed by current Indian regime. Imran Khan said this year the 5th August will be marked in a befitting manner with the determination that India will not be allowed to succeed in its designs. The Prime Minister said despite tough financial situation due to COVID-19, the government has increased the budgets for AJK, Gilgit Baltistan and merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said India cannot crush the will of freedom of Kashmiris.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Republic of Korea Kwak Sung-kyu and representatives of Korean companies handing over masks to KPK govt, at the Korean embassy. — DNA

Pakistan lodges protest with India

DNA
ISLAMABAD: A senior Indian diplomat was summoned to register Pakistan's strong protest over the ceasefire violations by the Indian occupation forces along the Line of Control (LoC) in Karel Sector, on 25th June 2020, resulting in serious injuries to an innocent civilian. Due to indiscriminate and unprovoked firing by the Indian occupation forces, 28 year old Madeeha Hafeez w/o Muhammad Tahir, resident of Batla Mathrani village, sustained serious injuries. Foreign Ministry said the Indian occupation forces along the LoC and the Working Boundary (WB) have continuously been targeting civilian populated areas with artillery fire, heavy-caliber mortars and automatic weapons. In 2020, India has so far committed 1487 ceasefire violations resulting in 13 shahadats and serious injuries to 106 innocent civilians.

Korean companies provide 10,000 masks

In last April, the Korean govt provided \$300,000 to the WHO in Pakistan to support Pakistan's response in controlling the spread of COVID-19

DNA
ISLAMABAD: In an effort to help contain the spread of COVID-19 in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the Korean companies including the consortium of Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power (KHNP) and LOTTE Engineering & Construction, and Korea Energy AsritKedam (KOAK) Power, handed over 10,000 pieces of made-in-Korea washable-and-reusable face masks to the KP government. At the handing-over ceremony at the Korean Embassy, Kwak Sung-kyu, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Pakistan, Himayatullah Khan, Advisor to Chief Minister for Energy, accompanied by Muhammad Zubair, Energy Secretary, Ahn Ho-young, Chief Representative of LOTTE Engineering & Construction Pakistan Branch Office, and Mr. Kim Kyung-sik, CEO of KOAK Power were present. The Advisor expressed his gratitude on behalf of the KP government for the good-will gesture of the Korean companies. Regarding it as appreciable beyond a simple act of corporate social responsibility, Ambassador Kwak highly appreciated the Korean investors' initiative in support of the local community during this trying time. It is worth mentioning that in last April, the Korean government provided \$300,000 to the World Health Organization in Pakistan to support Pakistan's response in controlling the spread of COVID-19, and the Korean investors in Pakistan's hydropower sector also joined in contributing to this cause by providing additional \$47,000.

Army Chief thanks Japan



COAS appreciated Japan's contributions to Pakistan in fight against COVID-19. Visiting dignitary praised Pakistan's role for peace and stability in the region

A.M.BHATTI
ISLAMABAD: Kuninori Matsuda, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan called on General Qamar Javed

Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS). During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, regional security situation and measures to enhance bilateral cooperation were

discussed. COAS appreciated Japan's contributions to Pakistan in fight against COVID-19. Visiting dignitary praised Pakistan's role for peace and stability in the region.

4 more Kashmiris martyred

DNA
SRINAGAR: Indian troops in their fresh acts of state terrorism martyred four more Kashmiris including an 8-year-old boy in Pulwama and Islamabad districts, today. These killings raised the number of slain Kashmiris in the territory to six since yesterday. The troops martyred three youth during a cordon and search operation in Tral area of Pulwama district. Earlier, two Indian troops were injured in an attack in the area. The occupation authorities snapped mobile internet service in the area.

Iranian envoy welcomes PM Imran statement

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Iran "Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini" in his tweet on Friday said "we appreciate and support Prime Minister Imran Khan's statements regarding interests and unity of Muslims". Earlier speaking in the National Assembly, Prime Minister Khan said his country's efforts to end tensions in the region would continue, but there are some spoilers who are against Iran-Saudi



Arabia relations. The premier said that Pakistan is trying its best to improve relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia. He said Pakistan would become a country to unite Muslim Ummah. Prime Minister Imran Khan visited Iran on October 13, 2019 with the aim of promoting peace and security in the region. During the visit, he met with Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif. Political observers in Pakistan believe that Imran Khan, as a Muslim leader, must play his part in resolving the differences among the Muslim countries.

Total cases in June lower than predicted: Asad

Detailing the reasons behind the reduction in figures, Umar said: "Most people realised their responsibility. Not everyone realised [their responsibility] and as a result, the government had to take some measures"

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Planning Minister Asad Umar on Friday said that the National Command and Control Centre (NCCO), after reviewing recent Covid-19 figures, believes that the number of nationwide cases by the end of June will be 225,000 or less. Earlier, the government had predicted that there would be around 300,000 cases by the end of this month. Umar, while addressing the media alongside Information Minister Shibli Faraz, said that the reduction in the projected figures "proves that if we all do the right thing and everyone performs their duty on an individual level while the government does its job on a communal level, a significant success in curbing the spread can be seen". Detailing the reasons behind the reduction in figures, Umar said: "Most people realised their responsibility. Not everyone realised [their responsibility] and as a result, the government had to take some administrative measures. "As a result, we are now looking at 225,000 cases instead of 300,000 — which we initially feared." He also explained some measures taken by the NCCO to curb the spread of the novel coronavirus. On May 30, the body issued a guideline, deeming it compulsory to wear a mask at crowded places.

Munawar Hasan passes away



DNA
KARACHI: Former Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Syed Munawar Hasan passed away on Friday at a local hospital where he was undergoing treatment. Hasan had been undergoing medical treatment at a local hospital in Karachi for the past few weeks, where he breathed his last. As per reports, his health had improved over the past few days. He started his politics from the National Students Federation (NSF) platform and went on to become its president in 1959. He joined the Islami Jamiat-e-Taliba organisation in June 1960 and went on to become its president in 1963. Hasan was respected by his peers in politics and regarded with respect by his rivals. He was the fourth JI chief who led the party from March 2009 to 2014.

