

Govt to provide medical equipment to PIMS

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has planned to provide necessary medical equipment to Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) to ensure best medical care to patients.

According to an official of Ministry of National Health Services Regulations and Coordination, besides meeting the demand of medical equipment, recruitment of medical staff will be started soon to address the issue of staff deficiency.

He said new dialysis machines would also be provided to PIMS. The ministry has changed the out-dated manual registration system at PIMS besides arranging sitting places for patients, he added.

He said that the government will build four new hospitals in the federal capital to reduce the patients' burden on existing hospitals. He said the government has planned to construct 200-bedded hospital in the federal capital with support of the Saudi government. The premises has been procured and is ready for construction to start the project, he added.

He said that the 200-bedded Islamabad General Hospital at Tarlai would be established with a total cost of Rs 2499.993 million on land measuring 13.07 acres.

The project is located at the junction of Park Road and Lehrar Road at Tramari Chowk, Islamabad which would help decreasing the load of patients on Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences and Federal Government Poly Clinic hospital.

He said the government will soon start work on upgradation of Federal Government Poly Clinic (FGPC) hospital.

He said the government has planned to set up a nursing university to address the increasing shortfall of nursing staff in the hospitals. He said the government has started revamping Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) and other organizations to encourage merit and improve the quality of medical education.

He said the government is working on its health insurance programme in the country to ensure medical cover of deserving families through health cards across the country.

He said the present government has shown keen interest in health infrastructure development and bringing positive change in the provision of improved health care delivery system for the people particularly living in the rural areas. He said the government's new reforms in health sector would ensure provision of best medical services to people. —APP

Saudia ranks third in spread of 5G networks

ISLAMABAD: Saudi Arabia ranks third globally and first in the Middle East, Europe and North Africa (EUMENA) region in terms of fifth generation (5G) networks spreading over 30 cities with setting up of more than 5,797 towers.

This reflects the great development achieved by the Kingdom's communications and information technology sector in boosting the digital transformation to achieve the goals of the Kingdom's Vision 2030. The Saudi Ministry of Communications and Information Technology strove to bring the 5G technology to the Kingdom and thus making it one of the pioneering countries to launch this service in the Middle East and North Africa region countries, Saudi Gazette reported.

The Kingdom launched commercial service of 5G during the second half of 2019, after its participation in the meetings of the International Telecommunication Union and the 3GPP standardization organization to ensure support for the 5G technology for available frequency bands in the Kingdom in addition to the World Radio Conference 2019 (WRC-19). —



ISLAMABAD: Former Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani, former Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf and Chief Minister of Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah leave National Accountability Bureau (NAB) after hearing Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in NAB.

Irresponsible construction exacerbates air pollution in city

ISLAMABAD: The irresponsible construction work of the Faisal Avenue G7 and G8 underpass was exacerbating air pollution in the federal capital.

The Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) data revealed increased ratio of toxic air pollutant-particulate matter of 2.5 microns (PM2.5).

An EPA official told APP that the air quality in the vicinity was being monitored through the agency's online system, which showed increased ratio of pollutants in the air.

"An EPA team has also visited the project site where no dust control system is put in place by the contractor executing the project. It is mandatory as per the environmental impact assessment report submitted to the EPA," she added.

She said during such road construc-

tions and mega infrastructure projects air quality was obviously reported as bad and polluted.

The daily ambient air quality report by EPA stated that PM2.5 was 92.23 microgrammes per metre cube (mg/m³). The pollution level comprising particulate matter of 2.5 microns (PM2.5) was above the permissible ratio of 35 micrograms per cubic meter (mg/m³), one of the highest ratio noticed in the federal capital.

World Health Organization (WHO) in its reports of 2015 claimed air pollution to cause huge number of premature deaths. PM 2.5 had been found hazardous pollutant which could penetrate into human blood through lungs cells.

