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'Pakistan moving on road to development', Says PM Imran Khan

ISLAMABAD: Expressing his satisfaction over the positive economic indicators, Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday said that Pakistan is moving on the road to progress with accelerated development spending, ARY News reported.

In a tweet, PM Imran Khan said that the current account



deficit shrank by massive 73 per cent, adding that the value of rupee is stable now.

He said that rising exports and sale of cement indicate the journey of progress.

Earlier on March 2, Adviser to Prime Minister for Commerce, Industry and Investment Abdul Razzaq Dawood had said that the February 2020 had witnessed a 13.61 per cent rise in exports from the country as compared to the past years.

In a message posted on his Twitter account, the federal adviser had said that the country's exports witnessed a 3.62 increase during the current

rent fiscal year as compared to the previous years.

"The increase is commendable when compared to the export trend of our competitors. This is just the beginning, the future holds much more!" he had said while tagging his message to the prime minister Imran Khan and others on the Twitter feed.



PM Imran made the announcement on his official Twitter handle on Sunday.

He visited the proposed site of Blue Area opposite to F-9 Park in the federal capital.

According to the PTI official Twitter handle, CDA Chairman Amir Ali Ahmed and NAPHDA chairman briefed Premier Imran in detail about the mega project. The prime minister apprised that the money generated from the commercial auction, to be held next month, will be utilised primarily for rehabilitation of the federal capital, provision of services and improvement of environment.

Govt is not concealing number of coronavirus cases: Zafar Mirza

RAWALPINDI: State Minister for Health Dr Zafar Mirza on Wednesday rubbished claims that the government was concealing the number of coronavirus cases following the emergence of COVID-19 in the country.

The health minister said it is "200 per cent false" that Pakistan was hiding the number of coronavirus cases because of ongoing Pakistan Super League (PSL) matches in the country.

Mirza confirmed that there are only five coronavirus patients in the country, adding that "everyone with flu should not assume they have the virus".

Coronavirus outbreak: Cabinet refuses to declare health emergency in Pakistan

The federal cabinet rejected the Ministry of Health's proposal for declaring a "health emergency" in the country to tackle the novel coronavirus.

Coronavirus outbreak: Cabinet refuses to declare health emergency in Pakistan

The cabinet in its meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Imran Khan, emphasised on strengthening coordination between provinces to increase awareness about the virus among the people.

Mirza said that all-out arrangements were being made at all the entry points of the country to screen the people coming from abroad. PM's aide Dr Firdous Awan added that the cabinet approved the health ministry's request for the purchase of equipment to tackle the disease, with the directives to take the provinces on board.

The cabinet also called for better screening of travellers

at entry points of the country and preparation of database. Provincial chief secretary, health minister, local government minister, education minister, chief law advisor, Karachi commissioner and representatives of WHO, FIA, airport administration, CAA and NADRA, along with Dr Faisal of Aga Khan Hospital and Dr Bari of Indus Hospital attended the meeting.

The government has confirmed two COVID-19 cases in Karachi. Two more coronavirus cases confirmed in Pakistan.

The move would give the provincial government enough time to locate people who came in close contact with those returning from Iran.

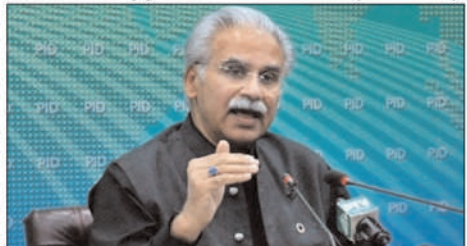
The chief minister directed the departments concerned to issue notifications for the closure of educational institutions till Friday, March 13.

However, due to weekend on the two following days, students would only be able to join their schools, colleges and universities from Monday, March 16. By that time, the recommended isolation period of 14 days would also be over and screening of passengers who have recently returned from Iran and their

close relatives would also be completed. The government on Saturday confirmed two more cases of novel coronavirus in Pakistan, bringing

as authorities scramble to screen hundreds of people who recently arrived from Iran, a major new hotspot for the virus. Karachi's second

about the virus comprising a member each from the National Health Services Ministry, the Information Ministry and the military's



the total number of COVID-19 cases in the country to four.

One patient has been diagnosed with the mysterious disease in Karachi and the other in a federal area - a pattern similar to the two cases confirmed earlier this week.

The city's second coronavirus patient and his family members have been put in isolation ward of a government-run hospital to contain the spread of the highly contagious disease. Confirmation of the cases has set off alarm bells

media wing A screening mechanism has been put in place at all points of entry and the health and regular surveillance staff present there have been provided with protection equipment and kits. He hoped the government's strategy would ensure there was no outbreak of the disease in the country. During the last one month, the federal government has taken several steps and adopted a standard operating procedure to tackle the situation.

Pakistan assures Iran of all-out support amid coronavirus outbreak

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Wednesday held a telephonic conversation with his Iranian counterpart Javad Zarif and expressed grief over



the loss of precious lives" due to outbreak of coronavirus in the country. Iran on Wednesday reported 15 new deaths from the novel coronavirus and 586 additional cases, bringing the overall toll to 92 dead and 2,922 infected. The Shia holy city of Qom, south of Tehran, is the epicentre of Iran's coronavirus outbreak and where its first deaths were reported on February 19 in Pakistan, all the confirmed five novel virus cases are linked to Iran.

Iran coronavirus death toll rises by 15 to 92.

Qureshi also assured Zarif of Pakistan's all-out support in containing the spread of con-

tagious disease. Both the ministers also agreed to jointly take measures against the epidemic of COVID-19 which has spread to more than 30 countries, killing over 2,700

The Pak-Afghan border at Chaman would close from Monday (today) for seven days "in order to prevent the spread of coronavirus on both sides of the border in the best interest of the people of the brotherly countries," said a notification issued by the Ministry of Interior.

"During the period, necessary measures will be taken to safeguard the health of the people of both countries," it stated, adding that the second crossing point at Torkham in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa would remain open. "This would remain open. This situation would be reviewed after seven days and an appropriate decision would be made," an official of the Ministry of National Health Services said.

