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PM Imran approves new political map of Pakistan

Ambassador of European Union enjoying mangoes

Pak may become regional hub: Chinese Envoy

Briefs

COAS interacts with senior military officials



ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa has visited Corps Headquarters Lahore, said Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) on Tuesday. The COAS met senior serving and retired military officers to discuss security and other professional matters. "The COAS had an interactive session on wide ranging issues including professional matters, security situation in the region, measures to optimise dividends of peace and stability and also the challenges and opportunities," read a statement from the ISPR. Participants of the meeting included General (retired) Jehangir Karamat, General (retired) Ahsan Saleem Hyat, General (retired) Tariq Majid, General (retired) Rashid Mahmood and General (retired) Raheel Sharif. Earlier, COAS visited troops deployed on frontlines along the Line of Control (LoC) in Khairatta Sector, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) had said. While interacting with troops, COAS said, "Eidul Azha epitomises the essence of unconditional sacrifice. No one understands this spirit of sacrifice better than a soldier."

'Pak may become regional hub'



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of China to Pakistan Yao Jing has said Pakistan possesses a huge potential to become a regional hub for trade and vast connectivity and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor offers such opportunities. During a talkshow at a private news channel, the Chinese ambassador strongly disapproved the propaganda by certain quarters in the West about CPEC by maintaining that it offered prospects of better future for the people of the two countries and would prove beneficial for the whole region.

Coronavirus kills 15

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has reported 15 deaths in last 24 hours by novel coronavirus as the number of positive cases has surged to 280,461. The nationwide tally of fatalities has jumped to 5,999 on Tuesday.

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HRW slams Indian curbs in Held Kashmir

The human rights organization mentioned allegations of torture and ill-treatment against the Indian security forces and the misuse of sedition laws to clamp down on peaceful, dissenting voices

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: The Human Rights Watch (HRW) Tuesday slammed the Indian government's "harsh and discriminatory restrictions" on the Muslim-majority areas of occupied Jammu and Kashmir, one year since the India's unilateral move to bifurcate the disputed valley continues to repress residents of the occupied valley. "The [Indian] government's unwarranted restraints on the rights to free speech, access to information, health care, and education have been intensified by the Covid-19 pandemic," read a statement from the HRW, citing the imposition of curfew by India on August 4 and 5 to stifle protests by Kashmiris in the occupied territory. The NGO noted how the Indian government had detained thousands of people, shut down telecommunication services and imposed restrictions on freedom of movement

and public meetings. "Indian government claims that it was determined to improve Kashmiri lives ring hollow one year after the revocation of Jammu and Kashmir's constitutional status," said Meenakshi Ganguly, South Asia director at Human Rights Watch. "The authorities instead have maintained stifling restraints on Kashmiris in violation of their basic rights," she added. Terming India's notorious Public Safety Law as 'draconian', the HRW noted that thousands had been arrested in occupied Kashmir and three former chief ministers as well as more than 140 children, had been held in custody ever since the unilateral move was undertaken by the Modi government. The human rights organisation mentioned allegations of torture and ill-treatment against the Indian security forces and the misuse of sedition laws to clamp down on peaceful, dissenting voices.

PM Imran approves new political map of Pakistan

STAFF REPORT



"The cabinet has approved the map," he said, adding that the Kashmiri and national leadership has also okayed the map. He said it would now be used in schools and colleges as well. While explaining the changes made in the new map, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said it reflected the will and aspirations of the people of Pakistan.

'BRI pushes forward Int'l coop in renewable energy'

BEIJING: Experts at Global Economy and Clean Energy Development Webinar held online said that the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has become a major source of pushing forward international cooperation in renewable energy sector. According to Gwadar Pro, they observed that COVID-19 epidemic and international trade barriers have impacted on the global economy and energy industry from different perspectives. They agreed that renewable energy has great potential and good momentum of development, and international cooperation in this field will be deepened constantly.

Zhou Changchun, representative of Global Energy Interconnection Development and Cooperation Organizations said that affected by COVID-19, energy investment has an overall decline. Especially, investment in oil and gas resources has decreased for 32%, investment in coal resources has declined for 15%. "However, this has not changed the positive trend of the development of renewable energy. Compared with the period from 2016 to 2019, investment in clean energy has significantly hiked in 2020," Zhou added. "The proportion of renewable energy in the global energy mix has been steadily expanding."



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi chairing a high-level meeting regarding 5th August arrangements at Ministry of Foreign Affairs. - DNA

Political, military leaders united on Kashmir: FM

Foreign Minister Qureshi said Pakistan had exposed the ongoing human rights violations in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) at every international forum

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi on Tuesday expressing strong support for the Kashmiris' right to self-determination, said the Pakistani nation, including the political and military leadership, had the same stance on the Kashmir issue. He was chairing the All Parties Conference on the Kashmir situation, here at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Foreign Minister Qureshi said Pakistan had exposed the ongoing human rights violations in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir

(IIOJK) at every international forum. He mentioned that India tried to change the demographic ratio in the IIOJK by amending the domicile laws, terming it a "clear violation of international law". He said all the political parties of Pakistan were united on the Kashmir issue. Qureshi said following the footsteps of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the Bharatiya Janta Party government because of its Hindutva thinking had sowed the seeds of hatred in the hearts of Kashmiris and minorities living in India. He stressed that India

could not demoralize unarmed Kashmiris despite continuous torture and imprisonment. Today, the real face of the Indian government has been exposed to the world, he said. The foreign minister said Pakistan would continue to support its Kashmiri brothers until they get their due right to self-determination. The conference was attended by Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani, National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser, Information Minister Senator Shibli Faraz, Law Minister Barister Farogh Naseem, Minister for Kashmir Affairs Ali Amin Gandapur,

Minister for Inter-provincial Harmony Dr Fehmida Mirza, Kashmir Committee Chairman Sheharyar Afridi, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on National Security Moeed Yousaf, Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed, Farukh Habib, Senator Raja Zafar ul Haq, Raja Perwaiz Ashraf, Syed Naveed Qamar, Senator Sherry Rehman, Senator Mushataq Ahmed, Maulana Abdul Akbar Chitrali, Aimal Wali Khan, Senator Sitara Ayaz, Senator Anwar ul Haq Kakar, Senator Murtaza Javed, Khawaja Asif and others.