The report mentioned that the 24 hours average concentrations of Nitrogen dioxide (NO2) and Sulphur dioxide

(SO2) were noticed below the permissible limits of National Environmental Quality Standards (NEQS) whereas concentration of PM2.5 was within safe limit of NEQS.

The daily ambient air quality report of the federal capital by Pakistan-EPA, the 24 hours average ratio of nitrogen dioxide (NO2) and Sulphur dioxide (SO2) were 30 mg/m³ and 44.21 mg/m³ respectively against the respective National Environmental Quality Standards (NEQS) of 80 mg/m³ and 120mg/m³.

Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) Director Sanitation Sardar Khan Zimri said it was the responsibility of the contractor to manage dust and transplanting trees from the construction site.

When contacted the Member Engineering Capital Development Authority (CDA) Humayun Akhtar said the CDA

officials were directed to strictly monitor the project contractors' pledges made in the environmental impact assessment reports submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). However, the EPA would be asked to take measures to implement the protocols and manage the dust control at the project site.

Motorway Police recover stolen car, thief arrested

National Highways and Motorway Police on Thursday recovered a car from Peshawar-Islamabad Motorway near Swabi which had been stolen from Lahore.

Motorway Police was informed that a Corolla LWB 133, model 2005 had been stolen from Lahore. Motorway Police officers Inspector Shawaiz and sub-inspector Syed Sultan traced the car near Swabi during duty on M-1. —APP

Minister to hold open court in Daska today

SIALKOT: Punjab Minister for Environment Protection Bao Muhammad Rizwan will hold a 'khuli Kutcheri' (open court) at Civil Club Daska today (Friday).

He will listen to the public complaints and problems. Sialkot Deputy Commissioner Dr Nasir Mehmood Bashir, Sialkot DPO Capt (ret) Mustansar Feroz and the district heads of nation-building departments would be present. —APP

Cold & dry weather forecast for city

MULTAN: The local Met office has forecast cold and dry weather for city and its suburbs during the next 24 hours.

On Thursday, maximum and minimum temperatures were recorded as 23.8 degree centigrade and 11.1 degree centigrade respectively. The humidity was recorded 88 per cent at 8 am and 48 per cent at 5 pm. —APP

Rs 60m for 'Mandi More' project released

ABBOTTABAD: National Highways Authority (NHA) Thursday released Rs 60 million grant for the widening of Salhad to Vegetable and Fruit Market Abbottabad road.

According to the details, NHA released the grant and also awarded the contract for the Karakoram Highway (KHK) widening project from Salhad to Vegetable and Fruit Market Abbottabad which is locally known as "Mandi More".

District administration Abbottabad and Tehsil Municipal Administration (TMA) also informed Vegetable and Fruit Market traders that the a certain part of the market would be used for road widening project. —APP

Novel Coronavirus national action plan being implemented: Mirza

ISLAMABAD: National action plan to ensure preparedness and response against Novel Corona Virus was being implemented in coordination with all stakeholders and all the necessary steps were being taken to protect people from the disease.

This was stated by Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Health Dr Zafar Mirza while chairing the emergency core group meeting for Novel Corona Virus Preparedness and Response on Thursday. There was, so far, no case of the disease in Pakistan as strict vigilance was being maintained at the airports with screening of incoming travelers and their follow up by dedicated public health teams and airport health authorities.

Under the National Action Plan, in line with WHO guidelines and in accordance with international best prac-

tices both isolation facilities at designated hospitals and quarantine arrangements were an essential requirement to meet any eventuality, added Dr Zafar Mirza.

Isolation wards were established in major designated hospitals across the country whereas a quarantine facility was being established as per WHO guidelines.

With the approval of the prime minister, Hajj Complex in Rawalpindi has been designated for the purpose. All necessary arrangements at the quarantine facility were now in place with the support of Ministry of Religious Affairs and NDMA.

