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**Prime Minister Imran Khan for celebrating Eid with simplicity**
**SCO Varsity an important platform: Norov**
**FO shelves rumours about FM health**

## Briefs

### PM for celebrating Eid with simplicity

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has appealed to the nation to celebrate Eid-ul-Azha with simplicity, strictly observing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) against coronavirus. Speaking to the media after inaugurating Isolation Hospital and Infectious Treatment Center in Islamabad on Thursday, the prime minister stressed that people should not throw caution to the wind this Eid as they did on Eidul Fitr, which, according to him, lead to a rapid increase in the number of cases, piling pressure on hospitals and healthcare workers. "Eid is coming, we should not do what we did the previous Eid," the prime minister emphasised, adding the country saw a surge in coronavirus cases following Eidul Fitr as the disease peaked.

### Body formed to stop fake news

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) has formed a committee led by Interior Minister Brig (Retd) Ijaz Ahmed Shah to prevent spread of disinformation and fake news about COVID-19 pandemic on social media. The decision was taken in a meeting of the National Command and Operation Centre with Minister for Planning and Development, Asad Umar in the chair. The committee will prepare legal framework to prevent and counter disinformation and suggest action against those involved in spreading false information about the pandemic.

### FO shelves rumours about FM health

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD, JULY 09 (DNA) – The Foreign Office on Thursday strongly condemned attempts to hack Wikipedia page of Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and spread rumours about his health. Spokesperson Aisha Farooqui in a Twitter statement said: "We strongly condemn attempts by mischievous elements to hack Wikipedia page of Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi spread rumours on social media about his health and well-being. 'By grace of Almighty Allah, FM is recovering fast."

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# 600 Taliban prisoners to be released

DNA / STAFF REPORT

KABUL :Afghan authorities on Thursday said it will release 600 prisoners it had deemed "too dangerous" in the hope of getting peace talks going, a day after they had refused to release the captives. Disagreement over about 600 prisoners from a total of 5,000 the Taliban want released has prevented the launch of US-brokered peace talks aimed at ending nearly 19 years of war since the group was ousted. While releases by both sides have taken place, the Afghan government has said it does not want to release some prisoners for security reasons and its Western allies also object to some of them being set free. "They have given us another list, the release process will continue but direct talks should also start immediately," Javid Faisal, spokesman for the National Security Council, told media. The Taliban could not be reached for comment and it was not clear if they would be willing to start talks based on the release of the prisoners on the list. The United States and the Taliban struck a landmark agreement in February on the withdrawal of US forces in exchange for Taliban security guarantees. As part of the pact, the Taliban agreed to

## Bradard meets with German envoy

QATAR: Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, the deputy political chief of Taliban met with Special Representative of Germany for Afghanistan Markus Potzel in Doha. Suhail Shaheen, the political spokesperson for the Taliban tweeted that the two sides discussed the current situation of Afghanistan and also emphasised the implementation of the Doha Agreement. "Both sides discussed the current situation of Afghanistan, implementation of Doha Agreement, the release of prisoners and withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan." He further added that "Moreover, inception of intra-Afghan negotiations and the peace process also came under discussion. The special representative of Germany assured his country's support for the peace process.

open power-sharing talks with the US-backed government. But a senior government official said there was still no agreement on starting the talks.

## Pakistan tea enterprises participate in China Expo

The expo is reckoned as one of the most important events in tea sector with great scale and influence

DNA

BEIJING: In order to export tea culture and products, Pakistani tea enterprises actively participated in China (Sichuan) International Tea Expo for four consecutive years in recent days, Gwadar Pro reported on Thursday. The China (Sichuan) International Tea Expo was held in Chengdu, Sichuan

province, China. The expo is reckoned as one of the most important events in tea sector with great scale and influence in China. On this occasion, Pakistani tea enterprises displayed their products, including tea, tea wares, jade art-wares and so on. Meanwhile, tea enterprises from other countries also bring their own products and distinctive culture to Sichuan International Tea Expo,

such as Britain, Russia, Japan, Sri Lanka, Nepal etc. "It is an effective opportunity for not only seeking commercial cooperation, but also communicating different tea cultures of each countries," an Expo's manager said. Affected by COVID-19, Pakistani exhibitors couldn't attend this event directly, companies entrusted their agents in China to display their products.

## PIA's regular flights to UAE restored

PIA passengers would be able to travel to Dubai, Sharjah, Abu Dhabi and Al Ain from Pakistan through the airline's regular flights

ADNAN YOUSAF

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) resumed regular flight operations to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from Thursday but the passengers were required to get their Covid-19 tests carried out 48 hours prior to the travel date. In a related development, Pakistan held bilateral consultations with Spain as part of its efforts to get PIA's flights to Eu-

rope restored. PIA spokesman Abdullah Hafeez said in a press release that PIA would resume its regular flight operations to the UAE from Thursday and tickets are already up for grabs. He said now PIA passengers would be able to travel to Dubai, Sharjah, Abu Dhabi and Al Ain from Pakistan through the airline's regular flights. He added that previously PIA was operating one-way relief flights to the UAE to repatriate Pakistanis strand-

ed in the country, but now after obtaining permissions the PIA would operate regular flights for the convenience of passengers. The PIA said the passengers could book and purchase their tickets through PIA offices, corporate website and its travel agents. However, the passengers would be required to get their Covid-19 tests done within 48 hours prior to flight departure and a negative test report would have to be presented at the time of check-in.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan visits E ICU isolation hospital and infections treatment centre. – DNA

## German embassy issues guidelines for visas

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The German embassy has issued new guidelines for visa holders, who could not avail visas due to pandemic. This however does not apply to Schengen visas. The entry restrictions on all non-essential travel from third countries to the Federal Republic of Germany to contain COVID-19 that came into force on 17 March 2020 may mean that visa holders were unable to use a national visa issued by the German Embassy in Islamabad or the German Consulate General in Karachi.

As soon as travel will be possible again for your purpose, a new visa can therefore be issued as part of a simplified procedure upon application. This fast-track procedure will be available if date of travel has changed, but the purpose of stay and destination remain unaltered.

Applicants have been asked to submit an application for new issuance of the visa informally (i.e. also by e-mail) to the following mail address - depending on the mission which issued your visa - to the German Embassy Islamabad (visainfo@isla.diplo.de) or the German Consulate General in Karachi (visa@kara.diplo.de).

## Eid-ul-Azha holidays

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has planned to announce only three Eid-ul-Azha holidays, likely to begin from July 31, in the wake of novel coronavirus, a private television channel reported Thursday. It has been learnt that the government is not giving additional holidays this time to stop people from unnecessary travelling. – DNA

## Minorities enjoying equal rights: NA told

Suspension of PIA operation for European countries is temporary: Sarwar Khan

FIAZ CH.

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Dr. Noor-ul-Haq Qadri has said that minorities are enjoying equal rights in the country under the Constitution of Pakistan.

Speaking in the National Assembly, he said the ideology of Qaid-e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Islamic values guarantee equal rights, complete safety and security of the minorities. Taking the floor in the House, PML-N leader Khawaja Muhammad Asif said peace, harmony and accept-

ance for all should be promoted in the country.

Responding to Khawaja Asif's point, Minister for Human Rights Shireen M. Mazari said the government is fully committed to protect the due rights of minorities to ensure their freedom and security. She said government is committed to ensure the basic rights of our citizens in pursuance to our Constitution and International commitments without any prejudice. The Minister further said that all the minorities in Pakistan enjoy complete freedom as equal citizen of the motherland.

Minister for Aviation Ghulam Sarwar Khan has said that suspension of Pakistan International Airlines' operation for European countries is temporary and flights will be restored soon. He was responding to a Call Attention moved by Murtaza Javed Abbasi and others on suspension of authorization for PIA by the European Union Air Safety Agency and UK's authorities to operate in Europe for six months. The Minister said licenses of 54 pilots have been cancelled, 26 grounded and 34 others suspended on ground of fake degrees and for not following the laid procedure.

## Pakistan, Afghan private reps discuss job reaction

IBARA KHAN

ISLAMABAD – Private sector representatives from Pakistan and Afghanistan met to boost prosperity and create jobs in both countries. The participants in this U.S. government-facilitated event addressed a range of trade issues between the two countries that have held back growth of the cross-border economy. The "Pakistan-Afghanistan Bilateral Trade – Private Sector Perspectives, Strategy and Recommendations" conference was a first-of-its-kind, cross-border dialogue. At an event organized by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) the participants met virtually because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Participants included the Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Chaman

Chamber of Commerce and Industry, as well as a number of Afghanistan chambers of commerce and a variety of logistics service providers, transport operators, and traders from both countries. The participants highlighted a desire to forge cross-border private sector partnerships and government ties to promote trade between the two countries. Many of the participants expressed concerns over unscheduled closures of border crossing points, slow clearing processes, lack of facilities at the Torkham border, and increasing transport costs. They also supported the creation of a core team of representatives from all participants to plan subsequent coordination efforts with the Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan. This inaugural virtual discussion sets the stage for a sustained and continued effort to improve trade relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

## SC orders Railways to make travel safer

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Against the backdrop of recent fatal train crashes, the Supreme Court of Pakistan Thursday directed the Pakistan Railways (PR) to take immediate measures to make people's journey by train safer. An apex court bench headed by Chief Justice Gulzar Ahmed was hearing a suo motu case pertaining to financial losses the Railway department has been inflicting on the national kitty. At the outset of the hearing, the country's top adjudicator wondered where will Railways Minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed appoint 100,000 people as the railways already had 77,000 employees. The funds Pakistan would get from China for ML-1 project will go to new hirings, he remarked. At this, the federal law officer replied that the government is trying cut the current strength of Pakistan Railways employees to 56,000 while 100,000 people will be recruited for the ML-1 project. Coming down hard on the railway secretary, the chief justice said the top PR official was unable to run the department.

## NADRA DG sacked

SHAHEEN QURESHI

ISLAMABAD (DNA): The Director-General National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), Zulfikar Ali, was removed from his post on Thursday on directives of the authority's chairman. According to the official notification issued by NADRA, the chairman of the national authority had directed the removal of Zulfikar Ali with all administrative and financial authority, delegated or otherwise, withdrawn from him immediately.

## SCO Varsity an important platform: Vladimir Norov

As of now, 78 higher education institutions are included in the SCO University, of which the total number of universities is distributed as follows: from Kazakhstan - 14, China - 24, Kyrgyzstan - 8, Russia

EXCLUSIVE

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: SCO Secretary General Vladimir Norov during an interview with daily Islamabad Post, DNA News Agency and CENTRELINE magazine said given the difficult current situation in the world due to the pandemic of coronavirus infection, all activities within the SCO on education have either been postponed or translated into an online format. He said under the chairmanship of the Russian side, the first organizational meeting of the Coordinating Council of the University of the SCO (CC USCO) was held in the mode of videoconference,

which was attended by members of the SCO CC from five SCO member states (Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan), one representative from the state body, at the level of the deputy minister of education and chairman of the council of rectors from the country. SCO University is a network of higher education institutions of SCO member states, united to jointly train highly qualified personnel on the basis of agreed innovative educational programs in specialties of priority interest for the economic and social development of the participating countries. The main objectives of the SCO University are to maintain a single educational space; exchange



of students, graduate students, doctoral students, and academics; Expanding scientific and academic cooperation; Introduction of modern educational methods and technologies; training for SCO structures and affiliated organizations. Based on the interests of SCO

member states, the SCO University participants introduced the following mutually agreed areas of training: regional studies, ecology, energy, IT technology, nanotechnology, pedagogy, economics. In the future, other areas of training and a set of specialties will be introduced and refined in accordance with the coordination of the educational departments of the SCO member states. National and international expert teams are set up for each of the training areas, and modules and training programmes are harmonized. It should also be noted that from each country the SCO University includes the most authoritative and representative higher education institutions, which have a solid educational and educational

base and necessary competences. I would like to note that despite the differences in educational systems and standards of education of SCO member states, effective and coordinated work of universities to jointly train in-demand and competitive specialists in the international labor market is possible and necessary. As of now, 78 higher education institutions are included in the SCO University, of which the total number of universities is distributed as follows: from Kazakhstan - 14, China - 24, Kyrgyzstan - 8, Russia - 20, Tajikistan - 11 (including Belarus - 1). In the 2010-2019 academic years, more than 1,500 people were trained at the SCO University.

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## Briefs

## NCHD fighting illiteracy in 124 districts

ISLAMABAD: National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) is the leading organization fighting illiteracy in 124 districts across the country with the mission to transform lives by improving access to basic education.

An official of NCHD told APP on Thursday that as the leading organization for literacy, NCHD was striving to empower the people at the grassroots to become the agents of social change.

"We are deeply committed to promoting learning for all people-especially for the most vulnerable adults and children who are most difficult to reach" he said. He said that NCHD has adopted an innovative strategy for improving the state of human development, directly focused on people's needs by acting as a support organization at the grassroots to fill the implementation gaps through community participation.

He said that the core of NCHD strategy lies with public private partnership capacity building of government line departments, community organizations and elected representatives community partnership and ownership. — APP

## Pakistan Post fully restored EMS Plus service

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Post has fully restored Express Mail Service (EMS) Plus to ensure timely delivery of international mail amid COVID-19 pandemic.

Director General Pakistan Post Muhammad Akhlaque Ahmed said that all the postal circles and regions are directed to encourage customers to book EMS Plus service, said a press release.

He said that EMS Plus articles are being delivered in 6 to 7 working days.

He said that the service was fully restored with an aim to ensure that customers do not face any problems in booking international mail.

"The service is available in major cities and links the country with 173 countries worldwide" he said.

Akhlaque Ahmed said that Pakistan Post has put into action a comprehensive plan to be a progressive, modern and vibrant organization, marching with the pace of the time and taking innovative measures to cater for the changing demands of its clientele. — APP

## Six periodical reports laid in NA

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly on Thursday witnessed presentation of three reports on as many government bills, two annual reports of various departments and six periodical reports.

