

Steps afoot to provide quality internet in merged districts: Bangash

From Our Staff Correspondent

PESHAWAR: Advisor to Chief Minister on Science and Information Technology, Ziaullah Bangash on Saturday said that the provision of quality internet services across the province including the newly merged districts was among top priorities of the provincial government.

Ziaullah Khan Bangash said this while presiding over the review meeting of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Technology Board regarding the provision of internet facility in all the districts of the province.

The meeting was attended by IT Board Director Finance Muhammad Muneem, Deputy Director Imran Khan, Project Manager Jawad Khan and representatives of various Telecommunication organizations and other concerned officials.

Ziaullah Bangash said that provision of quality and fast speed internet services in all the districts of the province was the need of time to provide more opportunities of people to play their role in the develop-



ment of the province and creating more job opportunities.

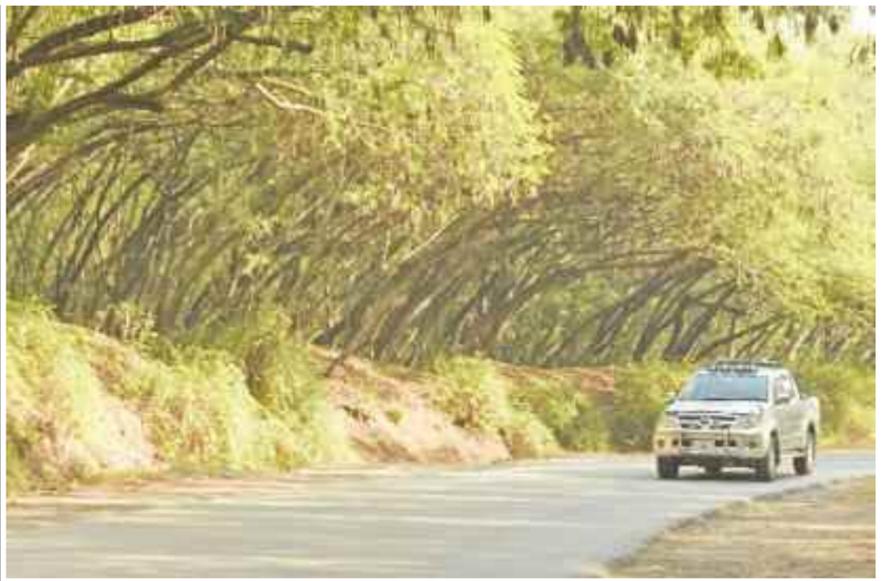
He said that provincial government has provided all the necessary documents to the federal government, adding the issue would be resolved by this year. He said that provincial and federal government including all telecommunication stakeholders are on the same page in providing telephone and internet services to the people in merged districts and other areas of the province. Ziaullah Bangash informed that government was also taking steps for provision of internet services to tourists' centers for the promotion of tourism in the province. Ziaullah Bangash while referring to the Universal Service Fund said Managing Director, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information

Technology Board, Sahibzada Ai Mahmood was in contact concerned officials and positive outcome was expected by June this year.

A representative of Pakistan Telecommunication Limited (PTCL) informed the meeting that PTCL has completed provision of internet services through optical fiber in almost all the districts of the province. He said keeping in view tourism importance internet at tourist destination, PTCL is providing services from Malakand to Bahrain to facilitate tourists.

He informed that optical fiber has been laid in Khar Tehsil of Bajaur district and providing internet services in some areas of Kurram and Orakzai districts. He said that Wana, Miramshah and Shakai areas of Waziristan were also being provided internet facility through optical fiber.

Other representatives of telecommunication organization also briefed the advisor about their services. Funds have also been released by Universal Service Fund to two mobile phone companies to provide 3G internet service in Chitral, Lower Dir and Upper Dir.



ISLAMABAD: A vehicle is on its way at Shakarparian Road. —Online

Virus deaths data to be collected through survey: Commissioner

From Our Staff Correspondent

ABBOTTABAD: Commissioner Hazara Division Riaz Khan Mahsood on Saturday said data of deaths caused by COVID-19 pandemic would be collected through survey in Hazara Division.

He said this while chairing a meeting to discuss issue regarding COVID-19, anti-polio drive, dengue fever and forest cutting in Hazara division.

The commissioner stated that the survey would reveal number of people died of Coronavirus and number of those who died of other diseases. He directed the concerned sections to provide required data within a week.

Riaz Khan said anti-polio drive would start from January 11 and continue till January 15.

While briefing the commissioner Hazara division, health department officials said that during the five-day drive 906881 children under five years of age would be vaccinated in the division whereas 4315 teams would immunize children on 119 bus stands and 391 designated centers and monitored by 1375 supervisors.

Riaz Khan emphasized that no child under age of five would left in the district from immunization.

He directed the concerned Deputy Commissioner and District Health Officer to submit data in time and warned that action would be taken against those who submit data late.

If the anti-polio teams would face any issue, they must contact with concerned District Commissioner or District Health Officer.

Commissioner Hazara while discussing illegal cut-

ting of forest said they have imposed section 144 on cutting trees and strict action would be taken against violators.

