

Simultaneously published from Karachi and Lahore



## TeleSchool project best way to impart education amid lockdown

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### Friday

April 24, 2020

Shaban 30

Vol#13 Issue# 258

Pages 8 Rs 20

KARACHI EDITION

## TOP NEWS:::FOREIGN EXCHANGE: STATE BANK RESERVES FALL \$85MN TO \$10.89BN

Economic Indicators	
Forex Reserves (17-Apr-20)	\$17,300bn
Inflation CPI% (Jul 19-Mar-20)	11.80%
Exports (Jul 19-Mar-20)	\$17,45bn
Imports (Jul 19-Mar-20)	\$34,81bn
Trade Balance (Jul 19-Mar-20)	\$(17,36)bn
Current A/C (Jul 19-Mar-20)	\$(2,77)bn
Remittances (Jul 19-Mar-20)	\$16,99bn
Foreign Investment (Jul 19-Mar-20)	\$2,376bn
Revenue (Jul 19-Mar-20)	Rs 3,063bn
Foreign Debt (Dec-19)	\$11,05bn
Domestic Debt (Feb-20)	Rs 22,651bn
Reparated Profit (Jul 19-Feb-20)	Rs 0,994bn
LSM Growth (Jan-20)	-5.96%
GDP Growth FY19	3.40%
Per Capita Income FY19	\$1,561
Population	208.84

Portfolio Investment	
SCRA (U.S \$ in million)	
Yearly (Jul 2019 up to 22-Apr-20)	626.56
Monthly (Mar 2019 up to 22-Apr-20)	-576.15
Daily (22-Apr-20)	-65.52
Total Portfolio Investment (1-Apr-20)	1,888

NCCPL	
(U.S \$ in million)	
FPI (23-Apr-20)	-2.11
Local Companies (23-Apr-20)	-0.05
Banks / DF (23-Apr-20)	-0.29
Mutual Funds (23-Apr-20)	11.85
Insurance Companies (23-Apr-20)	1.86
Local Investors (23-Apr-20)	0.06
Other Organization (23-Apr-20)	-0.18

PMEX Commodity Index	
Opening	3,481
Closing	3,333
Change	-148.00
% Change	-4.25
Volume (Lots)	15,728

Global Indices		
Index	Close	Change
KSE 100	32,850.83	386.60
Nikkei 225	19,429.44	291.49
Hang Seng	23,977.32	83.96
Sensex 30	31,863.08	483.53
ADX	4,062.99	75.93
SSE COMP	2,838.50	-5.48
FTSE 100	5,826.61	55.98
*Dow Jones	23,778.79	302.97
*Last Updated 20:00 PS		

Commodities	
*Crude Oil (brent)/\$bbl	22.29
*Crude Oil (WTI)/\$bbl	17.60
*Cotton \$/lb	56.51
*Gold \$/ozs	1,751.20
*Silver \$/ozs	15.64
Malaysian Palm \$	479
Gold 24K per 10 Grams	88,762
KHI Cotton 40K PKR	9,602
*Last Updated 20:00 PST	

GDR update		
Symbols	\$ Price	PKR:Share
MCB (1 GDR= 2 Shares)	3.00	239.67
OGDC (1 GDR= 10 Shares)	9.20	147.00
UBL (1 GDR= 4 Shares)	6.40	255.65
LUCK (1 GDR= 10 Shares)	9.10	363.50
HUBC (1 GDR= 25 Shares)	31.54	201.58

Money Market Update		
T-Bills (3 Mths)	22-Apr-20	8.21%
T-Bills (6 Mths)	22-Apr-20	7.88%
T-Bills (12 Mths)	22-Apr-20	7.32%
Policy Rate	17-Apr-20	9.00%
Kibor (1 Mth)	23-Apr-20	9.21%
Kibor (3 Mths)	23-Apr-20	9.31%
Kibor (6 Mths)	23-Apr-20	7.77%
Kibor (9 Mths)	23-Apr-20	7.72%
Kibor (1 Yr)	23-Apr-20	7.58%
PLB (3 Yrs)	15-Apr-20	8.53%
PLB (5 Yrs)	15-Apr-20	8.71%
PLB (10 Yrs)	15-Apr-20	8.97%
PLB (15 Yrs)	15-Apr-20	10.45%
PLB (20 Yrs)	15-Apr-20	10.70%
PLB (30 Yrs)	15-Apr-20	11.00%

Open Mkt Currency Rates		
Symbols	Buy (Rs)	Sell (Rs)
Australian \$	92.25	97.25
Canadian \$	105.00	110.00
Danish Krone	22.60	22.90
Euro	180.25	183.00
Hong Kong \$	20.00	20.25
Japanese Yen	1.500	1.530
Saudi Riyal	40.00	41.00
Singapore \$	106.00	110.00
Swedish Korona	15.30	15.55
Swiss Franc	160.15	161.05
U.A.E Dirham	41.00	42.00
UK Pound	189.00	195.00
US \$	158.00	160.50

Weather Forecast		
Cities	Max-Temp	Min-Temp
Islamabad	23°C	16°C
Karachi	35°C	26°C
Lahore	29°C	17°C
Faisalabad	29°C	18°C
Quetta	18°C	6°C
Rawalpindi	23°C	15°C

Inter-Bank Currency Rates		
Symbols	Buying	Selling
Australian \$	101.26	101.53
Canadian \$	112.99	113.28
Danish Krone	23.18	23.24
Euro	172.90	173.38
Hong Kong \$	20.59	20.64
Japanese Yen	1.482	1.485
Saudi Riyal	42.40	42.53
Singapore \$	112.09	112.39
Swedish Korona	15.84	15.89
Swiss Franc	164.38	164.88
U.A.E Dirham	43.50	43.60
UK Pound	197.39	197.91
US \$	159.78	160.16

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan at Ehsaas Telethon, here Thursday. - PID photo

## Vows FM Shah Mahmood Qureshi Efforts afoot for return of Pakistanis in Gulf, earliest

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has said that efforts are underway to bring back the stranded Pakistanis from Gulf States at the earliest.

In a statement on Thursday, the foreign minister said that screening is being done at the airports and quarantine facilities have also been expanded there.

The foreign minister said that

the opening of remaining airports has enhanced Pakistan's capacity to bring back six to seven thousand Pakistanis from abroad every week.

Shah Mahmood Qureshi said the coronavirus has badly affected the economy of the world. He said this pandemic will also increase pressure on

Spokesperson Aisha Farooqui regretted that these policies persist regardless of the challenge posed by COVID-19 pandemic. She pointed out that a systematic campaign is unfortunately underway in India to

## Pakistan now only South Asian state to be ranked as G4

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has been ranked as the 4th Generation Regulator (G4) by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and has become the only country in South Asia to have achieved this goalpost.

Out of 38 economies in Asia-Pacific, only 8% states have managed to achieve G4 status, said a press statement issued by Pakistan Telecommunication

Authority (PTA) on Thursday. According to ITU's report, "Global ICT Regulatory Outlook 2020 (GIRO)", Pakistan scored 88 out of 100 which means that Pakistan's ICT regulations are led by economic and social policy goals. Pakistan is also among the top 5 regulators in the entire Asia-Pacific region with a global rank of 48. GIRO is built on high-quality data provided

Ghulam Raza Rajani  
 KARACHI: Market observed an overall positive session closing higher by almost 1.2 per cent. Recovery in international stock exchanges assisted local market to start on positive note. Revival in global crude price kept local oil scrips in limelight helping

## Ramazan moon not sighted in Pakistan: Mufti Muneeb

ISLAMABAD: The chairman of Ruet-e-Hilal Committee, Mufti Muneebur Rehman Thursday said that the moon was not sighted in all parts of the country and the Ramazan will fall on Saturday (April 25).

Mufti Muneebur Rehman made the announcement after chairing the meeting of

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## Rupee gains more strength as dollar slips to Rs159.98

KARACHI: Pakistani rupee continued gaining strength against the US dollar on Thursday and gained 38-paisa in its value in interbank.

The US dollar was traded at Rs159.98 against Rs160.36 on last trading day (Wednesday), according to a tweet of State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The recent increase in the local currency is mainly due to \$1.4 billion received from IMF and deferment in payments of foreign debt.

During the last four days, Pakistani rupee has been strengthened by Rs3.59 against the international currency. - TLTP

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## Gold price rises Rs2,500 per tola

ISLAMABAD: Gold prices increased by Rs2,500 to reach Rs96,400 per tola in local markets on Thursday.

Likewise, the rate of 10 grams of the precious metal rose by Rs2,142 to Rs82,647.

Meanwhile, Gold in international market rose to a one-week high on the expectation of more stimulus from major central banks to limit the economic damage from the coronavirus pandemic, with most countries extending lockdowns to curtail its spread.

Spot gold was being sold at \$1,736.70 with an increase of \$22.4 per ounce at 1545 GMT. - TLTP

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## Option of imposing smart lockdown under consideration: Discusses Punjab situation with Buzdar; Rs.2.76bn have been raised for fund; Govt to take action if anyone tries to violate the 20-point SOPs: PM

# Next four weeks critical in terms of infections and deaths, says PM

No compromise would be made on security, integrity and sovereignty of the country, Imran tells at the briefing held at the ISI headquarters; PM was accompanied by COAS Bajwa, federal ministers & advisors

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan Thursday warned that the next three to four weeks can be critical for Pakistan in terms of coronavirus infections and deaths.

The Prime Minister said this while speaking at the largest Ehsaas Telethon being simultaneously telecast by the PTV and private TV channels for raising funds to fight COVID-19.

The live telethon organized for raising money for the coronavirus relief fund concluded with a total of Rs 2.76 billion being raised.

Prime Minister Imran Khan took part in the telethon which attracted extremely generous donations from Pakistani citizens all over the globe. The fund has amassed a total of Rs2.76 billion

in donations with the telethon alone raising Rs550 million.

Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) made a donation of Rs30 million while Managing Director EBM Zafar Munir donated Rs100 million.

CEO Petroleum Khalid Riaz donated Rs2 million while Salamati Ali from Faisalabad pledged a donation of Rs200 million.

He said that imposition of 'balanced and smart lockdown' on the pattern of western countries will be an effective and viable option under prevailing situation in the country. He said the government is mulling the option of imposing smart lockdown in the country to wisely provide relief to labour class, daily wagers and lower-middle strata of society.

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## Moody's expects Pakistan's GDP to grow by over 2pc in 2021

# Financial support lowers Pakistan financing risks

ISLAMABAD: Substantial financial support from International Monetary Fund (IMF), Asian Development Bank (ADB), International Development Association (IDA) and G20 creditors reduces Pakistan's financing risks, said Moody's on Thursday.

Moody's expects that Pakistan's financing needs will rise because of coronavirus-related economic effects and the government's Rs1.2 trillion stimulus package.

The stimulus provides tax concessions for households and businesses, including the export and healthcare sectors, and direct cash handouts to support socially vulnerable and low-income earners laid off because of the coronavirus outbreak. "Consequently, we expect the stimulus to widen the government deficit to 9.5%

10% of GDP in fiscal 2020 (ending June 2020) from 8.9% in fiscal 2019, despite strong revenue growth narrowing the deficit in the first half of fiscal 2020," said Moody's.

The government revenue in the first half of this year rose almost 40% from a year earlier, with tax revenue up by 18% and nontax revenue more than

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## 5G in no way responsible for corona spread: ITU

ISLAMABAD: The latest generation of fast broadband, commonly known as 5G, is in no way responsible for the spread of the COVID-19 virus, confirmed the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the UN's agency for information and communication technologies.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, 5G phone masts have reportedly been damaged or destroyed in several European countries, including Ireland, Cyprus and Belgium. The problem has been particularly acute in the UK, where dozens of towers were targeted, and engineers abused on the job, according to media reports.

5G can carry a huge amount of data much faster than previous technology, and reliably connect an extremely large number of devices, says the ITU, allowing future users to access a wide variety of services, including industrial and professional applications.

During the current pandemic, communications technology is playing an essential role in ensuring that health services, many of which are facing unprecedented demand due to the pandemic, are able to respond function efficiently: this was underlined when a phone mast supplying voice and data traffic to a hospital built in response to the pandemic, in the major British city of Birmingham, was reportedly set alight in April.

A spokesperson for ITU, Monika Geher said that the theory of a link between 5G and COVID-19 is "a hoax that has no technical basis."

"The coronavirus is not being spread by radio waves", she added. "It's a real shame, during this time when there are real concerns about the health and well-being of the general public, and the economic toll that the fight against this pandemic is taking, that any time or energy has to be put into fighting this and other false rumours."

The scale of the problem prompted the World

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## Crude price recovery helps market stay positive

KSE-100 Index sees bullish session closing higher by 387 points

KMI 30-Index improved by 1,319.08 points to finish the day at 52,570.37 levels.

Nabeel Haroon at Topline Securities said KSE 100 index remained largely in positive zone during the day to close at 32,851 level (up by 1.2%). This positivity in the market can be attributed to index heavy weight E&P sector, where the sector closed 7% higher on the back of recovery in international oil prices (WTI trading comfortably above \$15/bbl level). This recovery in oil process can be attributed to US president Donald Trump aggressive take on Iran. PPL from E&P sector posted consolidated EPS of Rs.5.2 for its 3QFY20 result announcement, which was largely in line with market expectation. Pressure was observed in banking sector on the back of SBP notice, where the Central Bank has barred banking companies from paying dividend for the next two quarters. UBL from the banking sector posted consolidated 1Q2020 EPS of Rs.3.98 along with a DPS of Rs.2.5, this result announcement was better than the street estimate due to higher than expected Net Interest Income booked the

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## Sindh Tajir Ittehad set to open businesses in Sindh, come what may

KARACHI: Sindh Tajir Ittehad on Thursday hinted at the possibility of a protest campaign against the provincial government.

