

APTMA thanks SNGPL for gas supply to export sector

ISLAMABAD: The APTMA has thanked SNGPL for uninterrupted supply of gas to export-oriented sectors. In a meeting of APTMA delegation with the newly-appointed Managing Director SNGPL Javaid Hamdani, the APTMA Chairman Adil Bashir welcomed his appointment. Bashir expressed the hope that Hamdani would personally ensure supply of gas at normal pressure to the export industry to enable it in the creation of additional jobs. —DNA

The Business

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Smart lockdown in more areas of Lahore, Gujranwala

LAHORE: Smart lockdown has been clamped in more areas of Lahore and Gujranwala. It has been said in a statement with reference to secretary primary and secondary healthcare Punjab Muhammad Usman that smart lockdown has been imposed in the areas where corona cases are being reported in large number. Muhammad Usman said smart lockdown has been clamped in further 17 localities in Lahore and three in Gujranwala. —Online

PM's scheme is to whiten black money: Bilawal

SUKKUR: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari alleged that the housing scheme announced by the Prime Minister is a method to whiten black money.

To make laborers unemployed was government's conspiracy. Under this conspiracy, employees of steel mill were made unemployed. Addressing a function to distribute flats in Sukkur, the PPP chairman said that a hospital and a vocational training institute would be set up in 'Mazdoor City'. In this difficult time, we will build flats not for the rich but for the poor, said Bilawal. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that we stand by the side of laborer brothers and sisters. The PPP is the voice of the workers. The federal government has destroyed health systems in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. "We will thwart any conspiracy of the anti-people government," he said. We will drive them away with the power of the people and form a government that will bring relief to the people. He said that they wanted to occupy the islands of Sindh and build houses.

These people are also snatching gas from Sindh but PPP is standing in front of them like a wall. We cannot give the people their rights until we drive out enemy of poor and the working class, he said. —DNA

Emirates offers Pfizer, Sinopharm vaccines to staff

The Business Report

DUBAI: Dubai airline Emirates on Monday began offering employees vaccinations against the COVID-19 disease with priority given to cabin crew, pilots and other operational staff. The state carrier's management says global inoculation is key to any recovery for the travel industry, which they believe could happen this year if vaccines are rolled out at scale.

Parent company Emirates Group said vaccines were being offered to all of its staff in the United Arab Emirates. The group, which also includes airport services company data, employs around 80,000 globally.

It said it was offering the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine and another developed by China National Pharmaceutical Group (Sinopharm), which are already available to the public in the UAE with certain groups being prioritised. Singapore Airlines is also encouraging its staff to get vaccinated. Both Emirates and Singapore Airlines lack a domestic market that could cushion against international border closures, which have decimated the global travel industry.

UAE officials are encouraging the public to get vaccinated with new infections rising to more than 3,000 a day this month for the first time. The Gulf state aims to vaccinate more than 50% of its roughly 9m population in the first quarter. Most virus restrictions have been lifted in Dubai, which has seen an influx of overseas visitors during its peak tourism season while govts elsewhere impose new lockdowns. Social distancing and mask-wearing are still required throughout the UAE.

Govt decides to make Broadsheet documents public

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to Prime Minister on Accountability and Interior Shahzad Akbar has said the country has been badly affected by deals made by previous governments and national reconciliation ordinances (NROs) issued in the past that cost the national exchequer billions of rupees.

Addressing a press conference in Islamabad on Monday, Akbar said that the government has decided to make public the judgment of a British court regarding Broadsheet and Pakistan involving liability and quantum awards. "The documents are being made public after written approval was obtained from Broadsheet's lawyers," he stated.

The adviser said they had approached Broadsheet to make the judgment clear on the instructions of the prime minister to ensure transparency. "The prime minister has formed a ministerial committee on Broadsheet and directed them to furnish its recommendations within 48 hours," he said. "The government's next course of action will be decided in the



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Dr Abdul Hafeez Shaikh chairs a meeting of the National Price Monitoring Committee (NPMC) to review the price trend of essential commodities.

Cybercrimes now a national security threat, says FPCCI

KARACHI: Chairman of National Business Group of FPCCI, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Monday said different gangs of cybercriminals have become a national security threat.

These criminals are attacking banks, financial institutions and online business hitting confidence of masses and the business community while the institution supposed to deal with them is not very efficient. Mian Zahid Hussain said that cybercrimes are jeopardising the future of e-commerce and branchless banking as they are easily required information from Nadra, telecom companies, banks, voter lists and union councils, etc.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that black sheep in different government and private entities are selling data of masses to the criminals while it has become difficult to bring them to the book.