Chairman Standing Committee on Law and Justice Riaz Fatayana presented reports of the Committee on the Muslim Family Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020 (Section-4), the Muslim Family Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020 (Section-7) and the Enforcement of Women's Property Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2020.

On behalf of Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication, the Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan laid the annual report of Universal Service and Research and Development Fund of the Federal Government.

Advisor to Prime Minister on Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Babar Awan presented the annual report of the National Economic Council for the Financial Year, 2018-19.

A total of six periodical reports of Standing Committees on Railways, Communications, Defence, Privatization, Housing and Works and Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan were presented in the House for the period January - June, 2019 as required by rule 234-A of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the National Assembly, 2007. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Major General Naveed Safdar Director General Land visited ANF Headquarters on Thursday. He met with the Director General and discussed matters of mutual interest. — DNA

## EU funded COVID-19 isolation center inaugurated

DNA

PESHAWAR: An isolation center and Intensive Care Unit (ICU) funded by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) and set up by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Medical Emergency Resilience Foundation (MERF) was inaugurated in Peshawar on Thursday, July 9th, 2020.

Gracing the event as Chief Guest, Mahmood Khan, Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, appraised the provisions and services at the specialized COVID-19 health facility. Speaking on the occasion and commending the initiative, he said, "Today, the Provincial Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa takes the concept of Public-Private partnership to the next level.

Masses from all across the province will be able to avail first class treatment right here in Peshawar, at no cost to them. This was the dream of the



PTI Government and the Prime Minister, Imran Khan, to ensure world class medical access to the common man, for free. I would like to thank the EU, IRC and MERF for helping us realise this dream." The 567 million PKR provided by ECHO is part of a bigger EU-package of COVID-19 response to Pakistan to help contain the spread of COVID-19 and

strengthen health system capacities and infrastructure in Pakistan.

IRC and its partner MERF have a special focus on supporting government isolation facilities accompanied with comprehensive mass awareness campaigns across Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This is the first isolation center being set up under this project and is augment-

ed initially with a five-bedded ICU, 16 High Dependency Units, and 40-bedded isolation capacity.

The following center has been set up as a model center based on global SOPs and guidelines. The facility is fully equipped with ventilators, monitors, oxygen, ABG machines, infusion pumps and other accessory equipment to manage hypoxemic respiratory

failure, acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS), septic shock, and other related complications resulting from COVID-19.

There is also special emphasis on accessibility provisions for the elderly and persons with disabilities. IRC and MERF will be establishing two more Intensive Care Units (ICU) and accompanied isolation centers in Quetta and Karachi.

Moreover, this project will also support provision of much needed Human Resources, including managers, doctors, specialist, support staff, etc., and will provide facilitation of 45,000 screening tests across designated districts and sites, provide Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS), and equip the government centers with essential medical equipment and supplies including Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

The ECHO financed action of the IRC is an immediate 'pandemic emergency

response' support extended to the Government of Pakistan aiming to contain spread of virus by strengthening system's capacities and enhancing mass awareness.

The action will be implemented in conjunction with key government counterparts at national, provincial and district levels including but not limited to the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination (MoNHS R&C) and its designated focal point, the National Institute for Health (NIH) at federal level, Departments of Health in KP, Sindh and Baluchistan provinces and relevant district authorities. IRC's COVID-19 action plan is also in conjunction with the Government of Pakistan's Preparedness and Response Plan (PPRP) and will directly benefit over 87,130 individuals via designated isolation centers, testing capacity facilities alongside raising awareness of another six million people across Pakistan.

## PIAF appreciates SBP for extending loan deferment policy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Nauman Kabir asks SBP governor to play role for loan disbursement implementation by banks.

The Pakistan Industrial and Traders Association Front (PIAF) has lauded the central bank for extending loan deferment policy for SMEs till Sept end, recommending the SBP governor to play his role for real implementation in loan disbursement by the commercial banks. PIAF Chairman Mian Nauman Kabir, in a joint statement with senior vice chairman Nasir Hameed Khan and vice chairman Javed Siddiqi, said that the State Bank of Pakistan has extended the deadline for small and



medium businesses to apply for one-year moratorium on loan repayment till Sept 30, considering the fact that COVID-19 pandemic is continuing to stress the cash flow of the industry which is a good step but these directive should also be followed by the commercial banks, he added. Mian Nauman Kabir said that it's a better strategy that the central bank has taken the Pakistan Banks

Association onboard and then announced a set of measures to help businesses to manage their finances amid growing concerns about the potential economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. He said that the decision would prove to be helpful for borrowers.

According to the central banks, the banks have so far deferred Rs593 billion of principal amount of loans of over 359,000 borrowers. A very large number of borrowers – 95 percent of total beneficiaries of this scheme have been small borrowers including SMEs, consumer finance, and microfinance. A key measure was the deferment of principal amount of loans and advances by banks and development finance institutions.

## Rs1m each provided to PSX martyrs' families

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly was informed on Thursday that one million rupees each has been provided to the bereaved families of the private security guards martyred in the terrorist attack on Karachi Stock Exchange. Responding to the calling attention notice of Nusrat Wahid today, Parliamentary Secretary for Interior Shaukat Ali Khan said one policeman was also martyred in the terrorist attack and his family has been provided Shuhada Assistance Package. The Parliamentary Secretary said the government is also considering bringing a legislation to make it binding on the private security companies to provide assistance to their guards.

## 'Govt will complete constitutional term'

ATTOCK: Federal Minister Ghulam Sarwar Khan has said that the government is in place, the federal cabinet and especially the portfolio of the Ministry of Aviation is in my hands with full vigor.

There can be no restrictions on sightings. Our government despite the 12 billion deficit caused by the Coronation, is fully committed to its sincerity.

Under the auspices of the National Command for Sponsorship, the Sensitive Sponsorship Program is rendering its full services.

What a wonderful way to screw people over He said that the present federal cabinet headed by Imran Khan is a single federal cabinet in which all the ministers openly discuss in detail with the Prime Minister in all matters, and neither of the federal ministers nor the Prime Minister hides anything from each other.

After decisions are taken in the federal cabinet in the light of facts and arguments, he said, adding that he had been the cabinet minister in Punjab and the federation before. He said that now the situation arising out of the crisis and its aftermath is rapidly improving and we have a passion for the welfare of the country and the nation, no obstacle will be tolerated in this, he added.

Every The Jamaat has its own interests, he said, adding that our Armed Forces and the Prime Minister of Pakistan are on the same page in view of the specific circumstances of the country's borders. — DNA

## DRAP urged to take emergency steps

ISLAMABAD: Renowned scientist and Chairman of Prime Minister's task force on Science and Technology, Dr Atta-ur-Rahman Thursday said Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) needs to take emergency measures regarding approval of conducting clinical trials of an internationally recognized vaccine for COVID-19 in Pakistan.

"The application for conducting clinical trials of this vaccine produced by a well acclaimed international company was submitted to DRAP for approval. The clinical trials of that vaccine have been done internationally", he said during an interview with APP on Thursday. He said, "We were in contact with several international companies for vaccine production after which one of the major international companies agreed to conduct clinical trials of their vaccination in Pakistan".

Dr Atta-ur-Rahman who is also the chairman of PM's Task Force on coronavirus hoped that DRAP is expected to give approval of clinical trials of this vaccine within two weeks. The clinical trials will be conducted in our supervision soon after approval.

He said, "It takes three to four months to complete clinical trials of a vaccine and hopefully, if DRAP grants approval within two weeks, the clinical trials will be completed within next four months. If the results of these trials come positive, then the mass production of the vaccine can be started". — APP

## Rs 152.395 bln disbursed

ISLAMABAD: The Ehsaas Emergency Cash initiative has so far disbursed an amount of over Rs152.395 billion among over 12,593,361 lockdown affected persons under different categories. The programme was initiated to disburse cash amount of Rs12,000 among those affected from the coronavirus lockdown. The payment process under different categories of the programme was continued across the country. According to the cash update received on July 9, a total of over Rs68.913 billion has been disbursed among over 5,693,981 deserving families in Punjab so far while around Rs45.272 billion has been disbursed among 3,753,957 families in Sindh. Over Rs26.120 billion has been disbursed among more than 2,151,472 beneficiaries in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while over Rs7.689 billion has been disbursed among 632,972 persons in Balochistan.

## Rescue 1122 rescued cat from the well

DNA

ATTOCK: Bumb animal fell into a deep well, a commendable operation by Rescue 1122 personnel. In Madani Colony near Sanjwal Cantt, a mute animal (cat) fell into an 80 feet deep well of a house which was running hungry and thirsty. The family and residents of the area appreciated the rescue operation and thanked them from the bottom of their hearts.

## The 129 Year Old Ancient Clock Tower in Faisalabad City

MUHAMMAD TAHIR

FAISALABAD: Lylalpur was ruled by the British at that time Capt. Popham Young supervised the foundation. I placed a map of the city in the style of the British flag Union Jack. The city of Faisalabad is known for its clock tower built between 8 bazaars. This clock tower is not the first clock tower in Faisalabad. Even before that there was a clock house which is an ancient Clock tower.

Built in 1882, it is now in very poor condition. Which is the clock house between the eight bazaars. It was built after the clock house. This is the condition of the house now These watches were worn, but now their names are not even marked. The clock tower was built by the British in the offices of the Anhar department. The building is also in a dilapidated condition. People living in Faisalabad are not familiar with their



homes at this time From Muhammad Ali Sheikh, a resident of Jhang Bazaar. Asked if you have seen the old clock house "We've only seen one hour at home since childhood," He said And heard, Which is in the middle of eight markets Most of the people of Lylalpur are not even aware

of this clock tower built in 1882 Connected with history and cultural heritage. People are worried about the dilapidated condition of the house Living in the quarters of the Anhar department.

A person, Muhammad Shafi, Told, When the British built this city. So he first

set up the office of the Anhar department And built a house in it for an hour in which there was a doll all around. When the clock tower was inhabited. The bells of this clock could be heard far away. An arrow pointing over the clock house indicating the direction of the wind. It was the duty of the

Anhar department to protect it But sometimes the clock becomes a washroom in the house Sometimes they make stores at home. The first and 129-year-old clock tower in the city's history Isn't it the responsibility of archaeologists to preserve their archeology? The focus of the district

administration, This old clock house is in bad shape Looking at the city administration Malik Tamoor, a lawyer, said This is national heritage Under the Punjab Special Princes Act Without government permission No extra things can be made in it can be broken An FIR may be registered

against the violator. With reference to the story of the Old Building When we contacted DCO Faisalabad Muhammad Ali said Contact the public relations officer When I spoke to the public relations officer, he said that I do not have the information. I can't say anything about that.





## Briefs

### 14,083 challan slips issued

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi City Traffic Police (CTP), under special campaign launched against improper number plates and without number plate vehicles issued 14,083 challan slips in June while 663 challan slips were also issued to under age drivers. CTP also impounded 121 motorcycles in various police stations under the campaign during the period. The spokesman informed that the CTP on the directives of City Traffic Officer (CTO) Rawalpindi Syed Ali Akbar launched special campaign against without number plate vehicles, improper number plates and fancy number plates and took action in accordance with the law. He said that city traffic police in its efforts for the smooth flow of traffic on city roads is taking strict action against the traffic rules violators. A special campaign was launched and grand operation was conducted against under age drivers and the drivers who were on roads without driving licenses. – APP

### Four drug peddlers arrested; charas recovered

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi police in the ongoing drive against narcotics and anti-social elements, conducted raids in different areas of the district and arrested four drug peddlers besides recovering over five kg charas from their possession. According to a police spokesman, in a raid, Airport Police arrested Israr Ahmed and Muhammad Akhlaq for having over 1250 grams and 1310 grams charas respectively. Jatl police managed to net Abbas Zahor and seized 1680 grams charas while Kotli Sattian police nabbed Yasir Mehmood for having 1100 grams charas. The police registered cases against all the accused under Narcotics Control Act while further investigation were underway. Superintendent Police (SP) Potohar and SP Saddar appreciated the performance of Airport, Jatl and Kotli Sattian police and directed the police officials for high vigilance and monitoring against those involved in anti-social activities, the spokesman added. – APP

### Online graphic designing course begins

RAWALPINDI: An online graphic design course has been started under the auspices of Punjab Arts Council, Rawalpindi (PUCAR). A spokesman informed that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all activities at the Arts Council were suspended and now has been resumed in the form of online activities. In the first phase, graphic design course has been started and other courses would be kicked off soon. The interested candidates, who want to enroll the course can contact Arts Council. – APP

### IHC reserves verdict in Vawda case

DNA  
ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday reserved its verdict on a contempt case against Federal Minister for Water Resources Faisal Vawda. The hearing of the case was presided over by IHC Justice Aamir Farooq who reserved the verdict. It must be noted that the high court had given a two-week time to the federal minister to submit a response.