Sanjrani for promising partnership with IPC

A memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was administered between the two sides in the presence of Founding President of IPC

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani has expressed hope to maintain a promising and fulfilling working relationship and partnership between the International Parliamentarians' Congress and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung from the platform of International Parliamentarians' Congress (IPC). The Country Director who called on Chairman Senate / Founder President IPC along with a delegation appreciated the initiative of Chairman Senate of launching IPC to bring together parliamentarians from around the globe on a single platform to discuss issues and proposals, share experiences, learn from each other's examples



and deliberate for further collaboration. A memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was administered between the two sides in the presence of Founding President of IPC. Country Director FES and Assistant Secretary General IPC signed the MOU to mark the beginning of a relationship and collaboration that will not only foster ties between the two organisations but will also act as a stepping stone for making the International Parliamentarians' Congress a meaningful platform in times to come on a global level. Furthermore, FES has appreciated the report of IPC Committee about UK Election and also shown interest for providing support to future events related to IPC's Committee on Monitoring and observation of Elections in the world.

Zardari's indictment on 6th

DNA
ISLAMABAD: An accountability court in Islamabad has decided to indict former president Asif Ali Zardari via video link on July 6 in the Park Lane reference. It is a part of the fake accounts cases against the Pakistan Peoples Party leader. The court had initially decided to indict him on June 26 (Friday) but the date was deferred as the PPP co-chairperson could not appear in court on Friday. Zardari filed for an exemption from appearance. His lawyer, Farooq H Naek, said that it is difficult for him to travel from Karachi to Islamabad.

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Business community urges SBP slash interest rate down

Pakistani couple shows solidarity with China

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Briefs

Attock sees drastic jump in COVID-19 cases

DNA

ATTOCK: A 75-Year-Old man died from Covid-19 in Attock and 22 more people were diagnosed with the disease, district health authorities have confirmed. There have now been 415 cases of Covid-19 in Attock district and 28 deaths. According to spokesperson of district Emergency service said that the deceased was a 75-Year-Old man from samaa village of district attock. He was admitted in CMH hospital. Where he tested positive for COVID-19. Rescue Officer said that he was buried according to the COVID-19 protocol. According to the district focal person for COVID-19 Dr Asif Arbab Niazi said that 22 new cases were reported in the district raising tally to 415. There has been an alarming spike in the district, with the highest single day rise in COVID-19 cases. One positive patient also succumbed to novel coronavirus in Attock raising death toll to 28. Dr. Niazi said that so far safe burial of as many as 42 patients was carried out in different parts of the district. According to District Attock focal person for Covid-19, Dr Asif Arbab Niazi, among 22 new cases, 13 belongs to Attock, 04 are from Hazro Tehsil, 01 from Fatehjang, 03 from Pindi Gheb and 01 from Jand and on While giving details about the active patients in various tehsils of the district, he informed that there are 90 in Attock City, 33 in Hazro, 15 in Hassanabdal, 01 in Fateh Jang, 11 in Jand and 10 in Pindi Gheb. He said as many as 06 patients were under-treatment at various hospitals of the district in which Four are Stable and Two are critical while other 158 positive patients are under home isolation.

Water inflow in rivers jumps to 409,300 cusecs

ISLAMABAD: Water inflow in major rivers has further jumped to 409,300 cusecs from 380,000 cusecs due to melting of snow and rainy season. According to River System Authority (IRSA) the water inflow was recorded as 409,300 cusecs against outflow of 316,000 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA water inflow in the Indus River at Tarbela was recorded as 183,700 cusecs against outflow of 115,000 cusecs. The water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1452.72 feet, which was 66.72 feet higher than its dead level 1386 feet. Similarly, water inflow in the Jhelum River at Mangla dam was witnessed as 49,600 cusecs against outflow of 25,000 cusecs.

Footwear exports increase 4.29 %

ISLAMABAD: The footwear exports from the country witnessed an increase of 4.29 percent during the eleven months of current financial year (2019-20) as compared to the corresponding period of last year. Pakistan exported footwear worth US \$114.860 million during July-May (2019-20) against the exports of \$110.140 million during July-May (2018-19), showing a growth of 4.29 percent, according to the latest data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). In terms of quantity, the exports of footwear also increased by 12.62 percent by going up from 11,887 metric tons to 13,388 metric tons, according to the data. - APP



ISLAMABAD: A view of dark cloud covering the city before heavy rain in the federal capital. - APP

MWHA demands reopening of Marquees and Wedding Halls in Islamabad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Marquees and Wedding Halls Association (MWHA) visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and demanded of the government to allow reopening of their businesses as putting ban on holding functions in marquees and marriage halls have resulted in financial crisis for them and rendered thousands of workers jobless. Luqman Afzal TheMonal, Mukhtar Abbas Paradise Marquee, Sheikh Jamshed Orchid Marquee, Ashraf Shahbaz Blessings Marquee, Bakhtawar Butt Clay Oven Marquee, WaqarSahi Fortress and Salman Ashraf Hanif Rajput were in the delegation. Tahir Abbasi Senior Vice President ICCI, Khalid Chaudhry, Naveed Malik, AshfaqChatha, Faheem Khan and others were also present at the occasion. Addressing the delegation, Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President, Islam-

abad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that marquees and wedding halls were generating lot of economic activity as business of many other sectors was linked with this industry. He said these businesses were suffering great losses due to routine expenditures including rent, staff wages and utility bills due to lockdown and government should allow them to reopen to save them from further destruction. He said thousands of workers were earning livelihood from these businesses and keeping them closed would give rise to poverty. He said when other businesses have been opened with SOPs, marquees and wedding halls should also be reopened as their owners were ready to operate their businesses in compliance with laid out SOPs. He said that these businesses were also contributing towards tax revenue and government would also lose tax revenue by keeping them closed. He further said that gov-