"I would like to express special gratitude to Ministry of Religious Affairs and NDMA for completing all arrangements at the facility in the shortest pos-



KARACHI: Patients wait outside OPD as they are facing difficulties during strike called by doctors in the Jinnah Hospital.

Welcome—President Recep Tayyip Erdogan-II

Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani

In July 1964, President Ayub Khan visited Turkey. The Pakistani President disclosed later that during his meeting with Turkish leaders, they had expressed grave concern over the Cyprus situation.

Therefore he had promised to convey the Turkish concern to the forthcoming Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference in London. On the other side the Turkish Government expressed her hearty appreciation of stance of the Pakistani government on the Cyprus issue. Turkish Prime Minister, Suleman Demiral expressed his gratitude for Pakistan's stand on Cyprus problem in his visit to Pakistan in April 1967. Meanwhile, the Western Media noted that there was a new 'line-up' between Turkey, Iran and Pakistan outside the framework of CENTO. As one British newspaper commented: 'It is also significant, in the light of recent anti-western feelings in Turkey over Cyprus, that Turkey should be taking part in talks with Iran and Pakistan, which have in recent years adopted a more flexible policy towards the Soviet Union and China Facts behind Formation of RCD The three countries Iran, Pakistan and Turkey may be regarded as belonging to distant cultural area. They are non Arab and the Turko-Persian culture dominates the lives of the people.

Thus besides Islam they have many common bond between them. They have been united under the Ottoman Empire and had common political thinkers, historians, writers and poets. All the three states were the members of CENTO and their policies were pro-west. If we analyze their economic needs in the early sixties, all three were moving towards industrialization and modernisation. Their economic needs and goals were similar in the beginning of sixties. They disenchanted with the west and began to look for new avenues. In Iran there was in evidence a trend towards national assertion, and

country had sought to lessen its embroilment in the Russo-American conflict. Iran on account of cut in economic assistance too, and Pakistan was disenchanted because of flow of US arms to India after Sino-India border conflict.

The idea about the formation of RCD (Regional Cooperation for Development) between three Muslim members of CENTO (Pakistan, Iran and Turkey) was first discussed in April 1964 in Washington.

They decided to forge a new partnership without CENTO when the three countries were gone to attend the CENTO Council meeting. A joint statement by the three heads of States issued on 22 July 1964 in Ankara, named the new organization 'Regional Cooperation for Development' and resolved that appropriate means should be adopted to set up cooperation 'in all fields' in a spirit of 'regional cooperation.' As a members of RCD Pakistan and Turkey made a good progress like various roads for enlarged Pakistan-Turkish trade were explored.

Turkish traders took keen interest to import Pakistani products like surgical instruments, caustic soda, glycerin, castor oil, and products of stainless steel. On the other side Pakistani importers were keen to buy chemicals and textiles auxiliaries among other goods from Turkey. At the session of the Pakistan-Turkish Joint Commission for Economic and Technical Cooperation which was held in Islamabad (Pakistan) in March 1977, the two governments Pakistan and Turkey obligated to identify a number of areas of cooperation, counting agriculture and food.

That interest was shown at the time of launching joint ventures in the fields of commerce, industry and transportation. In October 2005 Turkish President (the then Prime Minister) Recep Tayyip Erdogan in a joint press conference with (the then Prime Minister of Pakistan) Shaukat Aziz announced this relief package from the Government of Turkey for their Pakistani brethren. The relief package would con-

tain financial assistance of \$100 million and relief goods worth \$50 million, including one million blankets, 50,000 tons of flour and 25,000 tons of sugar. Turkey also provided technical help in several other fields. Turkey also play its vital role in materializing the Trilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which was signed among the governments of Turkey, Afghanistan and Pakistan to enhance and augment trade and economic cooperation among all these three countries for the joint interest.