'Financial close of Thar Block-2 plant in Sept'

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting Lt. Gen (Retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa on Tuesday said that the financial closes of 330 Megawatts (MW) Thar Block-2 power plant was expected in September end. The project to be executed by Thal Nova and HUBCO was launched recently with an investment \$ 500 million. In a tweet, Bajwa said that it has created 305 local jobs so far, adding that the project was being pushed by company's own equity to prevent time loss.

'Police martyrs pride of nation'

The nation saluted the heroes who were fighting against criminals: Shibli Faraz

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz on Tuesday said police martyrs who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty were pride of the nation. In a tweet on the occasion of Police Martyrs' Day, he said the entire nation was paying homage to the brave mar-

tyred officers and youth of the police force. Shibli Faraz said those sons of the soil who sacrificed their lives for the eradication of terrorism, establishment of peace and protection of the lives and property of the people were national heroes. The nation saluted the heroes who were fighting against criminals and anti-social elements, he added.

Saleem promoted as Rear Admiral



Rear Admiral M Saleem (SI/M)

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Commodore Muhammad Saleem has been promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral with immediate effect.

Rear Admiral Muhammad Saleem got commission in Operations Branch of Pakistan Navy in 1991. The Flag Officer is a graduate of Pakistan Navy War College Lahore and National Defence University, Islamabad. The Admiral has an illustrious career with vast experience of various Command and Staff appointments. His major Command appointments include Commanding Officer PN Submarines HAMZA & HURMAT, Commandant PNS BAHADUR and Commander 9th Auxiliary & Mine Hunting Squadron. His major Staff appointments include Senior Staff Officer (Operations) to Commander Submarines and Director Naval Operational Plans at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad. He also performed duties as Directing Staff at National Defence University, Islamabad. Rear Admiral Muhammad Saleem has served as Naval Attaché of Pakistan in India. After promotion, the Admiral has been appointed as Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Personnel). The Admiral is recipient of Sitara-e-Imtiaz (Military).

Kashmir's statehood stolen

EXCLUSIVE

JUSTICE ALI NAWAZ CHOWHAN

On 5th August 2019 the Indian government revoked Articles 370 and 35A of its constitution and annexed this disputed territory making material breach of international law, its intl. commitments, the binding Delhi agreement 1952, the UNSC resolutions as well as its own constitution giving a special status to this territory until the dispute is resolved. It also breached its fabricated instrument of accession. This was done on advise obtained from the Governor and not the Kashmir legislature. Besides laws including the new Indian domicile law designed to bring demographic change was promulgated. Over nine hundred thousand men of the army have illegally occupied the territory and are keeping the people under siege while violating with impunity the intl. Humanitarian law intl. During an armed conflict and using lethal

weapons, cluster bombs perpetrating Sexual offences, destroying Muslim religious and private properties and its incompetent COVID 19 response. According to authentic source the total killings so far are said to be 352, including 75 unarmed civilians, 196 rebels and 81 from the occupational forces. 170000 persons have been arrested including old, women and under aged. It's now a year since the curfew was clamped. There is acute shortage of food and medicines. The internet is suspended. Travelling is restricted Kashmir is split into two Indian unions of Kashmir and Ladakh. Against the wishes of the stakeholders. This is the worst type of tyranny being faced by the helpless people of Kashmir in the history of democracy by the largest democracy. Indian actions in Kashmir are akin to those of Israel's seizing Palestinian territory during 1967 war. The UN Resolution 476(1980) declared all legislative and administrative measures and action taken by the occupying force or alternating the status of Jerusalem of no legal effect and a violation of the fourth Geneva



Convention. In the case of the wall advisory opinion the ICJ held making of the wall by Israel as a defective annexation. The Hague regulations 1907 defined occupation as a territory considered occupied when it's actually placed under the authority of a hostile army. Since Kashmir is a disputed territory the conflict there is an intl conflict and India is guilty of war crimes against the civilian population who had to be protected. India is also violating the human rights provisions of ICCPR and ICESCR 1966. The Tashkent declaration and the Simla agreements speak of Kashmir as a disputed territory. And that the dispute to be resolved mutually dispute between our two countries. This is what was also

said by the EU delegation visiting Kashmir in October 2019 during the conflict. The British prime minister has recently reiterated the stand of his government which acknowledges this as a disputed territory. How can India unilaterally and so fraudulently make de jure changes in the status of Kashmir. How can the special status of Kashmir enshrined in the constitution of India be altered on the advise of a governor destitute of recourse to the people. All these changes are a fraud on the statute. Likewise the change in the domicile law is of no legal effect being violative of 1952 Delhi agreement and legal status of Kashmir. Under the circumstances when presently no state is taking the matter to the ICJ as was done by The Gambia we can look for an interim relief by invoking the norm of the UN R2P and bring in to the notice of the UN the violations in Kashmir by India while seeking an injunction against any change in status of and the asking for pulling out of the army and all security personnel and holding of an international investigation against commission of crimes

against humanity, ethnic cleaning and genocide by India in the disputed territory and for creation of a war tribunal for trial of the perpetrators and abettors. We can also bring to the notice of national institutions of human rights world over the crimes against humanity being committed by India. This is a powerful constituency and having interacted with this I know of its potential. We cannot expect any justice from the Supreme Court of India where the matter is pending as if it has no public importance same is the case of the national commission of India for human rights. Justice (R) Ali Nawaz Chowhan Formerly Chief Justice of The Gambia, intl judge of the UN at the Hague, chairman National commission of human rights Pakistan, justice superior judiciary Pakistan, visiting scholar to intl. Universities, co-chair UNESCO legal board etc.

Justice (r) Ali Nawaz Chowhan Formerly: Chairman, National Commission for Human Rights, Government of Pakistan

Briefs

NAVTTTC enrolls 12000 students in free online courses

ISLAMABAD: National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) in its efforts to cope with the circumstances imposed by COVID-19, had enrolled more than 12,000 students in free online courses to make the best of students time during the pandemic. "The scope of the courses was being further enhanced to bring in more and more courses for a greater number of youth as by July 2020, about 2,000 students had graduated from these online courses" said Executive Director NAVTTTC Dr Nasir Khan on Tuesday. In an exclusive talk with APP, he said that these free online courses were arranged by NAVTTTC, with international certification in a bid to give high priority to un-addressed areas and challenges being faced by TVET sector. To equip 120 million youth especially to the out of school children with technical skills, Dr Nasir said, NAVTTTC had developed specially designed online courses in accordance with National Vocational Quality Framework (NVQF). He said in that regard, online teachers training had also been started under which latest techniques were disseminated to the teachers at their door step. Unfortunately, a number of training programmes had to be suspended in the wake of closure of training institutes due to COVID-19. However, training will resume as soon the institutes re-open and suspended training courses of the youth will be completed, he added. - APP