ernment should allow marquees and wedding halls to pay their utility bills in 3-4 monthly instalments. Speaking at the occasion, the members of Marquees & Wedding Halls Association (MWHA) said that owners of marquees and wedding halls were now

on the verge of bankruptcy and if they were not allowed to reopen, 80% businesses of this industry would face permanent closure. They stressed that government should announce a relief package for this industry and allow them to reopen so that they could

start future bookings. They said their industry was completely shut down on 14th March, 2020 on a short notice due to which thousands of workers have lost their jobs causing extreme poverty to their families. They said due to closure

of marquees and wedding halls, many other allied businesses including meat, poultry, jewelers, bridal clothing, florist, furniture, crockery suppliers, tent services, waiter suppliers, wedding bands, valet staff, lighting and generator suppliers were also suffer-

ing losses. They said their business was much safer and they would run business according to SOPs. They said they have a complete plan to safeguard the health of their customers and workers and government should give them a date for reopening.

AIOU to hold all Post-Graduate Workshops Online from July 13

MAHNOOR BUTT

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) will start holding course workshops for Post-Graduate programs Spring semester 2020 Online from July 13 at the main campus as well as regional campuses of the university across the country. This was decided in a meeting of the University's Principal officers, Deans and Head of Academic Departments, held here under the chairmanship of Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum. Speaking on this occasion Prof. Dr. Zia-ul-Qayyum urged the faculty members to produce good quality content. He said that the university was making all efforts to provide affordable

and uninterrupted online facilities to both teachers and students during the workshops. He said that the university was engaged in telecommunication companies to get discounted rates for the students. Necessary training of the resource persons and tutors for the purpose will be held from June 28 that aimed at ensuring quality assurance in contents' delivery. Resource persons of these workshops will be mainly from academic staff of the University. However, each department could also outsource lectures of the workshops if the number of existing faculty members is found limited. As per the decision, the workload of the faculty members will be: Lecturer-four courses, Asst: Professor three courses,

Associate Prof. two courses and Professor One course. Besides this, the essential workload of each faculty member will be allowed to teach 2-3 courses extra on payment. The Director ICT informed the meeting that the University has upgraded its IT capacity both in terms of hardware and software at the main Campus as well as the Regional offices across the country. Besides the main Campus, regions have also been equipped with webcam, sound system and multimedia. Moreover, load-balancing and connectivity of the internet have also been improved, he informed. The number of servers has been raised up to four recently hence 120 classes will be held in each time slot simultaneously, he added.

Coronavirus sinking economies

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the business community and former President ICCI Shahid Rasheed Butt on Friday said coronavirus is sinking economies and hurting masses. The losses are surpassing projections, as the changing consumer behaviour has also become a threat to the economies worldwide. Majority of the people are now preferring savings and spending on essentials which is not enough to keep the economy moving on desired pace, he said, adding that people like to remain confined to homes which have damaged hotels, restaurants, garments, leisure and many other sectors.

FPCCI hails reduction in key policy rate

FIAZ CHAUDHRY

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) president Mian Anjum Nisar on Friday hailed the central bank to reduce discount rate by 100 basis points to 7% in an unscheduled meeting of Monetary Policy Committee which has so far dropped the key interest rate by 6.25% from 13.25% since March 17, 2020. He said the rate slash is a welcome move, but only 100bps (basis points) reduction is not enough. In the prevailing circumstances, interest rate at 7 percent is not feasible for the businesses, he said. "FPCCI hopes

the central bank will consider the plights of the business community and rates would be brought to 5 percent soon," he added. He said that the businessmen's apex body welcomes the central bank's move to cut the interest rates by 1 percent, urging it to bring discount rate to at least 5 percent in line with global financial trend. "This is commendable step of the State Bank, as it has now started shifting toward supporting trade and industrial growth and employment generation which is not possible without sizeable cut in key policy rate," he added. He said that the banks should now also be advised to follow the lines of SBP immediately accordingly.

Rs 1.97 bln disbursed under Ehsaas program

SARGODHA: A total of Rs1.97 billion has been distributed among 163,000 deserving across the district so far under Ehsaas Emergency Cash Program and Chief Minister Insaf Imdad Program. This was disclosed by Assistant Director Benazir Income Support Program, Sargodha Abbas Gondal in a briefing given to Deputy Commissioner Abdullah Nayar Sheikh here on Friday. He said that due to fingerprints issue and deaths of some people, 100 per cent target of the Emergency Program could not be achieved. - APP

RCCI to hold online business conference

"Our speaker guest will be known business tycoons including CEO Nayatel Wahaj us Siraj, Managing Director Daraz Ehsan Saya and Senior Economist from World Bank Gonzalao J. Varela"

ISLAMABAD: Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (RCCI) is holding an online business conference titled "ASPIRE-Premier Business Conference-2020" today. The Conference will focus on E-commerce and it would provide platform for business community, women entrepreneurs and youth said an official on Friday. "Our speaker guest will be known business tycoons in-



cluding CEO Nayatel Wahaj us Siraj, Managing Director Daraz Ehsan Saya and Senior Economist from World

Bank Gonzalao J. Varela," he added. He further mentioned that skilled and accomplished business owners will share the strategies with the participants of the conference to run business successfully during COVID 19 and Post COVID 19. This conference will undoubtedly prove to be a great support for entrepreneurs, moreover it would eliminate unemployment to some extent, he vowed.

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Diplomatic row

BOTH India and Pakistan are under the grip of a severe Covid-19 pandemic. Both have failed to contain the spread of the virus and mismanaged the disease resulting in spiraling of infections. Under these circumstances, when all their attention and energies should be focused solely on fighting the virus and providing the best possible medical help to their people, India has triggered a totally uncalled for and unwarranted diplomatic row that has been allowed to erupt and escalate to dangerous levels.