Members of the union said that they would give themselves up for voluntary arrests if a mechanism to open businesses was not put into action.

Members of the Tajir Ittehad also claimed that Sindh government did not care for its traders and daily wage earners and has left them to God's mercy alone. The members also threatened the government saying that the time for dialogue was now over and markets all over the province would now be opened, come what may.

Provincial Minister for Education and Labour, Saeed Ghani said that the government's priority was the safety of the

people and if a strict lockdown and further suspension of businesses was required to achieve that then the government would go for it.

President All City Tajir Ittehad was taken under arrest by local police over allegations of defying coronavirus lockdown restrictions.

The police took President All City Tajir Ittehad Hamid Poonawala into custody along with four others.

The traders had forcibly opened shops disregarding government orders, the police therefore took action and 'Iron Market' area of the metropolis was completely shut down.

All City Tajir Ittehad members have claimed that the police roughed them up and forced them to shut down shops. - NNI

## Industrialist seeks revised bills minus ISPA charges

KARACHI: President SITE Association of Industry, Suleman Chawla has demanded Ministry of Power to restrain K-Electric from collecting ISPA charges from the industrial consumers and immediately issue revised bills minus ISPA charges with one week extended, last date for payment for the current K-Electric bills is 30th April 2020, says a Press release.

Giving details Chawla stated that K-Electric is charging Industrial Support Package Adjustment (ISPA) amount for the period July 2019 to December 2019. He added that industries have sold their products based on then applicable rates of electricity and collection of this amount is unjustified as this is past and closed transaction.

"It is worth to be noted that at this crucial time, industries are unable to pay their labors, factories are close, and many units are afraid of bankruptcy which will result in huge unemployment", he pointed out.

## Last date for renewal of membership May 31: KCCI

KARACHI: Referring to a notification issued by Directorate General of Trade Organizations (DGTO), the spokesman of Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI) has informed that the last date for renewal of KCCI's membership has been extended from April 30, 2020 to May 31, 2020 due to the outbreak of coronavirus pandemic, says a Press release.

KCCI has requested all its members to get their membership renewed before May 31, 2020 to avoid any inconvenience.

Members can get their membership renewed by visiting KCCI's membership department which remains partially open with limited number of staff and office timings for membership renewal only whereas the Karachi Chamber has also provided the facility to submit renewal fee online to KCCI's Account # 6-11-12-20311-714-206195 from any branch of Habib Metropolitan Bank (HMB) while a scanned copy of payment receipt along with proof of Income Tax Return and Sales Tax Return (If Applicable) for the preceding year, which are mandatory, must be emailed at info@kcci.com.pk or membership@kcci.com.pk.

## IBA Acting ED's father passes away

KARACHI: Institute of Business Administration mourns the death of the father of Dr. Sayeed Ghani, the Institute's Acting Executive Director and Associate Dean, Faculty of Computer Science. His father passed away Wednesday, says a Press release.

They prayed for the departed soul to rest in eternal peace and give the bereaved family courage to bear this irreparable loss with fortitude.



KARACHI: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Syed Ali Haider Zaidi chairs a briefing during his visit to Port Qasim Authority, here Thursday. - PID photo

## Businesses are not more vital than lives: Ghani

KARACHI: "Businesses are never more important than the lives and health of people."

This was stated by Sindh Education Minister Saeed Ghani while speaking to a private television channel Thursday.

The minister was addressing the reservations of traders who want market operations to resume.

Ghani said markets will be reopened once the Sindh government gets the green light from the federal government, which will take three to four more days.

For this decision, Ghani cited Sindh's decision of imposing a province-wide lockdown on its own. He was of the view that the province might be autonomous enough to take various decisions, but once it does, certain entities

don't like it.

Hence, as Ghani put it, the chief minister has decided to get the Centre and Prime Minister Imran Khan's approval before making any move related to prevention of the coronavirus.

Since the lockdown was imposed on March 23, different trade bodies have called on Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah and several of his ministers to reopen markets.

If they want to open markets on alternative days, we can manage that too, the traders say.

Sindh Tajir Ittehad Chairman Jameel Paracha also appeared on the show and complained that the Sindh government and Centre were throwing the decision in each other's court instead of pro-

viding businessmen relief.

Paracha was frustrated with the Sindh government's decision. The Centre says that provinces are free to do what they want to, but the CM is acting in other direction, said Paracha.

He said authorities concerned could seal their shops if they find any shopkeeper violating the SOPs that prevent COVID-19 from spreading, but at least allow them to earn their livelihoods.

When asked how could the traders guarantee doing social distancing when they were holding press conferences without practicing it, Paracha said media briefings and market work is different.

He assured, however, that traders will take care of it at future press conferences. - NNI

## PIA to operate more relief flights to bring stranded

KARACHI: Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) on Thursday announced that it will operate more relief flights to bring back stranded Pakistani passengers from Australia and South Korea.

According to PIA spokesperson, the special flights will operate from Islamabad airport on Thursday and Friday to bring back the Pakistanis stuck in Australia and South Korea.

A PIA special flight will leave for Seoul from Islamabad Thursday and will bring back 300 nationals, while another PIA flight PK-8692 will leave for Melbourne on Friday, he added.

The special flight will bring 300 passengers from Australia and will land at Islamabad airport on Friday.

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) also decided to operate 53 special flights from next week to facilitate Pakistanis stranded abroad.

According to details, the flights would be operated for Algeria, Khartoum, Nairobi, Oman, Zurich, Amsterdam, Turkey and Jeddah to bring the Pakistani citizens.

The PIA has asked the passengers who were unable to travel to Pakistan from these destinations due to suspension of flight operations amid COVID-19 pan-

dem to contact the airline's call centre and provide their local numbers for coordination.

The numbers would be used to inform the passengers regarding booking procedures, flight suspension and others details pertaining to changes made in the flight operations.

Meanwhile, the national flag carrier has also announced to lower its fares after the CEO Air Marshal Arshad Malik took notice of the higher fares charged from overseas Pakistanis returning to the country.

"Tickets with updated fares will now be available on the e-ticketing system," said the PIA spokesman. - TLTP

## Four more Larkana localities sealed to stop virus spread

LARKANA: After sharp increase in the local transmission of coronavirus cases in Larkana, four more localities of the city have been completely sealed by the local administration.

The areas of Ali Goharabad, Samiabad, Samtia Road and Kafa Sirai have been completely sealed after the number of coronavirus cases detection.

Streets and the roads coming to the areas have been sealed by placing tents, while heavy contingents of the police have been deployed in the sealed areas to ensure complete lockdown.

It may be noted that three localities of the city Darri, Nawar

Mohallah and Bakrani are already completely sealed.

Nobody is allowed to visit the sealed areas, as the number of cases has jumped to 21 as compared to 14 yesterday.

Earlier, the Karachi's deputy commissioner had ordered the closure of 11 areas of the metropolis where new cases of coronavirus patients had been identified as Sindh's infected tally continues to surge.

Sindh Information and Local Government Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah had said not the complete UCs but only the affected localities in the 11 UCs of District East would be under a complete lockdown.

According to the minister, a major issue would emerge in case an entire UC was sealed. He had said the East deputy commissioner had been asked by the Sindh government to take the corrective measures.

Only those streets would be sealed where people affected from coronavirus were present, Shah clarified. He said sealing the entire UCs would create serious problems.

4590 patients have been tested positive for the epidemic in Punjab, 3373 in Sindh, 1453 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 552 in Balochistan, 290 in Gilgit-Baltistan, 204 in Islamabad and 51 in Azad Kashmir. - NNI

## Bail pleas of traders arrested for violation of lockdown rejected

KARACHI: A local court on Thursday rejected a request to set free a number of traders, including a trade body leader, apprehended for flouting regulations during coronavirus lockdown.

The court sent President All City Tajir Ittehad Hamid Poonawala and other traders to jail on a 14-day judicial remand. It rejected bail applications moved by their lawyers seeking their release on bail.

Karachi police had taken them into custody on the charge of breaching lockdown regulations the other day. Muhammad Ahsan, Muhammad Khalil, Javed Abdul Shakoor, Malik Aqeel and Faisal Hassan are among the accused.

Earlier on Wednesday, the traders forcibly opened shops disregarding government orders, the police, therefore, took action and 'Iron Market' area of the metropolis was completely shut down.

All City Tajir Ittehad members claimed that the police roughed them up and forced them to shut down shops.

Karachi traders summoned an emergency meeting earlier in the day after their deadline to the Sindh government to resume businesses in the metropolis expired Wednesday. The Sindh government had asked the traders to wait till Tuesday before they finalise the SOPs needed to resume businesses.

Sindh Tajir Ittehad on Thursday hinted at the possibility of a protest campaign against the provincial government. The member of the union said that they would give themselves up for voluntary arrests if a mechanism to open businesses is not put into action.

Members of the Tajir Ittehad also claimed that Sindh government does not care for its traders and daily wage earners and has left them to God's mercy alone.

The members also threatened the government saying that the time for dialogue is now over and markets all over the province would now be opened, come what may. - TLTP

## 86 more factories allowed operations in Sindh

KARACHI: The Sindh government has granted permission to 86 more industries to resume their operations after submission of undertaking to fully follow the SOPs designed by the government in the wake of coronavirus outbreak.

In a notification issued by the Sindh home department, 86 factories were allowed to resume their operation to complete their pending orders.

The units would be bound to follow

the SOPs amid coronavirus outbreak, the notification reads.

It may be noted that the Sindh government has allowed 151 industrial units to resume their operations in the province earlier.

Last week, the provincial authorities had sealed three factory units in Karachi for violating standard operating procedures (SOPs) issued by the Sindh government to contain the spread of COVID-19. - TLTP

## Industries to be opened gradually: Chief Secretary Sindh

KARACHI: Chief Secretary Sindh Mumtaz Ali Shah said that Sindh Govt is cognizant about the economic impact of closure of factories and is committed to allow the industries to function gradually. However, industrialists have to give an undertaking that all prescribed SOPs would be complied in letter and spirit as the government is seriously determined to control COVID-19. He was talking in meeting with Majid Aziz, President Employers Federation of Pakistan, Khalid Junejo, Director, and Fasihul Karim Siddiqi, Secretary General in his office, says a Press release.

Responding to the demand of EFP that the workers' wages

and salaries should be financed from the Workers Welfare Fund and SSSI reserves, the Chief Secretary, who was assisted by Additional Chief Secretary Home, Usman Chachar and Secretary Labour, Abdul Rasheed Solangi, understood the proposal and advised the Labor Secretary to discuss with Labor Minister Saeed Ghani to immediately hold a meeting of the Boards of WWF and SSSI and to finalize modalities to either give interest-free loans or at least 50% subsidy from these funds.

Mumtaz Ali Shah in his response to the suggestion that utility bills from SSGC and KE and contributions to



KARACHI: Mumtaz Ali Shah, Chief Secretary Sindh met a delegation of Employers Federation of Pakistan (EFP) comprising Majid Aziz, President, Khalid Junejo, Director, Fasihul Karim Siddiqi, Secretary General. Usman Chachar, Additional Chief Secretary Home & Abdul Rasheed Solangi, Secretary Labour are also seen in the meeting.

SESSI and EOBI be suspended for one year, assured the delegation that the Federal Govt would be contacted to facilitate the industries because it is a genuine demand when industries are facing a financial crunch.

"The limit of 55 years is only for workers and not for management personnel. He categorically disagreed with the demand that the Undertaking condition that employers have to sign should be withdrawn", Chief Secretary also informed.

Mr. Shah also agreed that SMEs must be fully supported to maintain their sustainability and save them from financial disaster. He said that the government has taken relevant

steps in this regard.

He further said that the Govt understands the need to also allow downstream industries of export-based enterprises to function otherwise the export-based industries would not be able to run without continuous supply of accessories and material produced by the downstream industries.

Chief Secretary Sindh requested the employers to assist the government during this crisis and hoped that private sector would refrain from litigation in the larger national interest. He also assured that his office would henceforth regularly consult with EFP and appreciated the positive role of EFP during this crisis.

# Amin directs USF to expedite fiber optics cable laying work

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Syed Amin-ul-Haq Thursday directed Universal Service Fund (USF) to expedite work on projects of laying fiber optics cable.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Universal Service Fund (USF) Haaris Mahmood Chaudhry during a meeting also briefed the minister about the working and projects of the USF being carried out various parts of the country, said a press release issued here.

The CEO apprised the minister that the USF had awarded contracts of eight projects in the current financial year so far for the provision of hi-speed broadband services in unserved areas of the country and the contract of two more projects would be awarded in the end of current financial year.

He said that in next financial year, contracts of 15 projects would be awarded for provision of mobile broadband and hi-speed internet in unserved areas.

Haq lauded the performance of Universal Service Fund and emphasized the need of maintaining transparency and merit while awarding contracts for providing broadband services. He also directed CEO USF to expedite the work on the projects of laying fiber optics cable.

Meanwhile, MD Telecom Foundation (TF) Zooma Mohiuddin also called on the minister and briefed him about the working and projects of the TF.

Managing Director National Telecommunication Corporation (NTC) Brig (Retd) Vigar Rashid Khan also met with the federal minister for IT and telecommunication. - TLTP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Sheikh Rashid Ahmed chairs a high level meeting regarding Rawalpindi Nullah Lai Expressway, here at Ministry of Railway, Thursday. - PID photo

## India speeded up atrocities in IoK amidst virus: Masood

ISLAMABAD: President Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) Sardar Masood Khan has said that India has intensified atrocities in Indian Occupied Kashmir (IoK) amidst coronavirus challenge.

