

# 900,000 children to be administered deworming tablets

From Our Staff Correspondent

**RAWALPINDI:** Chief Executive Officer (CEO) District Health Authority Dr. Faiza Kanwal on Sunday said over 900,000 children of the age between 5 to 14 years would be given deworming tablets free of cost during a five-day-long drive to be started from April 5.

The CEO told APP that children working at different places would also be given medicines besides those studying in seminaries and schools. She said the drive would help overcome malnutrition and intestinal infections among children as abdominal worms can cause several diseases. She informed that standard operating procedure regarding COVID-19 would be implemented to ensure safety during the drive while wearing face masks and the use of sanitizer would also be mandatory.

Dr. Faiza urged the citizens to cooperate with the health teams as a

healthy child was base of a healthy society, adding that the message should be conveyed to all.

## Exorbitant fee of ICT colleges deprive students of higher education

The exorbitant fee structure of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) colleges in comparison to the provinces has made it difficult for the students of low income groups to afford acquiring higher education.

The high fee has badly affected the enrollment of these colleges due to dropout and returning of students to the colleges of their respective provinces. Hundreds of local students, particularly from rural areas of federal capital, are incredibly poor and are compelled to miss out on a college education due to high fee. According to an official source, the fee structure of four-year BS Program and Associate Degree Program (ADP) of ICT colleges is beyond the means and paying capacity of the parents of the students. The students are charged fee ranges from

Rs.19100 to Rs.22100 in the first semester while in the subsequent semesters it is around 15000.

The provinces which generally have less resources, are charging a very affordable fee which is 400% less than the ICT colleges. Consequently, students influx desirous of admission in ADP or BS program are heading to colleges in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The sister city Rawalpindi is attracting students from Islamabad and if the trend continues, F.G colleges will be deserted and infrastructure underutilized.

The crisis for low grade and low-paid government employees living in and across the capital has further deepened as they are compelled to send their children to villages located under the jurisdiction of Punjab adding hassle of commuting to far flung Rawalpindi vicinities. Muhammad Munir, a father and a government servant said, "College Education in Islamabad is no longer a public good."



KARACHI: A man takes picture from his cell phone at Sea View picnic point. —Online

# Peshawar Zoo attracts influx of tourists, wildlife lovers

From Our Staff Correspondent

**PESHAWAR:** Established on 29 acres vast land near University of Peshawar, Peshawar zoo was a unique recreational facility constructed by the previous PTI Government was attracting a large number of people, tourists and wildlife lovers following coronavirus pandemic.

The negative effects on people's mental and psychological health put by the coronavirus had almost been ended courtesy by Peshawar zoo which become a main source of recreational and entertainment facility for thousands of people, tourists and wildlife lovers of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Peshawar zoo, which was closed due to coronavirus pandemic has been reopened for people and has attracted a substantial number of tourists along with their families and children on Sunday. Officials in Peshawar Zoo told that up to 2,000 people were visiting the zoo per day while the number of visitors increase up to 5,000 on weekend and holidays. The children took keen interest in snakes, Zarafas, tigers, lions, bears and inquired questions from the zoo officials and parents about their lifestyle, race, breeding and role in food chain.

White lion brought to the zoo after his seizure in Kohat and around 500 various types of colourful birds and parrots with beautiful chanted voices, are the main center of attraction of tourists and children these days.

Great rush was witnessed on falcons, zebra, lama, markhoor, rare cats, foxes, ducks and snakes. The children expressed great joy after seeing Cobra and others types of snakes being kept in the snakes box.

"In the past, I had visited Islamabad and Lahore Zoos to entertain my children. This year I did not go to these cities because of Peshawar Zoo," said Riaz Khan, a resident of Noshera District.

"Peshawar zoo is bigger than others zoos of the country where all important wild animals were kept," adding presence of an elephant would help enhance its attraction. More than 27 different types of wild species having a strength of about 160 animals besides 43 various types of birds having over 800 numbers mostly brought from abroad were attracting tourists of all age groups. Its strength have increased after breeding of more than 58 new animals and birds in the facility.

He said Peshawar zoo was the 74 years old demands of people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa that was fulfilled by the PTI Government and termed it a gift of Prime Minister Imran Khan for people of this province.

Prime Minister Imran Khan had laid its foundation on February 2, 2016 and was opened for general public on February 12, 2018. "The atmosphere of Peshawar zoo is very peaceful, clean and only Rs 40 is being charged from each visitor which is nominal in the prevailing situation," he said. The animal's cages were large that helped separating people and animals in a considerable distance.

The zoo is also an important source for students of zoology and wildlife for conducting research as previously they had to visit Lahore and Islamabad for the same.