## Awareness on exports’ promotion vital to tap global opportunities: experts

Matters related to trade, investment and economy including from the public and private sectors were discussed at online consultative dialogue ‘Textile & AMP; garment industry outlook amid COVID19’

DNA  
ISLAMABAD: The awareness on various instruments that are available to facilitate exports’ promotion and compliance with the international standards could open the doors of new markets across the globe for the Pakistani small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The experts on trade, investment and economy including from the public and private sectors said this while sharing their views with the participants at online consultative dialogue ‘Textile & AMP; garment industry outlook amid COVID19’ organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here on Thursday. Senior Economist at the

World Bank, Mr Gonzalo Varela, was of view that the productivity of Pakistani enterprises is low as compared to Bangladesh and India. Low investment is one of the key reasons behind this phenomenon and therefore, more capital needs to be diverted towards enhancing trade capabilities of private sector, he added. “Attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) can help export enterprises,” Mr Varela said and added further that FDI helps firms to integrate in global value chains. Pakistan can incentivize firms to export through bringing down tariffs on imports, improving logistics, and promoting smart branding and the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) can

help with branding and promotion, he concluded. Dr Vaqar Ahmed, Joint Executive Director, SDPI, while moderating the discussion, highlighted the need to create awareness across SMEs regarding export promotion schemes by the government. He said that the SMEs will need help to understand and meet buyer requirements which have become stringent during Covid19 pandemic times and the Ministry of Commerce along with SMEDA could explain to the small firms how to comply with quality control measures, pre-shipment and border clearance requirements, anti-competitive measures and other conditions by buyers of Pakistani goods. He suggested to the partic-

ipants that public – private dialogue should be encouraged as it would help the government to understand the role of SME’s in the trade space and how they could be helped to cope with the COVID19 crisis. Moreover, he said, it would also help to reflect stakeholders’ position on fiscal, trade and SME policy and what the government needs to do to support SMEs. Honorary Consul General of the Czech Republic, Dr Kamal Monnoo, was of view that Pakistani textile enterprises suffer when consumption declines in European Union and United States. In such a scenario, government’s top priority should be to support survival of exporters for at least the next 6 months. The four

main costs which are higher compared to peer economies include electricity, gas charges, wages, and general sales tax rate, should be reduced, he said. Mr Rahim Nasir, CEO at Ayesha Spinning Mills said: Covid19 has led to reduction in global demand of textile and garments by at least 30%. He stressed that minimum turnover tax may be abolished and refunds of exporters may be processed at the earliest. Muhammad Babar Khan, Former Chairman of Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturer Association (PHMA), urged that the new trade policy should aim to cultivate a culture of export facilitation across federal and provincial governments. Former Advisor to Federal

Board of Revenue, Tayyaba Batool, was of view that FBR is taking measures to simplify the process of accessing export promotion schemes. Mr Hamid Tufail Khan, Board Member at National Productivity Organisation, Ministry of Industries, highlighted the need for textile enterprises to learn good benchmarking standards. Mr. Ghulam Qadir, Economist, National Tariff Commission, Government of Pakistan, while referring to China-Pakistan FTA, said that it’s now providing favorable opportunities. He said that it may be appropriate that in future there could be sectoral working groups including for textile sector that could help Ministry of Commerce on the critical decisions.

### Fahmida for unified policy in sports sector

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Inter Provincial Coordination Dr Fahmida Mirza Thursday stressed the need to devise a unified policy for improving the sports sector. Talking to a private news channel, she said all the provincial sports ministers should unite at one platform and devise such a policy benefiting players as well as the sports sector of the country. Pakistan Sports Board, she said, was providing financial assistance to the sports sector so that the young talents could come ahead and earn a good name for the country across the globe. Expressing her disappointment over weak performance of the players in some games, she said Pakistan Olympic Association should streamline the system so that we could attain progress in all games. To a question, she said after the 18th constitutional amendment, the sports was a provincial subject. However, she said all out efforts were being made to improve this important national institution. About cash prizes and other awards for snooker players, Dr Fahmida Mirza said a letter had been written to the prime minister for necessary action. In reply to another question about projects in Sindh, she said a huge amount had been spent on different projects to promote sports activities at the provincial level. – APP

### NIC to hold webinar ‘How to Pitch Without a Hitch’

ISLAMABAD: National Incubation Center (NIC) has arranged an online webinar titled “How to Pitch Without a Hitch” to share the tips and tricks of mastering in investments and winning in business on 10 July. The webinar will feature the raising capital to attracting potential customers, a great pitch which can help to sustain and build perfect business. The webinar is an attempt to take a deep-dive into the topic and learn the important elements of a business, an official said on Thursday. Different business panelists and entrepreneurs will take part including Ali Shabbir CEO, DeafTawk, Malihia Javed Khan Ex Co-Founder easynsurance.com.pk and Shahrukh Babar - CEO, Xylexa Inc. He said that these founders will give you an overview of their experience and how you need to modify your business. – APP

### IESCO power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Thursday issued a power suspension programme for Friday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 04:40am to 09:40am, Sagri, HPT2 feeders 05:00am to 10:00am, Mandra-I, Mandra-II feeder, 07:00am to 11:00am, Madu Kalas feeder and surrounding areas. – APP



ISLAMABAD: A view of mirage on road due to scorching hot weather in Federal Capital. – DNA

## RCCI delegation attends Islamic relics expo

ISLAMABAD: A delegation from Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) visited Centaurus Mall to view Islamic relics on display here on Thursday. The relics includes Ghilaf e al-Kaaba, Parda Babul Kaaba, key to the Kaaba along with other relics associated with the history of Islam. The exhibition will conclude on July 15. The delegation, led by its president Saboor Malik, was received by the mall’s senior management. The exhibition is anticipated to bring consolation to residents of the twin cities. Punjab Board of Investment (PBOI) Chairman Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan along with the RCCI delegation performed a ribbon cutting on the occasion. Chairman in a short briefing informed the participants that the major aim of this display was to provide an opportunity to the common man to see the religious relics. Exhibitions played a vital role in promoting trade activities around the world and the Government of Pakistan is putting all efforts together to provide a conducive environment to the business community. RCCI President on this occasion appreciated the efforts and steps taken towards promotion of trade activities. RCCI has been organizing exhibitions in the country and abroad, he added. This year RCCI also organized the Virtual edition of Rawal International expo 2020 in August. Later the delegation visited a stall of mango and appreciated different varieties of mango. Group leader Sohail Altaf, senior vice president Nosh-erwan Khalil, Vice President Hamza Sarosh, members of the executive committee and others also present on the occasion. – DNA

### Qazi Faez case; remand of accused extended

The accused will now be produced before the court on Friday

ISLAMABAD: An Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) in Islamabad on Thursday extended the physical remand of an accused for a day in a case of threatening a Supreme Court Judge Qazi Faez Isa and institution of judiciary through a video got viral on social media. The accused Akbar Ali was presented before the court of ATC Judge Raja Jawad Abbas Hassan by the FIA after expiry of his two days remand and requested for further physical remand which the court accepted and extended remand for a day. The accused will now be produced before the court on Friday. It is worth mentioning here that main accused Agha Iftikharuddin had been sent to jail on judicial remand in the same case. – APP

## Infinix joins hands with DOW in fight against COVID-19

DNA  
ISLAMABAD: Taking the lead in ensuring the safety of the masses with their CSR initiative, Infinix, a globally acclaimed smartphone brand, has joined hands with DOW, one of the leading health institutes in the country fighting on the frontlines against COVID-19. In an activity that took place at DOW today, the smartphone manufacturers have announced a donation of 40,000 masks to DOW medical institute to play its part with small steps that will help reach the bigger goal and eliminate this threat. These efforts come as a meaningful and prompt gesture that demonstrates the company’s concern for public health and safety. Its commitment to corporate social responsibility becomes more meaningful in a time of national public health concerns. The company’s generous donation has come when there is a massive demand for protective equipment to be met in the country. Talking about this initiative, the Marketing Director of Infinix Pakistan, Mr. Saad Shams, said, “During these trying times for the whole world, we believe that everyone has a role to play. We want to remind our consumers that all of us are fighting for the safety of our community, and we should continue doing so by making these small efforts for a better tomorrow.” Professor Dr. Mohammad Saeed Quraishy, Vice-Chancellor of DOW university of health sciences, extended his gratitude for this donation and commented, “With the escalating number of cases in the past few weeks, we are constantly worried about the safety and well-being of our patients and staff. The most basic necessity at the moment is face masks, to lessen the threat of exposure. So, on behalf of our staff and the people, we would like to extend our appreciation to Infinix for their generosity and care during this difficult time for the entire community.” With the recent spikes of the number of coronavirus cases in Pakistan, Infinix ensures to play its part by doing the right thing and working for the greater good. The brand has also recently launched a DVC to instill a sense of responsibility among the masses for the role they play in this fight. The compelling message encourages them to take all the necessary precautions to overcome this tough time and to stay safe by washing hands, using face masks, and observing social-distancing.

## First Virtual Meeting of Asian Parliamentary Assembly held

Operational issues must be considered as APA has 44 members Parliament and working on such a scale will require review of the rules of procedure of APA to adapt to virtual meetings



DNA  
ISLAMABAD: The First Virtual meeting of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) on COVID 19 outbreak was held today. Members from Pakistan who participated in the meeting included Senator Nuzhat Sadiq, Senator Muhammad Ali Khan Saif and Senator Zeeshan Khanzada. The meeting was co-hosted by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and the Asian Parliamentary Assembly. It focussed on best practices to suppress the pandemic and restart the economy of the region in a sustainable and inclusive manner. Speakers included members from 42 countries and focussed on the emerging challenges; especially in terms of primary healthcare including mental health and a sustainable economy. General State-

ments of implications and precautionary measures of COVID 19 and modality of future virtual meetings were delivered. A draft declaration was issued. Senator Nuzhat Sadiq, head of Pakistan delegation was of the view that meetings such as these ensure that Parliamentarians remain active and uphold their posts as representatives of the people. In pursuit of this goal, she said that Pakistan upholds the initiatives of the APA President and Secretary General APA

to restart the activities in view of the new reality faced by the world to share best practices. She added that this pandemic is an unprecedented challenge in which every aspect of human life has been affected. Estimates suggest that global economic losses have run close to 9 trillion dollars. In Pakistan, she added, that COVID 19 has severely hit key sectors of the economy, estimates show that during fiscal year 2020 growth remained negative 24 percent. While for fiscal year 2021 growth

is projected to be 2.1 percent depending on how the pandemic unfolds. To reduce the severity of the pandemic, she said, Pakistan has responded with an emergency stimulus package of 1.42 trillion, with additional spending on healthcare, cash transfers and utility support for households and businesses. She further stated that to normalize life in the long run Pakistan has adopted the Smart Lockdown strategy that allows many businesses to cushion the economic impact

and support vulnerable segments and sectors in the country. She said that in the health sectors it is suggested that the government review existing trade regulations, both tariff and non-tariff to ensure timely access to affordable and trust worthy medical help. Likewise for healthcare workers, she stressed, all necessary resources and equipment should be ensured to minimize operational risks. She added that for virtual meetings of APA, we understand that all Parliaments of the world

are trying to adapt to this new situation and that there is no single successful model to replicate. Some Parliaments are facing capacity issues while others are having procedural and administrative problems. As far as the APA is concerned, she said, that we support the idea which might help in the resumption of normal activities. However, operational issues must be considered as APA has 44 members Parliament and working on such a scale will require review of the rules of procedure of the APA to adapt to virtual meetings. Moreover, she said that we can also look into the limiting of physical meetings on matters of urgent concern. We hope that with cooperation we will be able to convert this challenge into an opportunity and will continue the exchange of best practices and lessons to ensure the smooth functioning of APA.



## Briefs

## 16 gamblers arrested, stake money recovered

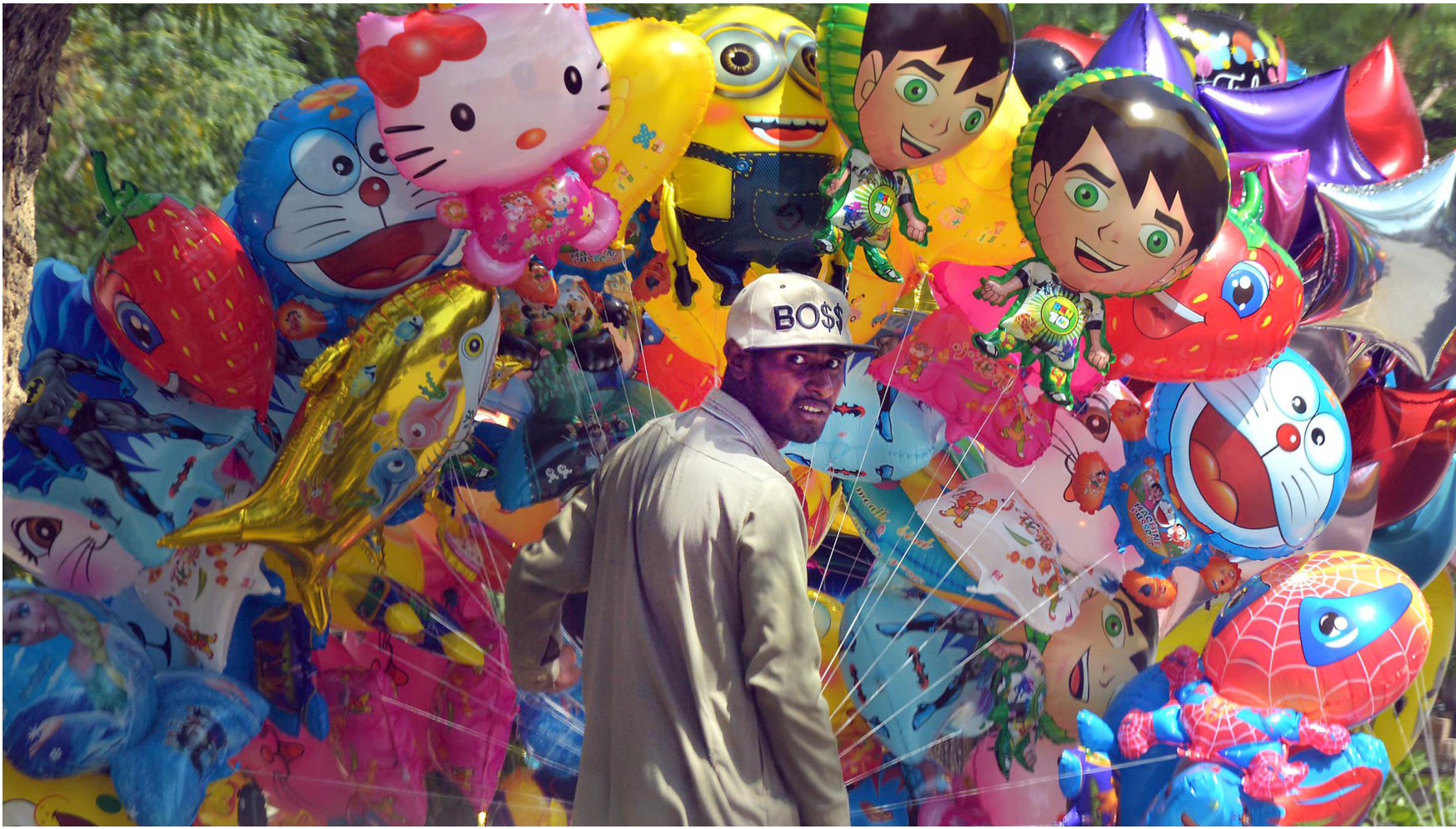
RAWALPINDI: Police have arrested 16 gamblers and recovered over Rs 53,000 cash stake money, 15 mobile phones and other items from their possession. According to a police spokesman, Kahuta police team under the supervision of Station House Officer (SHO), acting on a tip-off conducted a raid in its jurisdiction and arrested three gamblers namely Tahir Mehmood, Sadaqat Ali and Wazir Ahmed who were allegedly involved in betting while playing cards. Police also recovered Rs25,440 cash stake money, three mobile phones and other items from their possession. He further said that Pirwadhai police in another operation netted 13 gamblers identified as Umair, Salawar Khan, Qaiser Mehmood, Muhammad Ijaz, Muhammad Husnain, Muhammad Rasheed, Raja Asim Mushtaq, Muhammad Sabir, Tasawar Mehmood, Ehtesham Ahmed, Bilal Ahmed, Aziz ur Rehman and Haider Ali who were allegedly involved in betting on Parchi Jua. Police recovered cash Rs 27,600, 12 mobile phones and other items from their possession. Separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigations are underway, he said. — APP