Pakistan has asked India to reduce its staff strength in the Indian High Commission in Islamabad by 50 percent. This was in retaliation to a similar demand from the Indian government in New Delhi. The foreign ministry of Pakistan summoned the Indian charge d'affaires in Islamabad to convey the decision as a reciprocal measure. Both countries have been involved in repeated diplomatic rows in the past too, but seldom does it happen that the high commission staff is reduced to half its strength.

The recent spat is the result of claims by both sides that they harass each other's high commission staff members in their respective capitals. Now there are just seven days allowed to implement the decision. In the first place the Indian accusation that triggered the row was preposterous as it claims that the Pakistani High Commission is involved in 'illegal activities'. Of course, Pakistan dismissed these allegations as its staff has been working under strict adherence to international law and diplomatic norms. Then the Indian government went a step further by accusing Pakistan of intimidation – whatever that means – of Indian High Commission officials in Islamabad. Pakistan also has a counterclaim that two Indian staffers were involved in 'illegal activities' including a hit-and-run accident and possession of fake currency. Pakistan Foreign Minister Shan Mahmood Qureshi has rightly pointed out that if India expels Pakistani officials, Indian staff members will have to leave Pakistan, meaning Pakistan takes action similar to India's action. Now, there is an immediate need to de-escalate this diplomatic tension and both countries should respect diplomatic norms. The onus of this respect falls more on India as it has been not only violating the truce on the line of control (LoC) but has also resorted to targeting Pakistani staff in India.

India has been levelling baseless allegations and is trying to divert the attention of its people from the Modi government's mismanagement of Covid-19. The BJP government has been desperately trying to do something that keeps the people of India involved in border and diplomatic issues, be it with China, Nepal, or Pakistan. By doing this, India is minimizing chances of improvement in relations with nearly all its neighbours including Pakistan. As the Indian government finds itself under constant pressure to prove its performance domestically, it is masquerading with an aggressive posture against its neighbours.

India must learn some lessons from its border misadventure with China, and from its failed attempts to browbeat Pakistan. Both countries need diplomatic peace and border normalization as this is not the time to grind teeth at each other. Without India assuming a more reconciliatory stance, peace is impossible and the main loser in that will be the people of this region.



NFC order

IN an appreciable move, the Balochistan High Court (BHC) has set aside the presidential notification to constitute the 10th National Finance Commission (NFC). President Dr Arif Alvi had formed the commission last month to review the resource allocation to provinces from the federal divisible pool. The BHC has also ruled that the appointment of NFC members was unconstitutional, and the two-member bench that also annulled the appointment of Adviser to the PM Abdul Hafeez Sheikh. Similarly the federal finance secretary has also been removed from the NFC as a member. The BHC has invoked Article 160 of the constitution of Pakistan for its implementation and ordered that the procedure for the appointment of NFC members must be in accordance with the constitutional provisions. This means that the governor of Balochistan will have to appoint a new member from the province on the recommendation of Chief Minister Jam Kamal.

What the court has ruled was something many finance and legal experts had also been saying. And many had questioned the government's disregard for constitutional and legal formalities. The recent dismissal of the presidential reference against Justice Qazi Faez Isa is another case in point. It seems that the finance and legal teams of the government take leave of their legal obligations in these matters and move headlong in suggesting various steps to the president. Since the NFC is a constitutional entity that need not be tinkered with – as it distributes financial resources among the federating units – utmost care should have been taken while appointing its members and developing its terms of reference.

The formation of the 10th NFC has already been delayed, resulting in undesirable procrastination in the review of the NFC Award. Constitutionally speaking, every five years the government of Pakistan must form a new NFC and revise the award. In this matter, consensus development should take priority over all other considerations. Finally, we must stress that a new NFC must be constituted without delay and appropriate members should be notified from each province.

Second, the ToR must be strictly in accordance with the essential responsibilities of the NFC as stipulated in the constitution, without trying to stretch its domain to include matters that are beyond its pale. Since it is the Ministry of Finance that leads this exercise, as a first step the government needs to appoint a full-time finance minister to avoid further embarrassment. The ToR that includes matters such as natural disasters and security must be rectified and focus on the NFC's primary responsibilities.

India's Territorial flare-ups: Modi's Deleterious Game in Asia

Lt. Col. Khalid Taimur Akram (Retd)



Well-familiar with the expansionist Indian ambitions, Nepal has chosen to strengthen its ties with China. This has added to the worries of the BJP government, which had not only alienated one of its historical allies but also created a condition for China's growing influence in the Himalayan nation. China is flexing its muscles along the Indian border and has given a clear indication that undermining its strategic interests and stability of the region will come with a heavy cost for India

WAR' in contemporary times is like a strange game where the only winning move is not to play. This advice holds great relevance under current circumstances for India. India's warmongering approach toward its neighbors is a futile venture and would be detrimental not only for its regional rivals, China or Pakistan but for India itself too. The sooner India realizes this politico-military reality, the more it would add to regional peace and stability.

Soon after assuming power in India, the Modi administration has vehemently demanded a "once and for all" solution to all Indian external disputes without foreseeing the larger picture and its repercussions. While the world is grappling with the most disastrous issue of its time – the COVID-19 pandemic – India has started to aggravate border problems with two of its neighbors; China and Nepal. For Modi, India's non-retaliation is equated with powerlessness and loss. However, the reality holds that the much-vaunted Indian military might is nothing but subterfuge, and Modi's continual misadventures in the region are meant to obliterate all signs of BJP government's incompetent leadership and failure in India.

India's border issues and are not new. The India-China border problem dates back to the 1962 war. The lack of a demarcated boundary between the two countries continues despite countless rounds of talks. Likewise, the India-Nepal boundary issue is also decades old. Both countries claim territory that lies at the tri-junction of India, Nepal, and China. Tensions have recently erupted owing to Kathmandu's objection of India inaugurating a road connecting the Lipulekh pass with Dharchula in Uttarakhand. India claims that the road lies within Pithoragarh district, to give Indian pilgrims easier access to Kailash Mansarovar. Nepal's stance, however, holds that Lipulekh, Kalapani, and Limpiyadhura belongs to Nepal.

