



Islamabad POST

Monday, September 14, 2020

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

'Peace talks are a Historic milestone', says Shibli Faraz

Japan ambassador welcomes Afghan peace negotiations



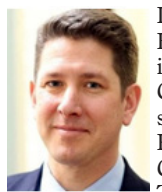
British envoy recognises Pakistan's role



Briefs

British envoy recognises Pak role

SHUJAAT HAMZA



ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner to Pakistan Christian Turner said Saturday Pakistan played a key role in the Afghan peace process that came after two decades of war.

Maryam blames govt's negligence

DNA



LAHORE: PML-N vice-president and Nawaz's daughter, Maryam, said that investigation has to be conducted what Nawaz Sharif was fed when his food from home stopped in the jail that resulted into an increase of his platelets counts.

Hamza contracts COVID-19

DNA



LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) spokesperson Marriyum Aurangzeb said Leader of Opposition in the Punjab Assembly Hamza Shahbaz has tested positive for novel coronavirus and he has been suffering from fever for the last three days.

Afghans rule out foreign assistance

Afghan, Taliban delegation form joint committee to facilitate Intra-Afghan talks

DNA / NEWS DESK

DOHA: The Afghan representatives and the Taliban delegation - who launched the intra-Afghan talks in Qatari capital Doha on Saturday - formed a joint committee of 10 members to facilitate the negotiations.

'Peace talks a Historic milestone'

ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Senator Syed Shibli Faraz on Sunday has said that the commencement of the Intra-Afghan dialogue is a historical milestone and a dawn for the war-torn Afghan people.

Monday, September 14, between the Afghan and Taliban delegation in Doha. Sayed Saddat Mansoor Nadiri, State Minister for Peace Affairs, said the primary demand by the Afghan government is a comprehensive ceasefire during the intra-Afghan talks held in Qatari capital Doha.



KARACHI: Rescue operations underway after roof of a building collapsed in Lyari area. - APP

Cabinet session on Sept 15

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The federal cabinet session has been summoned by Prime Minister Imran Khan on September 15 to discuss a 16-point agenda.

The federal cabinet will decide over the recommendation of hiking electricity tariff up to Rs2.89 per unit for K-Electric approved by the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC).

The summaries for the appointments of chief executive officers (CEOs) of National Disaster Risk Management (NDRM) and National Fertilizers Corporation (NFC); as well as a summary for deputing a member in Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) will be presented.

LOC VIOLATIONS

Pakistan lodges protest with India

Indian Charge d'Affaires Gaurav Ahluwalia summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; told that Indian forces have been committing violations continuously

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Indian Charge d'Affaires Gaurav Ahluwalia was summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Sunday to register Pakistan's strong protest over ceasefire violations by the Indian occupation forces along the Line of Control (LoC) on the night between 11th and 12th September 2020, resulting in one shahadat and serious injuries to four innocent civilians.

shahadat while 16 year old Muhammad Iqbal s/o Muhammad Qamrez; 75 year old Motia Begum w/o Muhammad Zaman, residents of Village Dera Sahib Zadian; 8 year old Khwaar Ahmed s/o Saif Ullah; and 40 year old Murtaza Khan s/o Saif Ullah,



Indian Charge d'Affaires Gaurav Ahluwalia

residents of Village Degwar, sustained serious injuries. The Indian occupation forces along the LoC and the Working Boundary (WB) have been continuously targeting civilian populated areas with artillery fire, heavy-caliber mortars and automatic weapons. This year, India has committed 2225 ceasefire violations to date, resulting in 18 shahadats and serious injuries to 176 innocent civilians.

Japan welcomes Afghanistan talks

He reiterated that the Govt of Japan will continue to actively contribute to the peace and stability of Afghanistan in collaboration with the int'l community

A.M. BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Matsuda Kuninori, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, welcomed the commencement of the Afghanistan peace negotiations between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Taliban.



tations would make a steady progress to put an end to the prolonged conflict, fulfilling the aspiration of the people of Afghanistan.

cess including facilitating the U.S.-Taliban Agreement and reaffirmed that the Government of Japan strongly hopes that the above mentioned negotiations will make a steady and constructive progress in order to realize an Afghan-led durable and comprehensive peace in the region.

Man dies in an accident with diplomat's car

The female diplomat later was allowed to leave because it was not her fault and secondly she enjoyed diplomatic immunity

EXCLUSIVE

STAFF REPORT / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Murad Ali aged 42 died in an accident in Islamabad as his motorbike struck with car of a female diplomat in Sector F 7. The diplomat was taken to women police station where she was allowed to walk away after brief investigation.

According to details, a female diplomat of Korean origin working in the United Nations System in Pakistan encountered an accident at College Road, Sector F 7/2 with two motor cyclists namely Murad Ali and Abdul Ghani.

was not responsible for the accident. The female diplomat later was shifted to women police station where she told the police how her car struck with the motorbike. She told the police that after the accident she stayed there in order to help the victims.

Terrorist Ihsan Sanray killed by security forces

Ihsan Sanray masterminded numerous terrorist activities. More recently he was involved in planning and execution of terrorist attacks in Shaktu area

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: In a major breakthrough, terrorist commander Ihsan Ullah alias Ihsan Sanray along with 3 other terrorists killed during an Intelligence Based Operation (IBO) in Ghariom, Shaktu near the inter district boundary of North and South Waziristan.



and execution of terrorist attacks in Shaktu area which led to martyrdom of several soldiers & offrs including Lt Nasir (Shaheed) and Capt Sabih (Shaheed).

Turkey confirms ship's return

ISTANBUL: Turkey on Sunday said the research ship at the centre of a row with Greece over energy exploration had returned to the Turkish coast, but insisted the move did not mean Ankara was "giving up".

The move was welcomed by Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis on Sunday. "The return of Oruc Reis is a positive first step, I hope there will be continuity. We want to talk with Turkey but in a climate without provocations," he told reporters in Thessaloniki

Pacific states assured of help

NEW YORK: Pakistan's Ambassador Munir Akram, in his capacity as the President of UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), has told envoys from the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) that he would try and use the 54-member body's machinery to help their nations respond to the double blows of the coronavirus pandemic and climate change.

Palestine rejects US-Bahrain-Israel declaration

Israel continues to control and annex the Palestinian lands by military force and actively works to Judaize Jerusalem, control the Islamic and Christian holy sites, and commit crimes against the Palestinian people

DNA / NEWS DESK

RAMALA: The Palestinian leadership has declared its strong rejection and condemnation of the US, Israeli, and Bahraini tripartite declaration on the normalization of relations between the Israeli occupation state and the Kingdom of Bahrain.

the Palestinian people. Israel continues to control and annex the Palestinian lands by military force and actively works to Judaize Jerusalem, control the Islamic and Christian holy sites, and commit crimes against the Palestinian people.

Pakistan's reaction to Bahrain-Israel deal

DNA / NAVEED MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan cautiously reacted to the controversial deal between the UAE and Israel to normalize ties, declaring the development with "far-reaching implications."

and calls on it to immediately retreat from it due to the great harm it causes to the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people and joint Arab action.

name. It also confirms that peace and stability in the region will only be achieved by ending Israel's occupation of all Palestinian and Arab lands- and with the Palestinian people gaining their independence in their sovereign state, on the borders of 4 June 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and resolving the refugee issue based on UNGA 194.

Inside...

- All out efforts being made to eliminate narcotics curse: Swati - Page 02
Technology based farms to be created, says Fawad - Page 03
Experts urge US a regional study on post 9/11 losses - Page 04
Iranian perspective of ME, Afghan & other issues-I - Page 05
Turkmenistan remains an isolated and repressive country: HRW - Page 06
Biden battles Trump, lack of enthusiasm among Black voters - Page 07
Pak to set up vocational training institutes with China's help - Page 08

Briefs

Construction of six parking plazas on cards

RAWALPINDI: The administration is planning to construct parking plazas in commercial areas of Rawalpindi city including Kutchery Chowk, Fawara Chowk, Jinnah Road, Ghazni Market, Bani Market and Commercial Market.

According to Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Capt. (r) Muhammad Mehmood, the administration was planning to construct parking plazas in commercial areas of Rawalpindi city aimed at resolving traffic issues on the city roads.

A tender had been awarded for construction of a parking cum commercial plaza at Children Park Commercial Market, Satellite Town and construction work on the project would be started soon, he added. He said, the authorities concerned had been directed to also award contract of Raja Bazaar Fawara Chowk within shortest possible time frame.

The authorities had also been instructed to inform him about progress on hiring of transaction advisor for Jinnah Road, Bani Market and Fifth Road, Commercial Market parking plazas, he added. — APP

Inter-provincial gang of car lifters busted

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Anti-Car Lifting Cell (ACLC) of Islamabad Police has busted an inter-provincial gang of car lifters and recovered six stolen cars from it worth more than Rs. 10 million, a police spokesman said.

He said that a team headed by In-Charge ACLC Sub-Inspector Liaqat Ali succeeded to bust a notorious gang of car lifters. The gangsters have been identified as Zahid Shah alias Zahdo, Ibrahaim Shah and Tariq.

They confessed during preliminary investigation to lift cars from twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi as well as other districts of Punjab and later selling them in various areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

DIG (Operations) Waqar Uddin Syed has appreciated his overall performance of ACLC police team and announced cash prize and commendation certificates for the team members.