## RCB completes cleanliness work

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) has completed cleanliness work of Adra, Faisal Colony, Mir Bakhsh Colony, Aslam Market and Peoples Colony nullahs. According to RCB spokesman, the board is finalizing all the arrangements for Monsoon season besides completing dredging, de-silting and cleanliness work of different nullahs. The board on the directives of Cantonment Executive Officer, RCB had launched drive to clean nullahs. The task is being completed under the supervision of Additional CEO and Public Health Officer. The cleanliness work of Adra, Faisal Colony, Mir Bakhsh Colony, Aslam Market and Peoples Colony had been completed while the remaining work of other nullahs on the directives of the CEO has been accelerated. He informed that the board would monitor the flow of water in different nullahs during rains and if required, another round of cleanliness work would be completed. He said, the Sanitation In-charge had been directed to complete the task utilizing all available resources within few days. The sanitation branch was also making efforts on daily basis to ensure cleanliness in all areas falling in RCB jurisdiction, he said. — APP

## Metro Bus Package-1, II almost completed

ISLAMABAD: Peshawar More- New Islamabad Airport Metro Bus infrastructure construction project assigned to National Highway Authority is nearing completion as about 98 per cent and 92 per cent work of Package-I and Package-II has been accomplished respectively. An NHA official of NHA told APP that so far 25.6 kilometres road track for the project has been completed, while the electrical part of the project was underway and final touch was being given to bus stations. The 25.6 kilometre-long extension to the Islamabad Metro Bus project included the construction of a dedicated, two-lane, signal-free corridor on the ground and in trenches and the bus stations. Moreover, a three-lane carriageway with shoulders on either side of the metro corridor from the Goltara Mor Interchange to the Grand Trunk (GT) Road Interchange were also its part to ensure the free flow of traffic and turnings along with the construction of flyovers and underpasses on existing roads and allied works. — APP



ISLAMABAD: A roadside vendor arranging and displaying cartoon shape air filled balloons to attract customer. — DNA

## Corruption is the mother of all evils: Chairman NAB

Chairman NAB said that NAB's faith is Corruption free Pak which is in line with its national anti corruption strategy of Awareness, Prevention and Enforcement

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Honorable Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB has chaired a meeting to review overall performance of NAB at NAB headquarters. He said that corruption is the mother of all evils. Eradication of corruption and logical conclusion of mega corruption cases is the top most priority of NAB. NAB is the focal organization of Pakistan under United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) as Pakistan is signatory of UNCAC. The Chairman NAB said that NAB's faith is Corruption free Pakistan which is in line with its national anti corruption strategy of Awareness, Prevention and Enforcement. He said that World Economic Forum and Transparency International Pakistan, PILDAT and Mishaal Pakistan have lauds NAB's efforts to aware people about the ill effects of

corruption in order to have corruption free Pakistan. He said that detailed analysis and review of all pillars of the organization i.e. Operations, Prosecution, Human Resource Development, Training and Research and Awareness and Prevention etc have been made in order to further improve their performance in an atmosphere of renewed energy and dynamism, where fight against corruption is being taken as a national duty. The Chairman NAB said that NAB's prime focus is on corruption and corrupt practices i.e.; money laundering, cases of cheating the public at large, bank frauds, willful bank loan defaults, misuse of authority and embezzlement of state funds etc. He said that the overall complaints in 2019 were 53643 and processed 42760 whereas complaints in 2018 were 48591 and processed 41414. Increase in the number of complaints also



reflects enhanced public trust in the NAB. NAB during 2019, processed 1308 complaint verifications, 1686 inquiries and 609 investigations and recovered Rs 141.542 billion from corrupt elements in 2019 and NAB's accumulative success ratio is about 68.8 percent which is a remarkable achievement in investigation of White Collar Crimes in the world.

He said that NAB has recovered Rs.466.069 billion from corrupt elements since its inception and deposited in national exchequer. He said that NAB has introduced a new concept of Combine Investigation Team (CIT) in order to benefit from the experience and collective wisdom of senior supervisory officers, a system of CIT comprising of Di-

rector, Additional Director, Investigation Officer, Legal Counsel, financial and land revenue experts has been put in place besides establishing its own state of the art Forensic Science Laboratory in NAB Rawalpindi which has facilities of Digital Forensics, Questioned Documents and Fingerprint Analysis. In 2019, 15747 questioned documents and 300 thumb impressions were

analyzed in 50 cases and forensic analysis was carried out on 74 digital devices (Laptops, Mobile phones, Hard Disks etc). He said that NAB is the Chairman of SAARC anti-corruption forum. NAB is considered as a role model among SAARC countries. He said that Pakistan's Apex Anti Corruption Agency, NAB is the only Organization in the world with whom China has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to oversee projects to be undertaken under CEPC in Pakistan. He said that signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Pakistan and China is especially significant in the backdrop of increasing economic and trade cooperation between Pakistan and China with the resolve by both the Governments to work in a fair, impartial and corruption free environment in order to share their experiences to eradicate corruption.

## Traders demand ban on poultry export to reduce price

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the business community and former President ICCI Shahid Rasheed Butt on Wednesday said mafia gangs have become a threat to the system and masses which must be controlled. Government should stop taking notice on every move of mafia and take stern action to stop them from fleecing masses, he said. Shahid Rasheed Butt said that poultry products have become more expensive in

summer as compared to the last winter; therefore, its exports should be banned and smuggling should be stopped to stabilize prices in the market. He noted that poultry lords have manipulated the market to bankrupt small poultry farmers and started looting masses. Eggs which were available at Rs80 and 90 per dozen in the last winter are now being sold for Rs130 to 150 per dozen while the chicken is being sold at Rs230 to Rs260 which was almost Rs110 few months back.

He said that inaction against wheat, sugar, pharma, IPP, LPG, petroleum and other mafia groups have emboldened the poultry mafia that has added to the problems of masses facing high inflation. Others mafias are also initiated their activities as they are sure that they will evade any meaningful administrative and legal action which is evident from shortage of wheat, flour and tomatoes in different cities. The business leader said that some FBR officials have started harassing

people who declared their hidden assets in the tax amnesty scheme announced in 2018 which is a violation of Voluntary Declaration of Domestic Assets Act of 2018. The government should step in immediately and restore order before further erosion of its credibility takes place, he demanded. He said that the move may not improve tax collection but it will widen the gulf between taxpayers and tax collectors resulting in the failure of tax targets for the ongoing fiscal.

## Government employees support the legitimate demands

ATTOCK: President Punjab Teachers Association District attock Prof. Majid Waseem and Prof. Aurangzeb Vice President Punjab have said in a joint statement that Government Employees support all the legitimate demands of the Grand Alliance.

Government employees have been severely abused by not increasing salaries in the budget. The storm of inflation has made the lives of white-clad employees miserable. In this era, government employees are working as an oppressed class whose basic needs are being met by the government.

It is the responsibility of the employees of 42 departments of Punjab to announce the joint struggle from the platform of Government Employees Grand Alliance. It is a welcome process.

Until the approval of legitimate demands, the unanimous leadership of the employees, Hafiz Abdul Nasir, Chairman Khalid Javed Sanghira and Secretary General Dr. Has announced to walk in step with the college in the protest on July 25 in Rawalpindi full participation of teachers will be ensured in all cases. — DNA

## MCI to return 1,000 safety kits to donors

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation (IMC), after failing to convince its sanitary workers for wearing the safety kits, has decided to return the same to the donor Inter-faith League Against Poverty (ILAP), Director Sanitation Sardar Khan Zimri disclosed on Thursday. "We have conveyed to the ILAP that the IMC is ready to return the personal protective kits as the workers cannot wear it in the current hot weather due to its weather-unfriendly stuff," he said while talking to APP Zimri said about 600 sanitary workers were given the kits to ensure their safety from the coronavirus but most of them refused to wear due to the prevailing hot and humid weather. The ILAP, Zimri said, had asked the IMC to ensure wearing of the kits by force or return the same. Some of the workers were compelled to wear the safety kits but they felt uncomfortable and became unconscious while performing their duty under the sun, he noted. — APP

## Mayor Islamabad assures assistance to F-10 traders

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The F-10 Markaz was one of the major commercial centres of Islamabad and MCI would soon take measures to address its key issues including repair of roads and footpaths. These views were expressed by Sheikh Ansar Aziz, Mayor Islamabad while addressing the traders at the occasion of ground-breaking ceremony of a public toilet in F-10 Markaz, Islamabad. Sardar Khan Zimri, Director Sanitation MCI was also present. Seikh Ansar Aziz said that the business community was playing important role in the development of the economy by promoting business activities and every effort would be made to solve their MCI related issues in order to facilitate them in doing business. It would help them to play an active role in the development of the country and the nation. He said that construction of public toi-



let in F-10 Markaz would solve a long standing problem of traders. Speaking at the occasion, Tahir Abbasi, Senior Vice President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry thanked Sheikh Ansar Aziz, Mayor Islamabad, and Sardar Khan Zimri, Director Sanitation, MCI, for their efforts to provide a public toilet facility in F-10 Markaz. He said that the non-availability of public toilet was causing difficulties to the traders of the

area and expressed the hope that its construction would ease their problems. Tahir Abbasi also thanked the Mayor Islamabad for his assurance to repair roads and footpaths in F-10 Markaz. He presented various suggestions for the development of F-10 Markaz on modern lines and expressed the hope that the Mayor Islamabad would consider them sympathetically for their implementation that would provide great facilitation in promoting business activities.

## AIOU uploads course books on website

University has recently started work on shifting all its academic operations from manual to digital, and as per directives of the Vice Chancellor

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has uploaded soft copies of course books of matric and intermediate level courses onto its website to facilitate the students. The students have been advised to download these books for their studies, said a press release on Thursday. The step has been taken by AIOU with an aim to provide education to its students at their doorsteps. Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Professor Dr. Zia-ul-Qayyum has directed all Servicing Departments of the varsity to facilitate the students as more as possible in their studies in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic in the country. Director ICT of the university in a statement said: "the university has recently started work on shifting all its academic operations from manual to digital, and as per directives of the Vice Chancellor, presently soft copies of books are being provided to students of matric and intermediate levels. Students of all other programmes will also be given soft copies of books by the university soon". The director advised the students to get the books downloaded and prepare their course assignments in time. — APP

## NCOC lauds DC efforts in corona fight

ISLAMABAD: The National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) has lauded the efforts of Deputy Commissioner, Islamabad, Hamza Shafiqat and his team for ensuring effective coordination among the federal institutions in fight against COVID-19.

A letter in that regard was issued by Lieutenant General Hamood uz Zaman Khan, HI (M), National Coordinator, NCOC. "I hope this epistle finds you in good health and high spirits. I would like to acknowledge your efforts and convey my sincere appreciation for your contribution in the national efforts against COVID-19," said a copy of the letter available with APP on Thursday. "I am grateful to you and your team for the continuous dedication, commitment and hard work displayed during 100 days of Nation's resolve against the pandemic. I would like to congratulate you and extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation for your enthusiasm and dedication to the national cause," the letter read. "We must understand that the battle was not yet over and we all need to continue working with the same energy dedication and hard work to take Pakistan out of the pandemic," it added. — APP

## SOPs issued for cattle markets

ISLAMABAD: The district magistrate, Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) has issued Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for trading and transportation in cattle markets across the federal capital in wake of COVID-19 pandemic and Congo spread. Metropolitan Corporation, Islamabad (MCI), District Administration, health department, Ministry of Health Services Regulation and Coordination, was taking necessary measures to prevent and control spread of the communicable diseases, like Cholera, Typhoid Fever, Congo Crimean Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) and Respiratory infections, a handout available with APP on Thursday said. According to SOPs, the cattle markets should be established at designated points, at least two to five kilometre away from city limits. However the technical working group (TWG) recommended increase in number of cattle markets to manage the rush of traders and customers. The management of cattle markets must ensure controlled entry to the market and the parking area would be marked for distanced parking. Only two people per vehicle would be allowed while the elderly and children would not be allowed to enter into the cattle markets. The markets should ensure provision of hand-hygiene facilities at entry points and multiple spots inside. No person would be allowed to enter without covering the face. Thermal scanning of staff and visitors at entry points by trained personnel should be ensured. Medical camps with adequate staff, equipment and personal protective equipment would be established at the markets. It further stated that Covid-19

was considered a zoonotic disease though its link with specific animals had not been established yet. The CCHF was a widespread disease caused by a tick-borne virus with a case fatality rate of 10 to 40pc. The veterinary clinic staff would examine any animal reporting these symptoms and if suspect for COVID-19 infection, would ensure immediate isolation of sick animal for further assessment. The information about sick animal and its caretaker would be passed to health department for assessment of health condition of caretakers and his contacts. The general public was asked to wear light colored full sleeves and trousers for easy detection of ticks on clothes and bite protection. Regularly examine clothing and skin for ticks, if found, remove them safely and use approved repellents on clothing and skin. Food points would be established at dedicated places with only take away services and meal would be served only in disposable utensils. Waste Collection bins with lid would be installed at places near each cattle market for disposal of waste. The awareness messages would also be displayed in the cattle markets at conspicuous places. Announcements regarding preventive measures and SOPs should be a regular activity throughout the cattle markets. Announcements in local languages were advised. The local Administrations would arrange awareness sessions and seminars with cattle market managements and traders on preventive measures of COVID-19 and Congo Fever in their respective districts. — APP



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**Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti**  
**Deputy Editor: Abid Raza**

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Email: [dailyisbpost@gmail.com](mailto:dailyisbpost@gmail.com)Website: [www.islamabadpost.com.pk](http://www.islamabadpost.com.pk)

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad

## AIDS cases

**W**HILE the Covid-19 pandemic has seized the attention of the world, it is easy to forget that other dangerous illnesses also continue to take their toll. According to the 2020 Global AIDS Update published by UNAIDS, cases of HIV infection are rising in Pakistan while the lack of diagnostic facilities and poor adherence to treatment means there are a higher number of mortalities and also onward transmission.