Painting competition were also held in the zoo through which students highlighted importance of wildlife in our daily life through their art work.

# 72 canal state land retrieved in Vehari

From Our Staff Correspondent

**VEHARI:** Assistant Commissioner Vehari Jaffar Choudhry on Sunday retrieved 72 canal approximately state land.

According to Assistant Commissioner Vehari along with Revenue officers and administration with police conducted raid in Chak No 45/WB and retrieved 72 canals agriculture and residential lands from grabbers such as Safdar Ali, Abdul

Sattar, Muhammad Ashraf, Muhammad Arif, Muhammad Anwar, Muhammad Boota, Muhammad Iqbal, Muhammad Raffique etc. Assistant Commissioner Jaffar Ch further said that on the direction of Chief Minister Punjab Usman Buzdar, the operation against squatters under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Vehari Mubeen Elahi will remain continue without any discrimination in the district.

# Another transport company announces 10pc discount for govt employees

**MULTAN:** Another transport company announced 10 percent discount in fare to government employees on recommendations of district administration here on Sunday. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Aamir Khattak has directed the officers concerned to seek relief in transport fare for government employees in a drive to facilitate employees. The Secretary RTA Rana Mohsin conducted meetings with different transporters and asked them to

facilitate government employees. In a meeting held here, the Rajpoot Travellers Rathor Group announced 10 percent discount at all tickets for government employees. The employees could avail the discount by showing their officials service card to the ticket points, transport company said. It is pertinent to mention here that Faisal Movers have already announced 10 percent discount in the fare for government employees. —APP

# Senate passes Biden's \$1.9tr COVID-19 Bill on party-line vote

**WASHINGTON:** The US Senate passed President Joe Biden's US\$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief plan in a party-line vote after an all-night session that was delayed repeatedly as the Republican minority tried but failed to push through around three dozen amendments.

The plan passed in a 50-49 vote with the support of every Democrat but no Republicans. It is one of the largest stimulus Bills in US history and gives Biden his first major legislative victory since taking office in January.

The partisan victory was made possible by Democrats winning two Senate seats in Georgia special elections in January, giving them narrow control of the chamber.

Biden said on Saturday he hoped for quick passage of the revised Bill by the House of Representatives so he could sign it and start sending US\$1,400 direct payments to Americans. "This plan will get checks out the door starting this month to the American people, who so desperately need the help," Biden said at the White House after the vote.

The final bill includes US\$400 billion in one-time payments of US\$1,400 to many Americans, with a phase-out starting for those with annual incomes above US\$75,000. It also includes US\$300 a week in



extended jobless benefits for the 9.5 million people thrown out of work in the crisis. Democrats agreed to reduce those benefits from US\$400 a week in order to secure passage in the Senate. They want the Bill signed into law before current unemployment benefits expire on Mar 15. About US\$350 billion in aid was also set aside for state and local governments that have seen the pandemic blow a hole in their budgets.

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# Bloody Sunday memorial to honour late civil rights giants

**SELMA, Alabama:** The commemoration of a pivotal moment in the fight for voting rights for African Americans will honor four giants of the civil rights movement who lost their lives in 2020, including the late US representative John Lewis.

The Selma Bridge Crossing Jubilee will mark the 56th anniversary of Bloody Sunday — the day on Mar 7, 1965, that civil rights marchers were brutally beaten by law enforcement officers on Selma's Edmund Pettus Bridge. Lewis, Reverend Joseph Lowery, Reverend C T Vivian, and attorney Bruce Boynton are the late civil rights leaders who will be honoured.

Bloody Sunday became a turning point in the fight for voting rights. Footage of the beatings helped galvanise support for passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

US representative John Lewis, center, talks with those gathered on the historic Edmund Pettus Bridge during the 19th annual reenactment of the "Bloody Sunday" Selma to Montgomery civil rights march across the bridge in Selma, Alabama on Mar 4, 2012.

This year's commemoration comes as some states seek



to roll back expanded early and mail-in voting access and efforts have been unsuccessful to restore a key section of the Voting Rights Act that required states with a history of discrimination to get federal approval for any changes to voting procedures.

"Those of us who are still living, particularly the young, need to take up the challenge and go forward because there is still so much to be done," said former state senator Hank Sanders, one of the founders of the annual celebration. —AFP

# French justice in dock as Sarkozy cries 'scandal'

**PARIS:** The French justice system has scored a series of major victories in high-profile corruption cases against right-wing politicians, but the successes have sparked claims of bias and verbal attacks on prosecutors and judges.

After the stunning conviction of ex-president Nicolas Sarkozy this week, a debate has raged about whether the sword of justice is getting stronger, or whether its blows are being manipulated.