MoHR to complete institutional strengthening project in Feb: The Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR) project "Institutional Strengthening" worth Rs 59.7 million would be completed in February this year.

The project, started in 2019 was aimed to create a comprehensive mechanism to strengthen Development Wing of the ministry to implementation current and future development initiatives, a MoHR official told APP.

The project was developed for reforming and automation of MoHR as per Federal Government's strategy to improve efficiency and accountability of the Federal Government through establishment of "E-Office Suit" in Federal Ministries, he added.

The official added that the scheme was started to improve internal communications and bring efficiency, accuracy, effectiveness, transparency, and accountability in decision making.

He mentioned that the project also focused to implement E-office Application Modules for human resource, procurement, inventory, project management, budgeting and finance to enable MoHR to perform day to day office activities effectively and efficiently.

The initiative would also help undertake strategic planning, research and new development initiatives for organizational goals and institutional objectives.

He mentioned that it would also help strengthen and upgrade existing ICT infrastructure of main Ministry by providing latest IT equipments, logistic support and

NCPC reunifies 1,364 children in three years

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: National Child Protection Center (NCPC) has reunified 1,364 children in three years from 2015 to 2018 as the Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR) has made significant progress in protecting child rights in the country.

According to document issued by MoHR, Zainab Alert, Recovery and Response Bill, Ban on Child Labour in ICT had already been enacted to protect the rights of chil-

dren during the year 2020.

NCPC has imparted education to 1492 children during five years from 2015-2020.

According to its data, in five years 416 children were reunified and 483 children had been provided non-formal education facilities.

According to data in 2015, around 300 children had been reunified, in 2016, 21 children, in 2017, 07, in 2018 21, in 2019, 19 child were facilitated and 48 children were facilitated in 2020.

The data showed that in 2015, 191 children have been imparted non-formal education, in 2016, 150, in 2017, 60 children have been facilitated and in 2018, 79 children were provided non-formal education, in 2019, 125 children and 60 children in 2020 were facilitated by NCPC.

As in 2015, 88 children were facilitate in mainstreaming, in 2016, 39 children were facilitate by NCPC and in 2017, 13 were children, in 2018 children, in 2019, 23 and 23 children in 2020 were facilitated.

UK reactivates emergency hospitals as virus cases surge

LONDON: British health officials have reactivated emergency hospitals that were built at the start of the pandemic to handle a surge in COVID-19 cases that is putting existing wards under extreme pressure, particularly in London.

The United Kingdom has recorded more than 50,000 new daily cases of the virus for the past four days, driven in part by a new variant that is much more infectious, and a rise in the number of people who are dying each day.

Medics have warned they are struggling to cope, especially when so many colleagues are off sick or having to self isolate, and paramedics and nurses have had to treat patients in ambulances because of a shortage of available beds.

An email to staff from the Royal London Hospital said it was now in "disaster medicine mode".

A spokeswoman for the National Health Service (NHS) said the Nightingale hospital in London was being prepared to reopen if needed.

"In anticipation of pressures rising from the spread of the new variant infection, the NHS London Region were asked to ensure the Nightingale was reactivated and ready to admit patients should it be needed," she said. "That process is



under way."

The hospital, based in the Excel Exhibition Centre in London's Docklands and named after Victorian nursing pioneer Florence Nightingale, will be staffed by London medics with additional support from the military and partners in the voluntary sector if needed, the spokeswoman said.

The Nightingale hospitals are temporary sites built with the help of the military in a matter of days in March and April when hospitals first struggled to cope with the influx of COVID-19 patients. China's relationship with the United States has reached a "new crossroads" and could get back on the right track fol-

lowing a period of "unprecedented difficulty", senior diplomat Wang Yi said in official comments published.

Relations between the world's two biggest economies have come under increasing strain amid a series of disputes over trade, human rights and the origins of COVID-19. In its latest move, the United States blacklisted dozens of Chinese companies it said had ties to the military.

Wang, China's state councilor and foreign minister, said in a joint interview with Xinhua news agency and other state media outlets that recent US policies towards China had harmed the interests of both countries and brought huge dangers to

New Year arrives with US hitting 20 million COVID-19 cases

WASHINGTON: The United States marked the New Year by passing the extraordinary milestone of 20 million COVID-19 cases, after global celebrations welcoming in 2021 were largely muted by the pandemic.

The US has floundered in its efforts to quell the virus, which is spreading rapidly across the country and has already caused over 346,000 deaths - by far the highest national death toll.

Worldwide hopes that COVID-19 vaccines will bring a rapid end to the pandemic in 2021 have been shaken by the slow start to the US vaccination program, which has been beset by logistical problems and overstretched hospitals.

Nearly 2.8 million people in the US have already received their first jabs, but the figure fell well behind the 20 million inoculations that President



Donald Trump's administration promised by the end of 2020.

The desperate race to vaccinate is set to dominate the coming year, with the coronavirus already killing at least 1.8 million people since emerging in China in December 2019, according

to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP.

