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## NSC decides to close all educational institutions till April 5

Lawmakers demand joint session of parliament to discuss strategy against coronavirus

By Our Staff Correspondent

**ISLAMABAD:** The National Security Committee (NSC) on Friday decided to close all educational institutions across the country till April 5 to curb the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19).

The Sindh Health Department said that a 52-year-old patient, who had recently travelled to Karachi from Islamabad, tested positive for COVID-19. The department also said that they are actively tracing the contacts of the patient for screening.

This is the 15th confirmed case of the virus in Sindh, out of which two patients have recovered whereas the remaining are said to be in stable condition.

So far Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and the federal territories have not reported any confirmed case of novel coronavirus whereas five cases have been confirmed in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and one in Balochistan. At least 251 have been tested in Sindh, 110 in Punjab, 30 in KP, 18 in Balochistan, nine in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and 32 in GB.

Another report adds: The lawmakers from the government and opposition parties in the National Assembly on Friday demanded the government to call joint session of the parliament to discuss

Speaking on the floor of the Lower House of the Parliament, former prime minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said that a joint session of Parliament should be summoned immediately to discuss the coronavirus to take steps at government level for controlling its spread.

"The government and the opposition should sit together to discuss the issue and find out the solution to control it which had already affected the whole world", he said.

Abbasi said opposition would not do politics on the issue of Coronavirus, the member of the opposition parties are ready to sit with the government to discuss the solution of the issue currently confronting the country and world over.

However, he was of the view that till date the government had not taken serious steps to control the deadly virus. He said Coronavirus had disturbed the economy of the world and it might bring negative impact of Pakistan's economy.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister of Federal Education and Professional Training, Shafiqat Mahmood said 22 confirmed cases of coronavirus had been reported in the country so far.

He said screening of Coronavirus had been put in place at all the airports and about one million had been screened by

was taking all possible steps to control the coronavirus in the country" he added.

The government was well-prepared to prevent the deadly corona virus which badly spread other countries, adding, government had taken adequate measures to ensure that the disease did not spread further.

He said the government has taken all-out preparations to provide necessary treatment if anyone in the country is found infected.

Talking about schools, he said, coronavirus situation in the country was not serious enough that schools need to be closed.

About not bringing back Pakistani students from the China, he said it was difficult decision, but it had been taken in the best interest of the country.

He said government of China had advised Pakistan not to take back the students from the affected province as the China government had provided all possible assistance and medical care to them.

He said emergency had been declared in Punjab while Sindh government had announced to close schools and universities in the province as preventive measures.

The minister said he had discussed the issue with the representative of



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan chairs a meeting to review progress on Federal-Funded Development projects in Karachi.

## PSX turns around, gains 104 points to close at 36,060

**ISLAMABAD:** Despite market halt in the morning, the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) Friday turned around and noted bullish trend as KSE 100 index closed at 36,060.88 points as compared to 35,956.69 points on the last working day with the positive change of 104.19 points (0.29 %).

A total of 290,470,770 shares were traded compared to the trade 230,698,940 shares during the previous day, whereas the value of shares traded during the day stood at 13,968 billion; compared to Rs 9,837 billion during st trading day.

As many as 354 companies' transacted shares in the Stock Market /Wednesday, out of which 158 recorded gain and 182 sustained losses whereas the share price of 14 companies remained unchanged.

The three top traded companies were, Bank of Punjab with a volume of 1,115,500 shares and price per share at Rs 10.10, Maple Leaf with a volume of 25,705,000 and price per share of Rs 7.58 and Fauji Cement with a volume of 20,948,500 and price per share of Rs 7.18.

Earlier, the PSX triggered Market halt for 45 minutes due to 4 percent decline in KSE-30 index at 09:25 a.m. All the equity based derivative mar-

kets remained suspended for 45 minutes.

Pakistan Stock Exchange as a front-line regulator has introduced market halt action with approval of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) in accordance with international best practices as a means to safeguard the interests of investors and stakeholders.