The Ministry of Interior has sent an official notification to the Balochistan authorities to close the border at Chaman. The de facto Health Minister, Dr Zafar Mirza, said, "This is a crucial step we had to take to safeguard the health of people of the two countries as the border crossing had a heavy traffic of travellers from both sides on a daily basis."

Mirza said the government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan, had put measures in place and taken steps in the best interest of the people in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak.

Pak-Afghan border at Chaman closes over virus fears

Islamabad: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting Firdous Ashiq Awan said that "there was an outpouring of press conferences immediately after writing a letter to London".

She was referring to a letter the government wrote to



authorities in the United Kingdom for the repatriation of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif who it alleged visited the eight-week bail by staying in London for medical treatment for the past three-and-a-half months.

The SAPM made these remarks while speaking at a

press conference outside the parliament on Wednesday.

"We sent the letter to London but even people from Australia returned... the letter was so effective that the PML-N has started updating the nation about Nawaz's health."

She added that the "taunts over [Nawaz's] health, it is actually the PML-N that is playing politics over it."

Raising questions about the former premier's health, Awan said that the PML-N has not submitted "any document about any procedure or investigation or documents made when he was admitted to the hospital and discharged from it."

Over 1200 pilgrims from Iran cleared of coronavirus, CM Sindh Murad Ali Shah

KARACHI: Over 1200 people who have returned to Sindh province from Iran are cleared of the coronavirus threat after they remained at quarantine for 14 days, ARY NEWS reported.

The details were given to the Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah during a



meeting of the provincial task force to deal with the virus that has claimed over 90 lives in Iran, mainly from where the virus was transmitted to Pakistan. The briefing said that around 2396 people visited Iran and of them 1277 people returned in the month of January.

"Those who have returned were put in the isolation for 14 days and now all of them are cleared from the coronavirus," the briefing said adding that still 823 people are put in quarantine to detect any suspected case of the virus. The provincial health authorities said that 14 people have undergone test during the past two days and all of them have tested negative.

The chief minister directed the authorities to put all those coming from Taftan border into quarantine to avoid spread of virus that has already claimed over 3000 lives globally. The Sindh government on Tuesday approved Rs100 million for taking measures to avoid an outbreak of the novel coronavirus in the province. The decision was taken in a meeting of Sindh cabinet with Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali in the chair. Read more: Family members of Karachi coronavirus patient test negative

The Sindh chief minister briefed the cabinet about the measures being taken by provincial govt to deal with the spread of deadly COVID-19 in the province after 2 cases were reported in Karachi.

Saudi Arabia suspends Umrah for locals amid coronavirus fear

Madina: Amid the novel coronavirus outbreak, Saudi Arabia has imposed temporary ban on local pilgrims from performing Umrah as experts suggested that COVID-19 is highly contagious and can permeate faster in crowds. Under the temporary ban Saudi nationals and residents living in the kingdom wanting to perform Umrah will also not be allowed into the holiest sites. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah has announced that it is working to help foreign pilgrims still in the kingdom return to their countries, Arab News reported on Wednesday.

After banning Umrah pilgrimage, Saudi Arabia restricts entry for GCC citizens day earlier. Saudi Arabia had barred citizens and residents of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries from entering the kingdom for 14 days after returning from outside the region due to coronavirus concerns. The kingdom reported its first case of the deadly disease on Monday in

a Saudi national returning from Iran, which has reported the most deaths outside China, where the flu-like disease originated. Saudi Arabia took several measures last week to prevent the spread of the virus to the kingdom, banning foreigners arriving for the Muslim Umrah pilgrimage, Gulf Arab citizens visit-

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After National Assembly, Zainab Alert Bill 2020 sails through Senate

ISLAMABAD: The Senate on Wednesday passed the Zainab Alert Recovery and Response Bill, 2020 aimed at raising alert, response and recovery of missing and abducted children and would pave way for conducting trials of child abduction cases in anti-terrorism courts established under the ATA 1997.

The bill against the child sexual abuse is passed two years after the brutal rape and murder of nine-year-old Zainab Ansari in Khasi school the nation's collective conscience in 2018. The horrific incident had drawn a country-wide outrage and raised questions over the safety of children and responsibilities on the part of the authorities concerned to prevent increasing incidents of child abuse in the country.

Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Azam Khan Swati moved the motion under Rule 263 for immediate consideration of the bill by dispensing the rules. The upper house

passed the bill after a brief discussion and considered it. As reported by the Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights. The bill will

raise the required alerts and initiate the responses required for recovery of missing, abducted, abused or kidnapped children in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). It will help to provide speedy system for alerts, responses, recoveries, investigations, trials and rehabilitation to prevent and with criminal activities against Alert Bill's ambit being expanded all over country will also ensure harmonisation and cohesion in the workings of the new



According to the bill, the maximum sentence handed down to perpetrators of child sexual abuse will be life imprisonment with a fine of Rs1 million while the minimum sentence will be 10 years. It also paved way for the creation of Zainab Alert Response and Recovery Agency (ZARRA), which will be headed by its director general who will be appointed by the prime minister in such manner and in such terms and conditions.

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Online rules consultation

UBLIC transparency and accountability mandate that a government legislate in the best interests of its constituents, following an inclusive and exhaustive consultative process. They also require that a government be responsive to concerns that arise as a result of such a process not being followed during the formulation of policies, rules and laws governing the public. The federal government has failed on both counts with regard to the controversial Citizen Protection (Against Online Harms) Rules, which has rightly been excoriated in both international and local quarters. Technology firms as well as press, legal and rights bodies have all warned of the varied and significant harmful effects that can arise by implementing this set of rules, which only came to light last month after the federal cabinet quietly approved it in January. In response to this backlash, the prime minister called for further review and stakeholder consultations a move that was welcomed by, among others, this paper. However, what has transpired since is extremely disquieting. After days of mixed messages from official quarters, it now appears almost certain that the so-called consultative process is little more than eye-wash. On Friday, the IT ministry notified a review committee that includes only government officials and no industry or civil society representation. Moreover, no assurance has been given that the rules have been withdrawn, leaving it unclear whether the government intends to consult on formulating online regulations afresh or simply on how to implement these rules. Forty Pakistani rights groups have now signed a statement boycotting these talks unless the government commits to revoking the rules in toto.

