

**'Bumper wheat production expected this year'**

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) Jamshed Iqbal Cheema has said that bumper wheat production was expected in the country this year. In a statement issued here, he said historical reforms in agriculture sector being introduced in the country for the first time would bring revolution in the entire agricultural sector. He said issuance of Kisan Cards is one of the remarkable steps taken by the present leadership for prevention of corruption at all levels. —APP

# The Business

Lahore, Monday, May 03, 2021 Ramazan 20, 1442

**1,508 housing units handed over to applicants under NPHP**

ISLAMABAD: The concerned department has completed process of 1,508 apartments/housing units possession and handed over to applicants under NPHP. These apartments and housing units have been handed over to applicants in collaboration with WWF. The information provided by Cabinet Division here, around 20,03,940 citizens applied for registration in NPHP during Phase-I and II of registration, of which 17,99,533 became eligible. —APP

## SC forms a larger, six regular benches for next week

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Gulzar Ahmed has constituted a larger bench and three regular benches at the principal seat Islamabad, two benches at SC Lahore Registry and one bench at Karachi Registry to hear a number of important cases during the next week, starting from Monday.

On Wednesday, a five-member larger bench headed by the CJP and comprising of Justice Mushir Alam, Justice Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Ijaz Ul Ahsan and Justice Mazhar Alam Khan Miankhel will hear the suo moto notice case regarding combating the pandemic of Coronavirus (COVID19).

The first bench is comprised of Chief Justice Gulzar Ahmed and Justice Mazhar Alam Khan Miankhel while the second bench is comprised of Justice Mushir Alam, Justice Yahya Afridi and Justice Qazi Muhammad Amin Ahmed. The bench three will comprise of Justice Qazi Faez Isa and Justice Sardar Tariq Masood.

A three-member bench comprising Justice Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah and Justice Amin-Ud-Din Khan and, a two-member bench comprising Justice Ijaz Ul Ahsan and Justice Sayyed Mazahar Ali Akbar Naqvi will hear cases at SC Registry Lahore.

A three-member bench comprising Justice Maqbool Baqar, Justice Sajjad Ali Shah and Justice Munib Akhtar will hear cases at SC Karachi Registry.

## Call to save handmade carpet industry

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Pakistan Carpet Training Institute (CTI) Chairperson Pervez Hanif Sunday said that Pakistan should follow the trends adopted by different countries for the export of its products in wake of Corona epidemic.

In a statement issued here on Sunday, he said for this, special tasks should be assigned to Pakistani embassies abroad.

Pervez Hanif said due to the decline in exports and lack of government patronage, skills in the handmade carpet industry are dwindling. "As a result, the industry which is considered as the identity of Pakistan in the world is facing the problem of its survival," he added.

He further said that he appealed to the government to provide a special package in the budget for the next financial year to save the export sector, especially the handmade carpet industry, so that the patronage of the artisans associated with it would be possible.

## Digital transformation vital for economy

ISLAMABAD: The experts have stressed the need for digital transformation and local data gathering mechanisms to enhance the economic competitiveness in the country's economy.

They urged to build 'Digital Skills' for promoting technological innovation to improve Pakistan's Global Competitiveness rankings of World Economic Forum (WEF) in 2021.

Extreme Commerce to Collaborate with Mishaal/World Economic Forum (WEF) to Improve Competitiveness Data on Digital Skills and Jobs of tomorrow in Pakistan, they said while addressing the launching of 'Executive Opinion Survey' carried out nationally by Mishaal Pakistan, said a press release issued here on Sunday.

They shared that the Executive Opinion Survey help identify some common features that help how Pakistan better manages the impact of the pandemic on its economy and its people.

Meanwhile, Chief Executive Officer of Mishaal Pakistan, Amir Jahangir a Country Partner Institute of the New Economy and Societies Platform, World Economic said, "Governments needs to devise systems to use digital technologies for the welfare of the people. He said the tax regimes on technologies that help fight COVID-19 should be given breaks to create more value for the citizens," —APP

He said, "the economic well-being



SIALKOT: Special Assistant to CM Punjab, Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan visits a stall during inspection of a Sasta Ramazan Bazar.

## Long Eid holidays

# Country to face billions of rupees loss in exports: PHMA

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers and Exporters Association has opposed the government decision of long Eid holidays, which would hurt the business, causing a loss of billions of rupees in exports.