He made the remarks during his visit to National Disaster Management Authority here on Thursday where he met with NDMA Chairman Lieutenant General Muhammad Afzal.

The AJK president pointed out that Kashmiri youth are being killed by the Indian occupation forces in detention centers.

Sardar Masood Khan appreciated the highly effective role being played by National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in the fight against coronavirus. He was also appreciative of the provision of personal protective equipment to the doctors and medical staff of Azad Kashmir.

Lieutenant General Muhammad Afzal said that the testing capacity for coronavirus is consistently being increased. - TLTP

## Hamza's judicial remand extended till May 7

LAHORE: An accountability court on Friday extended the judicial remand of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) leader Hamza Shehbaz Sharif till May 7 in assets beyond means case.

Justice Jawad-ul-Hassan presided over proceedings and awarded the accused an extension of 14 days in his judicial remand.

Leader of the opposition in Punjab assembly was not presented in the court due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

The court has ordered authorities to present Hamza Shehbaz Sharif before the court in the next hearing slated for May 4.

Justice Jawad-ul-Hassan also ordered the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to file a reference against Sharif, sooner rather than later.

According to the NAB, the PML-N leader is accused of accumulating assets through unfair means and was involved in money laundering through his servants.

It must be noted that the NAB had arrested PML-N leader in the assets beyond income case on June 11, 2019, after LHC had turned down his applications for extension in interim bail.

On Feb 25, the Lahore High Court (LHC) rejected the bail plea of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Hamza Shehbaz in assets beyond means case. - NNI

## PTV to live telecast Taraviah prayers in Ramazan: Firdous

# Violators of SOPs during lockdown to be dealt with

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan said on Thursday that strict action would be taken against the violators of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) during lockdown.

The government has been considering constituting committees to ensure the complete implementation of SOPs in religious activities during the month of Ramadan. Religious scholars, community leaders and political leaders would be a part of these committees, she said.

"Strict lockdown in the whole country can create economic issues for the middle class and low-income people, so the government would cordon off the areas where corona cases would emerge," she further added.

After the 18th amendment the provincial governments are free to take measures for the welfare of public; however, the federal government would support the provincial governments by providing guidelines, she mentioned.

Political opponents should stop playing politics in this situation and should focus on serving the masses, she remarked. "We respect the doctors

and paramedical staff as they were fighting against the fatal disease", she said adding the government is focused on the safety of the masses.

Meanwhile, Dr Awan said in a tweet that on the directives of the Prime Minister, Pakistan Television (PTV) has arrangements for live telecast of Taraviah prayers during the holy month of Ramadan.

She said as always, the blessings of the month of Ramadan would reach every home. She said in this time of epidemic, people would stay in their homes and participate in live telecast of Taraviah prayers. - TLTP

# SECP committed to growth of capital markets: Aamir

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) Aamir Khan has expressed resolve to strongly respond to the impact of COVID-19 challenge and convert it into opportunity for the growth of capital markets.

He expressed these views during a meeting with the Board of Directors (BoD) of Central Depository Company of Pakistan (CDCP).

The SECP is actively engaging the market stakeholders to mainly assess the situation arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the capital markets.

The CDC Board updated the SECP chairman on the latest developments, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, reforms that CDC has been undertaking, and status of different projects while identifying areas for future development.

It was noted that despite the challenges created in the wake of COVID-19, the CDC has been able to ensure smooth and un-interrupted operations, including the shifting of its majority workforce on "work from home" basis which demonstrates the robustness of business continuity arrangements.

The chairman SECP appreciated the measures being taken by CDC in development of the capital markets and ensured SECP's full support to CDC while also identifying areas which require more focus and dedication of resources. He also ensured SECP's resolve to strongly respond to the impact of COVID-19 challenge and convert it into opportunity for the growth of capital markets.

Earlier in the day, the Commissioner (SM) also chaired meeting of the Capital Market Advisory Committee, which has representation from SROs, market

experts, banking industry, mutual funds and insurance sector.

The committee reviewed the recent reforms and noted that due to timely response by SECP in addressing practical difficulties and effective and resilient business continuity arrangement of SROs, the stock market continued to operate successfully despite the threats posed due to COVID-19 pandemic and resultant scenario in the country.

It was also noted that the widening of circuit breakers and market halts implemented by SECP in February played a key role in ensuring efficient price discovery and significant trading volumes in the market which is also appreciated by foreign investors.

The committee also discussed various issues facing the industry and several major areas were identified for development and growth of capital markets. - TLTP

# NAB Executive Board approves six inquiries

ISLAMABAD: A meeting of National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Executive Board Meeting (EBM), chaired by Chairman NAB Justice (Retd) Javed Iqbal, has approved six inquiries on Thursday.

Deputy Chairman, Prosecutor General Accountability, Director General Operations and other senior officers attended the meeting.

It is years long set policy of the

bureau that the details of the EBM-NAB meeting is shared with the people, which did not tend to hurt anyone. All the inquiries and investigations are initiated on the basis of alleged allegations which are not final. The decision to proceed

ahead with the cases is taken after listening to the both sides of the picture.

The EBM has authorized conducting

six inquiries against various personalities including Aalia Amir wife of Aamir Khurshid, Additional Secretary Service and General Administration, Sindh, Ishaq Lashari, Ismael Lashari, former Sub Inspector Police and others. Two inquiries were ordered against the officers and officials of Port Qasim Authority, Manzoor Shah, former Chief Engineer Highways.

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# ANF seizes 1.689 metric tons drugs worth \$1.28 billion in 11 operations

RAWALPINDI: The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan seized 1.689 metric tons narcotics valuing US \$ 1.128 billion internationally.

The ANF also arrested 10 culprits and impounded 5 vehicles while conducting 11 counter-narcotics strikes, a press statement said Thursday.

The seized drugs comprised of 1120 Kg Morphine, 315.800 Kg Opium, 251.900 Kg Hashish and 2 Kg Heroin.

As per press statement, in an intelligence based operation, ANF Quetta raided at abandon house located at Nilan Rodh, Tehsil Mashgail, District Kharan and recovered 300 Kg Opium

from the Toyota Hilux Double Cabin parked in the said house.

In another operation, ANF Quetta recovered 1120 Kg Morphine from a Dry Nullah located at Koh-e-Rodini, Girdi Jungle, District Chaghi. As per initial information the recovered drugs were placed for handing over to some other narcotics gang.

An another operation, ANF Lahore raided near Hajvari Town, Hurbanspura, Lahore and recovered 500 Gram Hashish from personal possession of the arrested accused namely Muhammad Osama resident of Lahore.

On a tip-off, ANF Peshawar in collaboration with FC KP (Khyber Rifles) intercepted a Toyota Corolla car near Bigyari Check Post and recovered 4.800 Kg Opium from the said vehicle. An accused namely Israt Khan resident of Khyber was arrested.

In another operation, ANF Peshawar in collaboration with FC KP, 161 Wing, Mahsud Scouts intercepted a FX car near Nala Check Post and recovered 2 Kg Hashish from the said vehicle. Resultantly an accused namely Hazrat Noor resident of Khyber was arrested on the spot.

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ISLAMABAD: President AJ&K Sardar Masood Khan called on Federal Minister for National Food Security & Research Syed Fakhar Imam, here Thursday. Federal Secretary for National Food Security & Research Omar Hamid Khan is also seen in the picture. - PID photo

## ICCI stands with govt in public welfare initiatives

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) Muhammad Ahmed Waheed Thursday said that business community is standing with the government in public welfare initiatives and ICCI would try to adopt one Panagah (shelter home) in Islamabad.

He suggested that monthly accounts statements of Panagahs should be developed and a database of these Panagahs should also be maintained. He said that ICCI in collaboration with local industry would try to provide jobs to skilled and other poor people living in Panagahs. He further said that ICCI in collaboration with its members is working to provide free ration to 2500 families affected by COVID-19 and added that it would also cooperate with government in this noble cause.

Earlier, MNA Sajida Zulfiqar along with Naseemur Rehman, Prime Minister's Focal Person for government's Panagah Program, and Salman Aftab, Chairman PTI Standing Committee on Accountability & Discipline,

visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry and gave a detailed briefing to the business community on Panagah Program.

Speaking at the occasion, Sajida Zulfiqar said that the government wants to set up more Panagahs in the country for down-trodden people of society on public-private partnership basis to run these shelter homes on sustainable basis. She said that 40 percent population of the country is below poverty line and Prime Minister Imran Khan is determined to uplift their living standard as improving the lives of poor people was very close to his heart.

Speaking at the occasion, Naseemur Rehman said that 27 Panagahs are currently operating in the country and government has planned to set up 100 more Panagahs in the country by the end of this year to provide shelter to poor people. He said that a Panagah in each district was planned to be established to provide food and stay facility to poor people. - TLTP

## Govt allows export of textile masks: Razak

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to Prime Minister on Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood has said that the federal government has allowed export of textile masks.

In a series of tweets on Thursday, Dawood said that the export of masks will not apply to surgical and N95 masks.

"Pleased to announce the approval of the export of textile masks. Attached is a copy of the clarification sent by the Ministry of Health to the FBR. Please note that this DOESN'T apply to surgical and N95 masks", he said in one of the tweets.

He asked the exporters in another tweet to contact Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) or Ministry of Commerce in case of any inconvenience.

Abdul Razak Dawood said that the West is slowly opening up and there are trickles

of orders coming in. "These orders are in different segments to where we were prior to the coronavirus", he added.

Urging the exporters to rise to take full advantage of the situation, the advisor tweeted, "I'm appealing to our textile industry to take full advantage of these new opportunities to enter new segments and new geography. The government will support you completely."

It must be noted that the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) last week allowed the export of hand sanitizers and "textile masks".

On January 31, a ban was imposed on the export of face masks and hand gloves as "a first precautionary measure" and to ensure availability of "sufficient basic first aid material" due to the coronavirus pandemic. - TLTP



ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety Dr. Sania Nishtar addressing a Press conference regarding Ehsaas Emergency Programme, here Thursday. Dr. Shahbaz Gill is also seen in the picture. - PID photo

# Greenhouse gases don't respect national boundaries: Guterres

ISLAMABAD: In his message for International Mother Earth Day, UN Secretary-General António Guterres has acknowledged that all eyes are on the COVID-19 pandemic, which he flagged as "an unprecedented wake-up call."

Recognizing the "immediate and dreadful" impact of the coronavirus, the UN chief urged everyone to "work together to save lives, ease suffering and lessen the shattering economic and social consequence". At the same time, he observed that climate disruption is approaching "a point of no return" and a "deep emergency" that long pre-dates the pandemic.

"Greenhouse gases, just like viruses, do not respect national boundaries," stated the top UN official. "We must act decisively to protect our planet from both the coronavirus and the existential threat of climate disruption."

Emphasizing the need to turn the recovery into "a real opportunity to do things right for the

future", he proposed climate-related actions to shape the recovery.

While spending huge amounts of money to bring economies back, Guterres asserted, "We must deliver new jobs and businesses through a clean, green transition".

And where taxpayers' money

is used to rescue businesses, he maintained that it needs to be tied to achieving green jobs and sustainable growth.

He also underscored that to make societies more resilient, "fiscal firepower must drive a shift from the grey to green economy".

The UN chief maintained that

fossil fuel subsidies must end, polluters must pay for their contamination and public funds should be invested in sustainable sectors along with environment and climate projects.

Moreover, climate risks and opportunities must be incorporated into financial systems,

public policy making and infrastructure.

Finally, he stressed the "we need to work together as an international community".

"On this Earth Day, please join me in demanding a healthy and resilient future for people and planet alike", he concluded. - TLTP

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## Oil drop below zero for first time

The price on the futures contract for West Texas crude that is due to lose validity Tuesday pushed down into negative territory. The justification with the pandemic bringing the economy to a deadlock, there is so much unused oil dripping around that American energy companies have run out of room to store it. Even if there is no warehouse to put the oil, no one desire a crude contract that is about to come due. From the start of the year, oil prices have drowned after the consequences of the coronavirus and a breakdown in the original OPEC and agreement. The U.S. oil market has become with industrial and economic activity crushing to a stop. Governments around the globe are extending shutdowns owing to the quick spread of the coronavirus. An unusual output deal by OPEC and associated members a week ago to control supply is proving very little in the front of about 33 percent crush in global demand. There is indication of feebleness everywhere. Just before Monday's down, buyers in Texas were offering as merely as \$2 a barrel last week for some oil streams. Bankers in Asia are largely unwilling to give commodity traders the credit to survive as lenders grow ever more dreadful about the threat of a catastrophic nonpayment. In

New York, West Texas Intermediate for May delivery declined as low as negative \$40.32 a barrel. The price collapse is resounding across the oil industry. Crude explorers closed down about 13 percent of the American drilling fleet last week. Whereas production decreases in the country are increasing pace. Oil prices getting smashed due to absence of demand. West Texas Intermediate crude oil confused Monday, lower 28 percent or \$5.15 to \$13.12. Brent crude, the international standard was depressed \$1.01 to \$27.06. Economic conditions are suffering as countries try to decline the spread of coronavirus by closing down all operation. Past week, China showed its gross domestic product diminished for the first time since people started keeping records in 1992. Slower economic growth means there will be less demand for oil and its byproducts, which include gasoline and jet fuel. In a split up report out Thursday, OPEC stated global demand will down by 6.9 million barrels per day surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. In a separate report out Wednesday, the U.S. Energy Information Administration stated 9.3 million barrels per day of demand has been erased. Oil prices smashed below US\$0 for first time amid devastating

oversupply. Oil prices ended New York trading in the adverse on Apr 20, 2020, for the first time ever, as a supply excess compelled traders to pay others to take the commodity. The crisis was deteriorated by a price war between Saudi Arabia and Russia. Riyadh and Moscow constructed a line under the dispute and, along with other top producers, reached a deal to decline output by somewhat 10 million barrels a day earlier this month. However prices have fell as analysts stated the cuts are not sufficient and as storage facilities reach size.