This is a standard protocol for risk management purposes which is triggered when the KSE30 index moves 4% either way and remains there for 5 consecutive minutes.

"Market halt" procedure has been introduced by PSX as a front line regulator in line with international best practices and approved by SECP in PSX regulations in December of 2019.

The objective of introducing market halt is to safeguard investors and market participants during volatile markets. During this halt, trading in all securities remains temporarily suspended in order to ensure a cooling off period and run a mark to market activity as a risk management measure.

PSX remains at the forefront of the Capital market to provide a fair, transparent, and efficient marketplace for the benefit of investors, issuers and all stakeholders. —APP

## SECP reviews stock market situation with CEOs

**ISLAMABAD:** The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan's (SECP), team led by the Chairman SECP and Commissioner (SM) held a detailed meeting with the CEOs of Pakistan Stock Exchange, National Clearing Company and Central Depository Company on Friday morning, to review and discuss the stock market situation, risk management and business continuity.

The index based market halts were triggered for the third time during this week, said a press release issued here. This cooling-off period gave an opportunity to investors to align their trading strategy and collection of margins by the Clearing Company. Participants of the meeting affirmed that risk management system was functioning efficiently and margins were being collected timely. Market operations were running smoothly as a whole. The CEOs further apprised that their business continuity plans and disaster recovery setup was in place based on SECP's earlier in-

"We are committed to maintaining a vigorous, free media, which will evolve its own rules to ensure responsible journalism both in electronic and print media... [We will] ensure freedom of the press."

— PTI Manifesto 2018 (Page 16)

**MR PRIME MINISTER, WHY DO THE ACTIONS OF YOUR GOVERNMENT DIFFER SO RADICALLY FROM YOUR OWN PRONOUNCEMENTS AND THOSE OF THE PTI MANIFESTO?**



### A Prime Minister's Vision...

"The media is a major pillar of our democracy... my party owes its very existence to a free media... [we have to ensure] a rationalisation of government advertisements and ensure they are not used as a tool to harass or bribe the independent media... [we have to] respect media professionals. Had it not been for them, the story of your struggle would not have reached out to every household in Pakistan... no one has served democracy the way our journalists and the media have..." Excerpted from policy statements of Prime Minister Imran Khan and the PTI Party Manifesto

### ...And the Reality of the Policies of his Advisors

During the tenure of the PTI Government, as a result of an acute economic crisis, private sector advertising has spiralled downwards by 50%, while advertising by the Federal, Punjab and KPK Governments has been slashed by 70% across the board... Instead of attempting to resolve the crisis, over Rs 6 billion of advertising dues owed to the media (some since 2002) have as yet not been paid despite the Prime Minister's firm public promise and clear instructions to his government on May 16, 2019 that arrears should be paid before Eid-ul-Fitr (June 5). Over half these dues have already been authenticated by the government... During this period, several television channels and newspaper outlets have been forced either to close down completely or lay off over 12,000 journalists and media professionals as a result of near bankruptcy...

**MR PRIME MINISTER, A FREE MEDIA IS NOT YOUR ENEMY. ARE YOUR ADVISORS TRYING TO MISLEAD YOU?**



## Increase in exports vital for economic uplift: PM Govt ready to play its role in Karachi progress

**ISLAMABAD:** Prime Minister Imran Khan says federal government is committed to play its due role in development and progress of Karachi in view of public welfare.

He was chairing a review meeting in Islamabad on Friday regarding completed and ongoing projects of federal government for the development of Karachi.

The Prime Minister was briefed about the progress on 162 billion rupees development package announced by the Federal Government. The Prime Minister said provision of civic facilities and development in proportion with Karachi's population were ignored in past.

He said increase in exports is vital for economic development and it is necessary to improve port and transportation facilities in Karachi to achieve this objective. He said development of Karachi and the country is interlinked, adding Karachi is an engine of growth in country's economy.