These acts of aggression by India to expand its territorial reach is probably a tipping point defining the future of Asia. Modi's ideology is wedded to the principle of ends justifying the means. More worryingly, the contours of this new emerging dynamics will be based on the confrontation rather than cooperation. India's aggressive and hegemonic designs will lock both countries in a costly and exhausting conflict, similar to the one India is enduring with Pakistan. Taking the risk of nuclear war, besides Pakistan, PM Modi is acting upon the dangerous strategy against

China and Nepal.

India's Failed Regional Strategy

New Delhi has been observing China's increasing influence in South Asia with growing alarm and apprehensions. From ever-deepening ties with Pakistan to stretching its military muscle at the Bhutan border, drawing in a Free Trade Agreement with the Maldives, expanding border trade with Nepal, and acquiring the strategic Hambantota port in Sri Lanka, Beijing's presence is felt in every corner of the region. For India, these developments have been a cause for great concern and anxiety. India skeptically views it as a warning that the political dominance it has enjoyed in the region is likely to be irrevocably lost. China is the worst-hit country due to the COVID-19 pandemic, whereas Pakistan along with the entire world is undergoing the hardest period of the century. At a critical time like this, India is distracting and diverting world attention, and exploiting it to frame the geostrategic dynamics of the region according to its interests. India is posing a grave threat to the territorial integrity of its neighbors.

Pakistan is a consistent strategic partner of China whereas Nepal has proximity with the East Asian nation, and both of them are key allies under the Belt and Road Initiative of China. If India escalates border tensions, it could face a similar response from two or even three fronts, which is far beyond India's military capability and this might lead to a tragic defeat for India. For Pakistan, its eastern border with India has always remained a challenge. India has been violating the ceasefire and breaching international law since 1947. PM Modi, BJP and RSS are acting upon the ideology of Hindutva. The abrogation of the special status of the Jammu and Kashmir, continued lockdown in the IOK, the introduction of new domicile law against the majority of, persecution of religious minorities espe-

cially Muslims, discriminatory policies against minorities were the recent attempts of Modi government to increase tensions with Pakistan. It is now looking to create trouble for its neighbors, China, and Nepal. India's traditional strategy has been offensive toward its bordering states since its independence.

Modi's clear intentions are to change the status quo along the disputed borders without foreseeing its longer repercussions. Thus, with its expansionist policies, India is becoming a threat to its neighbors, and resolving the disputes through coercive rather than cooperative measures will be detrimental for regional security and stability. India's aggressive and hegemonic foreign policy in South Asia is underpinned by realist ideologies.

The Malignant BJP-RSS Nexus:

More recently, extremist narratives and nationalist ideologies have profoundly reshaped India's bilateral relations with its neighbors, which helps explain why border disputes between Nepal and India have re-escalated. From a security viewpoint, the increasing military and economic dominance of China is the major reason for political and military anxiety in India. Thus, from the period between 1952 and 1969, India operated 18 military check-posts on Nepal's western frontier to contain Chinese military threats.

As the rise of China transforms political order in South Asia, India seems keen to confront rather than cooperate with China. India's right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party's central agenda revolves around a purely communal and ultra-nationalist agenda called 'Hindutva'. The Hindutva movement has entered the consolidation phase under the Modi Government. Its ideological agenda is dictated by Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which was banned in India in 1948, 1975, and 1992 for its involvement in terrorism, extremism, and violence.

RSS's vision of an Akhand Bharat theoretically stretches from Pakistan to Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Myanmar and Indonesia. This ideology has greatly been inculcated into the thinking of Indian citizens. To put this into perspective, India's construction of the road through Nepal creates a shorter, more feasible, and less costly route for the Kailash-Mansarovar yatra pilgrimage that any Hindu devotee would dream of making. This makes the road a nationalist project that appeals to the BJP's Hindu voter base.

India's Troubled Relations with Neighbors:

Analyzing the dynamics of South Asia, India has created problems with its neighbors as well as other smaller countries of the wider region, from military conflicts and water disputes to border skirmishes. India has until now enjoyed a singularly dominant position in South Asia. Since its independence, India has exerted unilateral political influence over its smaller neighbors, except Pakistan and Afghanistan. Observing its pattern over the past decades, India as annexed Sikkim, carried out military interventions in Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bangladesh and Bhutan, coerced its neighbors with open war threats and intervened in their domestic affairs. The Modi government has intensified this trend by maintaining lopsided economic and political arrangements, serving only the Indian hegemonic interests.

With the advent of the Belt and Road Initiative of China, the smaller countries of South Asia have begun balancing against India by developing economic relations with Beijing. The South Asian states have been wary of the presence of the Indian giant amidst them even before the partition of the sub-continent, however, these fears have mounted with the onset of RSS inspired BJP's assertive foreign policy of India. Therefore, the smaller regional states actively tried to get out from under New Delhi's thumb.