With storage facilities filling up rapidly, there are apprehensions that there will be nowhere to store it. Dealing with the problem President Donald Trump reaffirmed his promise to fill up the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. The turmoil in the oil market comes as the petroleum industry rises as one of the backbone of the global economy made most vulnerable by government shutdowns to restrain the spread of coronavirus. The commodity has been further feeble by a battle for market share that raged much of the jump between Saudi Arabia and Russia. The European benchmark contract, London Brent North Sea oil for June delivery, finished down 9 per cent at US\$25.57 a barrel. Most of European stock mar-

kets finished the day higher as governments start to consider how and when to mitigate the lockdowns that have hit the global economy. Italy, Spain, France and Britain reported reduction in daily death tolls and diminishing infection rates, while Germany began permitting some shops to reopen and Norway resumed nurseries.

Oil prices rise after landmark crash to below zero. US crude prices rose above \$1.10 after a supply abundant sent prices escalating downward, but worries about demand stay. Oil prices recovered some losses from a record crash on Tuesday, with United States crude turning optimistic after trading below nil for the first time ever. But this will not take place before May, and the size of the reduction is not large enough to revive market balance. OPEC and its allies will most possibly consider larger output reductions and the US will be more tempted to consider reducing supply. There is at risk, because not only investors are in the financial markets for crude oil, but also the millions of people engaged in the oil and gas industry. In the meantime US crude inventories were anticipated to rise by approximately 16.1 million barrels in the week to April 17 after recording the highest one-week established in history.

## China: Lessons from experience



Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani

COVID-19 has not only posed a huge threat to the World community & specially first of all Chinese people's safety and health, but also a major challenge to the global public health security. There had been no newly confirmed indigenous cases in China outside Wuhan for several days. At the same time, imported confirmed cases of COVID-19 in China surpassed the newly confirmed indigenous cases as the daily reports said. In the next stage, China's main task is to rein in the imported cases and defend themselves from cross-border infection.

China will update the response measures to prevent the resurgence of the epidemic. As new COVID-19 cases skyrocketed in other countries, China's experience in fighting the epidemic will offer lessons and clues for the rest of the world to contain COVID-19. In this regard, China's experience can be distilled in 10 words/phrases: speed, strength, transparency, responsibility, coordination, overall planning, technology, balance, cooperation, and timely correction.

Speed: Rapid response: COVID-19 is a very special virus. China's experience in combating COVID-19 shows that it is possible to control the epidemic if effective measures are taken as early as possible. Such measures made the "Four Earliest" possible, as they encouraged patients to seek treatment as early as possible like on January 23, Guangdong province initiated a first-level public health emergency response, with a suspension of public places, allowed every single patient to receive timely treatment in hospitals.

Strength: Intensified measures. Infection prevention, control and patient treatment require both speed and strength. China showed super strong determination to block the transmission of COVID-19. The Chinese governments at all levels and all communities worked hard to fully implement joint prevention and control meas-

ures. China adopted region-specific and multi-level targeted approaches based on an accurate understanding of China's Response Measures based on virus and precise evaluation of risks.

Transparency. As the COVID-19 pandemic threatens every person and every country, real-time information sharing is a must for both China and the international community. Transparent information disclosure can never be overemphasized during the war against COVID-19. Committed openness and transparency, the Chinese government has released trustworthy epidemic-related information in a timely manner without reservation. China has shared its experience in epidemic containment and patient treatment, and responded openly to concerns at home and abroad. As a result, China has avoided public panic and put down rumors and misinformation, and succeeding in communicating the progress in epidemic prevention and control.

Responsibility. China demonstrated strong courage and a sense of responsibility to fight COVID-19 as an enemy. If we compare epidemic response to a "war", it is considered to be the people's war. WHO encouraged every person, especially every leader at any level and from any sector to stand in solidarity and seize every single opportunity to prevent, contain, curb, delay and reduce the impact of the virus. It is a collective commitment to the humankind. UN Secretary-General António Guterres delivered a speech saying "we must declare war on this virus" and calling on governments to cooperate in order to "ensure targeted support for the people and communities most affected by the disease." As the first country to move, in fact, China had already mobilized its governments at all levels, all its communities and people to kick out the virus. No one was alone in the combat. Every single member of the society from governments to citizens and from medical system to other industries were actively involved in this fight by playing different roles in preventing infection and treating the disease. All Chinese people were united in the battle.

Coordination. China demonstrated a strong ability to organize a full-scale battle against the COVID-19 virus. Epidemic response requires the systematic and complex efforts of the health sector and the entire society.

Efficient and flexible coordination played an indispensable role in combating the virus and made quick and effective response possible. Efficient coordination enhanced preparedness, enabling the medical system to handle the outbreak in a timely, effective and composed manner. Good coordination means the number of cases were well controlled to avoid shortage of medical resources for severe cases whereas infection rate and number were reduced through effective quarantine. This helped a lot to block off the source of infection through monitoring and screening.

Overall Planning. The epidemic outbreak tested and proved the power of the Chinese tradition of overall planning. An outbreak on this scale would surely rock the economy and society. History shows that a severe epidemic or disaster could lead to economic downturn and social disorder which in turn worsens the situation. No country would like to be trapped in such a vicious circle, and China is no exception.

Science and technology. China has taken a scientific approach towards COVID-19 outbreak. Science and technology remained the most powerful weapons against the epidemic as quoted by President Xi. Without this approach the fight could have been blind. On the other hand, a warrior well equipped with scientific tools and techniques has a much higher chance of victory. After the outbreak, Chinese researchers identified the whole genome sequence of COVID-19 in less than a week and isolated the strain of the coronavirus, and the findings were immediately made public to the world.

Balance. Technology can't do everything automatically to fight this pandemic so non-technological measures must play their roles. There is no specific drug or vaccine available as yet but China has effectively contained the epidemic by embracing non-technological means. Some people in other countries considered China's epidemic response measures as "over-reactive" whereas some even questioned China's political system.

Cooperation. Virus knows no borders. Victory over COVID-19 is of utmost significance to the safety and health of not only the Chinese people but also people around the world. While fighting a hard battle against the virus, China received countless condolences and

support as well as large amount of supplies from many countries. Since the very beginning of the outbreak, China has highly valued international cooperation on public health and provided timely information updates to WHO and the global community and shared the genome sequence of the coronavirus in an open and transparent manner.

Timely remedy. China has a huge population of 1.4 billion, so it is essential to stay alert and prepared for any major epidemic and public health emergency. As President Xi Jinping said, the epidemic was a big test for China's governance system and capacity. He called on the people to learn from past mistakes and continue to improve. Considering that WHO has declared COVID-19 as a pandemic, China had met with difficulties and showed shortcomings in the earlier days of the outbreak, while other countries were not well prepared either even after China made some progress in fighting the virus. In short, every country has weaknesses and problems in their epidemic response. China's problems include formalism and bureaucracy which hindered some epidemic prevention and control efforts. China was serious about these weaknesses and has taken quick remedial adjustments and corrective measures and has planned to take even more remedial actions after the outbreak is over.

The world has seen that the government and the people of China didn't panicked or taken delayed decisions instead they shown their resilience in this course of pandemic. Chinese noble struggle against the deadly novel corona virus was appreciated and acknowledged by the world which clearly reflects that how they act in this hour of distress. They gave weight age to their medical experts' opinions and proved that apart from being self sufficient in resources, nations can also be recognized by their self determination, upright consciousness, display of unwavering discipline and collective sense of responsibility.

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## Doing business or political point scoring in the name of COVID-19



Dr. Shahid Abbas

When there is no other preventive and therapeutic treatment for corona virus then why not to try Hydroxychloroquine and Super-Immuno IV-Drip with high Vitamin C which are scientifically proven to be effective. You must trust evidence based medicine and prevent huge loss of life than to wait for

randomized trials which may take more than a year. I have failed to understand that coronavirus infection is spreading in the country and still no one is serious and everyone is trying to do business and political point scoring on the cost of lives of the people. The disease is expected to spread rapidly in the country and God forbid there can be huge loss of life if we are not serious.

Pakistan Allergy Asthma and Immunology Society has developed the protocol with cheap medicine and immunoblasters which can be preventive and treatment. This protocol is being followed with similar medicines in UK and in different countries. I am receiving several requests daily for this protocol which is registered Patent protocol in USA. I was informed similar medicines are being used by Queen Elizabeth Hospital Edgbaston Birmingham. In fact one of their consultants was having corona virus infection and was treated by a doctor who got our protocol from me. Pakistan Allergy Asthma will be publishing easy to read and follow guidelines for prevention and treatment to be used by general public, clinics hospitals and ICU Units for serous patients. The COVID-19 pandemic has gripped the entire

world to a standstill. While there are unprecedented number of hospitalizations and mortality rates, scientists are yet to firmly develop, or have consensus on, the prevention and treatment medicines or vaccines for the treatment. COVID-19 vaccine may take up to a year to come to the market. Even after its introduction to the market, it is still unknown how long will global distribution take.

Evidence Based Medicine or Randomized Clinical Trials: I am sorry to say that we are still not serious and cannot appreciate the gravity of the situation. We must reevaluate our lockdown policies and re-evaluate evidence-based medicine. Most of the scientists are advocating Randomized Trials before starting simple effective medicines which can save life. They dismiss the Observational studies providing evidence of the effectiveness of medicines such as Hydroxychloroquine without rigorous reviews, recommending suspected studies just because these happen to be randomized trials. We must understand that time is passing fast and we are losing precious lives and we cannot wait for months for those luxury randomized trials. We need to act fast and use the data we have.

First, we must understand what Evidence Based medicine is. Let me explain; Evidence-based medicine is the integration of individual clinical expertise with the best available research evidence from systematic research and the patient's values and expectations. The efficient approach to finding the best evidence is to identify a systematic review or evidence-based clinical practice guidelines by integrating each study into the body of existing data, combining the best available science, reaching defensible conclusions and prescribing the medicines which can be effective.

To explain a little further - by leveraging the evidence-based medicine approach we can know the Pre

randomized Trial Probability of Success, which means that we can evaluate the likelihood of the drug efficacy before we get the data from the randomized scientific trials.

For the pandemic at hand, I would like to advocate Hydroxychloroquine, which is endorsed by half of the world while the others oppose its use, as prophylactic and therapeutic treatment for Covid-19 infections.

Hydroxychloroquine has a long history of use as antimalarial, antibiotic and antiviral. It has proven to be effective in vitro to inhibit corona virus by changing the structure of the receptors and preventing the attachment of the virus to the receptors on the target cells. In scientific terms, it inhibits viral entry and replication via intracellular alkalinization, by interfering w/ maturation of viral particles through impaired glycosylation which are the indirect immunomodulatory effects.

Even if we consider that the chances to be effective are 50:50, we must consider its use since there is no other alternative. To advocate its effectiveness let's look at the following studies:

1. Efficacy of hydroxychloroquine in patients with COVID-19: results of a randomized clinical trial by Zhaowei Chen et al (BMJ Yale): 62 hospitalized pts (mean age, 45 yo) w/ mild dz (SAO2 >93%) due to confirmed COVID-19 randomized to HCQ 200 mg bid x5 days or placebo, plus standard of care; HCQ-treated pts had shorter duration of cough (2.0 days vs 3.1 days) and fever (2.2 days vs 3.2 days), and higher rates of pneumonia improvement (80.6% vs 54.8%); 4 pts in placebo arm progressed to severe dz; 2 pts in HCQ arm developed mild ADRs

2. Hydroxychloroquine and azithromycin as a treatment of COVID-19: results of an open label non-randomized clinical trial Philippe Gautret P: Thirty-six patients in France with COVID-19 were examined.

Twenty were administered hydroxychloroquine and 16 were controls.

Concerns about taking Hydroxychloroquine: Some people consider hydroxychloroquine to be dangerous since it causes prolongation of QT Interval, but they should consider that most of the medicines being used daily have similar effects. These medicines include the likes of Azithromycin, Erythromycin, Clarithromycin, Levofloxacin, Moxifloxacin, Fluconazole, Ketoconazole, Metronidazole (Flagyl), antipsychotic and anti-depressants. So, Chloroquine and these medicines do not prolong the QT Interval of every person, and adrenaline used for the treatment of anaphylaxis. American College of Cardiology has given guidelines for the heart diseases patients susceptible to developing prolongation of qt interval and Ventricular Arrhythmias. Anyone can calculate the Risk Score and if he thinks it can cause Ventricular Arrhythmias and according to Risk Factor Score he can avoid it.

Recommendations of American College of Cardiology (ACC) for use of Hydroxychloroquine and Azithromycin in cardiac patients. Ventricular Arrhythmia Risk Due to Hydroxychloroquine-Azithromycin Treatment for COVID-19. You have to calculate your Risk Score for drug-Associated QTc prolongation by consulting the table and adding the Risk factor Points: If you have less than 6 Risk factor Points you have Low Risk to develop prolongation of QT interval and Ventricular fibrillation; If you have 7-10 points you have Moderate Risk; If you have more than 11 points, then you have high risk

The guidelines are on webpage www.allergypaais.org and www.allergycenter.info and can be downloaded or you can have by email.