NLPD to organise 3-Day Urdu Conference

ISLAMABAD: National Language Promotion Department (NLPD) will organise online 3-Day International Urdu Conference to be held from August 12. The purpose of the conference was to promote Urdu language not just as a language but as a culture. Federal Minister for Education and National Heritage and Culture, Shafiqat Mahmood will be the chief guest. According to an official, Urdu Musharrah will also be held in which poets will present their poetry in accordance with Independence Day Celebrations (August 14). He said that papers on many important topics related to literature, education, judiciary, fine arts and other spheres of life will be presented by scholars, researchers, teachers and intellectuals in the aforementioned conference. He said that session will be presided over by a high profile personality of Dr. Rashid Hameed, Director General, National Language Promotion Department. The conference will be attended by dozens of participants from within the country and abroad. - APP

IOU announces financial assistance scheme

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has announced financial assistance scheme for the poor, physically challenged, prisoners, transgenders and children of martyrs in the ongoing admissions of semester Autumn 2020. The university has allocated a handsome amount for funding studies of the poor and needy segments of the society, so as to enable them to get quality education and help them to earn their livelihood in a respectable way. "We can bring social change in the society and AIOU being a national institution is working for the social and economic development of the society", Professor Dr Zia ul-Qayyum, Vice Chancellor of this mega university said.

ICCI pays tribute to Police Shuhada on Police Martyrs Day

Writing his feelings in the guests' book, Muhammad Ahmed Waheed wrote that the police martyrs have written a history of courage with their blood by sacrificing their lives in order to protect the country from terrorists and miscreants.



SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry along with Muhammad Amir Zulfikar Khan IG Islamabad Police visited Yaadgar-e-Shuhada, Police Lines, Islamabad as part of observing the Police Martyrs Day (Youm-e-Shuhada) and laid wreath on their

grave. He paid tribute to the sacrifices of those police officers and jawans who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty. Tahir Abbasi Senior Vice President, Saif urRehman Khan Vice President ICCI, Nasir M. Qureshi and Khalid Chaudhry were also present at the occasion. Writing his feelings in the guests' book at the occasion, Muhammad Ahmed Waheed wrote that the po-

lice martyrs have written a history of bravery and courage with their blood by sacrificing their lives in order to protect the country from terrorists and miscreants. He wrote that the nation would always remember the unparalleled sacrifices rendered by the police martyrs as they gave their blood to make Pakistan a peaceful and secure country, which was essential requirement to foster the business and



investment activities. He also lauded the great efforts of Islamabad police and other law-enforcement agencies for eradicating the terrorism from the region in order to create conducive conditions for business and economic activities. He reiterated that business community would always stand with Islamabad Police in taking care of the families of police shuhada. Expressing his views at

the occasion, Muhammad Amir Zulfikar Khan, Inspector General of Islamabad Police paid tribute to the martyrs calling them the as the pride of the country. He said that the sacrifices of the brave martyrs reminded all the officers and officials that police force was not just a profession but a sacred mission which they will continue with honesty and bravery till their last breath. He said

that the sacrifices of police officers and jawans would never go in vain. Muhammad Ahmed Waheed President ICCI, Muhammad Amir Zulfikar Khan IG Police Islamabad and members of business community also offered fatiha for the departed souls and reaffirmed that they considered the families of the martyrs as their own and would stand with Islamabad Police in taking care of their needs.

UNSC urged for emergency session over Kashmir issue

ISLAMABAD: Minister for National Food Security Syed Fakhar Imam Tuesday called for an emergency session of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on the deteriorating situation in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). The minister, in a video message aired on PTV, urged the United Nations to play its role in resolving the Kashmir issue and fulfill its promise to give the Kashmiri people their right to self-determination. He questioned the international community's silence over the worst brutalities being perpetrated by India on innocent Kashmiris for several decades. It was high time for the world powers to take strict notice of the worst human rights violations committed by the Indian troops in the IIOJK, he added. Fakhar Imam said the Pakistani nation would observe the Youm-e-Istehsal on Wednesday as a day of solidarity with their proud and valiant Kashmiri brethren. "Pakistan is steadfast in its support to the Kashmiris and it will continue exposing the Indian atrocities in occupied Kashmir at every front," he said. Pakistan, he said, was committed to stand with the Kashmiris in their struggle for the right to self-determination. It had a clear stance that Kashmir was its jugular vein and it would never compromise on the Kashmir cause. The minister paid tributes to the Kashmiri martyrs and their families over their sacrifices for the freedom of Kashmir.

Tourists to Dubai assured of safe visits and smooth travel

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: As travellers mull over their summer vacation plans, Emirates and Dubai is sending out a clear message that tourists are welcome to enjoy the city's many attractions, with various measures put in place for safe visits and smooth travels. Tourists can easily apply for visas in advance, or get

their visa stamped on arrival if they hold a passport from one of 70 countries and territories, as per the entry and immigration regulations that were in place pre-pandemic. Dubai has also updated its entry requirements for inbound travellers. From 1 August 2020, COVID-19 PCR tests will be required for all travellers arriving to

Dubai or transiting Dubai. Travellers heading to the UK and Europe will also be required to hold a negative PCR test certificate. Adel Al Redha, Emirates' Chief Operating Officer said: "Dubai remains a highly attractive destination to international visitors. In the 3 weeks since Dubai re-opened for tourists, we saw more than 1.6 million searches for desti-

nation Dubai on emirates.com, and an increase in bookings with travellers coming from more than 30 countries including France, Germany, Malaysia, UK, and US. Emirates is working with Dubai Tourism and our other partners on even more attractive travel offers and packages, and we look forward to announcing these offers soon."

'Youm-e-Shuhada e-Police'

RAWALPINDI: Regional Police Officer (RPO) Rawalpindi Sohail Habib Tajik, City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Muhammad Ahsan Younas, other senior police officers and families of the martyrs attended the event and paid tributes to the martyrs. Rawalpindi district police on the special directive of Inspector General Punjab Police organized a function to pay tributes to the martyrs.