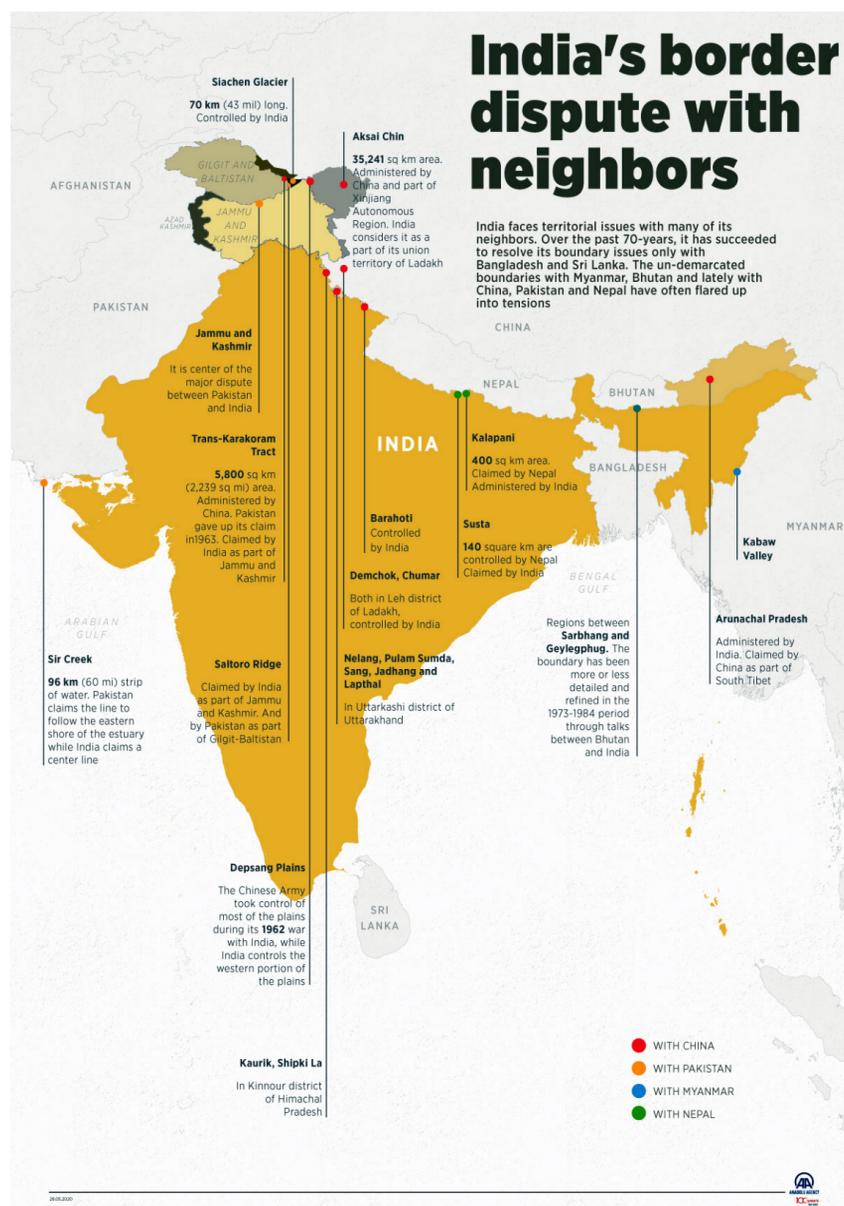
Well-familiar with the expansionist Indian ambitions, Nepal has chosen to strengthen its ties with China. This has added to the worries of the BJP government, which had not only alienated one of its historical allies but also created a condition for China's growing influence in the Himalayan nation. China is flexing its muscles along the Indian border and has given a clear indication that undermining its strategic interests and stability of the region will come with a heavy cost for India. Against this backdrop, India must accept this reality and realize that its dream of regional dominance is merely an illusion, as the regional states would never let an aggressive state to gain preponderance in the region.

It is important to note that China's increasingly closer ties with Pakistan and the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has openly been opposed by India and is trying to sabotage this project. Pakistan and China are adjoined in mutual interoperability against all common concerns and threats. The decades-old bilateral relationship, strengthening cooperation, deepening economic ties, technology transfer, and of course common threats have welded the two Iron Brothers into a resilient joint strength.

India is deluded to have assumed that the US will back and support Indian agenda against China and Pakistan, or other regional states as the world is witness that neither can US afford to increase tensions with China nor can it ignore the significance of its ties with Pakistan which are imperative for the peace process in Afghanistan. India is playing a larger strategic game in Asia. India, under Modi, has time and again attempted to change the status quo of territorial disputes not only with Pakistan but also with China. The revocation of the special status of the Indian Occupied Kashmir region alarmed China as it altered the status of the Ladakh region as well. India has also tried to hinder CPEC thereby bringing China's ire. Currently, three pressure points are developing; the China-Sikkim border, Nepal-India border, and the Ladakh region.

An escalated border dispute between the neighboring countries can culminate in a serious confrontation, thereby enveloping the entire region if it is not resolved through negotiations. Therefore the world powers must pay attention to Indian expansionist and hegemonic policies to ensure regional peace and stability.

The Writer is the Executive Director, Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad



"If partition is a settled fact, we are here to unsettle it. There is, in fact, no such thing as a 'settled fact' in this world. Things get settled or unsettled solely by the will of man. And man's will is steered by a spirit of dedication to a cause, which he knows to be righteous and glorious."
- Sri Gurusiji

Briefs

Millions of Yemeni children may starve: UNICEF

DUBAI: Millions of children in war-torn Yemen could be pushed to "the brink of starvation" due to a lack of funding amid the coronavirus pandemic, the UN children's agency said Friday. The country's health system has all but collapsed since the war escalated in 2015, with the intervention of a Saudi-led military coalition to support the internationally-recognised government against the Iran-backed Huthi rebels. A new UNICEF report warned of further deterioration of an already dire situation for children with the outbreak of the novel coronavirus. It said that an additional 30,000 children could develop life-threatening severe acute malnutrition over the next six months, with the number of malnourished children rising up to 2.4 million overall - around a 20 percent increase. UNICEF quoted estimates from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health that suggested an additional 6,600 children under the age of five could die over the next six months from preventable conditions. - APP

Paris-Orly airport reopens

ORLY (FRANCE): Orly airport serving the French capital Paris reopened on Friday for the first time in nearly three months after air travel collapsed during the coronavirus pandemic but flights will be a fraction of the normal rate. A plane operated by low-cost carrier Transavia took off at 6:25 am (0425 GMT) for Porto in Portugal, marking the first commercial flight since the airport south of Paris came to a halt on March 31. Firefighters hosed the plane with a festive "water salute" before it took to the runway. Airlines including Air France, easyJet, Vueling and Air Caraïbes account for most of the traffic at Orly, flying to the Caribbean, Reunion Island, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Iceland and Croatia, among others. On Friday, officials expect around 8,000 passengers, less than 10 percent of the daily pre-virus average of around 90,000. - APP

US House passes 'George Floyd' police reform bill

WASHINGTON: The US House of Representatives has passed a sweeping police reform bill that currently has little prospect of becoming law amid partisan gridlock. The Democratic-controlled chamber voted 236-181 for the measure mainly along party lines on Thursday night. The legislation is named after George Floyd, the unarmed black man whose death in police custody last month ignited worldwide protests. But US President Donald Trump has threatened to veto the measure. And his fellow Republicans in the Senate are proposing their own, less far-reaching bill.