The writer is President of Pakistan Allergy Asthma & Immunology. He can be reached at: allergycenter@hotmail.com

# The Quarantine: Damnation or benison



Engr. Salman  
Shaheen Charoo

When the entire world was busy in their zest and the technologies were crossing the horizons, landing on the moon and discovering other planets, No one noticed that their own planet is getting affected by a virus and is breathing its last. The modern concepts and the influence of technical era completely made the world callous at some point and all they were focusing on what they call 'A Career' and suddenly the priority got replaced from 'Career' to 'Life' because of a small change in the RNA of a person which is dangerous enough to get him killed and thus humans shun all their plans and activities and now all they care is

about their life which has become a necessity.

Humans were having no time for the recovery whether that was the recovery of relationships or split family or lost friends or forgotten acquaintances or 'The Dying Earth'. The clock of life tickled so fast for the human creatures that they hardly used to spend a quality time without the havoc. On the other hand, the earth suffered by the hands of humans up to an extent that it started rapidly losing its treasure like the fresh water and the green gold but the selfish humans hardly paid any heed to its cries until the earth declared a worldwide break for its recovery.

The plans were about to get executed when the world enunciated an immediate lockdown. The cities that never slept are now sleeping after decades, the streets which were always pre occupied are now empty, the stars which were hardly able to twinkle are now shining as if they have been blessed with a new light and the birds have started singing with joy again as if they have been praised by the unseen.

The people are now spending a quality time with their families which was disturbed and destroyed by an aura of fast life. I hardly remember a day when I woke up peacefully from my sleep as the noise of people, busy streets and sound of machineries always paid a vital role in the destruction of peace but now people are witnessing some miracles which they hardly thought of. Now the people are waking up by hearing the chirping of sparrows, the caw of crows, and the coo of pigeons and are breathing a free air.

The humans are wondering what actually happened and how did the plague commonly known as 'COVID-19' spread? The virus indeed is troubling humans up to an extent that majority of the people have nothing to eat at their places, some are losing their jobs, some are stuck at an unexpected place and so on but is it not something which we brought to us by our own deeds and actions?

In the noble Qur'an, it is mentioned clearly 'And do not mischievous on the earth after it has been set in order: that will be best for you, if you have faith' - Surah Al A'raf,

The Heights, verse 85. If the humans would have respected the Mother Nature and preserved its treasure and suppressed their greed than today we would have been living a free life and not a quarantined one.

This quarantine period proved damnation for the humans without any second thought but on the other hand, it has been proved itself a benison for the nature and the earth. When the human activities stop, nature takes over miraculously and let us now learn a lesson from this incident as for sure this too shall pass but the lessons learnt from it should be implemented in the upcoming time so that the earth won't introduce more deadly plagues and its eternal suffering will come to an end.

*The writer is also an author and an engineer. He writes majorly on the nature and social issues and shares his writing in the form of blogs and poetries. He can be reached at: Salmancharoo5@gmail.com*

## Speedy internet needed amid corona

Asma Kazmi

It is an undeniable fact that the outbreak of the deadliest COVID-19 pandemic has left world in a tremendous shock and badly affected all infected countries. The scale of this lethal pandemic has been observed more severe and intensified in European countries where thousands of people died and thousands of others fall in confirmed cases gradually. This lethal COVID-19 pandemic has not merely affected global economy and socio-political activities of the world only but also ruthlessly hit the global education system of the world.

After a short space of time, advanced states of the world successfully launched comprehensive method for online classes for students as they can resume their academic responsibilities effectively. Pakistan is also one of the reputable states in the world which is also miserably affected. Owing to outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, all educational institutions have been shut down. In this

regard, The Higher Education Commission has appeared and successfully introduced some productive software and approaching number of universities to start online classes.

According to some resources there are many universities that have successfully started online teaching - like LUMS - to facilitate students those are enrolled in various universities of Pakistan. Unfortunately, the picture of my beloved land District Kurrum (Parachinar) is still disappointed. Let me introduce very short background of this area to all my readers; Initially, this area was considered Kurrum Agency as a part of FATA that remained many years under the supervision of Federal government. Recently, its status has been changed and it is known as District Kurrum and now it directly falls under the supervision of provincial administration of Pakistan.

Owing to outbreak of pandemic and lack of stable enough internet connection have left the people of my area in a complete confusion. Apart from suffering socio-economic activities of these people, our education sys-

tem is also ruthlessly affected. Currently, amidst COVID-19 pandemic two perspectives have been widely observed in Pakistan. Firstly, good internet connection system has become a lifeline for every social, political and economic activity because most of us are following given direction of the government to be remain safe to stay at home, adopt self-isolation, self-quarantine and more importantly practicing social distance against COVID-19 pandemic. Secondly, almost all provinces of Pakistan are blessed with fundamental facilities where good internet connection system comes first.

As far as District Kurrum (Parachinar) is concerned all academic institutions are not merely deprived of good internet connectivity, but our students also who are enrolled in various schools. I teach as a teacher at the most reputable school named Bloom's International School Parachinar. Being a responsible teacher, I can truly understand the academic difficulties of our students because we are deprived of online classes due to lack of good internet connection facility. Moreover, there are

many students of this locality who successfully secured their admissions in various universities of Pakistan.

It is also observed that these students are also confronting the dilemma of good internet connectivity to resume their online learning. In this regard, Supreme Court of Pakistan has recently given directions to Ministry of Information Technology to resolve the prolonged issue of good internet connectivity 4G of various areas of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa where Parachinar comes first. It is my humble request to the authorities of district Kurrum and provincial administration to look of this issue seriously and resolve the dilemma of good internet connectivity which will save the quality of education of our students of this area.

*The writer is former student of Quaid-i-Azam University and now teaches at Bloom's International School Parachinar. She can be reached at: asma.shah022@gmail.com*

## Is pen too dangerous?



Aamir Reyaz Shiekh  
& Shabnam Ahad

The root of journalism comes from people's right to have an opinion. Today people depend on the press on being informed of what's happening. The media plays a vital role in a democratic society. ... Therefore its primary purpose is to make sure all citizens are aware of their rights.

How powerful is the media influence? Influence of mass media...Media influence is the actual force exerted by a media message, resulting in either a change or reinforcement in audience or individual beliefs.

Journalism has not yet created crime in the world. But there is a country in the world where there is a state that has been demanding its rights for the last 70 years, declared there journalism is a crime. But why have they been declared a crime, if they say the truth, they help people bring them back their rights and putting questions of people in front of the world. Where there is a lot of oppression and people are being persecuted. If journalists do not make the authorities aware about the sufferings of its citizens then who will make them aware about their problems.

Kashmir being a conflict zone where free and fair journalism is under attack who so dissents will be charged with doctrine laws in order to silence the pen of his ink.

The laws which are for hardened criminals where

used against them to silence their voice.

But there have been such situations in Kashmir that journalism has been declared a crime. After all, how long will the people of Kashmir tolerate this oppression? Wherever the truth is spoken, people are put on fire and then send them to jails. The people of Kashmir had only one hope that was journalism, but unfortunately the country who suppresses the Kashmir by armed powers also declared it a crime. My question is from the United Nations Organization that helps people get the right.

If journalism is a crime in Kashmir, why not journalism in the rest of world will be declared a crime? When the whole world is under lockdown and countries are trying to get out of these diseases in order to save the lives of their citizens India is busy in targeting Muslims in mainland India and journalists in Kashmir. After all, how long will we bear all this, we are being persecuted by our rights. A few days ago, one of our sister journalists and one of our brother journalist who were detained I do not understand what was wrong with them if they spoke of the truth.

Journalists in Kashmir are witnessing an increased level of harassment by the police through censorship, interrogation and, in some cases, imprisonment. The illegal detention of the Masarat Zehra, Gowher Gellani Kamran, Asif Sultan and Gowher Wani is the most recent such incidences.

A simple change in the winds of politics can become the trigger that eventually takes aim. As Kashmir has suffered one conflict after the other, beyond the state's citizens, journalists have paid the price too, facing death threats and even suffering attacks on their family members as a result of efforts to silence them.

Due to frequent internet blockage IOK journalists, face difficulty in broadcasting their stories and full filling their duties. In recent lockdown and revoke of article 370, life in IOK became stagnant and miserable. The lockdown of the internet has ceased communication. The Indian authorities had snapped the broadband internet connection of the Kashmir. Hence, Internet blockage is the main hindrance in full filling the profession of journalism in IOK.

On the other hand, under the draconian Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), journalists are captured, detained, tortured and molested by the Indian army for portraying the true events to the world.

Where is your power? Where is your ego? Where are your armies? You have always acted like you are unbeatable...where are you now? Hidden at home and scared from an unseen creature. Now try to think again there is someone powerful than you...someone who can beat you with an unseen soldier...please try to remember next time if you get another chance...remember that our Lord sees you while you are killing the innocent kids and women in the muslim countries. He sees you while you are ordering the weak Muslim rulers to kill the scientists and put religious people in jails to keep the society empty from all positive people. Now you are tasting fears from death for few weeks only. The kids of Kashmir, Iran, Syria, Palestine, Afghanistan, Uighur tastes this kind of fears from last 90 years.

There were people dying everywhere getting massacred in every town and village, there were people being picked up and thrown into dark jails in unknown parts, there were dungeons in the city where hundreds of young men were kept in heavy chains and from where

many never emerged alive, there were thousands who had disappeared leaving behind women with photographs and perennial waiting...there were multitudes of dead bodies on the roads, in hospital beds, in fresh martyrs' graveyards and scattered casually on the snow of mindless borders. This is the life of Kashmiri people continuous lockdown for the last 80 years.

We believe that the common people of India are totally ignorant of the Kashmir issue and about the atrocities being unleashed upon Kashmiris by those whom they call saviors.

They only know what their biased media tell them. The day they know the reality of and atrocities being unleashed upon the unarmed innocent Kashmiris they would come out on roads to ask for our rights. Last year the chief of Indian army in a statement advised young Kashmiris to laptops, pen and books instead of stones. We follow his advice and doing the same by writing this piece.

Kashmiri people are fighting the war for freedom. India cannot stop this freedom movement through atrocities, as Kashmir dispute is a problem of humanity, human rights, and freedom. It is time to end the western policy of malign neglect.

One of the great writers who quote one of the great quotes about Kashmir "Everyone wants Kashmir but no one wants Kashmiris."

Aren't I a miracle? A seed that survived the slaughter & slaughters to come. I think I believe in freedom I just don't know where to look. I think I believe in home, I just don't know where to look."

*The main writer is from Jammu & Kashmir. He can be reached at: aamirphytiy306@gmail.com*

## Coronavirus and poverty

Farzana Wani

If the COVID-19 threat continues and in view of possible months-long lockdown, these people will surely die due to hunger.

This small virus has brought whole world to a halt. The condition is deteriorating day by day. This deadly virus has not even left the developed countries of the world. This virus does not discriminate between rich and poor. The outbreak of pandemic disease from china has engulfed the globe. However experts are still looking for a cure and I hope Ins Sha Allah we will find it soon until we have to suffer that has been caused by lockdown and social distancing. This virus has made us understood the importance of life.

The robust healthcare infrastructure in Europe is overwhelmed. Now other countries want to pre-empt such a situation from developing. So the government

decided on a two pronged strategy: lock down the entire nation to break the chain and quickly ramp up its health care facilities to face the pandemic.

The impact of the coronavirus is having a profound and serious impact on the global economy. The global economy has entered a recession as a consequence of the coronavirus pandemic. There are lockdowns across the world, hitting economies hard.

Everyone is supporting the lockdown to break the chain. No doubt, we have to do that to protect ourselves. Everyone is suffering in one way or another and facing difficulties, however there is a sect in our society who may not die due to this virus but of hunger. These are the people that include street vendors, labourers, factory workers, conductors who used to go out on a daily basis and work for their livelihood. They are not government employees, industrialists, entrepreneurs or working in MNCs...they just

have to go out daily out of their homes to just fulfill their basic needs. People belonging to higher classes or middle classes are struggling so what about these people?

These people will surely die due to hunger. Government needs to look on this matter, the government needs to deduct some amount from salaries as fundraising for the poor. We as responsible citizens can also make community groups can collect funds and identify such families who are in need.

We may die prior to COVID-19 due to depression. People may suffer anxiety disorders. Death in this time of COVID-19 is a disaster as people cannot even mourn collectively. This is not only scary but traumatizing. Lucky are those people who died before this pandemic.

However, it's important to act optimistically and therefore, read books, watch movies or do something

that you love to do. Eat right food which boosts immunity and it's more important to introspect and seek God's mercy.

The lesson to be learnt from this pandemic is that the government needs to invest more in health care sector. Creating more medical colleges is a necessity, overall improving health infrastructure.

With this I am concluding, I would like to request all the people and corporates to donate towards feeding the daily wagers of our society. This is the time they need our help and we need to step up. If anyone can't afford to donate, please help by spreading the word. Let us pray to almighty to prevent entire humanity from this deadly virus.

*The writer is persuing MCA from Kashmir University. She can be reached at: Waniifarzana6384@gmail.com*

## Religion - A trust on God



Aiman Anwar

Religion is a 'deen' or we can say religion is that we trust on God. It is a social culture, value which we have belief on God or faith on God. There are so many religions like Muslims, Sikh, Christians and Hindu etc.

Our religion is Islam. What is Islam, anyone or anything that surrenders itself to the true will of Allah and we have only faith on Allah. Islam is not only a religion, it is considered as the complete way of life. The religion of Islam is all about the attributes

of peace, harmony, unity, forgiveness, and mercy.