That MoU was signed during the seventh trilateral Summit of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Turkey in Ankara, it provided a base for the establishment of Trilateral Trade Council, and will further help for advancement of foreign investment, rising and enhancing commercial ties and reconnoitering possibilities for cooperation in services sectors among the three countries. The MoU would also assist swap of information focusing on their respective legislation on trade and economic activities. That 'Trilateral Trade Council' will supply a handy platform to talk about advancement of regional, bilateral and trilateral cooperation besides joint practices on the issues of commercial and economic relations, trade policy matters and trade facilitation among the three countries.

Turkish security and police experts would facilitate Pakistan to set up perfect security and surveillance systems in major cities, besides overhauling the recruitment and training schemes of cops in all the provinces, and take new techniques to check crimes, terrorism and lawlessness. In a new agreement called the Security Cooperation Protocol, signed between Pakistan and Turkey during Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's visit to Ankara, Islamabad has sought the brother Islamic country's help to overhaul the country's policing by improving its recruitment, training, command and control systems and equipment. According to sources, the Turkish experts would also support Pakistan in

developing a trustworthy CCTV-based security and surveillance system as was working in Ankara. As the Turkey and Pakistan are founding members of the Economic Cooperation Organization and part of the Developing 8 Countries (D-8) Organisation. Both nations have worked to negotiate a preferential trading agreement, aiming to considerably increase trade and investments, especially in transport, telecommunications, manufacturing, tourism and other industries. Both governments have sought to increase the volume of bilateral trade to a sizeable amount by 2016 Pakistani exports include rice, sesame seeds, leather, textiles, fabrics sports goods, and medical equipment.

Turkey's exports to Pakistan include wheat, chickpeas, lentils, diesel, chemicals, transport vehicles, machinery and energy products. Turkish private corporations have also invested significantly in industrial and construction projects developing highways, pipelines and canals. Pakistan and Turkey have maintained long-standing military ties, with Turkey supplying arms, military equipment and training Pakistani officers. In April 1954, Pakistan and Turkey signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation. Both countries, valued as important states in their regions, joined the US-led Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) aimed to bolster military and strategic cooperation and counter the spread of communism and Soviet influence in the region.

Turkey has openly supported Pakistan's stance on the Kashmir conflict and maintained political and military support during its wars with India. Pakistan has reciprocated by expressing support for Turkey's Policy on Northern Cyprus. Both nations have sought to expand cooperation to fight terrorism. Both countries are also members of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference. Pakistan is the second largest Muslim country in terms of population after Indonesia and its status as a declared nuclear power, being the only Islamic nation to have that status,

plays a part in its international role. Pakistan is also an important member of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC). Pakistan is an active member of the United Nations. Historically, its foreign policy has encompassed difficult relations with India; especially on the core-issue of Kashmir, over which it has fought two wars. However it has had long-standing close relations with its other neighbors Afghanistan, Iran and China, extensive security and economic interests in the Persian Gulf and wide-ranging bilateral relations with the United States and other Western countries. Once referring to the hardship faced by Pakistan because of the war on terror, Mr. Erdogan said that 'You are not alone in your campaign against terrorism and extremism as we too have suffered heavily from terror, given many martyrs. 'My government and the Turkish people stand by their Pakistani brothers as has always been the case; and are ready to help address all needs to the best of their abilities. The people of Pakistan value their dignity and honor.

They are resolute and will spare no sacrifice to defeat the designs of the enemies of Pakistan. Erdogan expressed the hope that Pakistan would overcome its problems through national reconciliation and solidarity. Turkey had been a part of the Friends of Democratic Pakistan group from the very beginning and had always underlined the need of redressing the issues confronting Pakistan because it was the key country for regional and global stability. Pakistan had always occupied a special place in the hearts and minds of the Turkish leadership, government and people. All eyes are on the forthcoming visit of the Turkish President to Pakistan which is about to kick off today. The two-day visit would be milestone towards combating terrorism and strengthening bilateral trade and cultural ties between the two countries.

The writer is a media consultant (Concluded)