ISLAMABAD: Mayor Islamabad Sheikh Anser Aziz visiting various areas of the Capital in order to see post-Eid cleanliness arrangements. - DNA

COMSATS to cooperate with Egypt in region

MAHNOOR ANSAR

The Embassy of Egypt in Islamabad has expressed interest in furthering cooperation between Pakistan and Egypt in areas of cyber security, STI, and education through the Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the South (COMSATS). Discussions on potential collaboration in these areas and other matters of international importance were made in Islamabad during a meeting with Dr. Tarek Dahroug, Ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan, who called on the Executive Director of COMSATS, Dr. S. M. Junaid Zaidi, and his team at COMSATS Secretariat, along with Mr. Ibrahim Said Ibrahim, Deputy Head of Mission (DHM) at the

Embassy of Egypt in Islamabad. During the meeting, the Ambassador was given a detailed briefing about COMSATS' operations focused on bringing peace and development in the Global South aided by interventions aimed at socio-economic development through scientific tools and mechanisms. Towards this end, COMSATS has forged partnerships globally and launched programmes and projects in areas of health, education, internet services, climate change and sustainability which are in line with the United Nations 2030 Global Agenda. Egypt, one of the founding member states of COMSATS, has participated and benefited from various scientific programmes of COMSATS, including capacity-building events, scholarships,



and scholarly exchanges. During the discussions, Dr. Zaidi proposed the establishment of COMSATS University in the New Administrative

Capital (NAC) of Egypt as well as extended offer of assistance for formulation of Egypt's technology policy. It was also suggested that a virtual cell to dis-

cuss and brainstorm ideas for the formulation of STI policies post-COVID19 may be formed jointly by the Ministries of S&T of Pakistan (COMSATS Focal Point) and Egypt. The Ambassador was receptive of various proposals discussed during the meeting and expressed interest in enhancing cooperation between Pakistan and Egypt in cyber security, STI, education through COMSATS to help promote innovative approaches and technology-based solutions for overcoming global challenges and achieving sustainable socio-economic development in the region at large. The meeting ended on a cordial note with the invitation to the Ambassador to visit COMSATS Centre of Excellence in Islamabad, COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI)

Ufone concludes Master Class Program 2020

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani Telecom Operator, Ufone's "Future Proof Your Career with Ufone Master Classes" Program came to an end after delivering 7 insightful sessions over a span of 6 weeks. More than 7000 students across 150+ cities in Pakistan and abroad benefited from the program. The master classes allowed students to refine their skills from the comfort of their home and enhance their learnings for the future. In an effort to continue the legacy of imparting practical knowledge and skills even during the COVID19 pandemic, Ufone came up with the novel idea of substituting their flagship Summer Internship Program with virtual Masterclass sessions. Students from LUMS, LSE, QAU, FAST, IBA, NUST, SZABIST, BNU, AKU, GIKI, IM Sciences, Bahria University, UET, Punjab University and 160 other universities and colleges participated in the program. The humbling response from participants in the form of 300+ positive testimonials and 1000 + positive reactions on LinkedIn is a testament to the success of the program. The content for each session was tailor made according to the needs and priorities of students so they can be prepared to become a part of the corporate world. The program comprised of 6 Ufone internally certified trainers and 1 external trainer, in total delivering 7 sessions aligned with recurring participant interest manifested through pre-launch surveys. Topics such as MS Power Point and MS Excel essentials, career path management, CV making and interviewing skills etc. were covered in depth by the experts. Each topic resonated with the need of students and enabled them to learn something new. Being a people centric brand, Ufone has always come up with fresh and creative ways to empower the youth. One of the primary goals of the organization has been to prepare the workforce of tomorrow for the challenges through active engagement with the academia. With the growing significance of the digital arena, the scope of such programs will further increase in the coming years.

Pakistan's exports to Afghanistan decrease 25.46%

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's exports of goods and services to Afghanistan witnessed decrease of 25.46 percent during the fiscal year (2019-20) as compared to the corresponding period of last year, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported. The overall exports to Afghanistan were recorded at \$ 888,913 million during July-June (2019-20) against exports of \$ 1192,559 million during July-June (2018-19), showing negative growth of 25.46 percent, SBP data revealed. Overall Pakistan's exports to other countries witnessed decline of 7.22 percent during the period under review, from \$ 24,256 billion to \$ 22,504 billion, the SBP data revealed. On the other hand, the imports from Afghanistan into the country during the period under review were recorded at \$ 121,832 million against \$ 170,478 million last year, showing decreased of 28.53 percent during the fiscal year under review. The overall imports into the country witnessed decrease of 18.22 percent, from \$ 51,869 billion to \$ 42,418 billion, according to the data. Based on the trade figures, the trade of goods and services with Afghanistan witnessed decrease of 24.85 percent in surplus during the fiscal year under review as compared to the corresponding period of last year. The surplus during the period under review was recorded at \$ 768,081 million against \$ 1022,081 million during same period of last year, showing negative growth of 24.85 percent, the data revealed. - APP

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Human cruelty

Humans are said to be the most civilized creatures on the planet. But this is something that is tested every single day. The latest event at the Marghazar Zoo in Islamabad, where affairs have been in poor shape for decades, took a turn for the worse last week when the lioness and then the lion both died while being shifted to sanctuaries in a clumsy attempt to follow court orders. The IHC had ruled that given the condition of the animals at the zoo all must be shifted to places where they could live natural lives and enjoy better treatment. The manner in which zoo staff chose to go about this task defies imagination. The lioness and lion were first poked to bring them out of their cages and into the expensive Belgian transport holding devices brought in for the purpose. When this failed a fire was lit in the cage in the hope that this would drive the animals out or else suffocate them so they could be dragged out. Perhaps because of the high heat and perhaps because of the stress the strategy did not work. The lioness died before she could reach the sanctuary selected for the animals and the lion passed away a little later. Some ostriches and birds also died during this bungled transportation operation.

The Islamabad Wildlife Management Board entrusted with the task by the court has been asked to give an explanation and Minister for Climate Change Amin Aslam has ordered a full inquiry. The problem is that all the zoos in the country are essentially in a terrible condition, run with too few funds and too little expertise. Following the latest incident, the WWF has resigned from the IWMB. While there is possible merit in holding animals captive for research or breeding purposes in a few select cases, our zoos are certainly not capable of meeting these requirements. Tragedies take place at zoos around the country almost every day. Perhaps they should simply be shut down and the animals donated to other facilities around the world which are better equipped and willing to accept them.

There is one ray of light. After a long campaign run by pop stars including Cher, the elephant Kaavan who arrived as a baby at Marghazar Zoo from Srinagar at about six years old over thirty years ago is to be rehabilitated in Cambodia.