Muslims - persons who believe or follow the Islamic religion are known as Muslims. All Muslims believe in the oneness of Allah and know that Islam is the final religion sent down by Him so that mankind can attain guidance and piety in this world. It teaches us there is one God, and Muhammad (SAAW) is the Messenger of Allah. Muslims consider Holy Quran which is the holy book from Muhammad (SAAW). This is the Holy Book which we can learn many things about Islam. This is revealed on Shab-e-Qadr. In Islam many people divided this so many parts like Hanafi, Shia, Sunni, Al-Hadees. But I do not believe on this. I believe that there is one religion is Islam and there is one God (Allah). And there are many prophets but Muhammad (SAAW) is the last Prophet. Whatever actions, deeds and behaviour followers of

Islam depict in this temporary world, we have not to forget at the end the world will end. And everyone has to die one day. They will be accountable for in the next life or the Hereafter. Allah (SWT) is the one who made us and we shall return to him. He is the supervisor of the whole universe. Allah is the one who made the whole universe. He has no parents, no siblings and no offspring. Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAAW) is the last of the Prophets sent by Allah for the benefit of mankind. Hence he is known as the seal of the Prophets. It is a complete book of guidance. Islam is based on five pillars: (1) Testimony of faith (Kalmah Shahadah); (2) Prayer (Salat); (3) Giving (Zakat); (3) Fasting (Sawm); and (5) Pilgrimage (Hajj).

In Islam Marriage completes half of our Imaan (faith). In Islam the marriage is the Nikah which two

accepts two people or acceptance of both men as well as women. People believe that there is two caste of marriage upper caste and Lower caste and caste system but in Islam all are equal and same. Then why people are against this. Why a rich boy can't marry with poor girl? Why Shia Girl can't marry with a Sunni boy? If Shia boy can marry with Sunni girl then why Sunni girl marry with Shia boy. Why people are more against it? Why people can't understand in Islam there is not Shia, Sunni. Some people fight with each other, they don't know what actually Islam means? Everyone's forgiveness will be accepted without shirk. Everyone is equal. There is only one Islam and one God and Muhammad (SAAW) is the last Messenger.

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Market		KSE 100 Index				All Share Islamic Index			
Volume:	204,362,252	Current	32,850.83	Change	15,804.65	Current	15,804.65	Change	15,804.65
Value:	9,405,658,056	High	32,938.29	Low	15,841.67	High	15,841.67	Low	15,841.67
Trades:	92,735	Low	32,448.53	Change	15,499.79	Low	15,499.79	Change	15,499.79
		Change	386.60		304.68				

Symbols		All Share Index				KSE 30 Index				KMI 30 Index			
Advanced	160	Current	23,214.98	Change	14,424.47	Current	52,570.37	Change	52,570.37	Current	52,570.37	Change	52,570.37
Declined	151	High	23,250.66	Low	14,483.24	High	52,737.56	Low	52,737.56	High	52,737.56	Low	52,737.56
Unchanged	22	Low	22,886.89	Change	14,204.91	Low	51,251.29	Change	51,251.29	Low	51,251.29	Change	51,251.29
Total	333	Change	325.09		196.43		1,319.08		1,319.08				

UPTO 100 VOLUME						
Symbols	Open	High	Low	Close	Chg	Vol
NESTLE	5,629.30	5,680.00	5,658.00	5,680.00	50.70	60
UPPL	7,030.00	7,557.25	7,557.25	7,557.25	537.25	60

OTHER SECTORS						
Symbols	Open	High	Low	Close	Change	Vol
Pakistan Cables	99.61	103.99	94	103.81	4.2	1200
TRG Pak Ltd	16.89	17.25	16.6	17.09	0.2	265800
Munze Brewery	556	570	556	560.11	4.11	9100
Sheeran Inter	244.72	261.07	227	248.73	4.01	3300
Khalber Tobacco	190.02	199.95	189	199.48	9.46	200
Pak Tobacco	1624	1742.99	1615	1688	64	300
Shah In Hospo	225	226.77	225	221.32	4.45	20800
Media Times Ltd	1.41	1.78	1.06	1.4	-0.01	578090
PIA(C.A)	3.97	4.08	3.95	4.03	0.06	197590
Pee (Pak) Ltd	1.93	2.1	1.9	2.07	0.14	411000
Nisrul Tech	42.04	43.65	40.73	41.43	-0.61	285500

MIS LEVERAGE POSITION							
Symbol	Total Volume	Total Value	MIS Rate	Symbol	Total Volume	Total Value	MIS Rate
ASTL	709,500	19,878,100	10.00	KEL	40,878,166	1,788,000	10.00
ASTL	140,500	2,554,182	10.00	KCHC	302,500	30,160,200	10.00
ATRI	262,200	16,988,689	10.00	LOFICHEM	2,539,500	18,888,000	10.00
ATRI	159,500	3,677,644	11.00	LUCK	177,096,361	1,000,000	10.00
BAEL	3,145,900	86,517,584	11.00	MCB	22,870	2,930,883	11.00
BAEL	31,084	1,470,916	11.00	MEBL	859,000	52,021,997	11.00
BOF	64,094	3,677,644	11.00	MICF	7,422,000	162,755,895	11.00
CHCC	910,000	65,788,884	11.00	MIGHAL	119,500	4,509,597	11.00
CHCC	2,212,500	141,995,480	11.00	MIL	11,944	11,944	11.00
DOL	199,000	4,527,337	11.00	NBP	3,222,500	75,233,373	11.00
EFFERT	101,175	4,697,244	10.00	NCL	229,000	5,348,689	10.00
EFOR	33,594,655	33,877,644	10.00	NEKOL	3,908,787	3,908,787	10.00
EPLC	751,000	16,573,528	10.00	NML	230,700	12,646,256	11.00
FFCL	1,126,500	15,973,230	10.00	NPL	140,200	11,285,091	11.00
FFCL	134,000	6,484,668	11.00	OKCC	60,089,847	1,000,000	10.00
FFBL	2,242,500	29,422,402	11.00	PAEL	2,378,000	43,752,783	11.00
FHBL	2,118,000	2,303,388	11.00	PCF	18,269,514	1,000,000	10.00
FFM	533,150	39,031,367	11.00	PPCC	6,560,500	10,061,536	10.00
FFM	1,450,000	11,212,574	11.00	PRC	129,500	151,290	10.00
GATM	1,351,500	30,524,006	11.00	PSO	756,204	3,900,238	11.00
GATM	106,500	2,103,627	11.00	PPL	1,911,183	11,826,964	11.00
GENL	5,200	3,602,646	11.00	PSO	211,118	2,111,118	11.00
GENL	1,900	28,554	11.00	PSO	756,204	3,900,238	11.00
GTVR	19,000	624,881	11.00	SEAR	208,700	29,343,760	11.00
HSBC	574,000	67,424,000	11.00	SEAR	69,199,445	10,000,000	10.00
HBL	2,603,392	231,441,167	10.00	SEAR	1,279,000	14,174,533	11.00
HUBC	370,800	21,742,922	11.00	TRG	9,655,000	113,771,976	11.00
HUBC	452,400	32,226,738	11.00	TRG	60,199,445	10,000,000	10.00
ISI	671,000	22,737,082	11.00	UNTY	6,418,000	55,765,132	11.00
KAPCO	446,500	7,032,618	10.00	UNTY	6,418,000	55,765,132	11.00
KEL	29,500,000	71,855,419	11.00	TOTAL	125,367,864	2,309,023,777	10.62

OIL AND GAS								
Company	Paid up Cap(mn)	PE	Open	High	Low	Close	Chg	Volume
Arak Petroleum	955	446	28074	28388	28000	28376	504	6760
Arak Refinery	1066	166	1076	8245	7600	8039	486	10400
Arak Refinery	228	997	2675	2535	2332	2332	-193	3130
BPCL Pakistan	529	578	5299	578	529	529	0	900
Marat Gas Company	1334	374	30665	30665	30350	30665	6413	4500
Natural Gas	8039	369	8867	9232	9236	9236	648	52807
ONGC Gas Development	4309	369	8867	9232	9236	9236	648	52807
PSO	4925	230	14327	14300	14310	14329	652	248443
Pak Oilfields	2095	117	2095	2132	2095	2132	37	8000
Pak Petroleum	2710	310	7132	8113	7940	8105	575	82037
Pak Refinery Limited	1248	107	1248	1248	1248	1248	0	900
Sel Pakistan	1070	-	12549	12500	12500	12500	471	14800

CHEMICALS								
Company	Paid up Cap(mn)	PE	Open	High	Low	Close	Chg	Volume
Agrihyd Limited	3024	-	308	324	303	305	001	25500
Empay Ltd	529	529	2559	2535	2520	2520	161	8000
Hid Ltd	348	949	13340	13300	13390	13400	600	6000
Ashraf Pak	341	1146	3000	31700	40800	51222	1222	3000
Dawood Textiles	12743	4319	12743	12743	12743	12743	339	10000
Dawood Textiles	1509	-	2712	2700	2601	2647	465	30000
Dynex Pak	94	844	7400	7400	7400	7400	000	3000
Engo Corporation Ltd	5782	3088	18600	20400	20400	20400	648	10000
Engo Refinery	9489	2746	2797	2830	2734	2765	432	10000
Fafan Refinery	10000	727	2225	2345	2275	2325	050	5000
Fafan Refinery	10000	727	2225	2345	2275	2325	050	5000
Fafan Refinery	934	310	3050	3050	3050	3050	1622	021
Ganand Ltd	384	8947	8050	8160	8000	8050	450	1300
Ganand Ltd	1013	412	4109	4109	4109	4109	0	2900
IC Pakistan	924	673	65388	6500	64200	65491	407	13600
Indus Chemical	847	318	2025	2010	2050	2050	403	10000
Low Chemical	989	1542	1718	1939	1939	1939	0	9000
Nara Ind Chemical	553	12245	5600	6000	5400	6000	351	1500
Sian Petroleum	551	-	1742	1736	1710	1719	023	13000
United Industries	353	107	2644	2644	2644	2644	156	9000
Engo Ref. Ltd	13353	10668	9335	6150	5930	6081	146	441789

FORESTRY AND PAPER								
Company	Paid up Cap(mn)	PE	Open	High	Low	Close	Chg	Volume
Century Paper	1470	1261	5707	5800	5632	5700	407	5000
Security Paper	593	1347	12849	12800	12751	12826	423	600

CONSTRUCTION AND MATERIALS								
Company	Paid up Cap(mn)	PE	Open	High	Low	Close	Chg	Volume
Arak Steel	776	405	8008	8100	8121	8100	458	3160
Dard Steel	3157	-	315	315	303	305	40	37300
Indus Steel	4350	18273	3035	5138	4851	4803	-142	104000
Intermetal Ind	1319	2177	9966	10105	9500	9538	408	78200
Meto Steel	30	-	966	875	875	875	491	50
Siddique Steel	2263	-	771	789	770	775	004	18000
Asha Steel Mill	7655	-	916	930	903	915	001	20000

GENERAL INDUSTRIALS								
Company	Paid up Cap(mn)	PE	Open	High	Low	Close	Chg	Volume
Arak Cement	1374	612	13046	13450	12200	13180	134	27200
Bakht Cement	2616	-	336	405	390	398	005	22000
Bega Cement	255	5338	7000	7000	7000	7000	200	2000
Bega Cement	5963	1474	13028	12900	12110	12514	514	7200
Bega Cement	3108	14	3000	3000	3000	3000	-10	2900
Chas Cement	1943	605	9591	9730	8835	8841	450	40100
Dada Cement	108	2611	2410	2642	2530	2530	-120	1500
Dow Cement	4841	625	799	812	770	781	018	23000
FC Cement	438	617	8730	8700	8200	8316	467	100000
FC Cement	1578	1122	1697	1724	1675	1684	403	12000
FC Cement	502	201	2529	2718	2517	2709	180	28000
FC Cement	170	-	1031	1051	970	984	447	8000
Fraser Cement	379	3048	3000	3000	3000	3000	409	3000
Ghaffar Cement	403	1034	1780	1850	1755	1788	008	27000
Jacobs Cement	3174	230	2250	2350	2350	2350	100	1500
Kohat Cement	2009	691	14752	15120	13655	13880	-002	100000
Lucky Cement	3234	8134	49231	47000	42004	48164	-1117	10000
Majid Cement	10983	449	2799	2850	2650	2		

**No #1 Continued from page 1**

Pakistan's economy as it has brought to a standstill the economic activity and reduced Pakistani exports. The foreign minister said that Pakistan has increased its testing capacity for coronavirus. He said, "We had earlier testing capacity of three thousand but it will reach twenty to thirty thousand by May." - TLTP

**No #2 Continued from page 1**

demonize Muslims who face increased exclusion as well as threat of mob violence. The spokesperson said the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has also voiced deep concerns over rising anti-Muslim sentiments and Islamophobia within political and media circles as well as the social media platforms where Indian Muslim minority is being blamed for the spread of the coronavirus. Referring to the Indian atrocities in Occupied Kashmir, the spokesperson reminded that it is an internationally disputed territory and killing of people, use of brute force and blocking communication links constitutes violation of international laws. She said Pakistan is concerned over the increasing persecution of journalists in the occupied territory on baseless and concocted charges.

The spokesperson said that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its missions abroad continue to provide relief and assistance to the overseas Pakistani community in the wake of coronavirus. Food, ration and financial assistance are being provided to those in need.

She said repatriation of Pakistanis is continuing as per the comprehensive and phased plan developed with the coordination of relevant stakeholders. She said 5,079 Pakistanis have been brought back from different countries in the third phase of this plan. In addition, 1,254 Pakistani nationals have been brought back through land borders in the last few days including 41 from India through Wagha border. - TLTP

**No #3 Continued from page 1**

by 193 countries worldwide that forms the basis of 'ICT Regulatory Tracker'. The Tracker, developed by ITU, is an evidence-based tool that helps decision-makers and regulators monitor the rapid evolution of ICT regulation.