Ghulam Qadir

IT has been a month since the traders of North West Pakistan have been protesting in front of the KP Assembly, demanding compensation for losses incurred by businesses in Miral and Miramshah during Operation Zarb-i-Azb. Similarly, there has been a complete lockdown of all business activity in Miramshah, with people sitting outside the Miramshah Press Club protesting. Compensating their losses was agreed to by the government earlier. In May 2018, after exhausting all venues available to them, the traders of Miral and Miramshah protested at the National Press Club, Islamabad, demanding

compensation. Their sit-in at the press club ended peacefully after assurances given by the then DG ISPR.

It has been two years since their protest, yet their demands remain unresolved. Not only this, the provincial government is oblivious to their month-long sit-in. Practically no senior politician or high-ranking official has met the protesting traders to listen to their grievances and at least give them some hope that their problems will be solved. It's pertinent to know that this is an adviser to the chief minister for the tribal districts supposedly for this purpose.

Zarb-i-Azb is the hallmark of the cleansing of terrorist nests, neither owned nor operated by the people of Miramshah and Miral.

The destruction was so brutal that not a single building was left standing. Whatever was left of the buildings was brought down and the debris cleared so that no one had any idea of how much had been destroyed. A few well-designed plazas were built in a hurry to show-case Miramshah to outsiders. People left their shops, godowns and houses with no time to collect their valuables or stored merchandise. When they were ultimately allowed to return, after spending years in camps or rented places, there was nothing left to return to. People just couldn't believe their own government could do this to them. Fearing a backlash, the government was forced to compensate them for their losses and haphazard surveys started coming up.

Different committees cropped up, all conducting surveys of losses. The survey committees came up with different reports; the administration in its wisdom accepted the report of one committee, while rejecting the rest. So the claims submitted to this committee, no matter how exaggerated, were accepted while those submitted to other committees were relegated to the dustbin. There were people, especially government servants, who weren't claiming any relief or support from the government. They weren't included in any list of affectedes. When there were those who were principally against the Vatan Card and couldn't visit Waziristan because they didn't have one, then there were

those who had different temporary and permanent addresses on their CNIC. All these people were left out from submitting their claims. At present, a large number of claims of damaged houses have not been paid but not all. The government should have compensated for the homes first and then the businesses. Without paying for all destroyed homes, payment to businesses is creating resentment. Strong groups like petrol pump owners have taken up their cases separately. The government has agreed to pay for all their losses whereas others are being paid only the cost of structure. When or how much will the shopkeepers be paid for their merchandise? Yet the determined Those whose land has been encroached upon by

roads or buildings were to be paid for land compensation, the rates for which have yet to be determined. The people of Miramshah and Miral have suffered much. Making them suffer more will be unfair and might have consequences. The funds are there, all the provincial government has to do is act swiftly and fairly. All cases of residences need to be disposed of at the earliest so that one issue stands settled. Lists of shops and markets need to be shared. There should not be any discrimination regarding for structure and merchandise. The policy should be the same for all. The chief secretary should play a more proactive role and take a decision at the moment an irritant crops up. Courtesy the economic

Need of hour

Muhammad Ali

THE news that the Aabpara police have charged 10 men for brandishing Kalashnikovs in and around the Lal Masjid suggests that, at last, the state might be doing its job. But don't get too excited while the forces of law and order have registered a case, they still haven't plucked up the courage to actually arrest the men. But then, ever since 9/11, the role of a section of Deobandi clerics in jihadist violence has been underplayed. Despite being active participants in many arenas of post-9/11 conflict, in Pakistan, the Deobandis have been able to operate in the place they like best

out of the limelight. The Deobandis have many faces. Tableeghi Jamaat runs massive missionary operations. Various iterations of the JUI participate in parliamentary politics. And then there are the militants, mounting attacks in Pakistan and the UK too but largely quiescent in India. And there is a reason for that. The Indian state has taken a firm, consistent line against Deobandi militancy and that pressure has worked. The Deobandi leadership in India has explicitly and repeatedly rejected the use of violence. Last month, Maulana Abdul Aziz asked an important question. Would the Pakistani authorities have the courage to take him

on? Back in 2007, as most Pakistanis remember all too well, the maulana turned Lal Masjid into an arsenal and provoked a major confrontation with the state. Whilst his younger brother willingly went to his death, Maulana Aziz took the less dignified approach of fleeing the scene in a normal country, a man who had a leading role in such a shocking and disastrous event could reasonably expect to spend the rest of his life behind bars. But despite never resiling from his support for all forms of Deobandi violence up to and including suicide bombings and the Army Public School attack, Aziz was free to roam around. And last month, he slipped into the Lal Masjid with

some female students and gave some sermons. He was back. How would the state react? It should not have been difficult to answer that. The maulana's brand of Deobandism has less support than it did a decade ago. And when he asked other Deobandi madrasahs in Islamabad to send students to support him, many answered the call. Maulana Aziz's isolation could be explained by fellow Deobandi clerics being sick of his publicity-seeking ways or because of deeper ideological objections. Either way, the maulana and the Deobandis as a whole, are far weaker than a decade ago. In fact, the only rallying point for the Deobandi movement now

is resistance to curriculum reform. The differences between the various groups Disappointingly, the authorities chose not to face down the maulana, but instead decided to appease him. The interior ministry entered into talks with a delegation of clerics and an officer of the capital administration told this paper that the authorities were willing to negotiate with Maulana Aziz so as to resolve the issue peacefully. Maulana Aziz has repeatedly and outrageously demanded compensation for the destruction of Jamia Hafsa, setting in train a long-running dispute about the location and size of an alternative plot for a new women's madrasah. But that is in fact a sideshow. The real

point, as the maulana himself said, is that when he gives a sermon in a small mosque in G-7 nobody cares but when he speaks from the Lal Masjid, everyone listens. The maulana's goal is clear he wants to run Lal Masjid once again with some money and building plots thrown in. The questions most Pakistanis are asking is: 'why is that man still bothering us?' The question the state is asking is, 'how can the maulana be persuaded to leave the Lal Masjid without a big drama?' Rather than telling him that insurgents don't get compensation, the state has been offering a parcel of land in Islamabad to build a replacement Jamia Hafsa. Courtesy the economic