MCI plants 400 saplings in Kachnar Park

ISLAMABAD: MCI has planted 400 saplings in Kachnar park located in the area of sector I-8 under the "Clean and Green" Islamabad campaign. MCI workers in collaboration with COMSATS University volunteers planted saplings at the park to increase the green cover in the federal capital, a senior official in MCI told media. "We are engaging private sector to make the campaign successful and around one million saplings would be planted by this year," the official added. — APP

Technology based farms to be created, says Fawad

The country had the best laboratories in the year 1952 which later resulted in formation of Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research with an objective to connect industry and scientific research

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Chaudhry Fawad Hussain has announced to create 500 technology based farms initially in the country to promote export-based agriculture under the novel project of Precision Agriculture. Agriculture sector is considered as the backbone for Pakistan's economy and can contribute a big share in Gross Development Product through adopting the state-of-the-art technology. Therefore, his ministry is endeavouring to introduce modern technology for improving agriculture practices and boost the production level of different crops which would boost econ-

omy as well as make the farmers prosperous, he told media. Under the project of Precision Agriculture, Chaudhry Fawad said two, five and 12.5 acres farms would be given technology packages including drone, water sensors, pesticides sensors, packaging facility, seed selection etc. He said in our country, maximum production at even 12.5 acres land is not sufficient for our farmer to bear expenses however, in China, farmers could get optimum production at one acre land through tech-based agricultural practices which was enough for the whole year. He was of the view that laser leveling of fields could maximize

productivity of irrigation water at the farm level. This would help produce more crop per drop through optimal use of water and non-water inputs. The federal minister in his tweet said this year, Faisalabad Agricultural University has received 50 per cent more admissions applications than last year. The interest in admissions has also increased in other agricultural universities. "The interest of youth in agriculture is very welcome. It will change Pakistan's agriculture field", he said. The second part of this project, he mentioned, is to develop corporate livestock farms for the farmers. Pakistan Halal Authori-

ty has been created which would ensure quality of meat and Islamic way of sacrificing animals. Listing another initiative, Chaudhry Fawad said an Electric Vehicle value chain would be established in Pakistan under the strategic alliance between Pakistan and China based companies. The investment of 50 million dollars would be made initially in the project while manufacturing of the electric buses would begin in the second phase. "Around 25 percent of the global pollution comes from the transport sector and environmental hazards can be addressed widely through shifting on electric vehicles", he said.

Chaudhry Fawad also mentioned another project of Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education under which 440 schools would be converted into STEM schools in the first phase. Around 100,000 students would be imparted STEM education annually from Grade IX to Grade XII. He said Pakistan has great potential in Information Technology however, lagging behind in hard-core science. This project would enable the country to produce scientists. The federal minister was of the view that Pakistan had a robust beginning in terms of scientific interventions since its establishment.

Five held over harassing woman

DNA

MURREE: Five hoodlums were taken into custody by the police over harassing a woman at Murree Expressway. As per details, a woman who was travelling in a vehicle at Murree Expressway was harassed by five hoodlums. The woman immediately called helpline of motorway police.

The motorway police reached the spot and arrested the hoodlums and registered case against them on the complaint of the Motorway police inspector.

Earlier this week, Goodwill Ambassador for World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and an adventure athlete Samar Khan had claimed that she had been harassed on an Islamabad road by a motorcyclist. The athlete took to Twitter to share the entire harassment episode.

Sunday Trekking team explore beauty of Rock Pool Valley



ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Sunday Trekking Team enjoyed to the fullest the wild beauty of the Rock Pool Valley Trail in the gorgeous Margalla Hills with its remarkable streams flowing with powerful energy. Birds, butterflies, cute goats and donkeys were also present to celebrate the last trek of our friend Pietro Damiani before taking his new posting in Beijing. To celebrate this occasion, Algeria, Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Ethiopia, France, Hungary, Italy, Jordan, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Palestine, USA were represented on the trail to bid farewell to our loyal trekking friend and to wish him the very best in his new endeavours! — DNA

Tourist family tortured by restaurant staff

He directed that legal action be taken against the perpetrators and justice will be provided

DNA

MURREE: Tourists family has been tortured in Murree over a minor altercation by Expressway restaurant staff. According to the details, another incident of rudeness and fight with the tourist family has taken place in Murree. Tourists were severely tortured at the Murree Expressway restaurant over a slightly bitter rhetoric. The injured family member was shifted to the hospital. The victim's family is said to have come from Faisalabad who came for entertainment. Restaurant staff stormed the men and women. The administration and police were absent on the occasion.

It is to be noted that incidents of rudeness and quarrels with tourists have taken place in Murree even before this. The Dolphin Force was deployed to prevent violence. Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar has taken notice of the incident of violence against tourists in Murree and has sought a report from Commissioner Rawalpindi and RPO. He directed that legal action be taken against the perpetrators and justice be provided to the affected family. Such incidents will not be tolerated in Murree and other tourist destinations. The police should patrol the tourist places regularly, said CM.

PNCA to hold "Puppet Show" on 26 Sept

ISLAMABAD: PNCA will hold "Puppet Show" on September 26 to revive the dying art of puppetry. The show will feature theme based puppetry that usually revolved around current issues including women and children related issues, education and environment to educate the audience especially children through infotainment. Special puppet artist will perform in the show who have taught special techniques of puppetry from different institutions. The Puppet shows are being arranged by PNCA as regular feature which was established in 1978 and has been showcasing the skills of its puppeteers comprising vibrant costumed puppets presenting folk tales, skits, regional dances and national songs to provide infotainment to audiences of every age group. He said performers in these shows were contractual employees of PNCA who have received special trainings in this art. — APP

"Doctor 2020" highlights social issues

RAWALPINDI: A stage play entitled 'Doctor 2020' was presented at Punjab Arts Council Rawalpindi with aim to highlight social issues. The play was written and directed by Naeem Toota while Hameed Babar, Naeem Tota, Shama Niazi, Sawera Shahzadi, Sajjad Khan, Shahid Kodo, Zahida Ch and others played wonderful role in the play. The play dealt with the curse of illegal transplantation of kidneys in Pakistan. Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmed addressing at the occasion said that the drama highlighted social issues of the society and society cannot develop without overcoming social problems. "Artists are our precious asset," Waqar Ahmed added. The Arts Council always provided a platform for new talent to showcase their art. At the end of the play, Waqar Ahmed thanked the guests. — DNA



RAWALPINDI: Artists perform in a stage play 'Doctor 2020' presented at Punjab Arts Council to highlight social issues. — DNA

Authorities to take strict action against profiteers

RAWALPINDI: The authorities concerned of Rawalpindi District Administration have been directed to take strict action against profiteers and hoarders. According to Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi, Anwar ul Haq, the administration, under a vigorous campaign launched by Rawalpindi District government against profiteering and hoarding, had imposed fines amounting to over Rs 41 million on over 21,000 shopkeepers during this year while 316 violators were sent behind the bars. The administration was regularly conducting raids against hoarders and profiteers, he said and informed that fines were imposed on the violators in seven tehsils of the Rawalpindi district during last eight months.

The teams conducted 129,101 raids in seven tehsils of the district during the period and imposed fines on 21,000 violators, he added. He informed that the administration also lodged 274 FIRs against the violators and the profiteers were sent behind the bars during operations. The Administration had constituted teams to check profiteering, hoarding and rate lists of daily use items while on the recommendations of the teams, several cases were also registered. — APP

IEP pays homage to late Mansoor Akhtar Siddiqui

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A condolence reference was held here under auspices of the Institution of Engineers, Pakistan (IEP) to pay homage to late Engr. Mansoor Akhtar Siddiqui. Late Siddiqui was the former IEP Central Council member. He died at Taxila on August 24. Chairman IEP Rawalpindi- Islamabad Engr. Hafiz M. Ehsan Ul Haq Qazi opened the reference with inaugural address and offered 'Dua-e-Maghfarat' for the departed soul. Gp Capt (r) Engr. Najamuddin, Secretary IEP Islamabad Centre conducted the reference.

The reference was attended by representative engineers from different parts of the country. Prominent among them were Federal Secretary, IP and Telecom Engr. Shoaib Siddiqui, Chairman Pakistan Engineering Council Engr. Javed Saleem Qureshi, member National Assembly Engr. Najeeb Haroon, and a PTI's leader Engr. Ijaz Ahmad Chaudhry. The speakers shared personal association and memories of their relationship with deceased. Paying tribute to Late Mansoor Akhtar Siddiqui, Engr. Muhammad Ali Nasr, member IEP Islamabad Centre said that he was a visionary person who devoted his whole life for the cause of socio-economic

uplift of the country and the engineering profession. Remembering the departed soul Engr. Akmal Javed, member IEP Islamabad said that Mansoor was very passionate about the capacity building of young engineers of Pakistan. Talking about the Late Engr. Mansoor Siddiqui, Federal Secretary Engr. Shoaib Siddiqui said that Engr. Mansoor was very humble and amazing personality and was committed for the welfare of Engineering Community. He was designated as "King Maker" in view of his strong connection with engineering community that accrued success in elections for his supported candidates in var-

ious institutions. Engr. Waseem Nazir said that he was very close to him for last 10 years. He had lot of patience and always thought about the development of engineers. MNA Engr. Najeeb Haroon said late was associated with him since 1973 and was one of the founding Members of a Party "PASBAN" and PTI. He added, late Mansoor motivated him to participate in the PEC's elections. Engr. Ijaz Ahmad Chaudhry remembered him by saying that people like Engr. Mansoor are very rare. He had been a very loyal and passionate person, who had made a lot of efforts for the betterment of engineering sector of Pakistan.

SEPTEMBER 2020

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11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza,
G-8 Markaz, ISLAMABAD-PAKISAN
Ph: 051-2261960, 051-2266165



Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Vol: 01 Issue: 146

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad

Working towards peace

THE long-awaited Afghan peace process involving direct talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban has got underway in Doha with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo attending the opening session as a mark to demonstrate American interest in the matter and its determination to bring about peace in the region. The flurry of activity seen from the US over the past months is part of efforts to ensure the matter is settled for the US presidential election in November. The process that will now take place in Doha is a complicated and intricate one. As Prime Minister Imran Khan remarked, only negotiations can settle the conflict in Afghanistan and save the Afghans – who have been caught up in war for 40 years – from further misery. The Taliban favour calling it the 'Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan'. This however is likely to be opposed by President Ashraf Ghani and his government, who favour the 'Islamic Republic of Afghanistan' and wish to run the country as a modern Western-oriented state ready to move towards development and other steps which can ensure equality and rights for all its citizens, including women and minorities. The standoff which delayed the talks was essentially over the release of hundreds of prisoners whose freedom the Taliban demanded. This pattern is now being negotiated in detail alongside other smaller questions, which concern how the government is to run and who is to make decisions within it. This has been resolved only after many rounds of talks between the US and the Taliban, with Pakistan facilitating the process. Pakistan naturally has a deep interest in bringing about peace in Afghanistan. This is necessary for the country, so that it can itself move towards the stability and security that it needs and which the region needs as a whole. The war in Afghanistan has had a massive impact on Pakistan, bringing to it militancy as well as a surge of weapons and other factors, which play a role in building militant factions inside the country. There is hope now that perhaps some deal can be reached between the various stakeholders in Afghanistan, which would allow the country to move towards peace and a resolution of its many problems. This is what the people of Afghanistan and the entire region hope for.