The report further reveals that Pakistan has scored full marks (20/20) for regulatory authority, 19/22 for regulatory mandate, 22/30 for regulatory regime and 27/28 for competition framework. Pakistan's journey towards collaborative regulation has also been highlighted as a special feature in the report.

Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) is continuously striving to achieve new international benchmarks by showing its commitment to protect consumer interests and enhance public-private collaborations for the digital transformation & socio-economic benefit of Pakistan. - TLTP

**No #4 Continued from page 1**

Ruet-e-Hilal Committee held to witness crescent to ascertain the commencement of the month of Ramadan-ul-Mubarak 1441 Hijri.

He said that no evidence was found in all parts of the country for crescent. Moreover, zonal committees also held meetings in different parts of the country to collect the crescent's evidences.

The Ruet-e-Hilal Committee chairman recommended removing carpets from the mosques and conducting disinfectant spray besides making strict cleanliness arrangements.

An official of the Ministry of Science and Technology was also included in the Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee for the first time in the country's history. The ministry had earlier predicted that Ramadan month will be commenced from April 25.

Mufti Muneeb appealed the clerics to follow the 20-point standard operating procedures (SOPs) prepared by the federal government to contain the spread of coronavirus pandemic.

He urged the administration of mosques across the country to adopt strict precautionary measures against coronavirus. The prominent cleric asked elder citizens and children to prefer offering prayers in their homes.

Meanwhile, countries across the globe have started announcing the first day of the Ramadan 2020.

Those which announced the first day of Ramadan include; Egypt, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines. - NNI

**No #5 Continued from page 1**

unity and coordinated efforts of all stakeholders.

He said the PTI government announced massive historic relief package for poor families with an objective to reduce miseries of the masses amid a lockdown imposed to contain the spread of coronavirus.

Termining the Ehsaas Cash Emergency Programme as transparent and merit-based, the Prime Minister said that cash assistance worth Rs12,000 is being distributed among 5,437 million beneficiaries across the country.

He said the government has allocated Rs144 billion for poor segments of society under Ehsaas Cash Emergency Programme.

Imran Khan said entire world is struggling against coronavirus which has emerged as the major global issue. He said the lockdown adversely affected the world economy, resulting in growing poverty across the globe, especially in developing countries like Pakistan.

He said the government prepared a comprehensive roadmap for holy month of Ramadan by taking all religious scholars and Ulema on board. He, however, warned that the government will come into action, if any one resorts to violate the 20-point standard operating procedures to prevent spread of the virus during Ramadan.

Earlier, Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar called on Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday and discussed the coronavirus situation in the province.

They also discussed the measures being taken to contain the pandemic, operations of the reopened industries and the precautions being taken there.

They also discussed different steps to control hoarding and for public facilitation during the Holy month of Ramadan. Meanwhile, Members of the National Assembly Raja Riaz Ahmed and Faizullah Kamoka also called on the Prime Minister and discussed the matters of mutual interest.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Imran Khan has said that no compromise would be made on security, integrity and sovereignty of the country.

The Prime Minister stated this during his visit to Headquarters of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) on Thursday.

The Prime Minister was accompanied by Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa, federal ministers and advisors.

The Prime Minister appreciated the sacrifices and contributions of Inter-Services Intelligence being a superior state intelligence agency.

The Prime Minister was received by Director General ISI Lieutenant General Faiz Hamid.

A comprehensive briefing covering entire spectrum of internal and external challenges was given to the Prime Minister including impact of COVID-19 a couple of days ago. - TLTP, NNI

**No #6 Continued from page 1**

doubling in part because of higher profits from the central bank. Nevertheless, tax revenue is likely to contract in the second half compared with the year-ago period, although higher-than-budgeted central bank profits, lower-than-budgeted interest payments and fiscal savings from lower oil prices will mitigate the effect of the contraction on the

deficit. "We expect that general government debt will rise to around 87% of GDP by June 2020 from around 83% in June 2019 and gradually decline in subsequent years. In fiscal 2021, we expect the deficit to narrow given the government's commitment to fiscal consolidation under its IMF programme, but remain wide at 8%-8.5% of GDP," said Moody's.

The multilateral development banks' (MDBs) latest financial assistance augments their current funding to Pakistan and Moody's expects the extra funding to cover the government's additional external financing needs in fiscal 2020.

The G20's recent offer of debt relief to low-income countries will also support Pakistan by deferring principal and interest payments on bilateral debt due between May and December. The deferrals may be extended and involve other creditors. Debt relief by official-sector creditors would provide additional but very modest spending capacity for Pakistan, whose interest payments on foreign-currency debt are around 0.6% of GDP for fiscal 2021, with about one-third owed to bilateral creditors and another one-third owed to MDBs.

"We expect Pakistan's real GDP to contract modestly by 0.1%-0.5% in fiscal 2020 (the country's first annual recession, according to our records), with the economy gradually recovering to grow by more than 2% in fiscal 2021. Although the country's export sector accounts for just 9% of GDP and tourism accounts for just 2% of GDP, the nationwide lockdown from 1 April to month-end (with a possible extension) to curb the coronavirus will significantly curtail domestic consumption and pose downside risks to economic growth, which threatens a wider fiscal deficit and a higher government debt burden than Moody's currently projects. Despite the month-long lockdown, the government allowed labour-intensive industries such as agriculture, construction and textiles to resume operations on 15 April, which should aid a gradual recovery in domestic consumption.

The central bank's cumulative 425-basis-point policy rate cuts since the start of 2020 and facilities to ease the liquidity crunch for businesses further buffer the economic shock related to coronavirus. - TLTP

**No #7 Continued from page 1**

Health Organization (WHO), the UN agency which is leading the response to the pandemic, to add the 5G conspiracy to its COVID-19 myth busters article, which notes that "viruses cannot travel on radio waves/mobile networks. COVID-19 is spreading in many countries that do not have 5G mobile networks." - TLTP

**No #8 Continued from page 1**

banking company. Profit taking was observed in the cement sector, where DGKC and KOHC declared their financial result for 3QFY20 in which they posted consolidated LPS of Rs.2.45 and Rs1.90 respectively. Traded volume and value for the day stood at 204mn shares and Rs.9.4bn. MLCF was today's volume leader with ~26mn shares.

The advance to decline ratio in the broader market remained in favor of bulls. Out of 333 scrips, 160 scrips advanced, 151 declined while the value of 22 scrips remained intact.

The ready market volume decreased by 14.80 per cent to 204.362 million shares as compared to 239.873 million shares traded on last trading day.

Maple Leaf Cement Factory topped the list of actives, closed followed by Rs 1.27 at Rs 26.72 on 25.62 million shares followed by Hascol Petroleum Limited increased by Rs 1.04 at Rs 14.93 on 22.54 million shares and Fauji Cement Company Limited dipped by Rs 0.03 at Rs 16.94 on 12.23 million shares.

Other actives were Dera Ghazi Khan Cement which descended by Rs 4.67 at Rs 83.03 on 10.45 million shares and Fauji Foods Limited improved by Rs 0.39 at Rs 11.44 on 8.87 million shares.

According to Research Desk at Aba Ali Habib local bourse extended the Bull Run by adding 386.60 points before closing at 32,850.83 level. The investors cherished the news that Pakistan received USD1.39 bn from IMF under Rapid Financing Instrument coupled with recovery in international oil prices which drove investor sentiments. Moreover, Trump's assurance of economic support to Pakistan and SBP's statement that it is ready to take further steps to stabilize the economy which boosted investors' sentiments. Furthermore, yields on all short-term government paper declined up to 250bps across the board, which also provided the support to the bourse. Going forward, ongoing result season and concern over rising novel virus cases would continue to dictate market direction. During the session, the index found its support and resistance at 32,448.53 pts and 32,938.29 pts, respectively. Sector wise, heavy index cement sector remained in limelight throughout the trading session and fetched volume of 71.91mn share. Oil and Gas Marketing Companies (OMC) is the 2nd most traded sector which recorded total volume of 28.80mn shares followed by Commercial Banks which fetched volume of 15.19 million shares.

The overall market capitalization enhanced by Rs 86.730 billion to Rs 6.1925 trillion against Rs 6.1058 trillion observed on last trading day.

Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited and Mari Petroleum Limited remained the top gainer by Rs 527.25 and Rs 64.13 to close at Rs 7,557.25 and Rs 1,080.75 respectively, while Bata Pakistan Limited and Otsuka Pakistan Limited were among the major losers which lost Rs 46.75 and Rs 23.00 to close at Rs 1,402.00 and Rs 320.00 respectively.

**No #9 Continued from page 3**

Naseem Shah, chairman Sindh Abgard Board, district Mityari, officers and officials of Information Department, Sindh.

The EBM authorized closing inquiries against Dr Zahoor Ahmed, Medical In Charge, civil Hospital, Karachi and others, Muhammad Mohsin, Rahila Magis and others due to lack of evidence.

The EBM approved referring of some inquiries against officials of Model Custom Collectorate of Exports, Owners and officials of Messers Sky Clan Global Private Limited and others, officers and officials of Model Customs Collectorate Apperment Customs Department and others to Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) for appropriate action as per law.

Addressing the meeting, Chairman Javed Iqbal said that ending corruption in the country and bringing back looted money of public is NAB's top priority as faith of the bureau is corruption free policy.

He directed all DGs of NAB to utilize all available resources for taking the mega corruption cases to logical conclusion with stipulated time frame on the basis of solid evidence as per law.

National and International reputed organizations including World Economic Forum has lauded the performance of NAB, which is an honour for NAB.

NAB has directly and indirectly recovered record Rs 178 billion from corrupt elements and deposited into national exchequer during the tenure of present management of NAB with two years which is record achievement. - NNI

**No #10 Continued from page 3**

In third operation, ANF Peshawar in collaboration with FC KP, 161 Wing, Mahsud Scouts arrested two accused persons namely M Sabir Khan and Bakhat Muneer both residents of Khyber and recovered 3 Kg Hashish and 1 Kg

Hashish respectively from their personal possession.

Both were arrested near Nala Check Post. In fourth operation, ANF Peshawar in collaboration with FC KP, 143 Wing, Khyber Rifles arrested an accused person identified as Zaw Ullah resident of Khyber and recovered 2 Kg Heroin from his personal possession.

In fifth operation, ANF Peshawar raided near Toda Mala Nullah near Al Masud, District Khyber and recovered 4.8 Kg Hashish from the said place. In sixth operation, ANF Peshawar in collaboration with FC KP, 161 Wing, Mahsud Scouts arrested an accused namely Anan Khan resident of Khyber and recovered 1 Kg Hashish from his personal possession.

ANF Karachi intercepted a Mini Truck near Hub River Road Toll Plaza, Karachi and recovered 239.600 Kg Hashish from the seized vehicle. A person onboard namely Abdullah Jan resident of Ziarat was arrested during the operation.

In another operation, ANF Karachi intercepted a Toyota Corolla car near Pataro Toll Plaza, Indus Highway, Jamshoro and recovered 11 Kg Opium from the said vehicle. Two persons onboard namely Bismillah resident of Sanghar and Ghulam Mustafa friend of Kambhar Shahdad Kot were arrested on the spot.

All cases have been registered at respective ANF Police Stations under CNS Act 1997 and further investigations are underway. - NNI

**No #11 Continued from page 8**

expression of support for the US efforts to combat COVID-19. Having learned about testing of Prime Minister Imran Khan, President Trump offered to send the latest rapid testing machine for Covid-19 to the prime minister. The prime minister thanked President Trump for the gesture.

The two leaders also exchanged views on regional issues and further strengthening of Pakistan-US cooperation, a press release issued by the PM Media Office here said. Prime Minister Imran Khan conveyed sympathies and condolences on the loss of so many precious lives in the United States to the coronavirus. He also highlighted Pakistan's efforts to contain the spread of the virus. - NNI

**No #12 Continued from page 8**

and related industries could grow to 1.2 million, which is half of the region's 2.4 million aviation-related employment. Previous estimate was 0.9 million. Full-year 2020 traffic is expected to plummet by 51% compared to 2019. Previous estimate was a fall of 39%.

The GDP supported by aviation in the region could fall by \$66 billion from \$130 billion. Previous estimate was \$51 billion.

These estimates are based on a scenario of severe travel restrictions lasting for three months, with a gradual lifting of restrictions in domestic markets, followed by regional and intercontinental.

"Airlines in the Middle East continue to be battered by the impact of COVID-19. Passenger traffic has all but ground to a halt and revenue streams have evaporated. No amount of cost cutting will save airlines from a liquidity crisis. The collapse of air transport will have devastating effects on countries' economies and jobs. And in a region where aviation is a key pillar of many nations' economies the effect will be much worse. Direct financial support is essential to maintain jobs and ensure airlines can remain viable businesses," said Muhammad Al Bakri, IATA's Regional Vice President for Africa and the Middle East.

To minimize the broad damage that these losses would have across the Middle East economies, he said it is vital that governments step up their efforts to aid the industry.

The IATA is calling for a combination of direct financial support loans, loan guarantees and support for the corporate bond market tax relief.

In addition to vital financial relief, the industry will also need careful planning and coordination to ensure that airlines are ready when the pandemic is contained, said IATA.

The IATA is scoping a comprehensive approach to restarting the industry when governments and public health authorities allow. A series of virtual regional summits, bringing together governments and industry stakeholders are taking place this week. - TLTP

**No #13 Continued from page 8**

or violence based on religious, belief or ethnic identity is simply not acceptable," Shaheed said.

"To combat disinformation, it is critical that States establish effective strategies and channels of communication to provide accurate and reliable information to the public," he said.

"The firm commitment by political leadership to curb hate speech that stigmatizes people on the grounds of their religion or belief is essential in this regard," Shaheed said stressing that religious leaders can also play an important role. "Solidarity among people of all faiths and none has never been more critical in living memory."