The iconic Hagia Sophia reopens as a mosque

MUHAMMAD OMAR IFTIKHAR

The iconic Hagia Sophia in Istanbul has been converted into a mosque. The first Muslim prayers were held after 85 years. This building remained a museum for over eight decades. During the opening ceremony held on July 24, 2020, Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan said, "Now this place [the Hagia Sophia] has returned to its original form, it became a mosque again. However, it is a place where people from all religions can come and visit as a cultural heritage of all humanity."

The Hagia Sophia has an interesting history over the last few centuries. For nearly 916 years, it remained a church until the conquest of Istanbul. However, from 1453 to 1934, it remained a mosque. The historic judgment from the Turkish court came forth on July 10 as it canceled a 1934 Cabinet decree. This decree had converted Hagia Sophia into a museum. Ali Erbas, head of Turkey's Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet), during his sermon, said, "Hagia Sophia is the conquest's symbol and the entrustment of its Conqueror who endowed it on condition that it remains a mosque until the last day." He was referring to Ottoman sultan Mehmed II, who had conquered Istanbul. The Hagia Sophia was constructed in 537 as the patriarchal cathedral of the imperial capital of Constantinople. It remained the largest Christian church of the eastern Roman Empire that was also referred to as the Byzantine Empire.

In 1453, following the Fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Empire, the Hagia Sophia was converted into a mosque. It is considered to be one of the greatest structures reflecting the Byzantine architecture of the Byzantine Empire or the Eastern Roman Empire.

Modi's year long "Hate Muslim Spree"

Iqbal Khan

The political establishment, including the right-leaning newly emerged J&K Apni Party deemed the order as irresolute. The People's Democratic Party demanded the order to be rolled back whereas the All Parties Hurriyat Conference leader Syed Ali Gillani has urged Pakistan and the international community to take note of the demographic change in the making.

The left-leaning political stream of J&K state views the amendment as cosmetic in nature that overlooks the core concerns. Forced by the unprecedented political backlash, on April 3, the Indian government issued an amendment in the reorganisation order whereby, most importantly, all gazetted and non-gazetted jobs were reserved for the UT of J&K domicile exclusively.

From annexation of Jammu and Kashmir on August 05 last year to commencement of Ram Mander construction on the site of Babri Mosque on August 05 this year, marks Narendra Modi's yearlong "Hate Muslim spree"; denoting "Istehsal" [exploitation] of Indian Muslims—according to a Kashmiri politician something akin to "martial rape".

However, just within one year, India stands isolated on Kashmir issue. China has emerged as a powerful party to the dispute. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is desperately looking for a face saving back tracking and restoration of statehood (provincial status) of Jammu and Kashmir. It is almost certain that August 05 2019 Indian rash act to annul the statehood of Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJ&K) shall be undone in due course through, Union government sponsored, yet dramatized, intervention by the Indian Supreme Court. Then after sometime, Articles 370 and 35A shall also be restored because any state assembly, worth its salt would pass a resolution for doing so. Citizen Amendment Act shall also be watered down in due course.

In this regard the Indian government has given assurances to some of the politicians of IOJ&K, and in all probability to international powers that be. The only pending element is that a narrative is to be evolved so that all these U-turns are sold to Indian people as a great victory—easier said than done. Denial strategy is not a panacea for all ills. Modi is already in thick soup by denying China's conquering of vast stretches of Indian territories in May-June 2020.

August 05 is being observed as Youm-e-Istehsal [Exploitation Day] by Pakistan and the Kashmiris the World over to commemorate India's illegal annexation of Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJ&K) in 2019. This unilateral Indian action has violated the "Shimla Agreement" and various statutes of international laws. None of India's neighbours is happy with its aggressive Kashmir policies.

Over the year, the annexation issue has been extensively deliberated, the World over. Parliaments of over sixty countries reviewed the issue. The EU parliament has held discussions on Kashmir dispute in which it not only voiced concerns over the prevailing situation in IOJ&K but also demanded the resolution of outstanding dispute in accordance with the aspirations of Kashmiri people. The Organisation of Muslim Cooperation (OIC) has also condemned the annexation. All leading Human Rights watchdogs have expressed their concern over the

treatment of residents of annexed Jammu & Kashmir.

The UN Security Council has discussed it more than once. Last year, Prime Minister Imran Khan had effectively presented the case of Kashmiris before the 74th session of UN General Assembly. Pakistan's political leadership is united on the Kashmir issue and Indian attempts to jeopardize this unanimity have been frustrated. Not only Pakistan and Kashmiri people have rejected India's August 05 2019 illegal steps in IOJ&K, Indian political landscape is also divided on it. These Indian actions are aimed at ending the identity of Kashmiri Muslims in IOJ&K. Indian intentions were once again exposed to the world when they introduced the new domicile rule focused at changing the demography of the IOJ&K.

Pakistan has decided to further enhance diplomatic outreach to significantly highlight the Indian oppressions in IOJ&K.

One year ago, suspense loaded events began to unfold like a horror movie. Thousands of additional law enforcing troops started converging on to Indian Occupied Kashmir, a Hindu pilgrim was cut short; rumour mill was in overdrive. On August 05, 2019 a law was enacted, while short-cutting the procedure, to revoke the special status of IOJ&K. Articles governing the special status were revoked, state status was dissolved and it was bifurcated into two Union Territories. Any such action required approval by state assembly, that was on purpose dissolved and governor's rule was imposed. Mischievously, an RSS goon had already been placed as state Governor "for representing the will of the people!" This nominated governor single-headedly and single handedly advised his masters in New Delhi to do all this. Concurrent to proclamation of the order, an all comprehensive clampdown was imposed on IOJ&K. Electronic blackout and perpetual curfew brought everything to a standstill; even ambulances were prevented from reaching the Medicare facilities. These restrictions continue to haunt the Kashmiris one year down the time line.

Reorganisation Act 2019 and the J&K Reorganisation Order 2020 starkly contrast with the decades-old constitutional and demographic status of IOJ&K. The J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019 bifurcated the Indian-held territory of J&K into two separate Union Territories (UT) i.e. the UT of Ladakh and the UT of J&K. It practically limits the autonomy of the state legislature of J&K that was granted by Article 370. The J&K Reorganisation Order was enforced on April 01 2020. It disempowers the state legislature of

J&K from ascertaining 'permanent residents' and their right to employment, as was provided under Article 35-A of the Indian constitution. Before August 2019, the permanent residence of J&K was specific to the indigenous people of J&K, the new order seeks to grant UT of J&K 'domicile' to a wide range of Indian citizens. The order implemented in indecent haste invoked fierce bashing response from political parties of J&K.

