

Coronavirus

FBISE announces SSC-II results under govt's promotion policy

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (FBISE) on Monday announced the results of Secondary School Certificate (SSC) Part-II Annual Exams 2020 under the promotion policy of federal government formulated in wake of novel corona virus.

This year SSC Annual Examination 2020 could not be conducted completely due to corona virus while the results had been prepared under the "Promotion Policy of Federal Government".

Overall the girls remained dominant and clinched top slots in 2020 SSC Exams, it was announced in a ceremony held at FBISE which was attended by the Parliamentary Secretary for Federal Education and Professional Training Wajih Akram as chief guest, Chairman FBISE, Rao Atiq Ahmad, position holder students, parents and teachers. Speaking on the occasion, Parliamentary Secretary Wajih Akram congratulated the students, parents and teachers for achieving the high success in SSC exams and wished them good luck in

the future. She said that the announcement of results, conduction of exams and opening of schools were major challenges for the government in wake of pandemic coronavirus. Today's SSC result announcement was made possible by the efforts of government which took decision in Inter Provincial Minister Conference (IPEMC), she added. IPEMC, Wajih said, formulate a special promotion policy under which the SSC students have been promoted without exams due to COVID-19. Lauding the Madrassah students for achieving positions in SSC exams, Wajih said that they could get professional education in future. She said that new curriculum was being introduced by next years.

Earlier, Chairman FBISE Rao Atiq Ahmad in his welcoming address said the result was available on the FBISE website, while the same has already been conveyed through SMS to all the candidates. The result cards of the students shall be dispatched to them at their addresses or respective institutions, he added.

She said that federal board had led all the boards across the country preparing and announcing of re-

sults under government's promotion policy.

He further said that SSC Annual Examination 2020 was not conducted completely due to coronavirus. The result prepared under the "Promotion Policy of Federal Government", he told.

The students have been awarded marks in 10th class as per their performance in the 9th exams, he said adding that 30 percent extra mark had also been given the students.

According to the detail, a total 93304 regular, private and ex-candidates appeared in the SSC Part II examinations 2020, out of which 85151 could pass the exams with percentage of 91.26 percent.

In Science Group, the first position was shared by Khunsha Nisha Yaqoob Malik from Islamabad College for Girls, F-6/2 Islamabad and Menahil Iman from Army Public School and College for Girls Range Road Westridge-III Rawalpindi Cantt. with 1097 marks, while the second position was also clinched jointly by the two students including, Faheem Abbas from Garrison Cadet College Kohat and Zartasha Abbasi from Garrison Academy Kharian



KARACHI: A lady health worker administers polio vaccine drops during a polio vaccination door-to-door campaign. —Online

Retired teaching, non-teaching staff suffers due to prolonged delays in issuance of pension dues

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: A number of retired teaching and non-teaching staff members of educational institutions working under Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) were facing hurdles and prolonged delays in payments of their pension dues, despite the strict directions of Supreme Court of Pakistan regarding early finalization of pension cases.

Muhammad Latif, Upper Division Clerk (UDC) of Islamabad Model Postgraduate College (IMPC) H-8 who retired on February 01, 2020 said, "My pension papers were sent to Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) on March 16, 2020 for onward transmission to Account General Pakistan Revenue (AGPR) but still pending with the FDE. I am a kidney patient and on dialysis for the last three years. I am supposed to get 65% of my pay as temporary pension. The amount, if I could get, will help make my life little bit easier in the prevailing lockdown situation", he said while talking to APP.

Tahir Iqbal, a retired Vice Principal of the same college said, "The college office sent my pension papers to FDE on April 21, 2020 but due to administrative bottlenecks, the case is not yet ready to transmit to AGPR for final payment. I have been made shuttle between college and FDE. Liaquat Ali, another retired Associate Profes-

sor from Islamabad Model College for Boys, (IMCB) H-9, told "I got retired on April 14, 2020 from my service after awarding time scale of BPS-20. I applied to AGPR for revision of my pay slip of BPS-20 which has not been issued yet."

"After getting a revised pay slip, a Last Pay Certificate (LPC) will be needed to prepare my pension papers. So my pension case is still at initial stage. A lengthy process of completion and verification of related documents is ahead and I am concerned how much time it will take", he said. The process of preparation of pension papers of Zair Hussain, Associate Professor Zahir Rehman, Assistant Professor retired from IMCB, H-9 in March and April respectively were also at initial stages.

A female Associate Professor Danish Amjad facing delay in issuance of her pension dues since retirement in May 2020 emphasized that "There should be a respectful way of payment of retirement benefits". She suggested that process should be started one year before the superannuation of the government servants so that pensions may be sanctioned well in time before the retirement.