The Special Rapporteur noted not all religious or belief communities or those living in marginalized conditions can access online information regarding COVID-19 and best practices to avoid transmission. "I urge civil society and faith-based organizations to widely communicate and assist those in vulnerable situations, regardless of their belief or ethnic background."

"States must also be non-discriminatory in assisting those in need and ensure that everyone has fair access to all public and health services," Shaheed said.

"Inclusive dialogue will ensure that all communities implement and adhere to the required public health measures voluntarily, including by analyzing how religious practices may be adapted in response to COVID-19 preventive measures, such as organizing virtual religious services," he suggested. - TLTP

**No #14 Continued from page 8**

This would represent a return to malaria mortality levels last seen 20 years ago.

According to the World malaria report 2019, sub-Saharan Africa accounted for approximately 93% of all malaria cases and 94% of deaths in 2018. More than two-thirds of deaths were among children under the age of five.

To date, the number of reported cases of COVID-19 in sub-Saharan Africa has represented only a small proportion of the global total, though cases are increasing every week. This means that countries across the region have a critical window of opportunity to minimize disruptions in malaria prevention and treatment and save lives at this stage of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Mass vector control campaigns should be accelerated, ensuring protection for both health workers and communities against COVID-19 transmission. WHO and partners commend the leaders of Benin, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, Chad and for initiating ITN campaigns during the pandemic. Other countries are adapting their net distribution strategies to ensure households receive the nets as quickly and safely as possible.

Preventive therapies for pregnant women and children must be maintained. The provision of prompt diagnostic testing and effective antimalarial medicines are also essential to prevent a mild case of malaria from progressing to severe illness and death.

The WHO and partners have developed guidance to ensure that those suffering from malaria can safely receive the care they need within the package of essential health services to be delivered in COVID-19 settings. Tailoring malaria interventions in COVID-19 response includes guidance on the prevention of infection through vector control and chemoprevention, testing, treatment of cases, clinical services, supply chain and laboratory activities. - TLTP

**No #15 Continued from page 8**

Bank's response to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic effects.

The technical teams from both sides have already outlined the initial assessment for COVID-19 related financing, the statement said adding that the Ministry of Economic Affairs would evaluate and prioritize the proposals received. The final requirement of the country would be shared with IDB to materialize financing by the IDB.

The minister for economic affairs and president IDB expressed their strong commitment to further strengthen the relations as well as IDB portfolio in Pakistan especially for the COVID-19 related emergency activities, the statement added. - TLTP

**No #16 Continued from page 8**

milestone of 110,000, while fatalities in Italy, the hardest hit country behind the United States, topped 25,000 with 187,000 infections.

Finland said it would maintain a ban on gatherings of more than 500 people through July. In Spain, which reported a slight increase for the second day running in the number of COVID-19 deaths, the government said it did not expect to lift its strict lockdown until mid-May. - TLTP

**No #17 Continued from page 8**

The meeting discussed and review issues being faced by the telecom sector.

During the meeting, which was also attended by Minister for Industries & Production Muhammad Hammad Azhar, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistan Sayed Zulfikar Abbas Bukhari, secretary IT & telecom, secretary finance and CEOs of major cellular companies, various issues being faced by the telecom and cellular companies were discussed and debated.

Secretary IT & Telecom Shoab Siddiqui told the meeting a high-level committee has already been constituted to formulate recommendations for the resolution of the issues being faced by the telecom sector and its final recommendations would be completed by 28th April 2020. - TLTP

**No #18 Continued from page 8**

database, Federal Board of Revenue statistics, more than one family member applicants etc. Over 89,000 Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) failed in the process of verification, she said.

Under the third category of Ehsaas Emergency Cash Programme, Dr Nishtar said the lists of beneficiaries are being finalized through the help of district administrations.

She said, "Our priority is to run this initiative in a transparent manner without any political interference as per directives of the Prime Minister Imran Khan, providing maximum relief to the deserving people."

She said that strict action is being taken against those retailers involved in deduction from Rs 12,000 given to the beneficiaries.

She said the efforts are also underway to overcome the hurdles being faced by the applicants through their feedback and complaints.

About the Ehsaas Ration portal, Dr Nishtar briefed that this portal has been opened to facilitate the private sector in providing food rations to the most vulnerable affected in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis.

Through the portal, the role of government will be to facilitate match-making between donors and beneficiaries (on geographic basis) and provide data of eligible beneficiaries to donors.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Shahbaz Gill said it is very unfortunate that the Sindh government is doing politics on Ehsaas programme as well as the prevailing health crisis in the country.

The present government has not displayed any picture of Prime Minister and Dr Sania on the posters of the Ehsaas or any other initiative.

Sustaining all the political pressures, Dr Sania Nishtar is doing her best to ensure the merit-based cash disbursement in the programme, he said.

He said Sindh government has also done politics on coronavirus testing kits and returned to the federal government terming those not workable.

The same kits are being used by the National Institute of Health and are giving accurate results, he said.

He also criticized the press conference of the doctors calling for lockdown and termed it as a political activity. "We cannot impose strict lockdown considering the fact it would affect our poor people the most".

This is a national and international war of humanity, he said and urged the Sindh government not to do politics on such matters. - TLTP

**No #19 Continued from page 8**

economic and fiscal measures," said ADB President Masatosugu Asakawa.

"ADB's timely support will help the government implement comprehensive measures to mitigate the devastating impact of COVID-19," said Indonesia's Minister of Finance and ADB Governor Sri Mulyani Indrawati. "We appreciate the speed of ADB's response and close engagement with the government to support the urgent needs of Indonesia."

The COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support (CARES) Program will support the government's stimulus package geared to expand existing social assistance programs, boost resources for COVID-19 prevention and control, and safeguard productive sectors and workers from the economic downturn. The funding is coming from ADB's COVID-19 pandemic response option under the countercyclical support facility, which was introduced as part of a \$20 billion package approved by ADB on 13 April to assist its developing member countries in their fight against COVID-19 through quick disbursing budget support with affordable terms and condition.

Indonesia has been severely affected by the pandemic. Critical public health measures to limit the spread of the disease have seriously disrupted economic activity, resulting in a sharp decline in forecasts for economic growth in 2020. Many Indonesians have been adversely affected by the economic downturn, especially the poor and vulnerable groups. ADB estimates that poverty could increase significantly, unless support measures can be effectively implemented. - TLTP

## Tokyo Olympic staffer tests positive for COVID-19

TOKYO: A staff member of the Tokyo Olympic organising committee has tested positive for Covid-19.

Tokyo organisers issued a statement on Wednesday saying it was a male employee in his 30s who worked at the headquarters building in a part of Tokyo known as Harumi.

Organisers said he was in quarantine at home and gave no further details.

The Tokyo Olympics were postponed last month until 2021 because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The committee employs about 3,500 people, and organisers say about 90 per cent have been working from home for the last several weeks.

Organisers said the area in which he worked would be disinfected, and people who worked nearby have been told to stay home.

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ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi addressing an event during his visit to TeleSchool Project, here at Islamabad College for Girls, F-6, Thursday. - PID photo

## TeleSchool project best way to impart education amid lockdown: Dr Alvi

ISLAMABAD: President Arif Alvi has said that online education is the best and easiest way to provide education to the students amid lockdowns.

The President made the remarks during his visit to TeleSchool Project here on Thursday. He declared as impressive and important the TeleSchool project launched to enable the students get education from homes in the current lockdown situation.

The President said the online education enables the students to review and revisit the lectures, which is not possible in the lec-

Trump reaffirms COVID-19 support to Pakistan

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump on Thursday reaffirmed US support to Pakistan in its efforts to combat COVID-19, including by providing ventilators as well as in the economic arena.

During the daily White House briefing earlier in the day, the president of the United States, Donald Trump criticized the media for not reporting on the significant manufacturing of ventilators in the scheduled coronavirus briefing.

Trump said that United States was making hundreds of thousands of ventilators and helping all countries in need of the essential medical apparatus.

Mentioning Pakistan, the American president said: "They would like to have some ventilators. We're going to give them some ventilators."

In a telephonic yesterday, Prime Minister Imran Khan and President Trump discussed the coronavirus pandemic-related challenges, their implications on the global economy and the ways to mitigate the impact.

The US president appreciated the prime minister's telephone call and

Relief critical for MidEast airlines amid virus impacts, says IATA

ISLAMABAD: The International Air Transport Association (IATA) Thursday renewed its call for government relief measures as the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis in MENA deepen.

The region's airlines, including of Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt, Morocco, Iran, Kuwait, Algeria, Qatar, Tunisia and Oman, could lose \$24 billion of passenger revenue compared to 2019. That is \$5 billion more than was expected at the beginning of the month, said IATA.

Job losses in aviation

## Corona battle to last for long

ISLAMABAD: The head of the World Health Organization (WHO) has warned against complacency as countries continue to confront COVID-19 and citizens grow weary of stay-at-home measures aimed at preventing the spread of the disease.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said that most countries are still in the very early stages of their epidemics, while some that had been affected earlier are now starting to see resurgence in cases.

"Make no mistake: we have a long way to go. This virus will be with us for a long time", he stated.

The global COVID-19 case-

## States urged to clamp down on hate, intolerance amid pandemic

ISLAMABAD: A UN expert has deplored the flare-up in some countries of religious intolerance resulting from the coronavirus, and called for ensuring that the pandemic is not "twisted" for political or economic gains.

"I am alarmed to see the upsurge in incitement to hatred, scapegoating religious or belief communities,

including Christians, Jews, and Muslims for the spread of virus," the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Ahmed Shaheed, said in a statement.

He urged authorities in the countries where minorities and ethnic groups have been blamed for the spread of the infection to clamp down on hate speech and religious

intolerance.

In India, the ruling Hindu-nationalist BJP officials have blamed the Tableeghi Jamaat for spreading the virus that led to a spree of anti-Muslim attack across the country, as also denial of health and other facilities to the victims.

"Any incitement to hatred

## Malaria deaths in sub-Saharan Africa may double: WHO

ISLAMABAD: Severe disruptions to insecticide-treated net campaigns and in access to anti-malarial medicines could lead to a doubling in the number of malaria deaths in sub-Saharan Africa this year compared to 2018, according to a new modelling analysis released by WHO and partners on Thursday, ahead of World Malaria Day (25 April).

WHO urges countries to move

fast and distribute malaria prevention and treatment tools at this stage of the COVID-19 outbreak in sub-Saharan Africa, and to do their utmost to safely maintain these essential malaria control services.

The analysis considers nine scenarios for potential disruptions in access to core malaria control tools during the pandemic in 41 countries, and the resulting increases that may be seen in cases and

deaths.

Under the worst-case scenario, in which all insecticide-treated net (ITN) campaigns are suspended and there is a 75% reduction in access to effective antimalarial medicines, the estimated tally of malaria deaths in sub-Saharan Africa in 2020 would reach 769,000, twice the number of deaths reported in the region in 2018.

## IDB offers financial support to Pakistan to fight virus

ISLAMABAD: The Islamic Development Bank (IDB) Thursday offered financial support to Pakistan amid the lockdown due to coronavirus pandemic.

President Islamic Development Bank, Dr Bandar M.H. Hajjar had a video call with Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Makhdoom Khuroo Bakhtiar to assure him of bank's support for Pakistan in the testing times under the pandemic, according to press statement issued by the Ministry of Economic Affairs.

The President IDB thanked the minister for economic affairs and

assured the bank's full support for the people and the government to mitigate the negative impacts of COVID-19.

Dr Bandar informed that the Boards of IDB Group have approved the US \$2.3 billion "Strategic Preparedness and Response Package" for the IDB member countries to mitigate and recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the short, medium, and long-term.

This would be achieved through a holistic approach aimed to accommodate priorities beyond the immediate and emergency

response. The president assured his full support for Pakistan and informed that International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) has been directed to immediately finalize US \$500 million for import of oil and LNG; and an amount of US \$150 million is being allocated to mitigate the pandemic impact.

Makhdoom Khuroo Bakhtiar appreciated the president IDB Group for his special priority for Pakistan. The minister also underlined the needs of the member countries, and applauded

Global virus death toll now 184,000

ISLAMABAD: The worldwide death toll from coronavirus pandemic has risen to 184,000 while over 2.6 million declared cases have been registered.

According to reports, in United States, death toll from the pandemic now stands at 47,600 with over 849,000 infections from the virus.

The worst-hit region Europe saw its death toll climb to another grim

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Hafeez to help resolve telecom sector issues

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue Dr Abdul Hafeez Shaikh has assured his full support and cooperation for the resolution of the issues of telecom sector.

The adviser on finance and revenue gave this assurance on Thursday while chairing a high-level meeting.

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Rs69bn disbursed among 5.75mn families: Nishtar

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation, Dr Sania Nishtar Thursday said that Rs69 billion have been disbursed among 5.75 million deserving families under the first two categories of Ehsaas Emergency Cash Programme.

Addressing a press conference along with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Dr Shahbaz Gill, Dr

ADB approves \$1.5bn for Indonesia to fight COVID-19 pandemic

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) Thursday approved \$1.5 billion in financing to support the government of Indonesia's efforts to alleviate the impact of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on public health, liveli-

Nishtar said that 80 percent payment process under the first category of this programme has been completed while payments for the second category (SMS beneficiaries) are going on speedily.

She said around 35 million applicants were rejected after scrutinizing them on the basis of different parameters like wealth profiling, poverty score

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hoods, and the economy. "COVID-19 has had a devastating health, social, and economic impact on Indonesia. I commend the government on its response to the pandemic, including strong and well-coordinated

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