Covid-19 resurging globally

THAT Pakistan has been counted in a World Economic Forum list of countries to learn from to tackle the coronavirus pandemic is a welcome recognition by an international credible institution, but at the same time such accolades should not become a source of so much unchecked excess jubilation that one simply forgets how a second wave of the deadly virus is an eventuality. Neighbouring India's first Covid-19 wave is still going strong clocking the highest number of new cases in the world, around 90,000 a day, and with respect to cases per million of population (a more reasonable statistic to compare) is 2.3 times that of Pakistan. Deaths per million of population are also twice that of Pakistan. Clearly Pakistan, despite responding quite poorly to the virus when it first entered the country and started spreading, has come out of this pandemic relatively unscathed some projections in June were suggesting a death toll in the millions. Prime Minister Imran Khan took a risk by not placing a harsh lockdown immediately, instead opting for a very lax one which, it is suggested by some experts, inadvertently stopped the virus from spreading to villages as daily wage labourers were still able to find work in the cities, while a median age of 22 also helped keep the recovery rate up. But there is still no Covid-19 vaccine available and one is at least six months away, if not more. With winter around the corner and countries like the UK and other European countries already experiencing spikes after weeks of calm, Pakistan must capitalize on its current position. That is not to suggest a lockdown is placed when the temperature drops come October; hopefully it need not come to that. But what can be done now is stricter implementation of SOPs that are being blatantly violated since the country was fully opened a little more than a month ago. Equipping hospitals with PPEs now rather than scrambling for them later, if patients again start filling ICUs and wards would also be a good idea. Time is again on our side, just as it was when the virus had started travelling from Wuhan towards our shores. That opportunity was fantastically wasted and it would be a shame if that were to happen again and lives are unnecessarily lost.

Iranian perspective of ME, Afghan & other issues-I

Ali Hosseini



Ambassador of Iran Ali Hosseini delivered this speech at the National Defence University. Here is the text of the speech

Countries of the Middle East are coping with different types of misunderstandings. For example some have illusion of grandeur, while the others suffer from hypocritical phobias, some are trapped in arm races, and the others are involved in religious competitions. In such a topsy-turvy situation, some invisible hands are also trying to flare up the fire and keep the flame of divergence alive for ever in our region

AT the outset, I would like to thank NDU officials especially Lieutenant-General Muhammad Saeed honorable president of National Defence University. For providing me this opportunity to be here and discuss different aspects of Iran - Pakistan relations.

I also seize the opportunity to congratulate Pakistan's Defense day "to the brave, heroic and in a university that is concentrated on Defense issues has coincided with the defense day of your country. so accept my warm and cordial felicitation on such great day.

Regarding the depth and nature of relations between our countries, many issues can be elaborated in our today's discussion. But with the aim of having a subject oriented lecture, I will try to classify my presentation in 5 parts:

A- The first subject is about the effects of evolving global and regional environment on Iran's security:

After a long time working in the field of foreign affairs, I am brave enough to say that at least, in the last decades, no region in the world has been as chaotic as Middle East, Persian Gulf and West of Asia. Not yet one crisis finished, another one arises. Not yet one misunderstanding dispelled, another creates. If someone asks why, hundreds of answers are presumed to be proposed- that are not actually the subject of our discussion today- but majority of them, will concentrate on the negative effects of foreign interventions on the ultimate security of our countries and our region.

So, knowing our region and its chaotic nature, we have learned how to cope with it and not let this environment cripple our bilateral relations with our neighbors. In the other hand, we have learned how to turn the current challenges into now and then opportunities. For us, the best possible situation is the time that other countries in our neighborhood also join hands to reduce the negative side effects of these uninvited interventions.

To get more down to the nitty-gritty of the issue, I would like to focus on more challenging issues of our region especially challenges in Middle East and clarify Iran's stance on each of them:

You know that Middle East is not only the center of east but the center of foreign intervention as well. The conundrums of Middle East that has made the region like a tight corner are the result of many unresolved issues and above that, the result of non-dispelled illusions.

Countries of the Middle East are coping with different types of misunderstandings. For example some have illusion of grandeur, while the others suffer from hypocritical phobias, some are trapped in arm races, and the others are involved in religious competitions. In such a topsy-turvy situation, some invisible hands are also trying to flare up the fire and keep the flame of divergence alive for ever in our region. Regarding this prelim, I will explain Iran's stance on some important issues in our region:

First- Situation in Afghanistan:
It is proved that any insecurity or instability in Afghanistan will definitely spill over on neighboring countries -mostly Iran and Pakistan-. No country more than Iran and Pakistan has suffered from the burden of Afghan refugees and production of drugs in Afghanistan.

In spite of many similar pains and sufferings, unfortunately the level of cooperation between Iran and Pakistan has never reached to the extent that overcomes these tough situations and solve the crisis from their sources. In my vantage point, misunderstandings that are mainly originated from negative role of third parties are the main reason of this deferment.

We are very happy of seeing positive developments in Afghanistan today and have always supported a stable and prosperous Afghanistan and we know that Pakistan also has did its best in this way.
If we are in search of enduring peace and durable stability, we have to complement our efforts with each other and increase our connections on Afghanistan and with Afghanistan government.

If we won't be able to do so, others will decide about us according to their own priorities and interests. In recent years, Pakistan and Iran have taken separate positive steps to expedite the peace process in Afghanistan and many breakthroughs have gained in this way. For sure, future trilateral cooperation between Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan can make us more close to a prosperous region with sustainable peace in it.

Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the Constitution of Afghanistan is the result of a long journey passed by Afghanistan people and international community and preserving it can help to sustain current minimum order that exists in this country.

In pursuit of Iran's firm stance in supporting sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries in the region, Iran also believes that any negotiation about future of Afghanistan should be in cooperation and coordination with the official central government of this country.

Second- Palestine cause:
Most of us and majority of Muslims are quite familiar with the Palestine saga so I don't go too much to the history of the issue. In recent years, unfortunately the nasty agenda of "deal of the century" and its implementation consequences are focused on elimination of whole Palestine both from ground and maps.

Unfortunately Islamic countries are forced to normalize their relations with the voracious occupier Israel and in the case of disobedience, are threatened of retaliation in other fields.

For Islamic Republic of Iran, that has never accepted suppression and pressure, Zionist regime presence in our region is considered totally illegal and illegitimate because this regime has been luring, deceiving and coercing all nations and countries into acceptance of its survival. In this way, Zionist ill-wisher regime has sketched and implemented many evil plans that we can see their destructive and negative effects on our region and our people today. Although some efforts have also been taken to satiate its voracity, nothing tangible reached at the end.

Considering the inefficiency of previously suggested plans for the question of Palestine, Iran presents its precise plan entitled "National Referendum in Palestine" to the UN for the settlement of the issue.

In this plan, Iran clearly proposes a platform that provides the grounds for the people of Palestine to exercise their right to self-determination. According to this initiative, that is in full compliance with United Nations Charter and rules of international law, particularly international humanitarian law and human rights, all the people of Palestine, including the followers of all religions (including Jews, Christians and Muslims), who inhabited in Palestine before the issuance of the Balfour Declaration will hold a national referendum and establish a political system that will decide on the status of the non-indigenous residents of Palestine.

The main prerequisite of this initiative that is both the request of people of Palestine and enshrined in UN Resolutions, is the return of indigenous Palestinian refugees to their homeland.

Third- War in Yemen:

From 2011, Yemen that is a part of Islamic world and Yemeni people who are Muslims are suffering from clashes that lack any positive or even clear perspective about future.

Huge military violations and human rights breaches in this country didn't leave anything except destruction and disappointment.

Regarding this issue, Iran has always insisted on Yamani- Yamani negotiations for termination of the crisis and has done its best to subside the tensions over there. We believe that Yemen crisis doesn't have any military solution and military rivalry just has filled the pocket of arm sellers and empathized Yemen and our region of tranquility.

Iran is ready and will be ready to help the political settlement of the Yemen crisis for ever and will use its friendly relations with some internal groups to persuade them for terminating the battle. But I should clarify that people of Yemen like many other nations have learned how to defend themselves and have their own program of work and their own defensive strategy.

Fourth- Persian Gulf crisis:

Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz is one of the most important geopolitical spots in the world. A third of the world's liquefied natural gas and almost 25% of total global oil consumption passes through this strait. Unfortunately the US uninvited military oriented presence in these waters has created an immediate threat to Islamic Republic of Iran. To prolong its presence, US has defined Iran as a big danger for Arab countries and convinced some of them to buy their security before Iran from USA.

This situation led a fabricated Iran-phobia and intensification of military tensions between the Islamic Republic of Iran and United States of America and its allies in the Persian Gulf region. By strengthening its presence in our adjoining waters and with the aim of implementing its unilateral sanctions, US hampered the movement of Iran's oil tankers and prevented the oil sell via sea shipment.

Reacting to this U.S. military buildup, we clearly announced our opposition with American presence in our neighboring waters and asked our Muslim brothers in Arab countries to sit together and solve our security concerns. The proposition of "Hormuz Peace Plan" by president of the Islamic republic of Iran in the last General Assembly of UN was a clear indicator of Iran's ambition for peaceful coexistence and respect to other countries sovereignty in the region. In fact, we tried to send a clear message to our Arab brothers that the real threat is not Iran and that they are just diverted from the reality of Zionist malignity. In Iran's point of view, increasing connectivity and dialogue between Persian Gulf countries, can reduce a big segment of clashes and predicaments of the region that are mostly the result of Zionist plans and American performs.