Special tasks to be assigned to Pak embassies for enhancing exports Carpet Training Institute Chairperson Pervez Hanif propounding the establish-

ing Research and Study Secretariat to exploit further exports of the country said the government should give key assignments to Pakistani embassies abroad for enhancing exports of the country.

In a statement issued here on Monday, he said it should be the responsibility of this secretariat to study import products from different countries, their volume, competitive prices, and changing trends and make recommendations after taking all these things into consideration.

Pervez Hanif said red-tapism and non-permanent policies cannot determine the direction for which we have to work.

He said there are many countries whose markets we do not have access to or are hidden from our view.

LCCI pays homage to Shireen Arshad The Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) on Monday expressed deep grief and sorrow over sudden demise of the LCCI Executive Committee Member Shireen Arshad.

In a condolence message, the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) President Mian Tariq Misbah, Senior Vice President Nasir Hameed Khan, Vice President Tahir Manzoor Chaudhry

and Executive Committee Members said that Shireen Arshad was a great personality who had left behind many success stories.

They said that her achievements will be remembered for a long time to come. As Member National Assembly, Vice President Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry, Chairperson Handicrafts Association, Chairperson Bahawalpur Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Convener LCCI Resource Centre & Women Advocacy Forum, she had achieved various milestones.

The Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) office-bearers said that she made unforgettable struggle for the rights of business women, especially for those who belong to cottage industry. They said that Shireen Arshad always raised voice of the women at all forums. She was also a great philanthropist. The office-bearers of the LCCI paid rich tributes to the services of Shireen Arshad and recalled that she always preferred work over her health and had given priority to her commitments. They prayed to the Almighty Allah to keep the departed soul in peace and let the family bear this irreparable loss with fortitude. —DNA

IT services export potential \$10b with 1m jobs: OICCI

ISLAMABAD: The "OICCI Recommendations for Digital Economy" report was launched on January 18th, 2021 highlighting the much-needed shift required to capture the opportunity of Digital transformation happening within and outside Pakistan through New Economy mindset.

By digitizing most, if not all, key segments of the economy could boost IT export to \$10 B annually, provide significant growth to GDP, attract Billions of Dollars of FDI and create hundreds of thousands new jobs within a short time. Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) membership includes some of the best-known IT MNCs, including IBM, SAP, Teradata, who also actively contributed towards the development of these Digital Economy recommendations and offered to run one integrated technology training program for up to half a million Certified Resources in Pakistan using global courses successfully being run in many advanced countries.

These are online industry focused programs where the government needs to in-

vest only on tracking, adoption and placement through one Program office located in the Ministry of IT. OICCI Digital Recommendations highlight the importance of shift to skill development from academic degrees to ensure productive and effective participation of Pakistani talent in New Economy that is growing much faster and attracting capital globally.

Highlighting the potential for the IT export, OICCI President Haroon Rashid commented that "whereas IT exports from Pakistan is only US\$ 1 to 2 B, Philippines, with half the population of Pakistan exports IT services of about \$ 30 B, India IT exports are over \$ 190 B and many other Asian countries are also well ahead of Pakistan, which should be a cause of great concern to the authorities but at the same time could be a motivational factor as Pakistan has great potential to boost its IT exports with focused short and medium term strategy and its delivery by the key stakeholders, as recommended in the OICCI Recommendations for Digital Economy report."

The OICCI report further highlights the importance of stable and inclusive regula-

tory practices to ensure effective participation of global players in Platform Economy to attract FDI, make a significant positive impact on GDP growth and also connects Pakistan to global e-commerce and creative economy opportunity.

OICCI has appreciated the Special Technology Zones recently inaugurated by the PM, which hopefully will benefit the country in medium to longer term.

However, for immediate gains, OICCI has recommended the need to establish a digital mechanism to provide Ease of Doing Business coverage in PPP to bring 5-10 million Sq Ft space quickly. The OICCI report highlights the FDI potential by creating enabling environment for investment in Platform and High-Tech ecosystem so that Pakistan is able to attract global IT platform players and Venture Capital funding to accelerate innovation. The OICCI Digital recommendations cover six key areas i) Connectivity, ii) Digital Financial System, iii) Export Growth and Digital Skills, iv) Platforms & E-commerce Ecosystem, v) Innovation & Regulatory Environment, and vi) Digital Governance

Security forces kill two terrorists in NWA, one hurt

ISLAMABAD: Two terrorists killed, one injured in an intelligence-based operation by the security forces in 'Nergosa' area of North Waziristan.