Sindh Police take body of 'raped' madrasa student into custody

KARACHI: Sharafi Goth Police took the body of a 12-year-old boy, who was a madrasa student and suspected of being raped, into custody and shifted it to



Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC) mortuary on Monday night. However, Wali Khan, the administrator of Jamia Islamia Usman Bin Affan madrasa, where the boy studied, has denied the allegations. According to Khan, the boy, 12, was suffering from fever for the past four days and was taken to a clinic nearby the madrasa. He said the doctor at the clinic referred Centre after they

visited him for a follow-up check-up on Monday, adding that following this, the child was taken to Indus Hospital, where doctors declared it in custody and shifted it to

which the latter took the body into custody and shifted it to JPMC mortuary. According to JPMC Medico-Legal Officer Dr Ajaz, the report issued by the Indus Hospital stated that the boy died of cardiac arrest. He further said that post-mortem of the body, which was yet to be conducted, would be carried out in the presence of a family member. I belonged to Upper Dir and was learning Quran by heart at the madrasa, said Khan, adding that the boy's father worked in Saudi Arabia and was informed of the death. Dismissing allegations that I was raped, he went on to say that 150 students from Karachi and eight from other parts of Pakistan were studying and working at the madrasa, where they were well looked after. He said that he was in fact raped and those responsible for the offence were to be punished according to the law.

Pakistan Machine Tool Factory employees unpaid for four months

KARACHI: For the last four months, over 700 employees at Pakistan Machine Tool Factory (PMTF) have gone without their salaries, even though the state-run tools manufacturing unit reportedly completed contracts worth Rs7.5 billion in 2019. The management considers us to be deaf and dumb. They have forsaken us," complained PMTF workers' Liberal Union

general secretary Mairaj Ahmad. "We are struggling to make ends meet and feed our families while they are feasting in air-conditioned rooms." According to Ahmad, the employees were working daily shifts of eight hours or longer, but were still not being paid for their work. In a letter to Prime Minister Imran Khan, the Liberal Union appealed to the premier to order the payment

Sindh to levy tax on ground, surface water for commercial use

KARACHI: The Sindh cabinet gave a nod to finalise the 'Sindh Water Act 2020,' under which taxes would be imposed on the use of ground and surface water for commercial purposes, during a cabinet meeting on Tuesday. The decision was made in light of a court order, which came after the dissolution of the commission on water and sanitation in Sindh.



During the cabinet meeting, chaired by Sindh Chief Minister (CM) Syed Murtaza Ali Shah, it was decided that a committee would be formed under the supervision of the CM to review the law. Sindh chief secretary, local government minister, irrigation minister, agriculture minister and public health minister are to be included as members in the committee that will review the law and send it to the law department for vetting. "The committee may form a separate body to regulate the matters of groundwater, which was being extracted by many bottled water compa-

nies," an official privy to the development told The Express Tribune. Another official working in a local government department maintained that underground water worth bil-

ions of rupees is being extracted by various mineral and soft drink companies. He said that the initial pricing of Rs1 per litre tax on extracted groundwater was proposed at the meeting, and it was decided that the revenue collected would be distributed among water and sewerage boards across the province. According to Water Aid Pakistan Policy and Advocacy Manager Nadeem Ahmed, large amount of water is also wasted from tube wells, which run round the clock, extracting water unnecessarily. "People have now installed solar tube wells, meaning that they are able to run it the whole day," he maintained. According to Ahmed, the government must impose a tax on tube wells and task local authorities to monitor this.

Sindh Govt to purchase of 5,000 COVID-19 testing kits

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister (CM) Syed Murtaza Ali Shah has ordered the relevant officials to purchase 5,000 coronavirus testing kits, while chairing a cabinet meeting on Tuesday, following the confirmation of second coronavirus case in Karachi and surfacing of multiple suspected cases.

According to the CM, so far, 53 tests for coronavirus cases from Sindh have been conducted, of which only two have been confirmed. Addressing the meeting, the CM also said, "[The] government has released Rs100 million for adopting preventive measures and to deal with any emergencies [pertaining to coronavirus cases]."

He said that a taskforce was formed to deal with problem at the time of the confirmation of the first case and meeting had been held regularly since then. "I have been holding taskforce meetings, in which all relevant authorities and officials, including airport and aviation officials, Federal Investigation Agency National Database and Registration Authority and World Health Organisation representatives, besides doctors participate."

The CM shared with the meeting that isolation wards, housing 118 beds, had been established at nine hospitals across Sindh. Schools' registration suspended. Meanwhile, registration of 30 private schools in Sindh was suspended for violating Sindh government's order to remain closed till March 13, amid fear of coronavirus spread.

According to Private told, Schools Registrar Rafia Javed, three teams visited 50

Sindh chief secretary said that he was corresponding



schools in Karachi and suspended the registrations of 18 of them for violating government orders, adding that altogether 119 schools were visited by the inspection teams in the province.

On Monday, registration of 53 private schools was suspended for the same reason. Taskforce meeting. Later, at a coronavirus taskforce meeting, the CM was informed that eight samples were sent for screening from Sindh on Tuesday, and six of them were declared negative. Meanwhile, results for two remaining cases are awaited. Besides, four samples were sent for testing on Monday and all of them were cleared of infection. The CM was also told that 2,534 pilgrims from Sindh had left for Iran and 764 of them had returned over the past 14 days. All of them were quarantined but none showed any symptoms of COVID-19, the meeting was

with the Balochistan govern-

ment and steps were taken to ensure that all pilgrims arriving from Iran were properly screened at Taftan.

At this, the CM remarked that the situation was under control as the government had taken strict measures. Illegal entry. However, contradicting these assertions, a villager from Shikarpur District claimed on Tuesday that at least 50 persons from Iran had returned to his village without being screened anywhere.