Criticizing the government decision of more than a week holidays on Eidul Fitr, PHMA zonal chairman Fiasal Mahboob Sheikh said that the country would remain disconnected with the world for almost a week, and it will cost the economy of billions. He said that long closure of banks would lead to delays in the opening of LCs and making payments. The impact of banking sector shutdown would also create problems for the common man.

The ATM system is not efficient and it may aggravate the liquidity problem, he said. He also expressed concern over increase in minimum wage limit from Rs17,500 to Rs19,500. He said that keeping in the view the current economic situation of the country, it should be reviewed and brought back to the same denominator. PHMA chief coordinator Adil Butt said that due to closure of transport there will be problem to transfer the finished goods from one to other places.

He said that undoubtedly the government is acting wisely to contain the Covid-

## More taxes, duties exemptions in budget to cause new wave of inflation: PIAF

LAHORE: The Pakistan Industrial and Traders Association Front (PIAF) Chairman Mian Nauman Kabir on Sunday rejected the government's plan of imposing additional taxes of billions of rupees in the upcoming federal budget 2021-22, besides withdrawing duties and tax exemption of about Rs360 billion, leading to a new wave of inflation in the country.

The PIAF Chairman, in a joint statement with vice chairman Javed Siddiqi, said that the regular attempt of economic managers to impose new taxes and increasing oil prices along with the hike in power and gas tariffs will ultimately harm the government's overall move of reducing the production cost for the businesses. He said that Pakistan is the most frequent customer of IMF and governments often depended on borrowing from donor agencies and accepted their stringent conditions despite the fact that these institutions are merciless money lenders which always forced Pakistan to adopt bad policies like new taxes in the budget. Mian Nauman Kabir said that the new taxation measures include increasing income tax burden of the salaried and business individuals and the corporate sector, as the government will also withdraw about Rs360 billion worth of sales tax exemptions from next year while the sales tax is already high. —APP

19 pandemic and the industry appreciates the forceful steps in this regard.

However, the government must reconsider the long Eid holiday in consultation with the industry. Rejecting the government's decision, he said shutting down the country for 10 days was unacceptable. He said the business community is already

working on limited hours as per the Ramazan schedule and facing difficulties in meeting expectations of buyers for timely delivery and management of supply chains. The expected lockdown in the month of May has already disturbed future planning for the export-oriented industry, he said.

# Virus: Govt urged to speed up vaccination for workers

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The All Pakistan Business Forum (APBFF) president Syed Maaz Mahmood has stressed the need for speeding up vaccination drive especially for the industry workers in the country, as shutdowns of the industry and lockdowns of the cities are not the real solution.

He said that during the third wave of coronavirus the situation has been deteriorating mainly due to lack of implementation of COVID-19 standard operating procedures and the solution lies in speeding up our vaccination programs, instead of opting for closure of trade and industry amidst GDP growth of just 1.5%.

APBF President also suggested the government to launch a COVID-19 vaccination certificate for the vaccinated people as

an immunity passport on the lines of China and several other countries to facilitate its citizens for international travelling.

He pointed out that in post-corona era, this kind of health certificate is going to be mandatory for frequent travelers, in the embassies to obtain visas, to travel abroad and for check-in hotels in other countries.

Syed Maaz Mahmood said that the government had rolled out its COVID-19 vaccine campaign very late in Feb, beginning with the healthcare workers in the first phase, then starting vaccination program for the senior citizens which is appreciable step and it should be completed very quickly. Now the priority should be also given to the factory workers and employers across Pakistan, as healthy labor is must for uninterrupted operation of the local as well as export industries, he

added. He asked the government to expedite the process of vaccination and supply ample quantity of doses not only to the whole public but also to the trade and industry, their workers and families.

APBF Chairman Ibrahim Qureshi said that rising mortality in the midst of the third Covid-19 wave and growing anxiety in the business circles over possible restrictions on international travel and trade necessitate ramping up the pace of vaccination. To speed up inoculations, the government will need to bridge vaccine supply gaps with active participation from the federating units and the private sector, he added. He said that the current pace of putting jobs in the arms is slow, as 1.3 million Pakistanis had so far got vaccinated at government facilities and 18,000 paid to get vaccine shots at private hospitals.

## Tarin assures consultation with FPCCI for budget preparation

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Finance, Shoukat Tarin assured consultation with all stakeholders in budget preparation process to achieve goals of sustainable development and inclusive growth.

In an online meeting with Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) the finance minister, appreciated budget proposal presented by the representative of traders and industrialists, said a press release issued here on Sunday by FPCCI.