According to ISPR, both the terrorists belonged to a banned outfit. The killed terrorists, who have been identified as Usman Ali and Waheed were involved in attacks on security forces and were IED experts, terrorist trainers and motivators, ISPR said.

Terrorist Usman was also involved in the attack on security forces on October 14, 2020 in which Captain Umer Cheema, two JCOs and three soldiers embraced Shahadat while four were injured. —Online

North Waziristan check post bombed, no casualties

MEERANSHAH: An under construction police check post has been bombed by unknowns in North Waziristan.

As per police, militants succeeded to escape out due to midnight darkness.

Local authorities claim that no one was present at the check post during the explosion, hence no casualties reported. The police have started the investigations. —Online

Zulfi asks expats not to invest in bogus schemes

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (OP&HRD) Sayed Zulfikar Abbas Bukhari Monday exhorted the expatriates to refrain from investing in the housing societies, selling land without obtaining No Objection Certificates (NOCs) from the relevant departments.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony of Pakistan Overseas Real Estate Forum, he said the Pakistani diaspora was a major contributor of Foreign Direct Investment that was why protection of their assets was government's priority. He said the government was all set to launch first-ever fast-track court to ensure speedy retrieval of the expats' lands from land grabbers. The initiative, which was in its final phase, would help dispose of their cases within a time-frame of 30 days, he added.

The SAPM said the OP&HRD ministry would launch a drive next week to make sure that all the development authorities would post details of the housing societies, having NOCs, on their websites to facilitate the expats in making safe and secure investment in the country. He urged the expats to be vigilant of fraudulent elements and do some research before investing in the real estate sector.

Zulfikar Bukhari also asked the developers to only advertise and promote those schemes that had NOCs, and take advantage of the incentives offered by the govt for affordable housing in line with the vision of PM Imran Khan. He said the govt had been offering subsidies and loans to promote mass housing projects so that every middle class and lower-middle class person could own his/her own house in the 'Naya Pakistan'. —APP

Virus claims 46 lives in 24 hours

LAHORE: About 46 deaths occurred during the last 24 hours due to novel coronavirus mounting the nationwide tally of fatalities to 10,997 on Monday.

The latest statistics by the National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) said 1,920 persons tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 24 hours and the number of positive cases has surged to 521,211. Till now 235,576 coronavirus cases have been confirmed in Sindh, 149,782 in Punjab 63,615 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 40,111 in Islamabad, 18,612 in Balochistan, 8,631 in Azad Kashmir and 4,884 in Gilgit-Baltistan.

Furthermore 4,432 individuals have lost their lives to the epidemic in Punjab 3,793 in Sindh, 1,783 in KP, 457 in Islamabad, 241 in Azad Kashmir, 190 in Balochistan, and 101 in GB. Pakistan has so far conducted 7,405,571 coronavirus tests and 37,949 in the last 24 hours. 475,228 coronavirus patients have recovered in the country whereas 2,348 patients are in critical condition. —Online

NEPRA not to charge for shutting down PMT

KARACHI: The Director General, National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) Consumer Affairs, Naveed Elahi Shaikh, has assured the industrialists of Karachi that if any consumer has owned substation requests to Distribution company (DISCO) for shut down due to reason including the maintenance of machinery etc. the Distribution company will consider to shut down the PMT & substation without any charges.

However, the consumer is required to submit a written three days' prior the schedule shut down and in case of fire at a business location, the electricity can be temporarily restored if the distribution company is satisfied. Director General National Electric Power Regu-

latory Authority (NEPRA), while discussing with a delegation comprising President North Karachi Association of Trade & Industry (NKATI) Faisal Moiz Khan, SVP Shabbir Ismail and member Shahab Ali Akram at his office in Islamabad, said that National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) has included that clause in the schedule for implementation, so that the business and industrial community don't face any difficulties.

Faisal Moiz Khan and Shabbir Ismail informed to Director General, National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) that in case of fire at the business venue, power not restored even after several days, causing serious business losses.

Therefore, K-Electric should be

instructed to ensure that power is restored to the affected business premises as soon as possible after making necessary arrangements.

In response, Director General National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) said that if the situation at the site of the fire returns to normal, K-Electric could temporarily restore power if satisfied.

North Karachi Association of Trade & Industry (NKATI) delegation also requested that in the cottage industry, commercial meters are installed, which should be converted into industrial meters. Director General National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) assured that the commercial meters of cottage industry would be converted into industrial meters. —DNA



ISLAMABAD: President Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) Maulana Fazlur Rehman addresses media persons after PDM standing Committee meeting.