Commenting on the matter, a health department spokesperson Meeran Yousuf said, "It seems that these persons entered [Pakistan] illegally." The provincial health department has contacted the federal government on the issue and has requested it to keep strict check on the illegal entry of people from Iran to Pakistan.



Karachi: Chairman District Council Karachi Salman Abdullah Murad inaugurating development scheme.



Karachi: Hassina Moir addressing press regarding of First Women Conference at Arts Council of Pakistan.



Karachi: PPP Minority wing Wing remembered Shahbaz Bhatti on his 9th death anniversary. Former president of PPP Minority Wing Mustaq Mattu addressing the ceremony.

President MAJU asked not to misuse of social media



Karachi: President, Mohammad Ali Jinnah University Karachi (MAJU) Prof. Dr. Zubair Shaikh asked the students that projecting any good work in negative way on social media be avoided, every academic institution is taken as Mother of knowledge and no child propagate against her mother even in case of displeasure. He also asked the students to use social media for the encouragement of good work and things because negative propaganda also damage their own personality.

This he stated while he was addressing to a meeting on proper use of social media for the image building of the institution at University campus, yesterday which was attended by all Deans, Heads of Departments, Director academics and Director, QEC. During the meeting President, MAJU directed her mother even in case of displeasure. He also asked the students to use social media for the encouragement of good work and things because negative propaganda also damage their own personality.

Airlines rush to boost demand as coronavirus shreds standard crisis management strategy

CHICAGO/SYDNEY: The rapid spread of coronavirus cases worldwide is complicating a standard strategy used by airlines when disease, disaster or conflict hit travel destinations - lower fares and direct flights to trouble-free areas. For now, some airlines have resorted to suspending change fees for new ticket reservations in the hope of winning over hesitant travellers until it becomes clear where coronavirus outbreaks are localised and which routes could benefit from price drops. While lower fares have proven effective in the past in relieving demand, aviation consultant Samuel Engel said, "The pocket-book only works so far against emotion."



side China than inside. JetBlue Airways Corp, which does not fly to Asia, was the first airline to launch free rebooking options last week, as it became clear that cases were not isolated to China. JetBlue pulled together and announced its plan in a matter of hours. President Joanna Geraghty told Reuters, "We tried to put ourselves in the shoes of our customers and think about what we would want if we were, for example, booking a spring-break trip right now." Geraghty said.

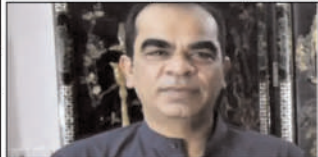
US majors have since followed suit with varying waivers on change fees for new reservations to many destinations, a switch from a previous policy that covered only pre-booked flights to areas hardest hit by the coronavirus. In Latin America, Peruvian low-cost carrier Viva Air was holding a board meeting on Wednesday to discuss measures, Declan Ryan, Executive Chairman of the board of directors, told Reuters. But with none of the offers so far guaranteeing money-back refunds, travellers say the policies are not enough.

"I understand that there are a lot of question marks right now for the industry on how this will unfold, but I don't feel like there's a truly customer-friendly policy out there," said Amanda Elman-Kolb of Chicago, who has put on hold plans for a family trip to Europe in August.

Declining demand to fly abroad is not limited to US travellers. International travel to the United States will fall 8% over the next three months amid coronavirus concerns, the largest decline since the 2007-2008 financial crisis.

Mukesh Kumar Chawla asks to boost-up efforts for recovery of dues

KARACHI MARCH 05: Sindh Minister for Excise and Taxation & Narcotics Control and Parliamentary Registration Wing was reviewed in detail. He directed the Assistant Director Computer-MRW



Affairs Mukesh Kumar Chawla has asked the officers to boost-up their efforts for the recovery of Government's dues regarding motor vehicle tax from Government, Sindh Government. Autonomous Bodies and Organizations and no lethargic attitude will be tolerated in this regard. This he said while presiding over a meeting here in his office today. Secretary Excise and Taxation & Narcotics Control Abdul Halim Shaikh, Director General ET & NC Shoaib Ahmed Siddiqui, Additional Director ADM/MRW Nasir Eftandi, and other officers also attended the meeting.

In the meeting overall performance of the Deputy Directors/Excise and Taxation Officers of Motor

to cooperate with all Deputy Directors/ETOs in providing requisite computerized data. Provincial minister for ET & NC & Parliamentary Affairs Mukesh Kumar Chawla also directed to launch Road Checking Campaign to nab the tax defaulting vehicles. He added, "Recovery of the taxes is very important and it shows the performance of the officers as well and we must come upto the expectations of the people."

Mukesh Kumar Chawla said that during last fiscal year "Sindh Excise Department" recovered more than 100% tax recovery and hopefully this year too we would also achieve more than our tax targets, he concluded.

KCCI members advised to get membership renewed by March 31, 2020

KARACHI: The Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), in a statement issued, advised all its members to renew their KCCI membership by March 31st, 2020 in order to avoid any inconvenience.

The process of membership renewal is currently underway at the Karachi Chamber for the year 2020-21 and as per Trade

membership of Karachi Chamber shall expire on 31-03-2020 thus all members must get their membership renewed on or before 31-03-2020 by submitting prescribed membership fee along with proof of filing of last income tax and sales tax returns, if applicable.

KCCI cautioned that in case an existing member could not get the member-



Organizations Act 2013, the last date for renewal of membership is 31st March 2020.

The Chamber has already intimated its members through letter, email and SMS service that the

ship renewed on or before 31st March 2020, his/her membership shall cease automatically and to become KCCI member again, they will have to go through the entire re-admission process.

Action will be taken against polluters of Malir Nadi, Says Murtaza Baloch

Karachi - March 5: Minister for Human Resources and Special Development Ghulam Murtaza Baloch has said that action will be taken against those involved in poisoning and polluting the Malir river (Nadi) so that



complaints of Malir's farmers can be resolved. He said today while talking to Murtaza Wahab Advisor to CM Sindh on Law and Environment here in his office today. On this occasion Minister Murtaza Wahab assured Provincial

due to environmental pollution to the settlers on the inclusion of wastewater from other factories, including the Nagori State in the Malir River (Nadi). Advisor to CM Sindh on Environment Murtaza Wahab assured Provincial

that Sindh government is with the farmers of Malir and action will be taken against those who add waste water to the river Malir. Provincial Minister Ghulam Murtaza Baloch thanked Advisor to CM Sindh for his assurance and hoped that his actions would improve the situation soon.