UNAIDS has said HIV infections have declined in the Asia-Pacific region, notably in Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam but there is a sharp rise in insurgence in Pakistan and the Philippines. In many countries in the region the 29 percent reduction in AIDS-related deaths since 2010 comes as a result of successful testing and treatment programmes.

However, the lack of access of most Pakistanis to basic healthcare means that testing for HIV may not be available to them while the stigma that is still associated with the disease means that even those who suspect infection may not report it.

The crisis that arose in Larkana and other areas of Sindh some months ago concerning a surge in HIV infection, with children among those infected, leaves open an area that requires further investigation. But currently the problem with the misuse of syringes even by medical staff and also by drug users in Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Afghanistan means that each of these countries is seeing a rise in AIDS cases. Many Pakistanis, including workers returning from the Gulf States, truck drivers, drug users and others may also not be aware that while HIV or full-blown AIDS cannot be cured, it can be successfully treated through good medical care. In developed countries, AIDS patients are living a normal life-span.

This is sadly not true for Pakistan where the rate of infection continues to rise. More awareness and better access to medical care are essential if the problem is to be halted. People also need to be informed about symptoms which could suggest HIV infection and proper testing offered to them. This would mean a major campaign by the government.

It has been predicted for years that South Asia, including Pakistan, could become an epicenter for HIV infection. The latest report by UNAIDS suggests this is now turning into a nightmarish reality over which health services in the country need to gain control and win over the confidence of people so that they are ready to get themselves tested and treated as per medical advice.



## Content check

OMAR IFTIKHAR

**T**HE content presented in programs aired on television channels is of high importance. It nurtures the viewers' minds and also reveals the intention of those who produce it. Pakistan's state-owned television channel was known for producing such content that appealed to viewers of all ages. Gone are the days when drama series were aired that showcased the realistic side of society.

Elders and the youth of the family would watch them together. Today, unfortunately, the drama series aired on private TV channels portray the side of society that is immoral, to say the least. Romantic affairs, extramarital relationships, and stories that do not add value to the viewers' thought processes are being produced and aired in bulk quantity.

One does remember the popular 'Ainak Wala Jin' that is still a classic. With a simple storyline and profound characterizations, the program imparted upon the viewers, especially the youth, moral values. Such programs are no longer being produced.

TV programs such as Neelam Ghar hosted by Late Tariq Aziz and Kasauti hosted by the Late Obaidullah Baig and Late Quraish Pur were one of the finest programs ever aired on Pakistani television. Today, such programs do not have a target market nor do the television channels want to produce them. The concerned authorities must keep a check on the content being produced for electronic media.

Unfortunately, our television channels do not air programs that enhance personality or broaden the horizon.

There are morning shows that are just noise while the dramas are the representation of a portion of the population. Programs showing the beauty of Pakistan and those related to enhancing skillsets among the youth must be aired.

In this regard, the efforts to launch the TV channel 'Teleschool' being aired through Pakistan Television (PTV) from April 2020 must be applauded.

Its objective is to educate the students from class one to 12 during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Such efforts must be multiplied so that education and skill-based learning could be disseminated across Pakistan in English, Urdu and other regional languages.

# SCO Varsity an important platform: Norov

Ansar Mahmood Bhatti



According to Professor Abdul Karim Aaas, Director of the Centre for the Advancement of Academic Excellence at the University of Sainz, three of the main problems with distance learning are: the experience and skill of teachers in the use of online systems and online applications; Infrastructure readiness status, such as Internet connectivity, bandwidth and devices as well as evolving thinking, both teachers and students

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**T**HE idea of creating the SCO University belongs to the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin. He put forward this initiative during a meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of State on August 16, 2007 in Bishkek. There were good reasons for such a step, as SCO member states have developed a serious legal basis for cooperation in education in general over the years, and regarding the SCO University in particular.

Thus, the Charter of the Organization of June 7, 2002 identified the key priorities of multifaceted cooperation of SCO member states in the sphere of cultural and humanitarian cooperation. The Charter's preamble states: "The main goals and objectives of the SCO are to strengthen mutual trust, friendship and good-neighbourliness among member states, and to encourage effective cooperation in... Cultural... Educational... and other areas of common interest."

It is also important to note that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's Development Strategy until 2025 identifies the main areas for deepening our countries' cooperation in the areas of policy, security, economy, and humanitarian cooperation. The SCO member states stated that "...there are preconditions for bringing the SCO to a qualitatively new level, characterized by increased cooperation in the fields of policy, security, economy, development of cultural and humanitarian ties, increased participation in the affairs of the region and the process of global regulation."

On June 15, 2006, an intergovernmental agreement was signed on cooperation between SCO member states in education.

To implement the initiative to establish the SCO University in 2008, the SCO Union's Minister of Education and the SCO University Concept were adopted, laying the groundwork for network cooperation between the leading universities of SCO member states.

At the SCO Summit in Astana in 2017, five member states - the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan - signed the "Agreement on the Establishment and Functioning of the University of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization."

The Coordinating Council of the CCU SCO is the

highest governing body of the CCU SCO (Article 7), accountable to the Meeting of Ministers of Education of SCO Member States. Its composition is formed from the representatives of the SCO member states that signed the Agreement.

During the first organizational meeting of the Coordinating Council, the agenda issues were discussed and several decisions related to the SCO University were taken, which will have to be approved at the meeting of the SCO Ministers of Education (Science) meeting.

He said at the mentioned organizational meeting of the Coordinating Council of the University of the SCO, interesting speeches and proposals from member states were made. The SCO Secretariat is generalizing them.

It can be noted that the SCO University has become an important platform for the development of cooperation in the Organization's space in the field of higher professional education, deepening inter-university cooperation and developing methods of implementing joint educational projects in a multilateral format. At the same time, it should be noted that since the beginning of this year we have all found ourselves in a new reality. Education systems around the world, including in SCO countries, are taking steps to educate in the face of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

In most countries of our Organization, schools have been completely or partially closed and many students have been transferred to distance learning. Interestingly, the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic comes at a time when most education systems, as shown by the latest round of the OECD International Student Assessment Programme (ISAP), have been unprepared to take advantage of new digital learning opportunities.

It is obvious that the closure of universities, colleges, schools, and the emergency transition to distance learning are fraught with problems, mainly due to insufficient technical equipment.

Taking into account the fact that almost the majority of the world's population was in quarantine and self-isolation mode, the demand for computer equipment increased dramatically, even avalanche-like. I will give only a few examples, which are also typical for many countries: for example, in Vietnam by 624%, and in Singapore by 82% increased demand for webcams. Demand for keyboards increased by 264% and 137% more than was available in Vietnam and Singapore, respectively.

Equally serious was the behaviour of teachers and educators in the transition to distance learning. According to Professor Abdul Karim Aaas, Director of the Centre for the Advancement of Academic Excellence at the University of Sainz, three of the main problems with distance learning are: the experience and skill of teachers in the use of online systems and online applications; Infrastructure readiness status, such as Internet connectivity, bandwidth and devices as well as evolving thinking, both teachers and students. Moreover, the third component is the third component - changing the mentality.

By the way, the topic of teaching readiness for the online regime is critical in many countries. For example, according to the research company BayViewAnalytics, in the U.S. 1.5 million teachers 70% of them have never edicts in virtual space.

Of course, these and other problems challenge the education system in a critical situation. At the same time, we can state that our countries are working in this direction. Thus, the relevant ministries and universities in the SCO countries have developed and issued recommendations to universities on the transfer of students to distance learning.

China was the first country to be affected by the outbreak and the first to announce the closure of schools. For example, after a detailed discussion of the situation on January 30 this year, Tsinghua University decided to start the spring semester courses online schedule. And on February 3, more than 57,000 students from Tsinghua University, faculty and alumni took part in a special lecture on Tsinghua University's work on epidemic prevention and the organization of the spring semester live.

The Russian university community has also demonstrated solidarity and a desire to consolidate its efforts to organize effective educational activities in the new environment.

An example of this kind is the efficient remote interaction and rapid exchange of information organized by the rector of Voronezh State University, Dr. Professor D.A. Yendowitsky, among the members of the Association of Universities of the Center of Russia. Such joint work of universities is observed in other SCO countries. At the same time, along with obvious challenges and challenges, the new learning format provides a wide range of opportunities and perspectives for changing and improving educational systems for which a critical situation creates a forced environment. Judging by the work started every-

where in this direction, it can be noted that online education has every chance to make a big leap. At the same time, an answer must be found on how this will affect the university system in the future.

According to Article 3 of the SCO University's Agreement, one of the main areas of educational and scientific activity of the SCO University is the development and introduction into the educational process of innovative educational technologies and modern educational methods in the field of higher education. Taking into account the formalization of the composition of the Coordinating Council of ESOS, it is important to work on generalizing the experience of the SCO countries on the development of distance education and preparing relevant proposals for the project of the Programme of Co-operation of the Member States of the Organization in this area, as the SCO University itself should become a reliable platform for the development of distance education in the SCO space.

In a number of SCO countries, work is under way to regulate distance education. Thus, the State Duma of the Russian Federation is currently considering amendments to the Education Act, which clearly delineate the powers of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education: the first sets the rules in secondary and vocational education, the second - in higher education. This is done in the light of the fact that the pandemic has identified some gaps in the legislative regulation of education due to the complexities of e-learning and the introduction of remote educational technologies. By the way, the draft Prospective Plan of University for the period 2020-2023. It is envisaged to create an online platform for the implementation of joint educational programs of the SCO University.

We see that the modern world is on the verge of unprecedented, one might say, revolutionary technological changes. The second era of the digital revolution, associated with the synergy of artificial intelligence working on superfast 5G networks, the development of robotics, bio- and nano-technologies, unites the digital and real spheres of the economy. The future seems to belong to those who can effectively exploit the huge potential of the IT industry. In this regard, given the presence of such a key area of training as IT technology, the development and implementation of training programs within the SCO University to train specialists in the development of artificial intelligence and the digital economy are of particular importance.

I would like to emphasize separately the importance of the SCO Youth Appeals adopted in 2018 and the program of action on its implementation, according to which it is proposed to create an association of young scientists within the framework of the SCO, to hold youth educational, scientific and innovative exhibitions and competitions in member states, exchange of scientific publications, organization of research works on topical issues of preventing the involvement of young people in the activities of destructive forces.

Given that the SCO University Concept covers many of the issues outlined in the SCO Heads of State Address, I am confident that the SCO University can make a significant contribution to the implementation of the above programme in cooperation with the

Secretariat and the SCO Youth Council.

Successful joint work requires a permanent link between the University's Rectorate and the SCO Secretariat in order to fully utilize the existing mechanisms for implementing the decisions and instructions adopted at the meetings of the Council of Heads of State and heads of government of SCO member states on the development of higher education and youth.

I would like to draw attention to the declaration of the SCO summit in Bishkek 2019, which emphasizes the importance of "further development of the SCO University, including by connecting the SCO countries concerned to the SCO member states' agreement on the establishment and functioning of the SCO University." In this regard, it is possible to express the hope that the accession of the Republic of India and the Republic of Pakistan to the SCO will allow to expand the geographical scope and direction of cooperation of the SCO University for the sake of common interests and for the benefit of our countries and peoples.

It is obvious that the consistent build-up of effective cooperation within the SCO University requires all participating member states to constantly share their experience in modernizing national education systems. We need to make a coordinated effort to improve the educational process, to find solutions across the spectrum of problems in this area.

The SCO University has enough opportunities to become one of the important tools for training "elite" highly professional competent personnel - carriers of the ideology of international equal cooperation, "translators" of the culture of partnership in the spirit of mutual respect, mutual support, respect for multiculturalism. It is necessary to form these attitudes among young generations of SCO residents in the name of progress, sustainable development, and prosperity in the space of our Organization.

It should be noted that this educational project - the University of the SCO - is complex and multifaceted, I would even say, very ambitious, requiring the painstaking and concerted work of all participants involved in its implementation and, above all, the state commissioners in education and higher education institutions. Time has shown that the SCO University has become not only one of the main tools of multilateral cooperation in education in the SCO space, but also the main humanitarian project, which contributes to the strengthening of mutual trust and good-neighbourly relations between the SCO member states and their peoples, and enhances the status and prestige of the SCO in the international arena.

To sum up, I would like to note the following points. The implementation of the SCO University project (including its geographical expansion) will further deepen the comprehensive integration links in education and science in the SCO space, primarily through the activation of academic mobility of scientific and educational staff and students of SCO member states.