Fifth- Sanction regime against Iran:

Contemporary history of Iran is overflowing with unilateral and hegemonic interventions of USA. Not going too far, you may have heard the name of Ajax Operation in 1953 which during a coup d'état, Americans overthrown the democratically elected Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh in favor of strengthening the monarchical rule of the then Shah/ King. In another vain attempt, they tried to suppress the 1979 revolution and then weaken it when they couldn't suppress. Americans have been wrestling with Islamic republic of Iran from its very inception in 1979 and imposing a wide range of prolonged and bothersome difficulties to its believers.

Securitizing Iran's Peaceful Nuclear Program and referring it to the UNSC that resulted in intensification of unfair and biased sanctions against my country was the result of their animosity.

So, Iranians have a negative picture of American interventionism in their internal affairs and suppression of their democratic governments even before the 1979 revolution.

They also perfectly know that Americans always preferred our country to be ruled by their stooges than by an independent administration. So, after 1979 revolution, many options like regime change, proxy wars, terrorist attacks, assassination/martyrdom of Iranian intellectuals and intelligent, sanction regimes and so on tried to fail our Islamic- Republican system and force us to succumb to their desire of puppet appointing. And you know that US has pursued intervention strategy in many other parts of the world.

Gradually, the issue of Iran and Iran- policy becomes an important element in US foreign policy and each party (Republicans or Democrats) tried to prove the efficiency of its approach in countering Iran comparing to its rival ones. In this context, the imposition of sanctions came to its maximum level during the Presidency of D.Trump – someone who beside his desire for being reelected had a strong commitment to realize Zionists aspirations. So, for analyzing the

sanction regime and unilateral sanctions on Iran, you need to consider many elements like historical developments, American internal affairs and international dynamics simultaneously.

The issue that we need to focus on today is the negative effects of these sanctions on Iran relation with its counterparts. In the case of nuclear program, during the last decade, Iran tried a lot to prove the peaceful nature of its activities and finally you witnessed that JCPOA (joint comprehensive plan of action) agreement concluded between Iran and all UNSC permanent members+ Germany in 2015.

In JCPOA, all the previous UN sanctions terminated and Iran's nuclear program defined as a peaceful one. In the importance of this breakthrough, it suffices to say that more than one decade of breathtaking negotiations was dedicated to reach such international agreement, which came to its legal strength with UNSC- Resolution 2231 in 2015.

Unfortunately, by political change in US, the newly elected Republican president unilaterally withdrew its country from JCPOA (besides many other injudicious withdrawals) and denounced it as a fruitless achievement of Democrats. This transgression happened while even in the case of state changes and succession, treaties are expected to be respected. The next step, Trump forced other partners to either withdraw or prevent the implementation of JCPOA in coming years. By getting closer to the presidential election of the US, Trump administration that considers itself on the verge of failure is looking for turning points to grab more votes to secure his presidency for next round. Putting further pressure on Iran with the aim of incurring a big change is one of these issues that he and his team are hardly working on it.

Fortunately and for the sake of Iranian's strong resistance, USA has faced failure in most of its Iran-policy. The recent story of UNSC that in a very humiliating effort, 90 percent of Security Council members didn't accept US proposal for Extending Arm Embargo on Iran and just the US and one non permanent member of the council supported the resolution in one of these failures. Less than one week later, US tried to reapplication the provisions of terminated resolutions under the name of Snapback. In another shaming defeat, none of UNSC permanent members accepted the US bid and the interim president of UNSC announced that Security Council members, including veto-wielding members believe that the United States has no legal standing to enforce the snapback provision, since it is no longer a party to the nuclear agreement. So, Trump administration's lonely insistence on restoring United Nations sanctions against Iran, headed nowhere. This result had many lessons for the US administration to learn but they will continue their wrong path of imposing maximum pressure on Iranians.

The story of Iran and JCPOA shows that there is a clear determination in US foreign policy to continue the clashes with Iran. You may ask me why?
- Because US needs a good excuse to continue its presence in the region,
- To continue its arm sell to some deceived countries in the region and,
- To continue its support of Zionist's brutalities in Palestine and so forth.

So, when they are determined to continue the clash in the expense of our regional progress and stability, we as the regional countries should be aware and vigilant to know what to do and what not to do. In a short sentence, we need and ought to work together and show collective resistance to an animosity that is not just against Iran (although it is ostensibly against Iran sole) but against the whole region and Islamic countries.

Although Iran's reaction to such pressures may change from patience to synchronized reciprocal actions, there is one permanent element that will never change in Iranian positions and it's the Iranian mindset of bully countering and unilateralism resisting. If such strong resistance be followed by other Islamic countries, for sure bully will change its approach and will see itself in full isolation.

During the sanction period, Iran has been able to change the challenges to opportunities and increase its self-reliance. Many subjects that once were being imported are now locally manufacturing by Iranian youths. Even in the defensive industry, Iran has become one of the best missile producers. In the knowledge of stem cells, nanotechnology, aerospace technologies and human capital, Iran is one of the best in the region and even in the world. I mentioned these breakthroughs to say that resistance works and resilience effects. If our close neighbor like Pakistan that has many similarities with Iran decides to resist the lordly behaviors of the US, many hurdles in our bilateral relations will be removed. We can achieve more in interdependence and cooperation than in divergence and dependence to others.

(To be continued)

Briefs

'US prepares to quit air base'

DNA

ANKARA: A provocative live-fire drill by the Turkish navy off the coast of Cyprus was branded illegal on Saturday, as reports emerged that the US is drawing up plans to withdraw from the strategic Incirlik air force base.

"We don't know what's going to happen to Incirlik," Ron Johnson, the US senator who chairs the Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee for Europe, told the Washington Examiner. "We hope for the best, but we have to plan for the worst." US withdrawal would be a blow to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, suggesting that the US no longer trusts him. "I think, from a defensive posture, we have to look at the reality of the situation that the path Erdogan is on is not good," Johnson said.

Meanwhile Turkey is conducting naval gunnery exercises from Saturday until Monday off the coast at Sadrazamky in northern Cyprus, a part of the island controlled by Ankara but unrecognized by the rest of the world. The Joint Rescue Coordination Center in Cyprus, which is attached to the Defense Ministry, said the drill was illegal because it "violates the Republic of Cyprus's sovereignty and sovereign rights."

Cyprus also said it would conduct its own joint training maneuvers with US forces, from Saturday until Sept. 20. "Two combatant craft medium transport vessels of the US special navy forces are in Cyprus to participate in joint military drills," the National Guard said.

Saudi Arabia treats 24,000 wounded Yemenis

DNA

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSrelief) is continuing efforts to provide health care to wounded Yemenis, both inside and outside Yemen, local media reported.

Saudi humanitarian organisation has provided transportation and treatment to over 24,000 Yemenis, KSrelief said in a statement. Some 9,279 injured Yemenis have been supported by the centre in treatment at both government and private hospitals in the southern part of Saudi Arabia, while more complex cases have been transported to hospitals in the Riyadh and Mecca regions. KSrelief was established in 2015 by Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz and has since worked on humanitarian efforts to more than 53 countries around the world, with millions benefiting. Over 800 wounded patients have also been transported from Yemen to private hospitals in Jordan, Sudan, and India, the center said. Yemen is of particular focus to KSrelief, with the organisation implementing 344 medical sector projects across the country since its establishment in 2015 with the aim of alleviating the suffering of many Yemenis. The organisation had signed 10 contracts with private hospitals across Yemen to provide medical services, with KSrelief reporting 9,014 injured Yemenis benefiting.

Biden battles Trump, lack of enthusiasm among Black voters

Earlier this month, both candidates visited Kenosha, Wisconsin, a battleground state, and the site of the most recent turmoil following the police shooting of Jacob Blake

WEB DESK

WASHINGTON: Racial inequality in the United States came into sharp focus this year, and became a defining topic of the national debate, after police killings of Black Americans ignited months of widespread protests and galvanised the nation to demand racial justice and police reforms. The unrest has forced US President Donald Trump, a Republican who is running for re-election on a "law and order" platform, and his main challenger, Democratic nominee Joe Biden, to wrestle with the complicated issue of race in America, and try to appeal to Black voters.

But with less than two months before the election, in the middle of a pandemic and record-high unemployment rates, whether Black Americans will be energised to come out in large numbers to vote remains uncertain - potentially defining the



outcome of the 2020 election. A recent poll shows Biden by far outperforming Trump among Black voters, with 78 percent

support. "Most Black voters are going to support Joe Biden," said Ravi Perry, professor and chair of the

Department of Political Science at Howard University, a historically Black university. "But there are differences in

enthusiasm," Perry tells media, "where Black women, for instance, have far more enthusiasm towards Biden, and many young people, support him but with far less enthusiasm."

Earlier this month, both candidates visited Kenosha, Wisconsin, a battleground state, and the site of the most recent turmoil following the police shooting of Jacob Blake, a Black man who remains hospitalised after being shot in the back seven times by a white police officer while authorities were trying to arrest him in late August.

Speaking at a local church in Kenosha after a private meeting with Blake and his family, Biden said the latest events would help Americans confront centuries of systemic racism.

In contrast, Trump did not mention Blake by name, refused to acknowledge systemic racism and instead blasted the protesters and offered his unequivocal support to law enforcement.

Plane cafes take off in Thailand

BANGKOK: With millions around the world stuck at home due to the pandemic, "plane cafes" in Thailand are offering customers the chance to pretend they are in the sky - and the idea seems to have taken off.

On board a retired commercial airplane in the coastal city of Pattaya, coffee drinkers make themselves comfy on first-class-style seats and pose for photos by the overhead lockers. Boarding passes in hand, some "passengers" even opt for a tour of the cockpit.

"With this cafe I can sit in first class and also mess around in the cockpit pretending to be the captain of the plane," 26-year-old Thipsuda Faksaitong told AFP. "It's a lot of fun." Chalisa Chuensranoi, 25, said her visit was as good as any trip she had taken before the pandemic, which shuttered Thailand's borders in March. "Sitting right here in the first-class section... really gives me the feeling of actually being on a plane, cruising through the air," she said. - APP

Bahrain: Ties with Israel a sovereign decision

DNA

CAIRO: Bahrain's agreement to establish diplomatic with Israel is a sovereign decision serving the kingdom's supreme interests, a senior Bahraini official said Saturday. Bahrain and Israel reached a US-mediated agreement to establish full diplomatic relations, less than a week before the White House hosts a ceremony to sign a historic peace treaty between the UAE and Israel.