Pakistan Head of Mission called on minister hydraulic, sanitation

Mr Ahmed Ali Sirohey Head of Mission Pakistan in Niger republic called on Mr Gado Sabo Moctar



ation to provide sweet water to rural population. He further added that water level is very low in desert

built to store water during rainy season. The water supply and power can be done through solar energy.



Minister hydraulic and sanitation. They discussed issues of mutual interest. The minister briefed the envoy about the water issues in Niger. He added that present government was relentlessly working to solve water and sanitation issues. He said that Niger being the desert country needs international cooper-

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Private Sectors' Initiatives with SDGs Appreciated

(Karachi 25 February 2020) "The activities of business community in Pakistan and the initiatives been taken to develop the community of practice embracing UNGC principles and SDGs implementations is commendable. The Thai company and their supply chain operating in Pakistan should develop partnerships with Pakistani companies for learning from each other

Ms Nuzhat Shirin Chairperson, Sindh Commission on Status of Women, while speaking on this occasion as the Guest of Honor, emphasized upon the need to work on improving the status of rural women in Sindh who were facing serious challenges of survival and livelihood. She further expressed the hope that the private sector can play very significant role in

sector in implementing SDGs and expressed the hope that they will move forward to build up this energy and partnership also with the Government so that the Global goals and targets can be achieved. A brief video presentation on the annual activities of the Global Compact Network Pakistan was made by Ms. Nuzhat Jahan. The Nestle case study



and exchanging their experiences. This was stated by His Excellency Khun Tharee Chauvachata, Consul General of Thailand at Karachi who was speaking as the Chief Guest at the Business Sustainability Moot and Living the Global Compact Sustainability Best Practices Award 2019 organized by United Nations Global Compact Network Pakistan in collaboration with Employers' Federation of Pakistan at Hotel Marriott Karachi.

The Consul General stated that the initiative of recognizing the companies demonstrating best practices in implementing UNGC principles and SDGs is highly commendable as it demonstrates how intensively the private sector is involved in playing its pivotal role in helping the Government to achieve the SDGs 2030 target.

He also informed the audience that Thailand attaches great importance to the concept of sustainable development which has long taken roots in the country. Thailand has been guided by Sufficiency Economy Policy (SEP) and the National Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD), chaired by the Prime Minister himself, has undertaken several steps for SDGs implementations including establishing coordinating body for each of the SDGs formulating road maps for all the 17 SDGs. The Chief Guest also stressed upon the need for collaboration between the Global Compact Networks of the two countries for strengthening the Government efforts to achieve the SDGs. He appreciated the role of UN Global Compact Network of Pakistan and Employers' Federation of Pakistan as the employers' representative body to provide leadership to the private sector in integrating their efforts for aligning their strategies with SDGs.

improving the livelihood and employment issues of rural women by encouraging small scale entrepreneurship opportunities which will significantly contribute to improving their status and also alleviating them from ills of poverty.

Mr. Majid Aziz President, Employers' Federation of Pakistan and South Asian forum of employers (SAFE) in his address on the occasion lauded the efforts of the private sector in responding to the call of UNs in implementing SDGs but stressed upon the need to streamline and disseminate the initiatives and the activities taken by the government in achieving SDGs goals and targets and connect them with the initiatives of the private sector. He said that strong public private partnerships must be built and encouraged for mega projects particularly those relating to alleviating poverty and hunger and the decent work. He said that there was a need for more extensive involvement of the business sector in the Ehas and Kamiyab Nojwan programs initiated by the Government of Pakistan. He congratulated the UN Global Compact Network Pakistan for motivating the private sector in aligning their strategies with SDGs and said that it was a matter of pride that the Global Compact Network Pakistan was being hosted and supported by Employers' Federation of Pakistan in the true spirit with which UNGC was initiated 20 years before in the United Nations.

Earlier, Mr. Ahsanullah Khan, President, Global Compact Network Pakistan and Mr. Fasihul Karim Siddiqui, Executive Director Global Compact Network Pakistan, in their remarks highlighted the activities of UN Global Compact Network Pakistan, appreciated the efforts of the business

on Social Inclusive Approaches by developing Women entrepreneurship; creating shared value was presented by Dr. Mustaghis-ur-Rehman followed by a highly captive presentation by Mr. Sohail Zandani on the topic of Taking Stock: Resetting our Collective Ambitions to deliver on the SDGs.

Presentation on Breakthrough Innovations from Champion Companies where made by Mr. Salman Zakir of PARCO and Ms. Asma of Artistic Milliners Private Limited.

A key note presentation on Reset Ambition: from CEO to Activist- Adopt the City was made by Mr. Saleem Qureshi CEO HireLabs.

Two highly interactive panel discussion session were moderated by Mr. Zubair Anwar Bawany. The one on the topic of TECH 4 Good - An Insight, an idea was participated by Mr. Faisal Mamsa, Mr. Roger Bayat and Mr. Saquib Ejaz Hussain. The second panel on the topic of The Road to Gender Parity 2030: The Female Quotient was participated by Ms. Uzma AL-Karim, Ms. Fakhira Rizwan and Ms. Hina Khwaja Bayat.

Later on, Living the Global Compact Best Practices Sustainability Award 2019 were conferred on the winning companies by Ms. Nuzhat Shirin and Mr. Ikram Sehgal.

The participants were led by the Chief Guest and the Guests of Honor to walk towards and sign the Pakistan Reshaping the Next Decade Pledge Wall 2030.

The event was followed by the Annual General Meeting of the Global Compact Network Pakistan.

The meeting was concluded by a vote of thanks presented by Mr. Zaki A Khan, Vice President Employers' Federation of Pakistan and Chief Event Coordinator.

'An honour for women peacekeepers to work under UN flag, wear blue berets'

New York: A female officer of the Pakistan Army has said it is an honour for women peacekeepers to work under the United Nations flag and wear the famous blue berets for peace and stability.