German firm BioNTech said Friday it was racing to ramp up production of its COVID-19 jab to fill a shortage left by the lack of other approved vaccines in Europe. —AFP

Opera to return to Sydney after virus hiatus

SYDNEY: The finishing touches were being put on a glitzy show at the Sydney Opera House, as the venue prepared to host an opera crowd for the first time since March.

"The Merry Widow" will open on Tuesday to masked audiences with up to 75 per cent capacity, in a sign of hope for a performing arts industry crippled by the pandemic, artistic director Lyndon Terracini told AFP.

"Walking back into the theatre was a very emotional time for everyone involved," he said.

"I think throughout this year, other opera houses will be opening very soon and people will be coming back to the theatre with a sense of hope."

Thanks to Australia's success in suppressing the virus, crowds inside venues - including the Sydney Opera House - have been permitted in the country's most populous city for months.

But even as the performers readied for their opening night, an outbreak in the city forced officials to tighten restrictions - including a new mandate on mask-wearing on public transport and in many indoor settings from midnight on Saturday. —AFP

Bangkok imposes partial lockdown to combat COVID-19



BANGKOK: Bangkok's nightlife will go quiet as a ban on bars, nightclubs and restaurant alcohol sales goes into effect among a raft of restrictions aimed at curbing the kingdom's rising coronavirus toll.

Thailand initially appeared to have escaped the worst of the virus, registering just under 4,000 total cases in November, despite being the second country to detect an infection in January.

But an outbreak last month at a massive seafood market has spiralled into a resurgence, with infections now detected in 53 of the kingdom's 77 provinces. By Saturday the caseload had jumped to more than 7,300. Thailand recorded 216 new COVID-19 cases and one death on Saturday. In Bangkok, where more than 2,600 active cases have been detected, city authorities acted swiftly and announced a partial lockdown to go into effect on Saturday. Bars and nightclubs, boxing stadiums, cockfighting rings and massage parlours - as well as beauty salons and gyms - will be among a slew of businesses affected. The capital also announced yesterday that public schools will be closed for two weeks, while more than a dozen virus checkpoints were set up Saturday across the city.

"We don't want to use extreme measures like a lockdown and putting up a curfew, but we need a stronger medicine to prevent the new surge," said Taweessin Visanuyothin, a spokesman for Thailand's COVID-19 taskforce. Nationwide restrictions and closures are expected to go into effect from Jan 4 to Feb 1, he added, allowing a two-day "grace period" for business owners to prepare. —AFP

BioNTech warn of virus vaccine supply gaps

BERLIN: BioNTech is working flat out with partner Pfizer to boost production of their COVID-19 vaccine, its founders said, warning there would be gaps in supply until other vaccines were rolled out. The German biotech startup has led the vaccine race but its shot has been slow to arrive in the European Union (EU) due to relatively slow approval from the bloc's health. —AP

COURT NOTICE

In the Court of Sohail Rafique Civil Judge Wazirabad
Suit For Declaration Title Sakina Bibi Versus Khadim Hussain etc To Shehnaz Bi Bi W/o ,arshad Mehmood ,Muhammad Usman SS/o ,Shabana Bibi ,Rukhsana Khadim ,Rizwana Khadim ,Sehrish Khadim D/o Khadim Hussain S/o Jalaludin Caste Cheema ,Revenue Officer Halqa Mozay Abu-Al-Fateh Wali ,Patwari Halqa Mozay Abu-Al-Fateh Wali All Are R/o Abu-Al-Fateh Wali Wazirabad Distt Gujranwala Where as service of defendants/respondents is not going to be effected through ordinary means. So, service of defendants / respondents is effected through proclamation in the newspaper ,You defendants/ respondents are directed to appear in the court in person or through counsel on 16-12-2020 at 9:00am failing which exparte proceedings shall be initiated against you Civil Judge Wazirabad

Turkey finds 15 people carrying UK virus variant



ISTANBUL: Turkey's health minister says the country has identified 15 people who carry a highly contagious coronavirus variant that was discovered in the United Kingdom.

In a statement, Health Minister Fahrettin Koca said the strain was found in travelers arriving from the UK. He said they were in quarantine, along with people they had been in contact with. He said the strain was not identified in passengers from elsewhere.

Turkey suspended flights with the UK

along with other countries in late December upon discovery of the new strain's spread and quarantined at least 4,603 passengers. Turkey also began to require a negative PCR test result for all international arrivals last week.

Turkey has among the worst infection rates in the world but official statistics show the 7-day average of daily infections has dropped to around 15,000 from above 30,000 since evening curfews and weekend lockdowns were instituted in early December. —AFP

COURT NOTICE

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Suit For Declaration Title Sajida Bibi Versus Muhammad Ilyas etc To Muhammad Ilyas Son Of Shahnwaz Caste Rajput R/o Baghrian Kuhna Tehsil Wazirabad Distt Gujranwala Where as service of defendants/respondents is not going to be effected through ordinary means. So, service of defendants / respondents is effected through proclamation in the newspaper ,You defendants/ respondents are directed to appear in the court in person or through counsel on 11-12-2020 at 9:00am failing which exparte proceedings shall be initiated against you Civil Judge Wazirabad