Sarkozy, who became the first modern president sentenced to jail, has consistently sought to portray the multiple investigations into his affairs since leaving office in 2012 as a witch hunt.

He has called it a "scandal that will remain in the annals of history", has questioned whether France still lives under the rule of law, and suggested that the tactics of investigators are reminiscent of those in "Mr Putin's Russia".

When asked for his reaction in a prime-time television interview on Wednesday, the 66-year-old said he was "used to suffering this harassment".

Former French president Nicolas Sarkozy has claimed bias in the justice system after his conviction. —AP

# Is higher inflation just around the corner?



**CAMBRIDGE:** Massive fiscal and monetary stimulus programmes in the United States and other advanced economies are fuelling a raging debate about whether higher inflation could be just around the corner.

10-year US Treasury yields and mortgage rates are already climbing in anticipation that the US Federal Reserve — the de facto global central bank — will be forced to hike rates, potentially bursting asset-price bubbles around the world.

But while markets are probably overstating short-term inflation risks for 2021, they do not yet fully appreciate the longer-term dangers. To be clear, huge macroeconomic support is unequivocally needed now and for the foreseeable future. The pandemic-induced recession is worse than the 2008 global financial crisis, and parts of the US economy are still in desperate straits. Moreover, despite promising vaccine-related developments in the fight against the coronavirus, things could get worse. Against this backdrop, the real inflation risk could materialise if both central bank independence and globalisation fall out of favour.

In the near term, policymakers are right to worry that, if the economy continues to heal, stimulus measures and consumers' cash savings will fuel an explosion in demand. But this is unlikely to lead to an overnight inflation blowout, mainly because price growth in modern advanced economies is a very slow-moving variable. The City of London financial district can be seen as a woman walks on a footpath along the River Th The City of London financial district can be seen as a woman walks on a footpath along the River Thames, amid the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak, in London, Britain, March 4, 2021. REUTERS/Henry Nicholls. —Reuters

# Pope Francis prays for 'victims of war' in North Iraq

**MOSUL, Iraq:** Pope Francis prayed for "victims of war" in northern Iraq, where the Islamic State group ravaged one of the world's oldest Christian communities until the jihadists' defeat three years ago.

With the partially collapsed walls of the centuries-old Al-Tahera (Immaculate Conception) Church behind him, Pope Francis pleaded for Christians in Iraq and the Middle East to stay in their homelands.

The 84-year-old pontiff said the "tragic" exodus of Christians from Iraq and the wider region "does incalculable harm not just to the individuals and communities concerned, but also to the society they leave behind".

The IS onslaught forced hundreds of thousands of Christians in northern Iraq's Nineveh province to flee. The country's Christian population has shrunk to fewer than 400,000 from around 1.5 million before the US-led invasion of 2003. The faithful had gathered on Sunday in the courtyard of the Al-Tahera Church, whose roof collapsed during fighting against IS in 2017. It is one of the oldest of at least 14 churches in Nineveh province that were destroyed by the jihadists. —AFP

# Fresh protests called in Senegal after days of clashes

**DAKAR:** A Senegalese opposition collective on Saturday called for fresh protests starting Monday (Mar 8), following days of clashes that have left at least four people dead.

At a news conference in the capital Dakar, the Movement for the Defence of Democracy - which includes the leading opposition party Pastef - urged Senegalese people to "massively descend on the streets".

The call comes after days of clashes between opposition supporters and police in the West African state, which began after Pastef leader Ousmane Sonko was arrested on Wednesday.

Police arrested Sonko, 46, after scuffles with his supporters broke out while he was on his way to court to answer a rape charge - which he says is politically motivated. —AFP

# Twitter's Dorsey auctions first ever tweet as digital memorabilia



**SAN FRANCISCO:** Twitter boss Jack Dorsey is selling his first tweet at auction, with bidding reaching US\$2 million in a sign of the appetite for virtual objects authenticated through blockchain technology.

"Just setting up my twttr," Dorsey tweeted on Mar 21, 2006. On Friday he posted a link to "Valuables @Cent", an online marketplace for tweets where, the site says, investors or collectors can "buy and sell tweets autographed by their creators".

The top bid on Saturday for Dorsey's tweet - US\$2 million - came from Justin

Sun, the founder of TRON, a platform for blockchain, the technology underlying cryptocurrencies. He also heads the BitTorrent streaming platform. "The creator of a tweet decides if they would like to mint it on the blockchain, creating a 1-of-1 autographed version," Valuables explains.

Buying a tweet means purchasing "a digital certificate of the tweet, unique because it has been signed and verified by the creator", according to Valuables. In Dorsey's case, the tweet itself remains visible to all, so long as he and Twitter leave