In today's environment, Member States are fully aware of the importance of joining forces to provide an enabling environment for the training of highly skilled personnel to meet the needs of a knowledge-based society and to put economies on an innovative path of development.





Briefs

Irfan's 33rd Guinness World Record

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani martial artist Irfan Mehsood has achieved his 33rd Guinness World Record by setting the latest of the most jumping jacks (81) in one minute carrying a 60-lb pack. "I broke the record of 70 jumping jacks by doing 81. I am the first player in the world to set this record. I have the record of all three jumping jacks at the world level. I attempted the record in Dera Ismail Khan in April this year", he told APP.

Irfan, who hails from Ladha Tehsil of South Waziristan, also holds the record of the most jumping jacks (64) in one minute while carrying a 100-lb pack. Irfan holds records for the most (60) push-ups in one minute with one leg raised and carrying a 40-lb pack, most knuckle push-ups (59) in one minute carrying a 60 lb pack, most side lunges (72) in a minute, most push-ups (39) on fingertips in one minute while carrying a 60-lb pack and most push-ups in one minute (40) with one leg raised and carrying an 80-lb pack. He also holds the record for most side lunges in one minute with 54 lunges in total.

The other records he broke included most full-contact knee strikes (87), in one minute using one leg; most full contact knee strikes, (83) in one minute (alternate legs); most push-ups with one leg raised, and carrying a 40-lb pack, 31 in one minute; most push-ups with one leg raised and carrying an 80-lb pack, 21 in one minute; most knuckle push-ups 25 with one leg raised and carrying a 40-lb pack in one minute; most thumb push-ups 35 in one minute; Most Bo staff strikes, 261 in one minute.

Venezuela's inflation down to 3,500 pc

CARACAS: Venezuela ended June with a year-on-year inflation of 3,500 percent, according to a statement published Wednesday by the opposition-controlled legislature. The figures show inflation is gradually decreasing, having hit almost 3,700 percent in May and 4,200 percent in April. However, June's inflation of 19.5 percent was higher than May's 15.3 percent, opposition legislator Jose Guerra said during a video press conference. The National Assembly has been publishing monthly inflation figures since 2017 due to a lack of official statistics from the government of President Nicolas Maduro. Inflation over the first six months of the year was just over 500 percent the statement said. Venezuela has been in recession for almost seven years and is in the midst of the worst economic crisis in its history. And it may get worse, according to Guerra, who said hyperinflation could be given "a new impulse with the depreciation of the bolivar." The local currency has lost 77 percent of its value in 2020 and depreciated three percent in each of the last two days, he added.

Airbus deliveries down 50 pct

PARIS: Airbus on Wednesday said January-June plane deliveries slumped by half to 196 aircraft compared with the first six months of 2019, highlighting the impact of the coronavirus crisis. For the second consecutive month there were no new orders in June, the plane maker added, though it did record 36 deliveries, up from 24 in May and 14 in April. In the first half of 2019, Airbus made 389 deliveries - a closely-tracked variable because clients pay most of the cost when they receive the planes. The COVID-19 pandemic has hammered the aviation sector with border closures preventing deliveries and a slump in traffic leaving most carriers strapped for cash. Fleets of planes have been parked at airports worldwide, and analysts forecast that air traffic will not return to 2019 levels before 2023. Airbus registered 298 net orders in the first half of 2020, all signed before the end of April. - APP



SOUTHAMPTON: Windies bowler Gabriel celebrates after taking the wicket of English batsman Joe Denly during second day of first test match. - DNA

Fear grip US foreign students after Trump visa threat

“It just seems really unfair to me that the virus getting bad would be something that international students, who didn’t necessarily have any part to play in spreading the virus, would have to suffer from”

DNA

NEW YORK: A couple of days after United States President Donald Trump threatened to revoke the visas of foreign students enrolled in American universities whose entire classes had shifted online, students numbering in the thousands feared for their future. The US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced this week that foreign students whose entire courses have moved online because of the coronavirus pandemic must return to their home country. "I might be affected if

they don't offer any sort of in-person class," said Taimoor Ahmed, an information technology student at Cal State University in Los Angeles. "I'm concerned. This can potentially change my future and plans," the 25-year-old told media. Harvard and MIT launched a lawsuit Wednesday, asking the court to revoke the order that Harvard President Lawrence Bacow said had thrown higher education in the US "into chaos." But the action has done little to alleviate the worries of foreign students, of which there were more than one million in the United States in 2019, a doubling in 20 years, ac-

cording to the Institute of International Education (IEE). "I'm kind of scared actually," said an Indian graduate student at a major Texas university, who asked not to be named. He planned to continue with online classes in the fall but is now obliged to return to the campus - in a state where COVID-19 cases are soaring - or face deportation. "I'm talking to a lot of people that are really scared, (they are) alone in a different country. "I don't have anyone to take care of me if I get ill. The cost of the medical treatment in the US is far, far more than the country which I come from," the 25-year-old added.

The students see themselves as collateral damage in Trump's aggressive push to force universities and schools to reopen fully in September amid his reelection campaign. An Indian graduate studying electrical engineering at one of the top universities in Arizona, where the virus is also surging, fears having to risk her health to continue her research and tutoring of younger students. "The rule is really, really cruel," she told AFP. More than 4,000 foreign students attend California's public universities, and another nearly 5,000 at Harvard in Massachusetts, establishments that plan to offer online-only

education this fall. Some 84% of universities are planning to offer a hybrid system of in-person and online classes, according to the Chronicle of Higher Education website, which would save students from deportation. Many students fear a resurgence of the pandemic later this year, though, which could see all classes moved online, forcing them to leave the country. "I think it's really hard to control the spread of the virus in such a densely populated campus," said the Arizona student, who asked not to be named. "It just seems really unfair to me that the virus getting bad would be some-

thing that international students, who didn't necessarily have any part to play in spreading the virus, would have to suffer from," she added. She says she will live in a "permanent state of anxiety" until her work and thesis defense ends in November. "If my visa gets invalidated, I have invested three years of my life of hard work to earn this degree, so it would be so bad." Students are not the only ones concerned: the universities themselves are worried that Trump's immigration policies are making their institutions less attractive. They fear losing foreign students to cheaper colleges in Europe.

NZ name Sophie Devine as permanent captain

DNA

WELLINGTON: New Zealand Cricket have named Sophie Devine as the permanent skipper of the national side. Devine had stepped in for Amy Satterthwaite when the latter decided to go on maternity leave towards the second half of 2019. The 30-year-old Devine was named captain in January this year in the lead-up to the Women's T20 World Cup, where New Zealand made a group-stage exit. Satterthwaite will now return as Devine's deputy. Devine expressed her gratitude at being handed the job and spoke of forging a strong leadership bond with her second-in-command Satterthwaite. "It's a huge honour and privilege to be awarded the White Ferns captaincy," Devine said. "I thoroughly enjoyed my time as captain over the past



season. It was challenging results-wise at times, but I feel we are moving in the right direction as a team, both with our cricket and our team culture. "I'm very much looking forward to working with Amy who has an exceptional cricketing brain and I feel we can form a strong leadership partnership in combination with a well-established leadership group." New Zealand's head coach gave a glowing testimonial of Devine's leadership, who,

he said, 'leads with actions'. Devine went into the T20 World Cup with scores of 72, 54\*, 61, 77 and 105 - the first player with five consecutive 50-plus scores in T20Is - and kickstarted her campaign in style with an unbeaten 75 against Sri Lanka. She'd also enjoyed stellar form in the WBBL last year - where she finished as the player of the season with 769 runs at a strike rate of 130.33 and picked 19 wickets too. The purple continued at home

in the Super Sash too. She will now lead New Zealand in the 2021 World Cup, scheduled to be played in February-March. "Sophie is a strong leader, she has her own style and knows what she wants from herself and the team," head coach Bob Carter said. "It's a testament to her ability as a leader that her performance with the bat last summer went to a new level. She leads with her actions and the team responds well to her leadership style. "Amy is on the comeback to cricket after giving birth and she is progressing really well. Having her experience, knowledge and leadership working alongside Sophie is only going to benefit the team." New Zealand's first series after the pandemic-induced break will be a limited-overs tour of Australia in late September, where they are to play three ODIs and three T20Is.

Australia must tour Engand for ‘health’ of cricket: Langer

Langer believed releasing Australia's big names to join the IPL - whose revised dates are yet to be announced - was also essential as a goodwill gesture, to make sure India go ahead with their Test tour

DNA

SYDNEY: Australia must tour England in September "for the health of world cricket", and players should then be released to join the Indian Premier League, coach Justin Langer said Thursday. Despite the challenges of COVID-19, Langer said Australia had to play its part in getting cricket moving again, even if it meant enduring quarantine, biosecurity restrictions and time away from family. "My personal view is we have to go. For so many reasons," Langer told News Corp Australia. "I think we have to go to England. There's lots of challenges of course but we have to find solutions to make sure that can hap-



pen if possible." Australia's limited-overs series scheduled for this month in England was postponed because of the coronavirus, and September has been raised as an alternative. Cricket Australia, which has laid off 15 percent of its staff during

the pandemic, is also desperate to host a money-spinning Test series against India later this year. "I think we have to go to England. There's lots of challenges of course but we have to find solutions to make sure that can happen if possible. That's my view," Langer said. "I think for the health of world cricket. "As much as we'd like India to come over here, I think we need to reciprocate that with England if we can." Langer believed releasing Australia's big names to join the IPL - whose revised dates are yet to be announced - was also essential as a goodwill gesture, to make sure India go ahead with their Test tour. "I think we have to. Talking frankly," Langer said.

Tesla 'very close' to level 5 autonomous driving

The California based automaker currently builds cars with an Autopilot driver assistance system

DNA

CALIFORNIA: Tesla Chief Executive Elon Musk on Thursday said the company was "very close" to achieving level 5 autonomous driving technology which enables the car to navigate roads without any driver input. "I'm extremely confident that level 5 or essentially complete autonomy will happen and I think will happen very quickly," Musk said in remarks made via a video message at the opening of Shanghai's annual World Artificial Intelligence Conference (WAIC). "I remain confident that we will have the basic functionality for level 5 autonomy complete this year." Automakers and tech companies including Alphabet Inc Waymo and Uber Technologies are investing billions in the autonomous driving industry. However industry insiders have said it would take time for the technology to get ready and public to trust autonomous vehicles fully. The California-based automaker currently builds cars with an Autopilot driver-assistance system. Tesla is also developing new heat-projection or cooling systems to enable more advanced computers in cars, Musk said. Industry data showed Tesla sold nearly 15,000 China-made Model 3 sedans last month. Tesla has become the highest-valued automaker as its shares surged to record highs and its market capitalisation overtook that of former front-runner Toyota Motors Corp.

MLS restarts with new virus fears

MIAMI: Major League Soccer returned from its four-month shutdown on Wednesday with a sombre anti-racism demonstration and fresh fears another coronavirus-stricken team may be forced to withdraw. An injury-time winner from Portugal international and former Manchester United star Nani gave Orlando a 2-1 victory over David Beckham's Inter Miami played out in a makeshift, fan-less arena at ESPN's World Wide of Sports complex at Disney World in Florida. Nani's 97th minute strike completed a come-from-behind win for Orlando, who had equalized through Chris Mueller on 70 minutes after Juan Agudelo fired Inter Miami into the lead just after halftime. However the injury-time drama in Orlando was largely overshadowed by events off the pitch as the restart tournament billed as "MLS is Back" got under way. Just before kick off, dozens of players from clubs across MLS had lined up around the field for a silent protest against racism and police brutality. Players clad in black t-shirts and wearing black gloves raised their fists to the night sky in an eight-minute 46-second salute - a reference to the May 25 death of unarmed black George Floyd in police custody in Minneapolis. Floyd died after being pinned to the floor by a police officer who knelt on his neck for eight minutes and 46 seconds. Miami and Orlando players then dropped to one knee just after the opening whistle, the gesture of solidarity with the Black Lives Matter cause that has rippled across the globe in the tide of revulsion which followed Floyd's death. - APP

Suarez scores as Barca relegates Espanyol

DNA

BARCELONA: Barcelona kept alive their hopes of winning La Liga with a victory over Espanyol at the Nou Camp that also relegated the visitors. Both sides had a player sent off early in the second half after video assistant referee reviews. Barcelona youngster Ansu Fati was dismissed for a foul on Fernando Calero before Pol Lozano was red carded for a dangerous tackle. Luis Suarez then smashed home a loose ball to secure the three points. The win means Barcelona are a point behind leaders Real Madrid. However, Real could restore their four-point advantage when they host Alaves on Friday. Suarez's goal meant he became Barcelona's outright

Officer told George Floyd to 'stop yelling'

DNA

MINNEAPOLIS: The US police officer accused of George Floyd's murder told him to stop talking as he repeatedly gasped under the man's knee, according to court documents. The unarmed black man cried out for his late mother and children as he said the Minneapolis policeman would kill him, transcripts from body-cam footage show. They were disclosed in court by lawyers for one of the four officers involved. The documents offer the clearest picture yet of Mr Floyd's last moments. His death in May sparked global uproar. It led to a wave of anti-racism protests led by the Black Lives Matter movement, and stirred debate and reflection in the US over the country's history of slavery and segregation. All four officers involved in taking Mr Floyd into custody were fired and arrested. Derek Chauvin, who knelt on his neck, faces several charges including second-degree murder, while the other three - Thomas Lane, J Alexander Kueng and Tou Thao - are charged with aiding and abetting murder.

Russian space official arrested for treason

DNA

MOSCOW: An adviser to the head of Russia's space agency Roscosmos has been detained by the Federal Security Service (FSB) on suspicion of treason. "The Federal Security Service detained Ivan Safronov, adviser to the director general of Roscosmos state corporation, in Moscow," an FSB spokesperson told Russian state news agency TASS. "Safronov was performing tasks for one of NATO's intelligence services, collecting state confidential data about Russia's military and technical cooperation, defense and security and handing it over to its [NATO intelligence service] representative." Roscosmos released a statement announcing Safronov had been detained on suspicion of treason and that the agency was providing assistance to the "investigating authorities."