Tarin was of the opinion that much needs to be done and the measures have to be radical and sustainable incremental changes in consultation with the business community.

The finance minister referring to the presentation by FPCCI on "Reduced Taxes for Accelerated Growth and Enhanced Tax Revenue", appreciated the tax policy and principle concept and assured to continue consultation and consideration over the tax simplification and reduction proposals. On the various tax rates proposed by FPCCI, he said these could be further discussed for its outcome. President FPCCI, Mian Nasser Hyatt Maggo, apprised the finance minister on issues being faced by the businesses, industries and trader communities of Pakistan. He specifically pointed out a number of reasons including the required paradigm shift in the present taxation structure towards the need of recovering the ailing economy. —APP

## Wheat harvesting, thrashing in full swing

ISLAMABAD: The wheat crop harvesting and threshing was in full swing in the Potohar region, like other parts of the country, due to the expected week-long dry weather predictions by the weather experts, aiming at preventing the crop from any damage.

"The farmers are interested in harvesting their wheat crop as soon as possible to avoid any harm from the unpredictable rains in twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad due to the changing weather patterns," said an official of Food Department Punjab in his telephonic talk with APP.

He said wheat crop on 290,000 acres of land in Rawalpindi region provides around 275.26000 tons wheat every year.

Replying to a question, he said that wheat harvesting has started in all parts of the Potohar region including Phulgaran, Shah Allah Ditta, Rawat, Kallar Syedan, Lohi Bher, Kahuta, Sagri, Raqqa, Chak Beli Khan, Fatehjang, Tarnol, Golra, Gujjar Khan, Chatta Bakhtawar, Sihala, Ari Syedan and Mandra. He said the farmers started collection of bardana or gunny bags at the advent of the month of April from 384 procurement centres established by the food department while the physical procurement of wheat started from a mid of the month. A prominent farmer from the Potohar Region, Raja Zubair said that the government has also increased the rate of wheat support price and fixed it Rs.1, 800 per 40 kilo gram which to him is not less than any reward for farmers. "We pray the weather be remained as favourable as we are expecting and I am also quite optimistic about increased crop yield this year," he said. He said during this season the farmers would get reward for their hard work. —APP

## World Press Freedom Day today

ISLAMABAD: World Press Freedom Day will be marked on today (Monday, May 3) across the globe including Pakistan to highlight that freedom of the press and freedom of expression are fundamental human rights.

This day reminds people that many journalists face severe circumstances in line of their duty to dig out truth for in the best interest of general public.

World Press Freedom Day gives people the chance to pay tribute to media professionals who risked or lost their lives in the line of duty.

Many communities, organizations, and individuals take part in the activities of the day through various events such as art exhibitions, dinners featuring keynote speakers, and awards nights to honor those who risked their

## 'Punjab converts all brick kilns over Zigzag technology'

ISLAMABAD: In an ambitious yet impressive move the Punjab government has successfully converted around 8,000 of its functional brick kilns over eco-friendly zigzag technology during past six months.

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Climate Change Malik Amin Aslam on Sunday in an exclusive chat with APP appreciated the Punjab government for its great accomplishment against environmental challenges on the direction of the Prime Minister to purge the province from the menace of hazardous smog creating conventional brick kilns.

Amin said conversion of around 8,000 brick kilns across the province to Zigzag technology

which was 100 per cent of the existing kilns to environment friendly technology was a great achievement.

He said efforts had been continued since 2017 but faced many challenges whereas the Punjab government has achieved this goal through continuous hard work of last six months.

"All 8,000 smog kilns have been converted to modern technology. The new technology will emit 60 less carbon emissions and help safe 30 per cent more savings for kiln owners," Malik Amin Aslam said.

He urged that the rest of the provinces should follow the example of Punjab and use Zigzag technology to contain dark emissions causing serious pollution and respiratory diseases among the masses.

The PM's aide mentioned that the government has provided subsidy for adopting latest technology.

During conversion, he said the internal system of the kiln is replaced by Zigzag technology.

It merits to mention here that Natural Draught Zigzag Firing kiln is a continuous, cross draught, moving fire kiln in which the air flows in a zigzag path due to the draught provided by a chimney.

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (NEECA) provided the technical assistance to brick kilns' owners which was supported by the Punjab Environmental Protection Department (EPD) and Provincial Disaster Management Authority



CHINIOT: A man drinks water from solar panel system tube well. Demands of solar system increases in country in Agricultural Sector.