The political establishment, including the right-leaning newly emerged J&K Apni Party deemed the order as irresolute. The People's Democratic Party demanded the order to be rolled back whereas the All Parties Hurriyat Conference leader Syed Ali Gillani has urged Pakistan and the international community to take note of the demographic change in the making. The left-leaning political stream of J&K state views the amendment as cosmetic in nature that overlooks the core concerns. Forced by the unprecedented political backlash, on April 3, the Indian government issued an amendment in the reorganisation order whereby, most importantly, all gazetted and non-gazetted jobs were reserved for the UT of J&K domicile exclusively. Indian designs of fostering Hindu settlements in the internationally disputed territory of J&K surfaced well in November 2019, when the Indian Consul General in New York Sandeep Chakravorty was reported saying that an Israel-modelled settlement could be undertaken in J&K conveniently.

In an exclusive July 27 interview to ThePrint, a head of the first anniversary of the revocation of Article 370, senior Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) leader and former cabinet minister of Jammu and Kashmir Naeem Akhtar described the decision as "marital rape". Naeem Akhtar also spoke about the symbolism attached with the construction of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya on 5 August 2020.

"Why is this 5 August marked with Ram Mandir? Because the foundation stone of the Hindu Rashtra is Kashmir, which is now mortar brick and stone for Hindu Rashtra. Kashmir has been transformed into a Hindu versus Muslim problem — something which the people of Kashmir did not believe in," he said. Akhtar also launched a scathing attack on "Hindutva politics" of the BJP and said the prevailing geo-political situation in south Asia will not bode well. Narendra Modi is a pathological Muslim hater, instead of giving up his game of sowing the seeds of hate he is likely to continue doing so in one way or the other. Writer is a freelance columnist; e-mail: Iqbal.khan9999@yahoo.com

A Year of Savagery in Kashmir

Farooq Alay

Last year, on August 5, 2019, India revoked the special status of Jammu & Kashmir granted by the Indian constitution. This special status gave IOJK a privilege to safeguard the interests of Kashmiris as they could have their own flag, own constitution and their own freedom to make certain laws. It also ensured that the Kashmir land was owned only by the Kashmiris, and non-Kashmiris couldn't get settled there. The revoking of the special status shocked the world. India sent more troops in the region and with a million troops imposed curfew to contain any confrontation. Since then India is playing a free hand to oppress the Kashmiris, especially the youth, in every possible way.

5th of August 2020 makes it one year to the siege of Kashmir; a full year of making the valley of Kashmir the biggest prison for the oppressed Kashmiris and 365 days of unimaginable living in the curfew, and nonstop cruelty at the hands of Indian Occupied forces.

Shall we ever forget such days and the part of our land, which the Quaid called as Pakistan's jugular vein — Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IOJK)? Isn't it still in the chains; struggling for freedom? Don't you think the ordeal being faced by our Kashmiri brothers and sisters has become more aching, particularly in the aftermath of August 5, 2019 when the already flawed IOJK's special status was revoked? Hats off to the Kashmiri people's unconquerable will and unstoppable sacrifices that have sent shockwaves to the Indians. Is this indicative of the dawn of independence to herald sooner than later?

Last year, on August 5, 2019, India revoked the special status of Jammu & Kashmir granted by the Indian constitution. This special status gave IOJK a privilege to safeguard the interests of Kashmiris as they could have their own flag, own constitution and their own freedom to make certain laws. It also ensured that the Kashmir land was owned only by the Kashmiris, and non-Kashmiris couldn't get settled there. The revoking of the special status shocked the world. India sent more troops in the region and with a million troops imposed curfew to contain any confrontation. Since then India is playing a free hand to oppress the Kashmiris, especially the youth, in every possible way. Gone are the days when the Indian constitution had enshrined the country to be a secular state. No more. It is no more a secular state in today's India, rather it is now a Hindu extremist, RSS terrorist state that sponsors terror, not only to perpetrate inside India but also in neighbouring countries, including Pakistan, Nepal, Tibet, Sri

Lanka, Bangladesh and Maldives. On August 5, 2019, the Modi government revoked Articles 35A and 370 of the Constitution, which gave an already flawed special status to the disputed territory of the state of J&K. This way, Modi sarkar through illegal action and with one stroke of pen turned the Kashmiris' Muslim majority into minority.

On October 31, 2019, New Delhi issued a map showing IOJK bifurcated into two union territories — J&K and Ladakh. The map identified Pakistani side of Azad Jammu and Kashmir as well as certain areas of Gilgit-Baltistan as an Indian territory. China rejected the malicious acts saying it "unlawful and void". "India's decision to 'include' some of China's territory into its administrative jurisdiction 'challenged' Beijing's sovereignty. Border dispute between China and India has increased tension between the two countries.

Narendra Modi, the leader of ruling BJP has accelerated anti-Kashmir moves. Implementing Hindu nationalism, he hastaken various other measures such as issuance of domicile certificates to 40,000 non-Kashmiris.

cruel actions against Kashmiris reached its peak on August 5, last year, when he imposed strict military siege deploying more than 900,000 troops. Indians have martyred so far hundreds of Kashmiris, including women and children. Curfew and military siege has resulted in shortage of food, medicines and other items. This is added with media blackout as Kashmir has been cut off from rest of the world.

According to BBC: "Unprecedented restrictions have put Kashmir into a state of lockdown. In one village the residents said two brothers were woken up and taken to an outside area. They kicked us, gave us electric shocks, beat us with cables. We screamed, they sealed our mouth with mud. We told them we are innocent, don't beat us, just shoot us. I was asking God to take me, because the torture was unbearable."

International community is pained. UN's special rapporteurs said: "We remain deeply concerned about the ongoing human rights violations, excessive use of force, torture and other forms of ill-treatment reportedly committed during the arrest and detention and death in custody... We have asked the Indian government to investigate killings of several Muslim men since January 2019. A report was sent to the Indian government on May 4 over the continued deterioration of human rights conditions in occupied Kashmir". Amnesty International said: It is "deeply concerned about the disregard for the lives of people in Jammu and Kashmir."

PM Imran and FM Qureshi took exception to world community's inaction for "financial interests". During his visit to US last year, the PM said: "The Indian occupied region has been facing a clampdown since August 5. Nearly 100,000 Kashmiris have died in the past 30 years. I am disappointed by the international community. If eight million Europeans, or Christians or Jews or Americans were put under siege, you can imagine the action. The only reason why Kashmiris are subjected to this is, they're Muslims". COAS Gen Qamar Bajwa repeatedly warned India against the illegal action.