## Briefs

## Melania Trump sculpture set on fire

DNA

SLOVENIA: A quirky wooden sculpture of US First Lady Melania Trump is reported to have been set on fire near her hometown in Slovenia, prompting its removal. Brad Downey, the American artist who commissioned the statue, said it was targeted on 4 July, Independence Day in the US. The Berlin-based artist arranged for the charred statue to be removed the next day. Police told Reuters news agency they had launched an investigation. The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The sculpture of Mrs Trump, which could be described as only bearing a crude likeness to the US first lady, was carved out of a tree trunk on the outskirts of Sevnica, her hometown in central Slovenia. The statue, which depicts Mrs Trump dressed in a blue coat similar to one she wore to her husband's inauguration and with a club-like hand gesturing to the sky, received mixed reviews when it was erected in July 2019. Some residents branded the statue a "disgrace", complaining it looked more like the Smurfs character Smurfette than the first lady.

## Pope slams Libya's detention centres

DNA

ROME: Pope Francis has compared detention centres for migrants and refugees in Libya with concentration camps, saying the world was being given only a diluted version of how hellish life really is for the people living there. Thousands of refugees and migrants are reported to be held in 11 "official" detention centres across the country as well as "private prisons" run by armed groups and traffickers where extortion, rape and abuse are rampant, according to the United Nations, medical agencies as well as the migrants and refugees. The pope, who has in the past called for the camps to be closed, made his comments on Wednesday in his homily during a mass to mark the seventh anniversary of his trip to the Italian island of Lampedusa, the landing place for many migrants making the perilous crossing from North Africa. Departing from his prepared address, he recalled how an interpreter translating his conversation with a migrant seven years ago gave him only a "distilled" version of what the migrant was actually saying.

## Active virus cases worldwide hit 5.5 mln

DNA

DOHA: More than 12 million people around the world have been diagnosed with the coronavirus disease, known as COVID-19, and at least 548,896 have died, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University. About 6.5 million patients have recovered. The United States and Brazil have reported the most cases and the highest death tolls. Humanitarian group Oxfam says as many as 122 million people could go hungry this year due to the coronavirus pandemic, warning that up to 12,000 people could die each day from hunger linked to the social and economic impacts of the disease. Africa now has more than 508,000 confirmed coronavirus cases after South Africa recorded another day of more than 10,000 confirmed cases as a new global hotspot. Dr Anthony Fauci, the leading US infectious disease expert, says he is cautiously optimistic that a coronavirus vaccine with some degree of effectiveness will be successfully developed by the end of the year or the beginning of 2021. Cases in the US have hit three million with more than 132,000 deaths.

## Saudi Arabia nominates Advisor to position of WTO Chief

The Saudi mission to the organization said the Kingdom realizes the central role the WTO plays in drafting and implementing international trade regulations and developing the economy and commerce internationally

DNA

RIRYADH: Saudi Arabia announced on Wednesday the nomination of advisor to the Royal Court, Mohammed Al-Tuwaijri to head the World Trade Organization (WTO), reported the Saudi Press Agency. "The following communication, nominating Mr. Mohammad Maziad Al-Tuwaijri for the position of Director-General, has been received from the Delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 8 July 2020," a WTO document read.

The Saudi mission to the organization said the Kingdom realizes the central role the WTO plays in drafting and implementing international trade regulations and developing the economy and commerce internationally. Tuwaijri's nomination during such a critical time in the world stems from Saudi Arabia's sense of responsibility in its role as president of the G20 for 2020. It also reflects its ongoing support for international efforts to boost the WTO and draft a strategic vision for G20 members to bolster the important role of trade



in economic growth and achieving sustainable development. Tuwaijri holds an MBA with honors from

King Saud University in business management. He served in several important positions in the Kingdom, notably minister of economy and planning. He also served as a member of cabinet and a member of the economic and development affairs council from 2017 to 2020. He also served as deputy minister of economy and planning, secretary general of the financial committee at the Royal Court from 2016 to 2017. He was also vice president of the national development fund and president of the National

Transformation Program. He also played a role in forming strategic partnerships in several countries. Tuwaijri was also president of the National Privatization Program and is member of the board of Saudi Aramco and the Public Investment Fund. From 2007 to 2010, Tuwaijri was CEO of JP Morgan Saudi Arabia. He moved to HSBC, where he worked in various roles, including CEO of global banking and markets, regional head of service management, and group vice president and CEO of HSBC MENA and Turkey.

## Australia suspends HK extradition treaty

WEB DESK

SYDNEY: Australia's Prime Minister Scott Morrison has suspended the country's extradition agreement with Hong Kong and extended visas for an estimated 10,000 Hong Kong people already in Australia because of concerns about the impact of the national security law that China imposed on the territory 10 days ago. Morrison said the extradition pact was being suspended because the security legislation represents "a fundamental change in circumstance". The prime minister also said the visas of about 10,000 Hong Kong people already living in Australia would be extended by five years, and those on student or temporary work visas would be offered a pathway to permanent residency.

## Johnson &amp; Johnson asked to stop selling baby powder

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: More than 170 non-profit groups on Wednesday called for Johnson & Johnson to stop selling its talc-based Johnson's Baby Powder worldwide, citing concerns that it contains cancer-causing asbestos, according to a statement from advocacy group Black Women for Wellness.

The groups, which include educa-

tional institutions such as Emory University and activist groups such as Greenpeace, among others, also want the company to recall existing inventory in North America. Janette Robinson Flint, the executive director of Black Women for Wellness, said in a statement that J&J's choice to continue marketing baby powder in international markets, often to Black and brown consumers, contradicts a statement it issued in June committing to fighting racial

inequality. Johnson & Johnson said in May it would stop selling its talc Baby Powder in the United States and Canada, saying demand had fallen in the wake of what it called "misinformation" about the product's safety amid a barrage of legal challenges.

However, the company said it would continue to sell its talc-based products in other markets around the world. "Decades of independent scientific studies by medical experts

around the world support the safety of Johnson's Baby Powder," J&J said in a statement on Wednesday.

"We continue to offer this product in many other regions around the world where there is higher consumer demand," J&J has faced intense scrutiny of the safety of its baby powder following an investigative report by Reuters news agency in 2018 that found the company knew for decades that asbestos lurked in its talc.

## UN chief: Foreign interference in Libya 'unprecedented'

Guterres told UNSC Libya's 'conflict has entered a new phase with foreign interference reaching unprecedented levels'

TRIPOLI: Libya was plunged into chaos by the 2011 NATO-backed uprising that toppled and killed its longtime leader, Muammar Gaddafi. Since 2014, the oil-rich country has been split, with an internationally-recognised government controlling the capital, Tripoli, and the northwest, while renegade military commander Khalifa Haftar in Benghazi controls the east.

Haftar is supported by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt and Russia, while the government is backed by Turkey. "The conflict has entered a new phase with foreign interference reaching unprecedented levels, including in the delivery of sophisticated equipment and the number of mercenaries involved in the fighting," Guterres said on Wednesday.

Russian private military contractor Wagner Group has up to 1,200 people deployed in Libya, strengthening Haftar's forces, according to a confidential May report by independent sanctions monitors to the UNSC Libya sanctions committee. The sanctions monitors identified more than two dozen flights between Russia and eastern Libya from August 2018 to August 2019 by civilian aircraft "strongly linked to, or owned by" the Wagner Group or its related companies.

The monitors also listed the details of 122 Wagner mercenaries of "whom many are highly probably operational, or have been operational, within Libya". Russia's UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia rejected the accusations of Russian involvement in Libya. "But we know about other countries' military personnel, including from those countries that accuse us, to be present on Libyan soil, East and West," he told the council, calling on all states with influence on the Libyan parties to push for a truce. - Web Desk

## Business community lauds Govt's efforts to promote tourism

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The business community all over Pakistan welcomes the decision of Government of Pakistan to take initiative for long term policy (10 Years) for the promotion of tourism. Due to Covid 19 situation economic crisis that prevails all over the world, the step taken by the Prime Minister and his team for promotion of tourism is appreciable. This was stated by Qaisar Khan Daudzai, Vice President FPCCI. Qaisar Khan said, that National e-Portal and Brand Pakistan need to be publicized widely both on national level and globally as well through Pakistani missions abroad. He further said that

with the passage of time as Covid 19 situation will be end, and life will come to its normal position.

He expressed his hope that foreign tourists will visit Pakistani tourist spots as and when Covid 19 situation is controlled and normalized globally. He suggested that Pakistani Missions abroad may be advised to do hold awareness session about tourism in Pakistan through Seminars, and road shows abroad. Vice Preside FPCCI, further said that tourism being industry is contributing 10% share in GDP of many countries while in Pakistan it's share in GDP is only 3%. We have a lot of tourism potential in our country in all four provinces alongwith four beautiful seasons, he added.



KUALUMPUR: Ambassador of Palestine to Malaysia Walid Abu Ali saying seeing off Palestinians citizens stranded in Malaysia. - DNA

## Russian attempt to halve UN aid to Syria fails

Germany and Belgium now expected to table new resolution to extend aid authorisation that is due to expire on Friday

WEB DESK

MOSCOW: A Russian bid to get the United Nations to reduce cross-border humanitarian aid to war-torn Syria was voted down by the Security Council on Wednesday with just four nations on the 15-member body voting in its favour, an official said. Russia put forward the proposal after it joined China on Tuesday in vetoing a one-year extension to aid

deliveries from Turkey through the two border crossings at Bab al-Salam, which leads to the Aleppo region, and Bab al-Hawa, which serves the Idlib region. The Russian resolution proposed halving humanitarian access by



Security Council

using only one crossing for six months. US Ambassador to the United Nations Kelly Craft told Reuters news agency she had urged her Security Council counterparts - who all voted in favour of Tuesday's resolution - to oppose Russia's proposal, describing

the choice as "good versus evil." "We're talking about the difference between life and death for millions of Syrians," she said, adding that council members should continue to push to keep two border crossings open. "The draft resolution has not been adopted, having failed to obtain the required number of votes," the President of the Security Council, German Ambassador Christoph Heusgen, said.

## Why Trump is right and wrong about America



MARWAN BISHARA

RESIDENT Donald Trump is right to be mad. Americans, who voted for him in 2016, are abandoning him in droves. Instead of rewarding him for fulfilling his campaign pledges, many are punishing him for it. But he is wrong about the reasons why. No, he is not a "victim" of a conspiracy by the Democrats, the treachery of the "deep state", or a witch-hunt by the liberal media, though he did fall out with all three. Nor is he the victim of the coronavirus. Republican strategists had warned of the impact of Trump toxicity on the future of the Republican Party well before the pandem-

ic. Rather, he is the casualty of simple and not so simple misunderstandings. Unlike many of his predecessors, Trump has done or tried to do all he promised. He lowered taxes, relaxed regulations, limited immigration, built a wall along the border with Mexico, renegotiated trade agreements, and even recognised Jerusalem as Israel's capital and moved the US embassy there, among other campaign pledges. He has also increased the Pentagon's budget, shrunk US military commitments abroad, and bullied US allies to spend more on defence. And he withdrew from the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and the Iran nuclear deal and pulled out of UNESCO and the World Health Organization. Trump boasted that these steps have helped "make America great again", powerful, protected and prosperous. He took the credit as the economy boomed, the stock market skyrocketed and unemployment nose-dived, until

the "Chinese pandemic" was let loose on America and the "radical left" exploited the police killing of George Floyd to foment civil strife. All of which begs the question, at least in Trump's mind, why on earth are Americans not uniting behind him to beat the presumptive Democratic candidate Joe Biden, and to defeat the leftist "fascists" besieging America? Surely, he is not to blame for every "Chinese virus" and every police transgression! This being an election year, Trump is not surprised that the Democrats, who tried and failed to indict him on collusion with Russia and abuse of power in dealing with Ukraine, blame him for the high rate of coronavirus infections and deaths and for fomenting racial hatred that encourages police brutality. But why are "seniors and suburban voters, two longtime pillars of the Republican coalition," defecting to Biden? Why are Republicans organising political action committees (PACs) against him? And why are the swing states swinging towards the Democrats?

In short, why are more Americans rejecting the messenger and his message after embracing him in 2016? Why, why, why? Some of the answers may be found in Trump's misinterpretation of his mandate and the role of the presidency, others - in his misunderstanding of America. From the very outset, Trump's invocation of "the American carnage" in his inauguration speech was an overreach that alienated many Americans. In the words of former Republican president, George W. Bush, that was "some weird shit". To be clear, Trump's fear-mongering on Twitter cannot be compared to Bush's warmongering. He may have talked the big talk, but like President Ronald Reagan, he has not gotten America into any major war. Not yet. But his "America first" policies have translated into "America alone", allowing China and Russia to step in and fill the void. This mainstream Republicans consider the abandonment of America's hard-earned global leadership.