AIOU expedites its outreach system in Sindh

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has recently expedited the expansion of its outreach system to reach every nook and corner of the country and provide educational facilities to all interested people of both rural and urban areas of the country. While speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony of regional centre Moro, Sindh Director Regional Services AIOU Dr. Inam Ullah Sheikh said that to materialize the dream of Education for All the university was establishing regional centres in all parts of the country. - DNA

Business community urges SBP slash interest rate down

SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) President designate Iftikhar Ali Malik urged the State Bank to further cut policy rate for easy access to finance for the local industry and exporters who were confronting new challenges and uncertain conditions

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Business and industrial community here on Friday hailed the yet another fresh move of the State Bank to reduce interest rate by another one per cent and urged the government to further slash it down to 5 percent offset gradually the negative impact of coronavirus. They also urged the government to announce another incentive package for the revival of small and medium sized Industry which

was playing a vital role in national economy building employment generation. SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) President designate Iftikhar Ali Malik urged the State Bank to further cut policy rate for easy access to finance for the local industry and exporters who were confronting new challenges and uncertain conditions. Iftikhar Malik also urged for the payment of sales tax and income tax pending refund of the value-added sector demanded and rebate, waiver of mark-up in export

refinancing and relaxation in loan repayments. He also urged the need of deferment of payment of utility bills and waiver of surcharges for at least next three years, restoration of zero-rated sales tax regime and exemption from welfare fund contributions. He said that the government's resolve to contain the spread of virus was commendable and foreign industries were now considering relocating to Pakistan due to it. On behalf of the manufacturers, he said that incentives such as the

cut in import duty on the required raw materials must continue unabated as it would ensure an economic stimulus. He said the global oil price reduction comes as a mercy at a time when the entire machinery has shifted gear on exploiting the optimum export potential. Vice President Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Zahid Iqbal opined that a lowering of interest rate at 5 percent together with cheaper oil import shall raise future expectations of investors and serve

as vantage point for Pakistan in steadily conquering the budding trade gap in GSP Plus backed markets of Europe. "Moreover, it would also make business climate more lucrative for foreign investment in the ongoing pandemic," he added. He said that presently effective power houses like USA, UK, China, South Korea and Japan who controlled 65 percent of the manufacturing industry of the world were being in trouble whereas Pakistan still can meet the challenge and can grow its economy.

874 children lost their lives in Afghanistan

RAJA FURQAN AHMED

KABUL: Deborah Lyons, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan, briefed the UN Security Council on the situation in Afghanistan and said that the Afghan conflict remains one of the deadliest conflicts in the world for civilians and the deadliest for children. "Afghanistan also remains the deadliest conflict in the world for children. Last year alone, 874 children lost their lives as a result of the conflict and many, many more were injured," the UN envoy told the Security Council. She also said that Afghanistan has made immense progress in recent years including press freedom.

Pakistan diversifying its exports: Dawood

The Advisor Commerce stated that one of the objectives of the STPF is to achieve diversification of our export in products other than the traditional ones

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to the Prime Minister on Commerce, Abdul Razak Dawood here on Friday said that Pakistan is rapidly diversifying its exports into high quality and globally competitive engineering products. He was chairing an internal review meeting to discuss the finalization of Strategic Trade Policy Framework (STPF), at Commerce Division, said a press release. The Advisor Commerce stated that one of the objectives of the STPF is to achieve diversification of our export in products other than the traditional ones. He explained that through promotion of exports in new sectors, particularly the engineering and pharmaceuticals sectors, "we are going to reduce our reliance on five traditional export sectors. He added that this has also been supported in the Budget 2020-21, with reduction of import duties on raw materials and the tariff rationalization measures. Currently, the draft STPF is being reviewed by the stakeholders and their views are being incorporated in the final draft, which will be placed before the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet shortly.



ISLAMABAD: Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Yao Jing, calls on Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue, Dr. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh. - APP

Uzbek embassy and Sialkot Airport authority to cooperate in aviation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan and Sialkot Airport

Authority have mutually agreed to collaborate and cooperate in the field of aviation industry. A meeting was held between Lt Col Saad U-



lah, Charge De Affairs/Defence Attaché and other diplomatic staff of Embassy of Uzbekistan, Islamabad, Lt Col Khalid Taimur Akram (Retd), Executive Director, Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad and Senior Officials of Sialkot Airport Authority at the Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Islamabad. It was agreed that CGSS will act as a bridge between both the parties to enhance bilateral cooperation and strengthen ties between both brotherly nations.

Australia starts virus testing blitz

MELBOURNE: Health workers fanned out across suburbs of Melbourne Friday in a testing blitz aimed at choking off a surge in coronavirus cases in Australia's second-biggest city. Officials reported another 30 new COVID-19 infections in the city overnight in a continuing outbreak that has raised fears of a second wave in Australia, which looked like it had successfully contained the epidemic. It was the 10th straight day of double-digit rises in new cases in Melbourne and surrounding Victoria state, while most other Australian regions have seen no or low single-digit new infections for weeks.