"The declaration to establish diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the State of Israel is a sovereign measure constituting a courageous stance



reflecting King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's wisdom and his forward-looking vision," Bahraini Interior Minister Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa said.

"This matter will reflect on serving supreme interests of the Kingdom of Bahrain domestically and externally, contribute to consolidating security and stability and spreading progress and prosperity," he added, according to Bahrain's news agency BNA.

The minister said that Bahrain will remain the land of peace and "cradle of coexistence and openness". The pact makes Bahrain the fourth Arab country after Egypt, Jordan and the UAE to normalise ties with Israel.

Johnson accuses EU of plotting food 'blockade'

The food dispute centres on the EU's refusal so far to grant Britain "third country" status

LONDON: Prime Minister Boris Johnson has accused the European Union of threatening to impose a food "blockade" between Britain and Northern Ireland that could tear the UK apart, throwing new fuel on the fire of simmering Brexit talks.

Writing in Saturday's Daily Telegraph newspaper, Johnson said the EU's stance justified his government's introduction of new legislation to rewrite its Brexit withdrawal treaty - a bill that is causing deep alarm among his own MPs.

Talks between London and Brussels on a future trading relationship are deadlocked. Absent a deal by the end of this year, when the full force of Brexit kicks in, Johnson said the EU was bent on an "extreme interpretation" of rules for Northern Ireland. "We are being told that the EU will not only impose tariffs on goods moving from Great Britain to Northern Ireland, but that they might actually stop the transport of food products from GB to NI," he wrote.

"I have to say that we never seriously believed that the EU would be willing to use a treaty, negotiated in good faith, to blockade one part of the UK, to cut it off, or that they would actually threaten to destroy the economic and territorial integ-



city of the UK."

The food dispute centres on the EU's refusal so far to grant Britain "third country" status, which acknowledges that nations meet basic requirements to export their foodstuffs to Europe. Under Britain's EU withdrawal treaty, Northern Ireland will enjoy a special status to ensure no return of a border with EU member Ireland, in line with a 1998 peace pact that ended three decades of bloodshed.

The EU is worried that post-Brexit Britain could undercut its own food standards, as well as rules on state aid for companies, to send goods into its single market via Northern Ireland.

After another difficult round of trade talks this week in London, chief EU negotiator Michel Barnier said "many uncertainties" remained about Britain's food export regime after January 1. - APP

EU wants 'credible' Lebanon govt

BEIRUT: The European Union's commissioner for crisis management on called for the urgent formation of a "credible" government in Lebanon before a second phase of financial support for the crisis-hit country can be released. Janez Lenaric said the EU had mobilised 64 million euros (\$79 million) for the emergency response to a devastating port blast that killed more than 190 people and wounded thousands in Beirut on August 4. The next round of funding would be for reconstruction, he said, but warned it would have to go hand in hand with reforms. - APP

UN moves to contain virus in Syrian camps

DNA

NEW YORK: UNHCR steps up efforts to combat COVID-19 among tens of thousands of Syrian refugees in camps in Jordan after the first three cases were confirmed last week. South Korea to decide later today whether to extend stricter antiviral curbs in the greater Seoul area by another week as number of infections drop. Domestic air travel in Wuhan, the epicentre of the global coronavirus out-

break, returns to pre-pandemic levels with 500 domestic flights on Friday, Chinese authorities say. More than 28.6 million people around the world have been diagnosed with the coronavirus and nearly 917,000 have died, according to Johns Hopkins University. About 19.2 million have recovered. South Korea has eased its tough social distancing policy for the next two weeks in the densely populated Seoul metropolitan area, with new daily novel coronavirus cases hovering stub-

bornly within triple digits. The government lifted a ban on onsite dining after 9 pm though still requires restaurants and cafes to restrict seating and record patrons' names and contact details. While leisure facilities such as gyms and internet cafes are also allowed to reopen, under so-called phase two restrictions, indoor gatherings are limited to 50 people and outdoor gatherings to 100, while spectators are banned from sporting events.

Bahrain reports highest spike

DNA

DUBAI: Bahrain recorded the highest spike in daily coronavirus cases with 757 new infections, according to the Ministry of Health. The new figure surpassed the highest recorded daily total of 724 cases in June 26. Out of 11,728 COVID-19 tests carried out in the past 24 hours, 757 new cases have been detected among 85 expatriate workers, 668 new cases are contacts of active cases, and 4 are travel related. This brings the total to 58,207. There are currently 28 cases in a critical condition, and 93 cases receiving treatment.



ISLAMABAD: UNICEF head in Pakistan reviewing clean drinking water provision to masses. - DNA

PIAF seeks cut in tax ratio on oil to facilitate industry, trade

When country's GDP ratio was further stretched owing to slow exports growth amidst high cost of doing business, the trade and industry need maximum relief

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: The Pakistan Industrial and Traders Association Front (PIAF) has sought reduction in tax ratio on petroleum products to facilitate the trade and industry, as the government has been charging petroleum levy as well as sales tax on oil products to the record high level. PIAF President Mian Nauman Kabir, in a joint statement with senior vice chairman Nasir Hameed and vice chairman Javed Siddiqi said that at a time when country's GDP ratio was further stretched owing to slow exports growth amidst high

cost of doing business, the trade and industry need maximum relief. He said that Pakistan's economy is going through a challenging phase due to the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic. With a view to improve the cash flow of businesses at this crucial time, the government will have to facilitate the business community through reduction in tax ratio on all items including the oil products, besides deferring the interest payments of the businesses for at least one year. Mian Nauman Kabir observed that the government has already increased the general sales tax on all petroleum products to a standard

rate of 17 percent across the board to generate additional revenues. Earlier, the government has been charging 0.5 percent GST on light diesel, 2 percent on kerosene, 8 percent on petrol and 13 percent on HSD. He said that the Brent crude rates, during last six months period dropped to the lowest level, but the authorities, instead of providing full relief of massive fall in oil rates to the public further escalated the prices of petroleum levy on petrol by another 26% to the highest level along with the GST. Besides the 17 percent sales tax, the government lifted the rate of petroleum levy on HSD and petrol by

around 400%, during last almost one and half years. PIAF senior vice chairman Nasir Hameed observed that business-friendly policies should be adopted as other neighboring countries of the region are giving to trade and industry. He said that sizeable cut in oil rates would certainly bring down the cost of doing business and our products would get their due share in the global market. Nasir Hameed called upon the government to address the key issues of trade and industry, facilitate the economic growth along with improving tax revenue of the government. He said that the impact of COV-

ID-19 has badly affected business and industrial sector, stressing the government to bring down GST in order to ease the difficulties of businesses. Vice chairman Javed Siddiqi said that the move would reduce the cost of doing business, attract new investment, promote industrialization and create new jobs. He said that turnover tax should be reduced from current 1.5% to 0.25% or zero percent for the next 3 years for manufacturers and retailers. He said that to combat the impact of Covid-19, government should withdraw the requirement of CNIC for sales transactions of Rs.50,000.



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Briefs

NAB recovers Rs 137 bn of plundered money

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) recovered 137 billion rupees plundered money in a year. According to a report on recoveries released by NAB, Rawalpindi Bureau of the accountability watchdog made maximum recoveries of 91 billions in an year. The Pindi bureau recovered 23 billion rupees of the looted national wealth only in the fake bank accounts case, the report said. The Rawalpindi bureau also recovered heavy amounts in 3-G, 4-G licenses and a housing fraud. Lahore Bureau of NAB remained at second place with over recovery of over 30 billion rupees in a year, the bureau's recovery report said. The Accountability Bureau Sukkur recovered over 9.4 billion rupees and the bureau's Karachi chapter recovered 3.3 billion rupees of the looted national wealth within the period. The amount was recovered from corrupt elements in result of plea bargain and voluntary return, the NAB statement said. In a plea bargain the NAB and a defendant reach to an agreement of return of certain amount of the case money, which requires subsequent approval from the trial court. The amount plundered from the national exchequer has been returned back to the federal and provincial governments, according to the statement. The looted money recovered in housing fraud being returned back to the victims of the scam, NAB stated.

NDMA distributes 19,000 tents

ISLAMABAD: National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has distributed 19,000 tents in flood-hit areas of Sindh as the relief and rehabilitation operation continues in deluge hit areas of Sindh province in collaboration with other relief providing agencies. According to NDMA report, a total of 60,073 tents, 2,190.82 tons food packs, 14,521 blankets/quilts, 79,870 mosquito nets, 4,795 plastic mats and 12,532 tarpaulins have been distributed among flood-hit people in collaboration with provincial relief agencies. As many as 4,907 kitchen sets, 20 gas cylinder, 5,983 jerry cans, 5,889 hygiene kits, 3,744 iron beds, 503 bed sheets, 8 buckets, 5,000 mattresses/sleeping mats, 3,050 pillows, 500 pedestal fan, 2,387 water cooler/tanks, 2 generators, 269 de watering pumps, 345 life jackets, 2,750 solar lights, 20 boats with OBMs, 66,000 water bottles (1.5 litres each), 375 mt high energy biscuits, 6.5 tons MREs, (1.3 kg each), 1,442,000 aqua tabs and 50 medical kits have so far been distributed among the flood hit peoples. - APP

Reforms in criminal justice top priority: Ali

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan has said that the reforming criminal justice system and ensuring speedy justice to the common man are the top most priorities of the government. Talking to a private news channel, he condemned the motorway incident, and assured that the culprits involved in the incident will be given exemplary punishment. He stressed on law enforcement agencies to take all necessary measures to provide speedy justice to the victim. Ali Muhammad said that the government will take revolutionary measures to transform Thana culture and to ensure redressal of public grievances at police stations.