DG ISPR in a statement said: "Indian ceasefire violations along LoC have witnessed a surge since the abrogation of the constitutional status of Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The situation along LoC is worrisome and India has violated the ceasefire agreement many times during recent times."

Pakistanis as well as Kashmiris living in Pakistan and abroad are observing 5th of August as 'Youm-e-Istehsal-e-Kashmir'. Conferences and rallies will be held reminding the world that the Kashmiris have not been given the rights of self-determination which was guaranteed by the UN. Will the world wake up? (The writer is freelance columnist)

Briefs

Curfew in Kashmir on 'black day'

DNA

SRI NAGAR: Curfew has been imposed in Indian-Occupied Kashmir in anticipation of protests ahead of 5 August, the day the government stripped the region of its special status. Officials say the curfew is meant to prevent violence by groups planning to observe 5 August as "black day". They said mass gatherings were also not allowed because of Covid-19. The state was split into two federally-administered regions last year and its semi-autonomous status was revoked. Reports say there is tension in the region ahead of the anniversary and more troops have been deployed. The decision to revoke article 370 - the part of the constitution that guaranteed Kashmir special status - was met with anger and betrayal in the region. Thousands were detained amid a curfew and a communications blackout was ordered. The region witnessed protests and security forces often clashed with civilians. Thousands of activists and others were believed to have been picked up from their homes in the days that followed the surprise move. However, due to the strict lockdown and the detention of thousands of people, including three former chief ministers of the state, protests against the move were largely controlled. Jammu and Kashmir was India's only Muslim-majority state and anti-India protests have been taking place in the region for decades. It has long been one of the world's most dangerous flash-points and is a highly militarised area. India and Pakistan both claim Kashmir in full, but control only parts of it. The nuclear-armed neighbours have fought two wars over Kashmir, most recently clashing in a series of aerial attacks over the territory in February last year.

'NCOC consults provinces over reopening'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Industries and Production Hammad Azhar on Tuesday said that the National Command Operation Center (NCOC) has started consultations with provinces on review and possible re-opening of different sectors. The minister in a post on Twitter, said that consultations have been underway over reopening of tourism sector, restaurants, marriage halls and parks etc under proper standard operation procedures (SOPs). The working hours of the markets and industries will also be revisited, he said. "We have collected the proposals from provinces and asked them to finalise SOPs and enforcement methods," the minister stated. The proposals will now be taken to the NCC headed by Prime Minister Imran Khan to take final decisions in this regard within a few days, he added in his statement.

China accuses US of harassing students

BEIJING: China on Monday accused the United States of monitoring, harassing and willfully detaining Chinese students and researchers in the US. Foreign ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin's comments follow the denial of a bail request in California for a university researcher accused of lying about her ties to China's military and Communist Party to gain access to the United States. Wang said China had no intention of helping Juan Tang escape the country, but did not otherwise comment directly on the accusations against her. However, he said China urges the US to handle the case fairly in accordance with the law and ensure the safety and legitimate rights and interests due to Tang. - APP

Pakistani youth enters finals of int'l Chinese proficiency competition

Compared with other foreign languages, they highly recommend Pakistanis to learn Chinese, and shared their experience on how to grasp the language well

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The 19th "Chinese Bridge" Chinese Proficiency Competition for college students just completed. Haider Abbas and Saira Banu won 1st and 2nd places respectively. According to Gwadar Pro, the champion represents the country's mandarin learners to attend the finals and compete with outstanding Chinese language talents all over the world. As a large-scale international annual event, the Chinese Bridge competition has been successfully held for 18 years since 2002. Nearly 1.5 million college and middle school students from 154 countries have participated in the preliminaries, among which over 6,500 have been invited to China for the finals. Moreover, more than

100 million TV viewers worldwide watch the competition each year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year the competition in many countries was held via Internet. In Pakistan, every participant submitted a video to showcase his or her Chinese proficiency. Haider Abbas and Saira Banu from the Confucius Institute in Islamabad gained high marks because of their excellent linguistic competence. Compared with other foreign languages, they highly recommend Pakistanis to learn Chinese, and shared their experience on how to grasp the language well. "Pakistan and China are working collectively on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that brings thousands of jobs for bilinguals who are flu-



ent in both languages. China is a leading country in the world of economy. The two nations are on good terms in trade, commerce, arts, culture, science and technology. These facts provide excellent opportunities to the Pakistani students to learn Chinese language to explore one of the largest growing economies and job markets in the world. "Haider Abbas explained why he suggests people learn Chinese. Moreover, both of them have got satisfactory jobs related to Chinese language. "I got my first job as a Chinese language instructor and now I have many students in different cities of Pakistan, some of whom are even double of my age. Currently I am working at a Chinese enterprise with a handsome salary. I am gaining great experience

in translation and how to set up a new company, etc.," Saira Banu said with a sense of accomplishment. "CPEC is opening many doors of employment locally and helping to boost up the economy of our country," she said. When talking about the key to mastery of Chinese, Haider Abbas suggested that learning Chinese as a pictographic language and maximizing the interaction and communication with native Chinese speakers. Saira Banu thinks focusing on tones and phonemes is very important. Furthermore, watching Chinese dramas is also a way to speed up learning the language as well as the culture. It's learned that the finals will start from September to December. The participants will get scholarships to come to China for further study.

NDMA, FWO continue to clear sewerage drains

DNA

KARACHI: The cleaning of sewerage drains in Karachi continues on 2nd consecutive day by the teams of National Disasters Management Authority (NDMA) and Frontier Works Organisation (FWO). With the help of heavy machinery garbage is being lifted from five spots from sewerage drains, which had choked free flow of the water in the recent rainfall in the city. The garbage from the sewerage drains being transferred to the landfill site. It may be noted that, Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has predicted new spell of monsoon rain in Karachi on Friday and Saturday. Heavy downpour may generate urban flooding in Karachi and Hyderabad and flash flooding in hill torrents of Khuzdar on Friday and Saturday. NDMA Chairman Lt. General Muhammad Afzal on Sunday in a media briefing in Islamabad had said that NDMA was tasked to clear encroached nullahs in Karachi and asked the federal and the provincial authorities to sit together to resolve the city's long-standing issues as temporary measures would only subside them rather than solving them permanently. Muhammad Afzal had said that the NDMA has launched the cleanliness drive in the city and would take measures to minimize the effects from rainfall as compared to the past.