Imran called for immediate focus to issues pertaining to clean drinking water, sewerage, and water pollution. It was decided in the meeting to reorganize the Sindh Infrastructure Development Company and enhance its capacity to timely implementation of development projects.

A detailed briefing was also given about various projects, including construction of flyover on Jinnah Avenue, progress on Operationalization of Green Line, different development projects being completed in other parts of Sindh under Prime Minister's Package, big projects under Public Private Partnership like water filtration plants, revamping of Lyari Expressway, and extension of Karachi Northern Bypass. The meeting was informed that Sakhi Hassan, Five Star, and KDA flyovers, 6.4 kilometer-long road and a portion of Manghopir road were inaugurated last week.

It was told that infrastructure of Green Line Bus Rapid Transit System will be completed by March next year. While, 95 percent work on water supply line with a diameter of 66 inches from Banaras to Jam Chakro has been completed and rest of the work will be accomplished by next

month.

Regarding upgradation of fire-fighting system of Karachi Municipal Corporation, it was told that so far over one billion rupees have been spent on this project under which fifty fire tenders will be included.

Another report adds: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Friday said that progress of the country is linked with the progress of Karachi and the city of Quaid plays a role of "engine of growth" for the country's economy.

He said this while presiding over a meeting in Islamabad regarding completed and ongoing projects of federal government for development of Karachi.

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar, Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Syed Ali Haider Zaidi, Governor Sindh Imran Ismail, concerned federal and provincial secretaries and other senior officials attended the meeting.

The prime minister said federal government is committed to play its due role in development and progress of Karachi in view of public welfare. He was also briefed about the progress on 162 billion rupees development package announced by the federal government.

PM Imran said provision of civic facilities and development in proportion with Karachi's population were ignored in past. He said increase in exports is vital for economic development and it is necessary to improve port and transportation facilities in Karachi to achieve this objective. He said development of Karachi and the country is interlinked. He said Karachi is an engine of growth in country's economy. He called for immediate focus to issues pertaining to clean drinking water, sewerage, and water pollution.

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## 36 Brigadiers promoted to Major-Gen

By Our Staff Correspondent

**RAWALPINDI:** The Promotion Board of Pakistan Army, presided over by Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Friday approved the promotion of 36 Brigadiers to the rank of Major General.

According to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the meeting to this regard was held here at General Headquarters which was presided over by COAS General Qamar Javed Bajwa.

Around 25 Brigadiers raised to higher rank belonged to various corps whereas 11 Brigadier were from Army Medical Corps.

Those promoted include: Brigadier Faheem Amer, Brigadier Rashid Mahmood, Brigadier Abdul Moeed, Brigadier Shahid Manzoor, Brigadier Arshad Mehmood, Brig M Atif Mansha, Brigadier Iftikhar Hassan Chaudhary, Brigadier M Umer Bashir, Brigadier Asad-ur-Rehman, Brigadier Wajid Aziz, Brig Kamran Tabrez Savera, Brig M Raza Aizad, Brig Ch Amir Ajmal, Brig Jawwad Ahmed Qazi, Brigadier Ehsan Ali, Brig Kamran Nazir, Brig Shabeer Narejo, Brigadier Adil Rehmani, Brigadier Javed Dost Chandio, Brig Syed Asif Hussain, Brigadier M Ishaq Khattak, Brig Ahmad Bilal, Brigadier M Shahbaz Tabassum, Brigadier Zafar Iqbal and Brig Imran Ullah.

Those approved from Army Medical Corps include: Brigadier Mohsin Muhammad Qureshi, Brigadier Zaheer Akhtar, Brig Mahmood Sultan, Brigadier Hafze-ud-Din, Brigadier Salman Saleem, Brigadier M Zafar Ali, Brigadier Syed Khuram Shahzad, Brigadier Bilal Umair, Brigadier Atiq-ur-Rehman Slehria, Brigadier Rao Ali Shan Khan and Brig Abeera Choudry.