Pak to set up vocational training institutes with China's help

Bao Zhong, head of political and press section of China's embassy in Pakistan said that China is helping Pakistan to modernize existing vocational training Institutes as well as giving funds to set up at least six more such Institutes to produce skilled work force

DNA

ISLAMABAD: China has decided to help Pakistan open six vocational training Institutes across Pakistan to produce skilled labor, Gwadar Pro reported on Sunday. At present, Chinese companies working in Pakistan are facing acute shortage of skilled labor as majority of local workers falls under unskilled category. Shafqat Mahmood, the Federal

Minister for Education, told Gwadar Pro that "Vocational training institutes are being set up with the help of China under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to impart necessary skills to meet the demands of the industries. This will further strengthen the partnership between the two friendly countries." Bao Zhong, head of political and press section of China's embassy in Pakistan said that China is helping Pakistan to modernize exist-

ing vocational training Institutes as well as giving funds to set up at least six more such Institutes to produce skilled work force. Pakistan has the ninth largest labor force in the world with an estimate of 61 million workers, out of which 5.9 percent are unemployed. Around 2.5 million people enter the local job market while the majority of them lack necessary skills to meet the demands of the local industry. While Pakistan has capacity to

produce only 445,000 skilled laborers annually, authorities expect that with induction of six more vocational training institutes with help of China, Pakistan will be able to produce skilled labor for both local and international market. Pakistan and China expect to produce millions of jobs for skilled work force by 2030. Until September 2020, as many as 70,000 Pakistanis have been directly employed at different pro-

jects under CPEC. A recent study conducted by CPEC Centre of Excellence, showed that indirectly, CPEC could help create even 1.2 million jobs until 2030 under its presently agreed projects. In July 2020, China provided training equipment worth \$4 million (approximately 650 million rupees) for the vocational training institutes/ schools around Pakistan through National Vocational and Technical Training Commission.



KARACHI: President Dr. Arif Alvi chairing a meeting of business community at Governor House. - APP

Pak-China to sign development agreement of first CPEC SEZ

The BOI promoted the establishment of this SEZ with the goals of capitalising on investment inflow under CPEC, inclusive economic development of KP Province, creation of job opportunities, industrial development, and export generation in Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China on Monday will sign the Development Agreement for the first China Pakistan Economic Corridor's (CPEC) Rashakai Special Economic Zone (SEZ) Monday at the Prime Minister (PM) House. The event will be attended by federal ministers, officials from line ministries, the KP government and other stakeholders. In a statement, State Minister and Board of Investment (BOI) Chairman Atif R. Bokhari said that the agreement would realise the vision of SEZs' development, ultimately leading to a prosperous and industrial Pakistan. He highlighted the progress on SEZs under CPEC, saying that sufficient headway has been made on this front and the zones are now gearing up for business. "Pakistan's proximity with China will allow these SEZs to foster economic interdependence for mutual economic advantage," he added. The SEZ Act 2012, under Section-13, binds together the Federation (BOI), the

province and SEZ developer through an agreement for the successful establishment and development of an SEZ, aptly termed 'Development Agreement'. This agreement provides the road map for the establishment of an SEZ while holding the federal and provincial governments as well as the developer jointly responsible for the development and successful operations of an SEZ. The Rashakai SEZ is to be developed under Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zone Development and Management Company (KPEZDMC) in collaboration with China Road & Bridge Corporation, a state-owned Chinese enterprise. An SPV company of these two firms named Rashakai Special Economic Zone Development and Operations Company (RSEZDOC) has been created for the implementation of this agreement, which is a first of its kind with our Chinese counterpart being one of the parties. On August 6, 2019, a project of \$128 Million, spanning over 1,000 acres of land was awarded SEZ status while its

Concession Agreement was signed in April 2019. The BOI promoted the establishment of this SEZ with the goals of capitalising on investment inflow under CPEC, inclusive economic development of KP Province, creation of job opportunities, industrial development, and export generation in Pakistan. Rashakai SEZ holds a unique competitive advantage due to its proximity to the first juncture of the CPEC route, and significant resource and manufacturing base in the region. Due to such factors, it has the potential to become one of the primary investment destinations for foreign investors - particularly Chinese investors who are looking to find new and cheaper markets to relocate their industrial base. Bokhari said that the BOI has successfully expedited the process of provision of promised utilities besides facilitating the allocation of fiscal incentives and concession to the SEZ's co-developer. "To enable successful operations of this SEZ, the federal government has committed Rs1.8 bn for provision of 210 MWs of electricity, and Rs1.2 bn for the provision of

30 million cubic feet per day (MMcfd) gas from the Federal PSDP. Provision of required utilities at the SEZ's doorstep as per the required timelines will allow on-time construction and development," he concluded. Rashakai SEZ aims to become a role model for other SEZs under CPEC, trade transfer station as well as base of industrial capacity cooperation between China and Central Asia and Western Asia. The total planned area in Rashakai is about four square kilometers, and will be developed in three phases, with about one square kilometer for Phase I. Adequate water, power and gas will be supplied to the zone's enterprises for their production and daily consumption. Auxiliary facilities such as complex administration building, exhibition center, apartment, commercial area and hotels will be also established. "One Stop" services including business registration, license issuance, work permits, custom clearance and declaration, inspection and quarantine, issuance of certificate of origin and building permits will be provided for enterprises in the zone.

Lady lawyer seeks SC suo-motu action over motorway incident

"The incident has again proved that the Police and other law enforcement agencies do not have the capability and neither the willpower to protect those who are the most vulnerable in this society"

ISLAMABAD: A lady lawyer of Capital District Bar urged the top court to exercise its suo-motu jurisdiction over gruesome incident that not only crumbled modesty of a woman survivor on the Sialkot-Lahore Motorway where recently felons committed heinous crime of rape in presence of the survivor's two children but has also raised eye brows over priorities of people at the helm of affairs who apparently failed to get structural changes on war footing in the police department. Filing the plea before Supreme Court, advocate High Court Mariam Farid Khwaja along with her colleague advocate Usama Khawar submitted that a horrible, remorseful and regretful incident occurred on Sialkot-Lahore Motorway has shaken the entire nation and has brought to the forefront miseries of females of Pakistan who are utterly unsafe from criminals and miscreants all Pakistan. Applicants claimed, "The incident has again proved that the Police and other law enforcement agencies do not have the capability and neither the willpower to protect those who are the most vulnerable in this society". They added the incident has also shown that the federal government, provincial government and law enforcement agencies have failed to uphold the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution of Pakistan, 1973. Substantiating their claim for invoking top court suo-motu jurisdiction, applicants submitted that the incident has caused immense fear and insecurity in the society especially the women who are 48.76 per cent of the country's population. While seeking court directives for administrative action against negligence of the people at helm of affairs the applicants urged the top court to initiate and pursue criminal proceedings against the responsible and liable persons. They also prayed to formulate guidelines for a safe policing, police reforms and recommendations for avoidance of such incidents amid measures for effective enforcement of the relevant laws in the country. - DNA

526 new infections reported during 24 hours: NCOC

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Six deaths and 526 COVID-19 infections have been reported during the last 24 hours across the country, confirmed NCOC. The statistics provided by NCOC stated that 6,379 patients died of coronavirus, whereas, the number of active cases of COVID-19 reached to 5,673 and a total of 310,481 cases reported so far. Overall 289,429 patients have recovered from the virus and the country conducted 31,411 coronavirus tests. 1,000 COVID-19 patients including 96 put on ventilators are currently admitted to 735 hospitals of the country. The country conducted 29,534 detection tests during the last 24 hours, taking the total number of tests to 2,879,355. 1,021 patients are currently admitted to 735 hospitals across the country including 93 people put on ventilators.

Motorway gang rape suspect surrenders

DNA

LAHORE: A suspect in the motorway gang rape case surrendered before the Lahore Police on Sunday and claimed that he was not involved in the highway incident, media reported. Waqarul Hassan was among the two suspects identified by the Punjab government on Saturday for their involvement in the heinous crime which has angered the whole nation and prompted countrywide protests. The key suspect, Abid Ali, is still at large and police teams are conducting raids at different locations to apprehend him. According to sources, Waqar surrendered himself at the Model Town police station on the pressure from his relatives and told the investigators that he was not involved in the motorway case. He claimed that his brother-in-law, Abbas, was using his mobile phone. "Abbas refused to surrender himself with me but he may do soon. He was involved in some criminal activities with Abid Ali and is still in contact with him," Waqar reportedly told police. Claiming innocence in the gang rape, he asked the officials to get his DNA test done.

Railways generate Rs10 bln revenue

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways has generated around Rs 10 billion revenue through special initiatives and projects initiated by the incumbent government reducing its annual deficit by Rs four billion. The additional revenue had also helped in absorption of Rs 6 billion additional bill in respect of increasing cost of the fuel as well as pay and pension bill, an official in the Ministry of Railways told media. During the financial year 2018-2019, earning of the department stood at Rs 54.59 billion compared to Rs 49.50 billion for financial year 2017-18, which was the highest revenue ever achieved by the department. He said the annual deficit was lowered from Rs 36.00 billion to Rs 32 billion. He said the revenue target has been increased from Rs 53 billion to Rs 58 billion in last fiscal year. Up-till December 31, Rs 27,967.195 million have been earned against the budgetary target of Rs 27,499.967 million. In the freight business, the earning surged to Rs 10,285.466 million against target of Rs 10,039.970 million upto December-2019, he said. The official said Pakistan Railways had completed ten rehabilitation and development projects worth Rs 27,435.6 million during last two years from August 2018 to 2020. He said, a project of doubling of track from Khanewal to Rawind-246 kilometers was carried out at a cost of Rs 14,261 million. - APP

Draft paper on 'Police Reforms' launched

ISLAMABAD: A draft position paper on 'Police Reforms' has been prepared under a pilot project of "Police Awam Saath Saath (PASS)," which would be presented to Senators and members of assemblies for more effective legislation and capacity building of the law enforcement department. The paper contained recommendations of parliamentary groups, formed by the SSDO in collaboration with the USIP, and police officers after a series of consultative meetings, according to a news release issued here on Sunday. Four parliamentary groups, consisting of members from National Assembly and Senate, Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assemblies, were formed to bring reforms in the police department by introducing modern research mechanisms and making necessary legislation. Mobilizing lawmakers for the institutional reforms were vital for a more vibrant judicial system, which had a key role in ensuring rule of law in the country. - APP