By walking away from international agreements without reaching alternative agreements, with the exception of the North America Free Trade Agreement, Trump has weakened America's influence abroad. And by imposing his "deal of the century" on the Middle East, he caused a major breakdown in regional US diplomacy. He also pursued a severe and inhumane immigration policy that led, among other human rights violations, to snatching children from their parents at the US-Mexico border. All of which has undermined America's long-nurtured brand as a benevolent superpower, and compromised its much-valued liberal principles. Americans may be ambivalent about "ends justifying the means" abroad, but domestically, ends do not justify the means when those means are undemocratic. So, when Trump imposed a "national emergency" for the sole purpose of circumventing Congress to extract funds from the Pentagon to build his border wall, Americans squirmed. They also squirmed

after he politicised the Justice Department to do his bidding and attacked judges and the courts for not doing his bidding. Trump took advantage of his predecessor's economic recovery to impose tax cuts, mostly for corporations and billionaires. The stock market may have risen to new heights and unemployment fallen to new lows, but the real standard of living has remained stagnant for most Americans, as the gap between rich and poor has kept growing. His tax cuts helped create more job opportunities for African Americans and Latinos, but Trump ignored problems of structural racism and treated people of colour like no more than tolerated guests in their own homeland. Likewise, Trump's assault on Obama's legacy without reaching an alternative scheme left many poor and elderly confused and exposed to the high costs of healthcare. And then came his terrible mismanagement of the pandemic, reacting rather slowly, halfheartedly and incompetently to the health crisis that has engulfed the na-

tion and taken more lives than all of America's wars since World War II. And to top it all, he inflamed racial tensions instead of calming and healing the national divide, following the police killing of George Floyd. In short, the state of the union has not been great; it has been dreadful. Trump has failed the basic test of politics: to create the broadest voter base possible. He has been so laser-focused on appeasing his core right-wing and evangelical base, attacking journalists, bureaucrats and even generals and war heroes, that he has alienated mainstream Americans, who cherish their democratic institutions, independent media, and liberal values. Americans may have tolerated his bullying, name-calling and outright viciousness during the campaign, but despite him winning and becoming the president of all Americans, he continues to lead like he campaigned, alienating everyone outside his hardcore followers. Long live the king... - Courtesy Al Jazeera



## Briefs

## China stands by Pakistan: Envoy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chinese Consul General, Long Dingbin has said that China stands by Pakistan in the fight against coronavirus and in the light of its experience would continue to provide all kind of technical assistance to Islamabad. He was speaking at the meeting of the Primary Joint Working Group on Chinese Security which was held in Lahore. The meeting discussed various steps to improve the security of Chinese nationals working on CPEC and other projects. The Chinese Consul General said that on the instructions of President Xi Jinping, China is providing medical equipment, protective gear and medicines to Pakistan to control the coronavirus.

## China to build 6 to 8 reactors

DNA

BEIJING: China will build six to eight nuclear reactors a year between 2020 and 2025 and raise total capacity to 70 gigawatts (GW), up 43.5 per cent compared to the end of May, the official China Daily said on Thursday (Jul 9), citing the country's nuclear association. The China Nuclear Energy Association said the country's total installed nuclear capacity is expected to stand at 52GW by the end of 2020, falling short of a 58GW target. But it would soon get back on track and could bring total capacity either in operation or under construction to around 200GW by 2035, the association was quoted as saying. China's nuclear capacity stood at 48.8GW at end-May, accounting for 2.5 per cent of its total generation capacity, according to figures from the National Energy Administration.

## Lockdown in Melbourne

MELBOURNE: Five million people in Australia's second-biggest city began a new lockdown Thursday, returning to tough restrictions just weeks after they ended as Melbourne grapples with a resurgence of coronavirus cases. Residents have been told to stay at home for six weeks after other measures to contain a spike in COVID-19 failed to prevent the virus spreading. The state of Victoria has been effectively sealed off in an effort to preserve the rest of Australia's success in curbing the virus. However, a rush of travellers across the border into neighbouring New South Wales on Wednesday has raised concerns those efforts could be torpedoed. "A few cases coming over the border from Victoria (can) tip that magic number into outbreaks that are going to be very hard to control," epidemiologist Mary-Louise McLaws told public broadcaster ABC. — APP

## Global virus deaths pass 550,000

PARIS: The new coronavirus pandemic has claimed more than 550,000 lives worldwide, an AFP tally showed Thursday, with more than half the deaths in the four worst-hit countries — the US, Brazil, Britain and Italy. A total of 550,013 deaths were recorded globally out of 12,081,516 cases, a tally based on official data showed. The United States led with 132,309 deaths, followed by Brazil (67,964), the United Kingdom (44,517) and Italy (34,914). Europe recorded 201,124 deaths for 2,782,032 cases, making it the worst affected continent. Worldwide, 6,447,909 patients — or more than half the number of infections — were declared by health authorities to have recovered. — APP

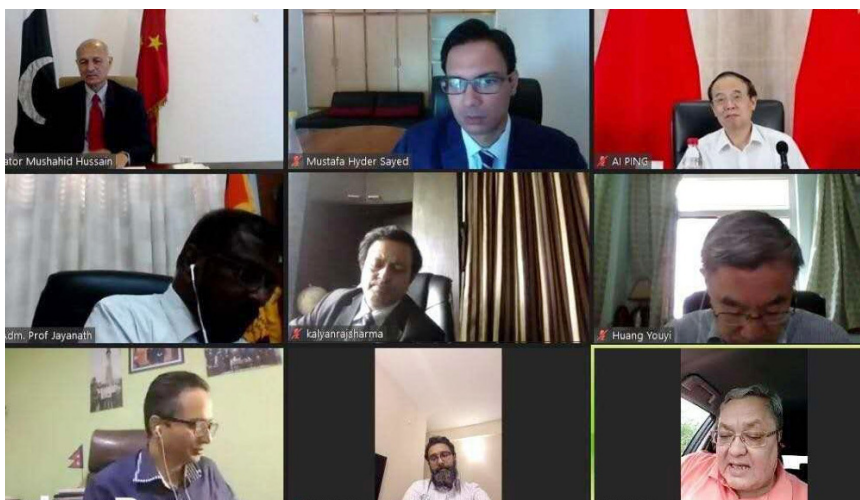
## BRI moot calls for joint strategy to address COVID-19 challenges

They highlighted the significant role of BRI, of which the CPEC is the flagship, for tackling the common problems, particularly after post-COVID-19 period

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Representatives of eight countries while participating in first-ever Non-Governmental Online Conference on Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) pledged that they will work closely to address the common challenges of COVID-19, says a report published by Gwadar Pro on Thursday. According to the report, they agreed that the coronavirus crisis had underlined the need for global interdependence to forge closer cooperation to tackle the socio-economic challenges. The conference, organized by Pakistan-China Institute (PCI) on Wednesday was participated by eight countries: Pakistan, China, Nepal, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka.

They also agreed that BRI is the way forward as it connects the whole region, representatives from eight countries including Pakistan and China concluded Wednesday. They highlighted the significant role of BRI, of which the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the flagship, for tackling the common problems, particularly after post-COVID-19 period. The meeting reached the consensus that the BRI is the way forward as it promotes regional connectivity based on the principles of equality, reciprocity, and mutual benefit while acclaiming CPEC as 'BRI success story'. The propaganda about the so-called 'Debt trap' was rejected by participants as in the case of Pakistan and Sri Lanka, total debt from China was a very small percent



age of what is owed to other countries or multilateral institutions. They rejected the 'New Cold War', demonization, or stigmatizing any country using COVID-19 as a political weapon or targeting BRI on geopolitical grounds. Chairman Pakistan Senate

Foreign Affairs Committee Senator Mushahid Hussain, in his opening remarks, termed BRI as the biggest and most significant Diplomatic and Developmental initiative of the 21st century. He said that CPEC, as the flagship of BRI, was

already a success story and has entered its second phase successfully. Energy and infrastructure projects have been completed on schedule, with 75,000 Pakistanis got jobs in BRI projects and 28,000 Pakistani students studying in China.

He also thanked China for support to Pakistan during the COVID-19 crisis and he mentioned the two resolutions passed by the Pakistan Senate, February 12 and May 14, in which the parliament of Pakistan appreciated China's role and support. Afghanistan's former Ambassador to Pakistan and China, Janan Musazai, gave a specific five-point plan for Afghanistan's role in BRI and he referred to CPEC as well, since Afghanistan can be a land bridge for connectivity and he said that China could facilitate to provide market access for BRI countries. Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, and Myanmar referred to the respective role of their countries as part of BRI and how different projects were being initiated as well as the exchange of high-level visits between these countries and China.

## Masood calls for Kashmir solution

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Masood Khan, President Azad Jammu and Kashmir, has said that because of US's protection to India in the UNSC, the latter is operating with absolute impunity in the Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK). This is where, he said, realpolitik is steering dynamics of the Kashmir dispute. Both the US and India have economic and defence partnerships, and this has become a barrier for the US, as it sees the Kashmir dispute through the prism of India, he said. The AJK President made these remarks while addressing a virtual conference of club members, belonging to different walks of life, of a prestigious IVY League institute. The address was followed by a comprehensive Q&A session. In his introductory remarks, the President while explaining the genesis of the Kashmir issue said that in 1947, the people of Jammu of Kashmir had to choose either to accede to Pakistan or India.



ISLAMABAD: Leader of the House in Senate Shahzad Waseem meets Prime Minister Imran Khan. — DNA

## Chinese tech helps promoting maize-soybean production

Now increasing soybean area is encouraged in Pakistan. For farmers who are not ready to reduce their maize area, the best available option is to use the intercropping tech"



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Maize-soybean intercropping will be the best system in terms of income and ecological sus-

tainability if total benefits are calculated," says a report published by Gwadar Pro quoting Muhammad Ali Raza, a Pakistani student of China's Sichuan Agricultural University. Under the University's Prof. Yang Wenyu's support and guidance, he brought this technology from China to Pakistan. It was noted that there is a lack of soybean production in Pakistan. Till now Pakistan has relied on imports to meet the soybean needs. "Now increasing soybean area is encouraged in Pakistan. For farmers who are not ready to reduce their maize area, the best available option is to use the intercropping tech," Prof. Yang is satisfied with the yield data and provides his professional advice for future planting, Ali said. Maize yield could have been lifted more if double amount of fertilizer was applied to each unit length be-

cause in the intercropping filed the number of maize plants is twice as many as that in the pure maize field. Furthermore, selecting shade-resistant soybean varieties is also a key point, and the yield of soybean can reach a new high. It's also learned that after COVID-19 pandemic ends, specialized machinery such as planters and harvesters will be introduced to Pakistan to further boost the production efficiency. According to the report, the maize-soybean strip intercropping demonstration in Bahawalpur, Punjab completed harvest last week. The yields of soybean and maize reach 1,304 kg/ha and 8,596 kg/ha respectively, which exhibits satisfactory results. This is indeed inspiring news for local farmers who want to grow soybean without curbing the cultivation of maize.

## Bank timings from 9am to 5:30pm

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: Banks in the country will remain open for business from 9am to 5:30pm, the State Bank of Pakistan announced on Thursday after it had issued revised timings due to the coronavirus outbreak in the country. The new timings will be effective from July 13, the central bank said in its circular. "Effective from July 13, 2020, the banks/MFBs shall observe the following office timings till further orders. However, banks/MFBs may prescribe business hours for branches as per their business requirement subject to observance of SP business (banking) hours public dealings as notified vide BRPD Circular Letter No. 20 dated April 23, 2020," it said.

## Educational institutions reopen from Sept 15

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education Shafqat Mahmood on Thursday announced to reopen educational institutions from September 15 under strict enforcement of standard operating procedures (SOPs). Addressing a press conference here in Islamabad, the education minister said that the government has decided to resume educational activities from September 15 and provinces have been asked to formulate SOPs for school's reopening in this regard. "The situation of Covid-19 in the country will be reviewed in August and September before the opening of the educational institutions. If the Covid-19 situation gets better, the educational institutions will reopen from September 15," he added. However, the minister said that educational institutions that come under smart lockdown areas would not be allowed to resume academic activities. He said that the government was permitting universities also to admit students into hostels up "We are allowing universities to call PhD students, who are very few in number, to their laboratories for research work before September 15," he said. "As to how they do that, we leave it up to him." He said that the government was permitting universities also to admit students into hostels to 30% capacity. However, he said that 'health checks' which included tests and temperature checks will be done strictly by universities. Shafqat Mahmood said the provincial governments will be authorized to close the institutions, which do not observe SOPs while the federal government will monitor implementation of the SOPs. Earlier, it was reported that govt had decided to resume educational activities across the country from the first week of September amid the coronavirus pandemic. The decision was taken in an interprovincial education ministers' conference chaired by Federal Education Minister Shafqat Mahmood. 0 DNA

## Pak, China, consider resuming border trade

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China are considering a proposal to resume border trade from next week amid the coronavirus pandemic with stakeholders advising restriction on the number of cargoes to avoid crowding at the dry port, media reported. The proposal came under discussion during a meeting between Adviser to Prime Minister on Commerce Razak Dawood and the Chinese ambassador. It was proposed that the border might be opened

from Wednesday (15th July) so that appropriate arrangements could be made. Representatives from Pakistan Customs, Federal Investigation Agency and National Logistics Cell advised that not more than 10 cargo trucks might be allowed from the Chinese side each day so that crowding at Sost border might be avoided, according to the ministry of commerce. The proposal came on the heels of the second wave of the novel coronavirus in China that turned out as the epicentre of the pandemic, however, its impact is not as severe as that of the previous outbreak.

## PSX ATTACK

## Rs 1 million each provided to families of private guards

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly was informed on Thursday that one million rupees each has been provided to the bereaved families of the private security guards martyred in the terrorist attack on Karachi Stock Exchange. Responding to the calling attention notice of Nusrat Wahid, Parliamentary Secretary for Interior Shaukat Ali Khan said one policeman was also martyred in the terrorist attack and his family has been provided Shuhada Assistance Package. The Parliamentary Secretary said the government is also considering bringing a legislation to make it binding on the private security companies to provide assistance to their guards in case of their deaths in such incidents. He said our security personnel valiantly foiled the terrorist attack on Karachi Stock Exchange in a matter of eight minutes. He said our security forces were alert as there were intelligence reports of a terrorist attack. Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan laid before the house the annual report of Universal Service and Research and Development Fund of the federal government. The annual report of National Economic Council for the Financial Year 2018-19 was also laid before the house. Responding to a calling attention notice, Minister for Power Omar Ayub Khan said the federal government has taken steps to improve the power supply in Karachi in order to address the problems of the people of the provincial capital. He said we are providing additional one hundred megawatt of electricity to the K-electric more than the contract agreement signed with it. Thirty thousand metric tons of furnace oil and 100 mmcf gas have been provided to the company. He said we will provide more gas to the K-electric which will help it generate two hundred megawatts of power. — DNA

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11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza,

G-8 Markaz, ISLAMABAD-PAKISTAN

Ph: 051-2261960, 051-2266165