Siraj-ul-Haq urges govt to raise Kashmir issue at int'l level

DNA

LAHORE: Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami Siraj-ul-Haq has criticized the government's policies on Kashmir issue and said that the government should announce a clear policy on this important issue. Senator Siraj-ul-Haq in his statement said that he salute the Kashmiri leadership and the sacrifices of the people for the independence movement. Occupied Kashmir is not an occupation of Kashmir, it is an attack on Islamabad and Karachi. He rejected cosmetics measures of the government and renaming of Kashmir Highway and said that the Kashmiri leadership also rejects the government's move. He demanded that the government announce a clear policy on Kashmir and the Permit of the resumption of Indian air operations should be canceled. Siraj-ul-Haq said that the government should not formulate any policy without consulting the leadership of Occupied Kashmir and Azad Kashmir. And raise the issue of Kashmir at the international level at every forum. The Kashmir issue will not be resolved through resolutions and 2 minutes of silence, he added.

'No silver bullet' for Coronavirus: WHO

DNA

GENEVA: The World Health Organization (WHO) warned that there might never be a "silver bullet" for COVID-19, despite the "unprecedented" rush by nations across the world to find a vaccine. "A number of vaccines are now in phase three clinical trials and we all hope to have a number of effective vaccines that can help prevent people from infection," WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on Monday, adding that the international scramble for a vaccine was also "unprecedented". "However, there's no silver bullet at the moment - and there might never be," he said, underscoring uncertainties. "There are concerns that we may not have a vaccine that may work, or its protection could be for just a few months, not more. But until we finish the clinical trials, we will not know."

Pilgrims quarantined for 14 days after Hajj

JEDDAH: Pilgrims who took part in this year's Hajj must continue wearing electronic tags so authorities can track their 14-day quarantine once they return home. The bracelet is designed to monitor pilgrims' adherence to quarantine, as well as monitoring and recording their health status through the "Tataman" app. Pilgrims were required to quarantine before embarking on the Hajj and wore the bracelets to ensure they were obeying the self-isolation rules as part of strict measures to contain the spread of coronavirus. The country continues to experience a decline in COVID-19 cases. Recorded infections remain below the 2,000 mark for the 10th day in a row. - APP

First Session of the Online Internship Program "Contemporary Dynamics of Azerbaijan"

DNA

ISLAMABAD: On 4th August 2020, first session of the Online Internship Program "Contemporary Dynamics of Azerbaijan" was held. This internship program is initiated jointly by Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad and Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Pakistan. The session was commenced with the remarks of Ms. Mehreen Gul, Director, CGSS and Program Coordinator of the Internship Program. She highlighted the friendly bilateral relations between Pakistan-Azerbaijan. Furthermore, she thanked the Embassy for the efforts for this internship program and also stressed upon the importance of initiating such activities to make the relations stronger. His Excellency Ali Alizada - Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan also addressed the participants of the internship program



on the topic "Azerbaijan after the Restoration of its Independence. Azerbaijan-Pakistan Friendship and Strategic Partnership". He stressed to promote relations between Pakistan and Azerbaijan through healthy activities. People from all across Pakistan have enrolled for this Internship program. This program will further enhance Pakistan-Azerbaijan bilateral relationship, people to people contact and increase awareness between both the nations.



ANKARA: Turkey and Albania have signed an accord whereby Turkey will sell arms to Albania. Leaders of both countries posing for a picture. - DNA

Punjab reports 139 new coronavirus cases

DNA

LAHORE: The coronavirus cases continued to decline in Punjab as the province reported 139 new infections in the past 24 hours. According to the spokesperson of Punjab Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department, the total count of coronavirus cases has reached to 93,336 in Punjab, whereas, five more succumbed to COVID-19 today, taking the death count to 2,153. The province has conducted overall 743,533 detection tests and 82,575 people have recovered from the virus. The COVID-19 death toll in Pakistan has reached near 6000 after 15 more deaths in the country soared the count of fatalities by the disease to 5,999. The novel coronavirus infections and deaths gradually going down in Pakistan according to the latest figures released by the National Command and Operation Center (NCOC).

Pakistani farmers express their gratitude to China for providing drones

"It is indeed a piece of great news. China has provided drones to fight locust. It means we will be able to save our crops from locust soon," Ajmal Bhutta, a noted agriculturist based in Multan said over telephone.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Hundreds of thousands of farmers across Pakistan have appreciated the Chinese government for providing a dozen of agricultural drones to Pakistan to fight the locust, Gwadar Pro reported on Monday. The drones were donated by the Chinese ministry of agriculture to the Ministry of National Food Security at the Pakistani Embassy in Beijing. China will provide as many as 38 more drones to Pakistan in a few months, said Pakistani

officials. Although Pakistan is yet to deploy these drones to stop desert locusts, a wave of joy has been felt among Pakistani farmers. "It is indeed a piece of great news. China has provided drones to fight locust. It means we will be able to save our crops from locust soon," Ajmal Bhutta, a noted agriculturist based in Multan said over telephone. Earlier in June, a leading Chinese company expressed willingness to set up an industrial unit in Pakistan to manufacture drones that can be used

to protect crops and control locust. "From factory construction, production, assembly, after-sales to personnel training, we can provide a full set of technical support to help Pakistan develop the drone manufacturing industry to quickly respond to various types of disasters," Du Jixiang, Chief Engineer, Beijing Andun Equipment Co. Ltd told Gwadar Pro. The government is negotiating with a mission of the Chinese aviation industry for the supply of aircraft to carry out aerial spray in the locust-affected areas. An official of Pakistan's Ministry of

National Food Security and Research said that Pakistan wanted to lease six aircrafts from Chinese Ministry of Civil Aviation to conduct aerial spray into locust affected areas. Desert locust is an international trans-boundary concern with major economic, social and environmental implications. As per estimate of officials of department of agriculture of Pakistan's provinces of Sindh and Balochistan, the locust attack has damaged crops cultivated on 80,000 hectares of land besides causing serious damage to grazing fields and forest areas. In February

this year, Pakistan declared national emergency to eliminate the attacking swarms of desert locust. This year, locust's attack is unimaginable, according to Pakistani authorities. "The farmers are very worried as they have seen their crops being destroyed in front of their eyes. These farmers should be compensated," said Zahid Bhurguri, general secretary of the Sindh Chamber of Agriculture. "Almost all crops and non-crop plants are vulnerable and the insects are one of the biggest threats to food security," he added.