Pak to announce relaxed-visa regime for Afghans

The ambassador before his departure to Kabul to assume his new position, said that he will give importance to promote cooperation in education, science and technology and youth affairs

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will announce a relaxed-visa policy for Afghan nationals particularly students, businessmen, investors and patients, Pakistan's ambassador-designate to Afghanistan Mansoor Ahmad Khan has said. Khan said the new policy is aimed at facilitating Afghans as a large number of people in Afghanistan want to do business, study and seek treatment in Pakistan. "The government of Pakistan is committed to ensure more facilities for Afghan nationals. The main focus is on easing the visa system and facilitating business-

men," he said. Khan, a senior Pakistani diplomat, has served as Director General of Afghan Desk at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and ambassador to Austria. The ambassador before his departure to Kabul to assume his new position, said that he will give importance to promote cooperation in education, science and technology and youth affairs. Khan called on President Arif Alvi, Prime Minister Imran Khan, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and other officials before departure for Kabul to discuss his responsibility in Afghanistan, where he had previously served as deputy ambassador. "I have assumed office after getting spe-

Afghan FM lauds Pak support

ISLAMABAD: Acting FM of Afghanistan, M. Haneef Atmar, on Sunday appreciated Pakistan's continuous support for a durable peace in Afghanistan. In a tweet, Atmar fully endorsed Pakistan FM Qureshi's views at the commencement of Intra-Afghan negotiations yesterday. I fully share the view of SM Qureshi & Foreign Office Pk (Pakistan) that a peaceful and stable Afghanistan will bring new opportunities for the progress. - APP

cial directives from the leaders who all underscored the need for strong relations with Afghanistan," Khan said. He said as ambassador it would be his priority to provide more facilities to Afghans particularly students, youth and businessmen. A Pakistani official, who was involved in drafting the new visa policy for Afghans, said that proposals have been finalized and sent to the federal cabinet for approval. He said that long-term multiple visas will be issued to students, businessmen, investors and visitors. Besides, medical visas to patients will be issued on arrival at Torkham, the major border point, between the two countries.

"There is also a proposal to end the monthly mandatory exit and re-entry for Afghans, who will have long-term visas," he said. Pakistani embassy and consulates in Afghanistan would issue over 2,000 visas daily before the COVID-19 pandemic which affected both countries, according to embassy officials. Pakistan's visa rejection percentage for Afghans is zero. The Pakistani embassy has resumed visa service for Afghan students and also issued visas to those Afghans who travel by air as the main Torkham border points are still closed. Both countries do not charge for visas under a bilateral arrangement.

Briefs

APHC
condemns
arrest spree
in IIOJK

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has expressed serious concern over the arrest spree unleashed by Indian troops and police personnel across the territory. According to media, the APHC spokesman strongly condemned the arrest of youth by Indian troops during massive cordon and search operations in Pulwama, Awantipora, Sopore, Baramulla, Bandipora, Kupwara and other areas. He said that the Indian Army was arresting the youth and killing them in fake encounters. The spokesman pointed out that Narendra Modi-led fascist government was hell bent upon converting the Muslim majority in the territory into a minority. He urged the international community to put pressure on New Delhi to stop human rights abuses in the occupied territory. Indian police and troops have arrested dozens of youth during house raids and search operations in Srinagar, Pulwama, Kulgam, Bandipora, Kupwara, Ramban and other areas in the last few days. The police under a new strategy arrest the youth and put them behind the bars by labeling them as militants or over-ground workers of mujahid organizations. The action is aimed at punishing the youth for their affiliation with the on-going freedom movement.

'Reports not
mandatory
for teachers,
students'

DNA

LAHORE: The Punjab government has not imposed any mandatory condition of COVID-19 test for teachers and students before opening of the schools. This clarification has been made by Primary & Secondary Healthcare Department Secretary Captain (ret'd) Muhammad Usman in a letter issued to the departments concerned, said spokesperson of the P&SHD here on Sunday. However, the secretary cleared that coronavirus tests would be made by the government in the educational institutions after opening of the institutions. He added that a comprehensive strategy had been devised in this regard. The health department would make random sampling for COVID-19 tests in the institutions situated in the high risk areas, the secretary explained. He further said that no other department except the government health department had any authority to demand any kind of report regarding coronavirus from the schools and colleges.

Balochistan
concerned
over surge in
cases

DNA

QUETTA: Balochistan government's spokesman Liqat Shahwani on Sunday said that a surge has been witnessed in novel coronavirus cases in the province. Talking to media government spokesperson said that preparations have been finalized for opening the schools on September 15 in Balochistan. Shahwani said that a committee has been formed to monitor enforcement of standard operating procedures (SOPs). He appealed the people to follow the SOPs strictly to avoid infection. He said regular tests will be conducted after opening of the academic institutions. The prime minister in his recent visit of Quetta, lauded the performance of the chief minister of Balochistan, he said. "We are determined for development of the province despite limited resources," Shahwani said. He said the construction of western route of the CPEC will initiate development in backward areas of the province. "Balochistan will progress with the progress of Gwadar and Makran divisions," he said.

All out efforts being made to
eliminate narcotics curse: Swati

Azam Swati also praised China for its diplomatic support to Pakistan on Kashmir issue and said relations between two neighbouring countries are time tested and strengthening with each passing day

DNA

PESHAWAR: Federal Minister for Narcotics Control Azam Swati Saturday said the government has taken all the needed steps to eliminate drugs from the society and elements in drug trade and peddling would be brought to court of law. He was addressing a ceremony in District Bar Abbottabad wherein fifty women lawyers were given laptops. The event

was also addressed by Chinese Ambassador in Pakistan Yao Jing and President District Bar Association, Jehangeer Elahi. The minister said that check post has been established at Torkham bordering point to control drug trafficking and strict action would be taken against those involved in narcotics smuggling. He said that Chief Justice of Supreme Court Justice Gulzar has also constituted a five-member bench to deal narcotics cases that would help punishing big fishes in-



involved in drug smuggling, adding the bench would help disposing 2250 cases relating to smuggling of contraband items. Highlighting the importance of bench and bar, the minister said that delivery of speedy and inexpensive justice is dependent on their liaison and effective working. Azam Swati also praised China for its diplomatic support to Pakistan on Kashmir issue and said relations between two neighbouring countries are time tested and strengthening

with each passing day. Speaking on the occasion, Chinese ambassador said that his country is taking keen interest in development projects of Hazara owing to its importance as a gateway for trade with Central Asia. He said that completion of second phase of Karakoram Highway would positively impact trade and economy of the region. He said that a Chinese language learning academy would be established in Abbottabad that would create employment opportunities for youth.

'Hunarmand
Pakistan' Govt
aims to enroll
100,000 youth

ISLAMABAD: The government has ramped up its efforts to enroll 100,000 youth for high tech and traditional trades under the 'Hunarmand Pakistan' (Skill for All) project of Prime Minister's Kamyab Jawan Programme.

The initiative was meant to increase number of country's skilled workforce by imparting six-month courses to 50,000 less developed areas youth in traditional trades, besides training to 50,000 people in high technologies. Executive Director, National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC), Dr Nasir Khan told media.

"All is set for resuming registration of youth under first phase of the 'Hunarmand Pakistan' programme after September 15," he said.

Highlighting the institution's future endeavours with regard to the Kamyab Jawan Programme, he said, under the first phase, launched in beginning of this year, a target was set for imparting six-month training courses to 50,000 youth of underdeveloped areas in traditional trades like welding, plumbing, dress-making, cooking, electric and others. "We have already enrolled 20,000 individuals under this phase, who have already completed one-month training of the course," he noted.

Dawood
inaugurates
cargo shed at
Sialkot airport

SIALKOT: Adviser to Prime Minister on Commerce, Textile, Industries, Production and Investment Abdul Razaq Dawood has said that the business community of Sialkot has served the country and the nation by building a beautiful and functional international airport in the private sector. He was speaking to the media after inaugurating the newly constructed Sialkot International Airport Limited (SIAL) cargo shed at Sialkot airport.

He said the government would use all its resources to make the project successful. He said that a state-of-the-art scanning machine worth Rs 300 million would be provided from the Export Development Fund to Sialkot International Airport for immediate inspection of export goods sent abroad.

SIAL Chairman Mian Naem Javed, Vice Chairman Chaudhry Muhammad Afzal Shaheen, former chairmen Mian Muhammad Riaz, Engr Khawar Anwar Khwaja, Airport Manager Nisar Ahmed, Cargo Terminal Manager Syed Ali Azhar Amir, Manager Airport Handling Services Tariq Mahmood, Manager Relations, Public Abdul Shakoor Mirza, Assistant Manager, Customer Services Adnan Hameed Khalil and other airport officials were present.

He said that in order to improve the condition of all roads connecting the airport, he would personally talk to Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar and try to improve the road network. The adviser also visited the airport terminal building and praised its quality. He was also presented with a SIAL shield. - APP

Small Traders
need gov't
attention:
LCCI

DNA

LAHORE: President of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry Irfan Iqbal Sheikh has urged the SBP governor to grant interest free loans to textile traders as Covid-19 has affected their business to the maximum. He has demanded the government to immediately resolve the issues of textile cottage traders on priority basis. He was speaking with a 70-member delegation of Textile Traders Association. The delegation was led by Chairman Textile Traders Association Chaudhry Muhammad Tariq. President Dr. Rashid Raza and General Secretary Fahimuddin was also present. The President of the Lahore Chamber assured the delegation that the Lahore Chamber would do its utmost to resolve the issues of the textile traders.