Unfortunately, the process of preparing the papers of pension starts after the retirement and it takes too much time due to administrative hurdles and the government servants have to move from pillar to post to get their dues

Medium flood level likely in River Jhelum at Mangla: FFD

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The Flood Forecasting Division (FFD) has said that under the influence of prevailing weather system, sharp peaks upto Medium Flood Level are expected in River Jhelum at Mangla (Inflows), while moderate flooding in the Nullahs of Rivers Ravi & Chenab including Hill Torrents of D G Khan Division, besides, urban flooding in Gujranwala, Faisalabad & Lahore Cities during the period

July 20-22.

All main rivers of Indus River System are flowing with "Normal Flows" and there is no riverine flood situation in the country.

The combined water storage of Tarbela, Chashma and Mangla reservoirs is 7.548 MAF (55.44% of the 13.614 MAF), which somehow is higher than the corresponding value of last year i.e. 6.005 MAF.

However, the storage of Tarbela Dam is 1.147 MAF Vs 3.092 MAF of last year due to fluctuations of temperature in upper catchment of

Indus River. Both Tarbela Dam Management authorities and IRSA are advised for judicious releases as per approved SOPs.

As reported by Flood Forecasting Division (FFD), Lahore, moderate moist currents from Arabian Sea are penetrating into upper parts of the country upto 6000 feet with Seasonal Low continues to prevail over Northern Balochistan.

Westerly Wave trough earlier over Northeastern Afghanistan has slightly moved and lies over Northern parts of Pakistan.

United Arab Emirates launches mission to Mars

DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates (UAE) launched its first mission to Mars early as it strives to develop its scientific and technology capabilities and move away from its reliance on oil.

The Hope Probe blasted off from Japan's Tanegashima Space Center at 1.58am UAE time (6.58am Japanese time) for a seven-month journey to the red planet, where it will orbit and send back data about the atmosphere.

A live feed of the launch showed the rocket carrying the unmanned probe, known as "Al-Amal" in Arabic, lifting off.

Five minutes after launch, the rocket carrying the probe was on course, carrying out the first separation of its flight.

The first Arab mission to Mars was initially due to launch on Jul 14, but has been delayed twice due to bad weather.

There are currently eight active missions exploring Mars; some orbit the planet and some have landed on its surface. China and the United States also plan to send another this year, taking advantage of a period when the Earth and Mars are nearest.

In October, Mars will be a comparatively short 62.07 million km from Earth, according to NASA.

Hope is expected to reach Mars' orbit by February 2021, marking the 50th anniversary of the unification of



the UAE, an alliance of seven emirates.

The unmanned Emirati probe, known as "Al-Amal" in Arabic, is one of three spacecraft

The unmanned Emirati probe, known as "Al-Amal" in Arabic, is one of three spacecraft racing to Mars, including Tianwen-1 from China and Mars 2020 from the United States AFP/Giuseppe CACACE

Unlike the two other Mars ventures scheduled for this year, it will not land on the Red Planet, but instead orbit it for a whole Martian year, or 687 days.

While the objective of the Mars mission is to provide a comprehensive image of the weather dynamics in the Red Planet's atmosphere, the probe is a foundation for a much bigger goal - building a human settlement on Mars within the next 100 years. The UAE also wants the project to serve as a source of inspiration for Arab youth, in a region too often wracked by sectarian conflicts and economic crises.

The Hope Probe is expected to detach from the launch rocket about an hour after blast-off.

That's when the real excitement will begin, UAE Mars mission's deputy project manager Sarah al-Amiri told AFP before the launch.

"In my heart of hearts, I'm looking forward to the initial 24 hours after separation, and that's where we see the results of our work," said Amiri, who is also Minister of State for Advanced Sciences. —AFP

UK to suspend Hong Kong extradition treaty

LONDON: Britain will suspend its extradition treaty with Hong Kong in a further escalation of its dispute with China over the introduction of a security law in the former colony, British newspapers reported.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab, who on Sunday accused China of "gross" human rights violations, will announce the suspension of the treaty in parliament, the Times and Daily Telegraph newspapers said, citing sources.

Britain's foreign office declined to comment.

Such a move would be another nail in the coffin of what former prime minister David Cameron has cast as a "golden era" of ties with the world's second-largest economy.

But London has been dismayed by a crackdown in Hong Kong and the

perception that China did not tell the whole truth over the novel coronavirus outbreak.

Last week Prime Minister Boris Johnson ordered Huawei Technologies equipment to be purged completely from Britain's 5G network by the end of 2027.

China has accused Britain of pandering to the United States.

Earlier on Sunday, China's ambassador to Britain warned of a tough response if London attempted to sanction any of its officials, as some lawmakers in Johnson's Conservative Party have demanded.

"If UK government goes that far to impose sanctions on any individual in China, China will certainly make a resolute response to it," Liu Xiaoming told the BBC's Andrew Marr Show.

"You've seen what happens in the United States - they sanction Chinese officials, we sanction their senators, their officials. I do not want to see this tit-for-tat happen in... China-UK relations."