"Working under the United Nations flag and wearing a blue beret for peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of Congo is an honour for women peacekeepers," said Major Samia Rehman.

Working for the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in DR Congo (MONUSCO), Maj Rehman conducts intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions for all operations.

In 2019, Major Samia Rehman was awarded a certificate of appreciation by the special representative of UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

78 Pakistan Army women peacekeepers serving with distinction across the world.

Currently, 78 Pakistan Army women peacekeepers are serving under the umbrella of the UN in various roles across the world.

The country also achieved the goal of 15pc women participation in UN peacekeeping missions in early 2019.

Pakistan Army women peacekeepers are serving as part of Female Engagement Teams (FETs) and as staff officers at various headquarters. Pakistan was also the first country to deploy female engagement teams to Congo on June 19, 2019.

Apart from two female engagement teams in Congo, a third team would commence operations from March in the Central African Republic.

So far, around 450 women peacekeepers from Pakistan have served in UN missions.

The women peacekeepers from Pakistan have won numerous accolades, including tributes at the UN and medals for exceptional performance and services rendered.



The country is the third-largest contributor of personnel since participation began in 1990.

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Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), were awarded the UN Medal at a ceremony in Addis Ababa in South Sudan.

This team of 15 female officers, who serve the ranks of Major and Captain, was stationed there in June last year, marked by the raising of Pakistan's flag at the mission.

The officers include psychologists, stress counsellors, vocational training officers, gender advisors, doctors, nurses, operations officers, information officers and logistics officers.

The MONUSCO peacekeeping mission said in a press release that another 17 female officers will join them this month.

Following this achievement, top United States diplomat Alice Wells said she was inspired by Pakistani women serving in the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Congo.

The US diplomat also took to social media and lauded the Pakistani women for serving with "distinction" in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

UN secretary-general to arrive on four-day visit/United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) Antonio Guterres will be visiting Pakistan from February 16 to 19 during which he will attend an international conference on Afghan refugees and deliver his key note address. Pakistan, in collaboration with the UNHCR, is organising the international conference to mark the 40-year-long stay of hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees in the country on February 17 and 18.

The UNSG will also call on President Dr Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Imran Khan, besides holding meeting with Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi.

LHC restrains NAB from illegally harassing Rana Sanaullah

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Wednesday turned down a plea of PML-N Punjab President Rana Sanaullah to restrain the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) from taking any coercive measures against him in an inquiry initiated against him in assets beyond means case.

However, the divisional bench headed by Justice Ali Baqar Najafi restrained NAB from illegal harassment of petitioner Sanaullah and issued notice to NAB which sought para-wise comments.

The former law minister had challenged NAB's inquiry in LHC which questioned the

Judge Shahri Hassan fixed the date of March 7 to frame charges against Sanaullah and four others in the case.

The PML-N leader has been demanding access to the footage, which according to Minister of State of Narcotics Control Shehryar Khan Afridi and the ANF director general showed him handing over heroin to the authorities at the time of his arrest.

On January 18, the court had reserved its decision over the MNA's plea seeking the release of his vehicle on Supardas.

Sanaullah, who served as the Punjab law minister during the previous PML-N government



investigation of acquiring assets by two departments under two different allegations. Sanaullah's plea for access to arrest footage dismissed.

In his petition, Sanaullah claimed that all the assets which are owned by him, his family members and other relatives have allegedly been found to have been acquired through narcotics trade. A challan has since been submitted and the proceedings are pending before the 'Special Court' constituted under the Control of Narcotics Substance Act, 1997.

But another inquiry by National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has been started on the same assets under the allegation of having been acquired through corruption or corrupt practices which is tantamount to the mockery of the law. He prayed upon the court that assumption of jurisdiction, issuance of impugned call up notices and proceedings in pursuance thereof be kindly declared as mala-fide, illegal and without lawful authority and the same be quashed.

An anti-narcotics court on Saturday dismissed two petitions filed by PML-N Punjab President MNA Rana Sanaullah – one seeking access to the footage of his arrest by the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in July last year and the second for the return of his confiscated vehicle in which heroin was allegedly found. The court also rejected the prosecution's petition for day-to-day proceedings of the drugs possession case against the PML-N leader.

and known for his tough talk, was arrested by the ANF on July 1, 2019 from the Islamabad-Lahore motorway near Sukheki. Four others including his driver and security guard were also nabbed.

Afridi, at a news conference with ANF DG Major General Arif Malik, had maintained that 15 kilograms of heroin were recovered from Sanaullah's possession and there was footage which would be submitted to the court as evidence.

The PML-N leader remained in detention of the ANF for over six months as the anti-narcotics special court twice rejected his bail petition.

In August, District and Sessions Judge Masood Arshad was forced to stop the hearing of case in the middle of the proceedings much to the surprise of everyone present in the court. The judge said he received a WhatsApp message that he had been transferred to the Lahore High Court even though the court had not issued any notification of the judge's repatriation at that time. In December last year, the Lahore High Court granted him bail on two surety bonds worth Rs1 million each.

Sanaullah has consistently denied the charge and denounced the case against him as being "fabricated" and "politically motivated". In his petition, alleged that he was implicated in a fake case. He submitted that the FIR of the incident was registered under 9-C, 15 and 17 of the Control of Narcotics Substances Act with a delay, which made it dubious.

China reports fall in new coronavirus cases for third day, 38 more deaths

BEIJING: China on Wednesday reported 38 more deaths from the new coronavirus but a fall in fresh cases for a third consecutive day. The death toll nationwide is now 2,981.

The National Health Commission said, with more than 80,200 people infected in total.

There were 115 new cases in central Hubei province – the epicentre where the virus first emerged in December last year – and only four elsewhere in the country.

The figures in China have generally been declining in recent weeks as a series of draconian quarantine measures seem to be paying off.

Fifth coronavirus case confirmed in Pakistan

But there are mounting concerns about infections being brought back into the country from other global hotspots.

In total there have been 13 confirmed cases of the virus being imported to the mainland – all in Chinese nationals returning from overseas.