The outbreak has rattled people across Australia, with major supermarket chains on Friday re-imposing nationwide limits on purchases of toilet paper and paper towels to counter a surge in panic-buying not seen since the first days of the pandemic in March. "Stop it, it's ridiculous," Prime Minister Scott Morrison said when quizzed about the public rush on stores at a press conference. - APP

PM calls on int'l community to hold India accountable

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan Friday said that as the world observed "International Day in Support of Victims of Torture" on the day, the international community must hold India accountable for its human rights abuses in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. "Today on International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, I call on the international community to hold India accountable for its human rights abuses in IOJK where women, men & children have faced pellet

guns, sexual assault, electrocution, & physical & mental torture," the prime minister said on his Twitter handle. He said the atrocities by Indian occupation forces on orders of the Hindutva Supremacist Occupation Modi government were well documented by the United Nations, human rights organizations as well as international media. "A continuing silence in the face of such blatant abuse is against international human rights and humanitarian laws and must be unacceptable," the prime minister remarked.

The international day is observed globally for two reasons. First, on June 26, 1945, the United Nations Charter was signed during the midst of World War II - the first international instrument obliging UN members to respect and promote human rights. Second, June 26, 1987 was when the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment came into effect. - APP

UAE govt allows commercial centres, restaurants to operate

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Health and Prevention (MoHaP) and the National Emergency Crisis and Disaster Management Authority (NCEMA) and Ministry of Health and Prevention (MoHaP), said a news release received here on Friday. According to the statement, waiting areas should remain closed and outlets must only serve food and drink using disposable cutlery, and hand sanitiser dispensers must be available. Wearing masks and gloves is a must while changing them regularly in addition

to maintaining safety distance norms and ensuring all working staff are free of COVID-19. The Ministry of Health and Prevention (MoHaP) and NCEMA added that they have already allowed children below 12 years of age and people who are not over 70 years old into all commercial centres and restaurants nationwide, reiterating the necessity of taking all COVID-19 countermeasures into consideration to ensure public safety. - APP

Govt to introduce Radio Schools, E-Taleem Portal: Shafqat

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Shafqat Mahmood Friday said the government has all set to introduce Radio Schools and E-Taleem Portal in the next month.

He expressed these views while talking to a delegation of Insaf Students Federation (ISF) which met him at his office to discuss the education related issues. Shafqat Mahmood informed the delegation that the education ministry was making efforts on urgent basis to provide access to students to internet facility with increase in speed. A committee, in that regard, had been established under the chairmanship of Additional Secretary Education Mohiuddin Ahmadwani, he added. The minister said that around eight million students were taking benefit from the Tele-school project. He said the pandemic has severely affected all the sectors of life; however, all out efforts would be made to continue the educational activities at any cost.

Ethihad Airways suspends flights from Pakistan

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Ethihad Airways on Thursday suspended its flight operations from Pakistan, a day after several passengers who had travelled to Hong Kong by another airliner tested positive for Covid-19. Ethihad Airways is the third airline of the UAE after Fly Dubai and Emirates to have temporarily suspended its flight operation for outbound passengers. An official of Ethihad Airways, who didn't give his name, told media that the outbound flights of Ethihad Airways had been suspended till July 1. He didn't give any reason for the suspension of flight operations from Pakistan, but hinted that the suspension of outbound flights might be extended. However, he added, inbound flights would continue to operate for Pakistan. Ethihad Airways resumed its two weekly flights from Karachi and Lahore on June 13 after a gap of 55 days and was planning to operate flights from Islamabad. The airline earlier suspended flights to Pakistan on March 21 to contain the spread of coronavirus.

Pakistani couple shows solidarity with China

DNA

BEIJING: Couple volunteer from foreign countries including Pakistan expressed solidarity with China against COVID-19, hoping that the World's community would take benefit of Chinese experience of controlling the deadly virus, says a report published by China Economic Net (CEN). "Diseases do not respect borders. We don't care about WHY, WHO or WHERE; we only care about saving lives," said Pakistani Hamad Abdul Zahir and Mauritian Sumayyah Hosany, a married couple who worked as doctors at Panhealth Medical Center and volunteered in China's battle against the COVID-19 pandemic in Wenzhou, China.

Back in February, Hamad Abdul Zahir and Sumayyah Hosany chose to stay in China when the pandemic situation was more than serious. Seeing loads of exaggerated and incorrect information online, their parents were really worried, wanting them to stay home.

However, they explained the measures taken by the Chinese government, the protective gears given to them by the hospital and the ground reality of the epidemic, so their parents were reassured and encouraged them to keep doing their job. As they put it, "it was a very

normal reaction for them. First of all, we are doctors; second, we have lived in China for more than 10 years and we are proud to call China our second home. We wanted to help with anything that we could." Hamad Abdul Zahir and Sumayyah Hosany told CEN

that they were so awed by the spontaneous and drastic measures taken by the Chinese government. It made all the differences in controlling the epidemic in China and buying the world enough time to put the adequate measures in place. They also reckoned that the Chinese people impressed them greatly by the way they cooperated with the local authorities, the way they respected the lockdown and the way they followed the rules. Days of volunteers were never an easy one. Around 5,000-7,000 cars passed the check point per day before the lockdown was imposed, and they had to do temperature checks and ask basic questions relating to living in Wuhan and the deadly virus. About their experience of

the prevention and control of COVID-19, they mentioned that they mostly used social media like Facebook and Instagram to keep their families and friends updated about the latest COVID-19 researches. Besides, they helped friends abroad who are doctors by sharing experiences relating the Chinese CDC guidelines along with the established drug regimes used in the hospitals for treating COVID-19 patients in China. For Hamad Abdul Zahir, the situation in Pakistan is truly alarming; the number of infected cases has already surpassed that of China. "It's difficult for Pakistan to enact the same measures as China," he said, "but I hope they can learn from China and reformulate some measures that could be effective in Pakistan."