Raab told the same programme he would not be drawn on future additions to Britain's sanctions list but he denied that Britain would be too weak to challenge China through this channel.

Britain says the new national security law breaches agreements made before the 1997 handover of Hong Kong to Chinese rule, and that China is crushing the freedoms that have helped make Hong Kong one of the world's biggest financial hubs.

Hong Kong and Beijing officials have said the law is vital to plug holes in national security defences exposed

New COVID-19 cases in Russia lowest since late April

MOSCOW: Russia, the world's fourth hardest-hit country in terms of coronavirus infections, reported fewer than 6,000 new cases for the first time since the end of April.

Health authorities also said 85 people died over the past 24 hours - the lowest daily fatality figure since May 4.

The country's COVID-19 death toll is now 12,427 while the number of infections stands at 777,486.

Russia's fatality rate has remained low compared to other badly-hit countries, raising speculation that Moscow could be underreporting figures.

Russian authorities began easing anti-virus measures in June ahead of a massive World War II military parade in Moscow and a nationwide vote on constitutional reforms that now allow President Vladimir Putin to stay in power until 2036.

Both events were initially postponed due to the epidemic.

Moscow plans to open cinemas and theatres on Aug 1. In the capital, masks are mandatory in stores and on public transport but not in the streets. The country reported 5,940 new infections on Monday. —AFP

Saudi King Salman admitted to hospital for medical checkup



RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's 84-year-old ruler King Salman bin Abdulaziz has been admitted to King Faisal Specialist hospital in the capital Riyadh for medical checks, the state news agency (SPA) reported early.

It said the king, who has ruled the world's largest oil exporter and the close US ally since 2015, was admitted for inflammation of the gallbladder, without giving further details.

King Salman spent more than two-and-a-half years as the Saudi Crown Prince and deputy premier from June 2012 before becoming king.

He had also served as the governor of Riyadh region for more than 50 years.

The 34-year-old Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman, widely known by his initials MBS, is the de facto ruler and has introduced It said the king, who has ruled the world's largest oil exporter and the close US ally since 2015, was admitted for inflammation of the gallbladder, King Salman spent more than two-and-a-half years as the Saudi Crown Prince and deputy premier from June 2012 before becoming king without giving further details a raft of reforms to transform the kingdom's economy and end its "addiction" to oil. —Reuters

EU chief urges compromise on COVID-19 rescue package

BRUSSELS: Squabbling EU leaders held a make-or-break dinner to try to break three days of deadlock in talks over a huge coronavirus rescue package.

EU Council President Charles Michel, the summit host, gathered the 27 leaders for dinner after a day of small group meetings that failed to yield a major breakthrough in the search for a deal. He made a last-ditch proposal for the €750 billion (US\$860 billion) rescue deal aimed at bridging a gaping rift with a coalition of "Frugals" - the Netherlands, Sweden, Austria, Denmark and Finland.

The Frugals, led by Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte, have sought to slash the scale of the package of loans and grants.

As fears rose that the summit would collapse without agreement, Michel suggested cutting the grant portion of the deal to €400 billion - down from his initial proposal of 500 billion - and raising the loan part to 350 billion, up from 250 billion. In a heartfelt speech over dinner, Michel reminded leaders of the devastating human cost of the pandemic - 600,000 dead including 200,000 in Europe - and urged them to come together to complete a "mission impossible". —AFP

Mexico reports 5,311 new COVID-19 cases, 296 more deaths

MEXICO CITY: Mexico's Health Ministry reported 5,311 new confirmed COVID-19 infections and 296 additional fatalities, bringing the total in the country to 344,224 cases and 39,184 deaths.

The government has said the real number of infected people is likely significantly higher than the confirmed

France says up to 500 COVID-19 clusters but no 'second wave' yet

PARIS: French authorities have reported 400 to 500 active coronavirus outbreak clusters but there are no signs of an imminent "second wave", Health Minister Olivier Veran said.

Many of the current virus clusters involve abattoirs or other contained

professional settings such as old age homes, he said.

Others had resulted from family reunions during the summer holidays. "At this point we are very far from a second wave," Veran told Franceinfo radio, as face masks were made mandatory in all enclosed public spaces including shops,

covered markets and administrative buildings.

"The goal is not to worry people excessively, but to keep them on their guard," he said. Nationwide the "R" number indicating the viral transmission rate now stands at 1.2, meaning 10 infected people will infect. —AFP

COVID-19 causes poaching spike in Congo's Virunga park

KINSHASA: When rangers in Congo's Virunga National Park discovered three-year-old baby gorilla Theodore tangled in a poacher's snare this month, they knew they had to act fast.

Theodore's left hand was caught in the illegal trap, potentially restricting blood flow and causing infection if left untended. But before they could do anything, they had to deal with his overprotective parents.

The rangers sedated Theodore's mother, distracted his 270kg silverback father, laid the furry baby on the leafy jungle floor and got to work. —AFP

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