Quarantine measures have been put in place on people arriving in Beijing, Shanghai and southern Guangdong province from virus-hit countries.

The number of suspected infections in China fell to the lowest level since late January, at 520

cases – down from nearly 29,000 suspected cases reported in early February.

Italian nationals in India

At least 16 Italian nationals in India tested positive for coronavirus, New Delhi's health minister said on Wednesday, as the total number of cases in the country rose sharply to 28.

An Italian had tested positive for the virus in the western desert state of Rajasthan, a health official said. Tajikistan asks Muslims to pray at home because of coronavirus. The government of mostly Muslim Tajikistan asked its

citizens to avoid going to mosques for Friday prayers as a precaution against the spread of coronavirus, though the Central Asian nation

has not reported any cases so far. A spokesperson for the state committee on religious affairs wrote on Facebook that there was no outright ban on mosque attendance, but such a measure was on the table after several imams asked for it. The nation of 9 million people bordering China and Afghanistan has shut its border to citizens from both neighbours as well as South Korea, Iran and Italy.

Japanese coronavirus infections

reach 1,000

The number of confirmed coronavirus infections in Japan reached the 1,000 mark on Wednesday, as the government reiterated that plans to host the Tokyo Summer Olympics in July remained on track.

South Korea adds 142 more coronavirus cases

The government's top spokesperson said that Japan would go ahead in preparing to host the Olympics as planned, amidst speculation they could be postponed because of the coronavirus threat. "We would steadily proceed with our preparations while closely coordinating with the IOC (the International Olympic Committee) and the organising committee," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said at a regular news conference.

Still, there are worries the Games could be postponed or even cancelled. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has asked schools to close this month, companies are encouraging employees to work from home and sporting events are being cancelled or played in empty arenas.

Olympics host city Tokyo has seen 40 cases, while infections have been confirmed as far south as Okinawa.

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PTI govt approves seven projects worth Rs12.2b

ISLAMABAD: The Central Development Working Party (CDWP) on Tuesday approved seven projects worth Rs12.2 billion and recommended five other schemes worth Rs158.23 billion to the Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecne) for consideration. The meeting was presided over by Planning Commission Deputy Chairman Mohammad Jehanzeb Khan. Projects related to energy, higher education, information technology, science and technology, transport and communications, and water resources were presented in the meeting.

An energy project for power transmission

Two projects related to science and technology were also presented. A project titled Advanced Skills Development through International Scholarships (Phase-II) worth Rs12.4 billion was recommended to Ecne.

The second project of Pak University of Engineering and Emerging Technology worth Rs3.2 billion was approved in the meeting.

Five projects related to transportation and communications were presented. The construction of a road from Nagar Sharif to Sunstar worth Rs1.256 billion was approved by the CDWP. The revised project envisages construction of a 54km-long and



from the 660-megawatt Lucky Electric coal-fired power plant at Port Qasim worth Rs1.3 billion was approved by the CDWP.

The objective of the project is to link the 660MW power plant with the national grid system for electricity transmission to upcountry load centres by constructing a 500-kilovolt double-circuit transmission line. Two projects related to higher education were presented in the meeting.

The establishment of the National Centre of Industrial Biotechnology for the manufacturing of bio-products using synthetic biology and metabolic engineering technology worth Rs1.4 billion was approved. The project envisages the setting up of the National Centre of Industrial Biotechnology at PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi that can provide direct value addition to the natural products isolated from plants and those derived from microbial origin. The second project of

four-metre wide single carriageway with the provision of two-metre wide shoulders from Nagar Sharif to Sunstar in Gwadar district. The dualisation and rehabilitation of DG Khan-Di Khan section (208.19 km) worth Rs53.4 billion was referred to Ecne.

The main objective of the project is the construction of additional two lanes and widening/rehabilitation of the existing two-lane carriageway of DG Khan-Di Khan section of Indus Highway N-55. The construction of Rajanpur-DG Khan section as a four-lane highway of N-55 (121.59 km) worth Rs33.9 billion was referred to Ecne.

The Indus Highway (N-55) additional carriageway project (Shikarpur-Rajanpur section) of 221.95 km worth Rs47.5 billion was also referred to Ecne.

The operationalisation of Green Line Bus Rapid Transit and the installation of integrated intelligent transport worth Rs10.9 billion was referred to Ecne.

A project related to water resources for increasing the storage capacity and improvement in the command area of Tando Dam district, Kohat worth Rs2.5 billion was approved by the CDWP. Five concept clearance proposals were also considered and cleared for donor financing. Planning Secretary Zafar Hasan and senior officials of federal and provincial governments were present in the meeting.

Centre decides against taking administrative control of JPMC, NICVD and NICH

KARACHI: The federal government has decided against taking administrative control of three major hospitals in Sindh, namely Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC), National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) and National Institute of Child Health (NICH).

The decision was taken during the weekly federal cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Imran Khan on Tuesday.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, provincial Minister of Health and Population Welfare Dr Azra Pechuho expressed the Sindh government's gratitude on the Centre's decision. "Sindh has always worked towards serving its people and will keep doing so," she said.

"These three hospitals are one of our biggest accomplishments and we have invested billions of rupees in uplifting and upgrading these three hospitals and we hope we will be able to make these facilities better than they are at the moment."

The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government had taken over the major hospitals last year, escalating

tensions with the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) government in Sindh. In his last visit to the provincial capital, PM Imran held talks with Sindh

run JPMC, NICVD and NICH. Meanwhile, unhappy at being passed around, JPMC doctors handed the authorities an ultimatum

early February to either form a committee to resolve it. The doctors of JPMC have been in trouble since the 18th Amendment. We were handed over to the Sindh government and now we are being put under the federal government," said Dr Iqbal Afridi.



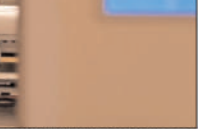
Chief Minister Syed Murtaza Ali Shah over issues including the imposition of general of police and the administrative control of the hospitals.

Murtaza claimed that the premier told him the Centre wouldn't be able to run the hospitals and had given the go-ahead to Sindh government to

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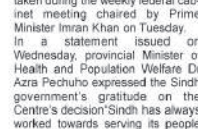


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