IoBm launched Cyle Friendly
Campus Initiative

It was launched recently by its Alumni Association. Tufail Group generously donated to IoBm 100 bicycles for this initiative. Through this campaign, IoBm plans to reduce carbon emissions and keep the campus clean and green



DNA

KARACHI: Preserving the environment and reducing carbon emissions are the main goals that the Institute of Business Management (IoBm) aims to achieve through its Cycle Friendly Campus Initiative. It was launched recently by its Alumni Association. Tufail Group generously donated to IoBm 100 bicycles for this initiative. Through this campaign, IoBm plans to reduce

carbon emissions and keep the campus clean and green. Mr. Zubair Tufail, CEO Tufail Group, appreciated the positive direction of IoBm's management in making the campus carbon-neutral. Mr. Salman Tufail, Director, Tufail Group, was pleased to see that his ideas reciprocated with IoBm's CSR endeavors and was hopeful that more collaborations will materialize. Mr. Talib Karim, President IoBm said that the late Founder President of IoBm, Shahjehan S. Karim,

also focused on preserving the environment especially when he served at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Mr. Talib Karim was hopeful that IoBm and Tufail Group could collaborate on several fronts especially in bridging the gap between academia and the industry. Representing IoBm Alumni Association were Mr. Farhan Ahmed, President, Alumni Association and Head of External Communications, Standard Chartered Bank

(Pakistan); Mr. Asif Jafri, Founder & CEO, E-Ocean Private Ltd.; Mr. Aamir Ali, General Manager Sales, Samaa TV; Ms. Sara Haroon, Project Manager H & S Connect; and Mr. Salman Baig, Visiting Faculty IoBm. Dr. Asima Faisal, HoD Health and Hospital Management, and Dr. Shahid Amjad, HoD Environment and Energy Management were among the speakers from IoBm who discussed how a clean environment positively impacts our health and lifestyle.

Pakistan
Railways
slashes
ticket prices

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan Railways slashed ticket charges by 10 percent across all AC Business and 5 percent across all AC Standard classes. The concession in tickets for both the AC Standard class and AC Business class shall reflect from Sept 21 throughout the department. Moreover, the department announced the restoration of dining restaurant cars across all the express trains from Sept 14. It said the dining restaurant cars were restricted earlier in the wake of COVID-19 breakout. However, now the passengers can avail breakfast, lunch and tea among other edibles from their express trains. The cut shall reflect from Sept 21 in both the AC Business classes and the AC Standard class. In another development, announced by the department the same day, Pakistan Railways decided on Saturday to launch two new railway trajectories from Lahore, each to Narowal and to Sahiwal destinations. The train from Lahore, called Faiz Ahmed Faiz, shall embark on its journey to Narowal at 06:30 PM to conclude its journey at 08:55. The return will take place from Narowal at 05:30 AM to arrive at Lahore by 07:50 AM. Another train, Lasani Express, will be from Lahore en route to Sahiwal which will be scheduled to leave Lahore 03:45 PM and to arrive at destination by 07:45 PM. Lasani Express shall depart from Sahiwal at 06:00 AM and will reach Lahore by 09:55 AM, according to the department.



LAHORE: Members of Pasban Democratic Party holding a protest against recent rape case. - DNA

Bilawal urges centre to issue
'Watan Cards' to flood affectees

Bilawal Bhutto said that Asif Ali Zardari had given Watan cards to the victims in 2011. PPP cadres know how to protest for the right. He said that we will not allow the people of Sindh to be left destitute by the government

DNA

MIRPUR KHAS: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has demanded from the government to provide Watan card to the flood victims. He said that he spent more time in Mirpur Khas, it is just the beginning, PPP MNAs, MPAs work hard on their own, there were losses in Mirpur Khas, Umerkot, Badin, Tharparkar, we have come to

damage caused by rains and floods. Distribution of rations will not solve the problems of the flood victims. The present government should provide Watan Card to the flood victims. He said that he spent more time in Mirpur Khas, it is just the beginning, PPP MNAs, MPAs work hard on their own, there were losses in Mirpur Khas, Umerkot, Badin, Tharparkar, we have come to



assess the losses in the affected areas, he added. Bilawal Bhutto said that Asif Ali Zardari had given

Watan cards to the victims in 2011. PPP cadres know how to protest for the right. He said that we will not allow the people of Sindh to be left destitute by the government. Chairman PPP said that federal government did not give NFC shares to Sindh government, farmers of the country are worried due to rains, floods and locusts. This year, the Sindh government was given Rs200 billion less.

He said that small farmers should also be helped by declaring emergency. He said that poor farmers of the country could not bear huge loss and all should work together to solve the problems of the people. Bilawal Bhutto said that PTI should compensate every farmer, Sindh government is trying to come up with a scheme for farmers, next time we will have political activities here, he added.

Briefs

IGP directs strict action against patrons of beggars

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Muhammad Aamir Zulfiqar has directed all police officials to take strict action against those involved in patronizing beggars or alm-seekers. Following complaints of citizens about surge in begging activities, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Muhammad Aamir Zulfiqar directed SP (Investigation) Malik Naeem Iqbal to take action against those patronizing beggars. As per directions, he constituted special teams under supervision of DSP Hakim Khan which arrested eight persons forcing children and women to adopt the ugly business.

It came to know during the investigation from the beggars that policemen formally support and get money from them. Following this information, Zonal SPs initiated action against policemen patronizing activities in their respective area and nabbed Assistant Sub-Inspector Nasir Maqbool, Head Constables Raheem Khan, Zulfiqar Ali, Constables Liaqat Ali, Mushtaq, Abdul Hameed, Muhammad Iqbal and Muhammad Ehsan. The nabbed patrons of beggars revealed that children and others also supply drugs in public transport as well as truck drivers in guise of alm-seekers. These handlers have been working in form of an organized gang and used to hire children mostly from shanty areas against the daily wages from Rs. 500 to Rs. 600 for begging in specific areas. IGP Islamabad Muhammad Aamir Zulfiqar said that policemen backing beggars would not be spared and this menace would be curbed through strict action. — APP

Rung School to hold workshop on fine arts

ISLAMABAD: Rung School of Music and Arts will hold a workshop on fine arts including Painting, Drawing, Sketching, Art & craft, Textile & Fashion Design on Wednesday. An official on Sunday said that in workshop topics will also include basic color theory and compositional strategies adding that students will be working on still life and its composition. Immerse yourself in the world of fine arts and gain confidence in the nuts and bolts of the medium, he stated. "If you are looking for a course that will show you how to paint, draw or make a sketch and get grip on fine arts, this is the course for you, this session is suitable for all levels of ability", he said. Students require some tools and certain other components including Canvas small size, brushes, acrylic colors, Sketchbook and pencils, no # H, B2, B4, B6, B12, Drawing book and pencil, watercolor. Students will also bring fabric white color piece and 3 fabric dye colors, and rice, cotton thread, Art and craft paper bag simple, a small piece of jute and Robbins of any colors and UHU tube he stated. — APP

Pakistan lodges protest with India

From Page 01

established humanitarian norms and professional military conduct. These egregious violations of international law reflect consistent Indian attempts to escalate the situation along the LoC and are a threat to regional peace and security. It was added that by raising tensions along the LoC and the WB, India cannot divert attention from the grave human rights situation in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK). Indian side was called upon to respect the 2003 Ceasefire Understanding, investigate this and other such incidents of deliberate ceasefire violations and maintain peace along the LoC and the WB. The Indian side was also urged to allow the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) to play its mandated role as per the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions.

Experts urge US a regional study on post 9/11 losses

Right to information and expression is being declined, adding more frustration and distress among the young and those having differently framed opinions

DNA

ISLAMABAD, SEPT 12 (DNA) – Speaking to webinar the experts termed the 9/11 incident as the high outcome of the hybrid war that intensified 5th generation warfare all around the globe. It was a human tragedy intentionally created by the unfair geopolitical interventions taken up by the so-called super power and its unwise allies. The incident changed the entire landscape of peace and prosperity globally, especially an unrepairable dent to the region of Pakistan and Afghanistan. While talking and negoti-

ating the peace process in Afghanistan, the US and NATO countries should also consider about having a comprehensive regional study on the impact of the 19 years consistent threat of terrorism on the mental health of people living in the region. The study should also include impact of war against terrorism on socioeconomic conditions, culture and environment of both countries, Afghanistan and Pakistan. A rehabilitation programme should follow the post-peace process accordingly. The webinar was organized by the Development Communications Network (Devcom-Pakistan) and

DTNTV on Saturday. Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed frustration and chaos is rising up in the developing countries as the 5th generation warfare intensifies. State institutions are confronting their own citizens for doubts of integrity. Right to information and expression is being declined, adding more frustration and distress among the young and those having differently framed opinions. This distrust may lead to anarchic situation and direct confrontation between the state institutions and the people thinking differently if the confidence building measures are taken up.

Ahmed said the mental health, cultural and environmental loss of Afghanistan and Pakistan had never been accounted for while talking about the post 9/11 impact and losses. Before the US and NATO decide to quit Afghanistan, they should take up a study of social and environmental loss followed by rehabilitation investment. Dr. Imran Ashraf, assistant professor international relations at the National Defense University (NDU), said we are living in the era of 5th generation warfare where misleading, pessimist and conflict-raising information plays a crucial role in disorienting the citizens.

The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is the main source of dissemination of such type of information that disintegrate the fabric of society. It also creates frustration and distress. Government needs to have a check on ICT use in Pakistan without compromising on the basic rights of the citizens. Well-known environmentalist and former director general of Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) Asif Shuja Khan said air, water and land have been immensely degraded during the war against terrorism in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pakistan foreign office shall write to the US

and NATO for a comprehensive study of the environmental, cultural and socioeconomic loss. It should be followed by a rehabilitation plan. Not only 9/11 but the post-event trauma was more horrible for the mental and psychological health of the people living in the region. Geopolitical analyst Shamsud Mangat said the 9/11 incident was created to dismantle the war-mongers created by the US itself against the USSR. It only benefited the global ordnance factories and the manufacturers of the heavy weapons. A country for the benefit of some destroyed the entire landscape of global peace and prosperity.

'Culprits of motorway tragedy shall be punished'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Federal Capital Islamabad Additional General Secretary Sardar Muhammad Rafique Gujranwala has said that the incident with a woman on the motorway was a slap in the face to the government and institutions. Expressing regret over the incident of rape of a woman on a motorway a meter away, he termed the motorway tragedy as very sad and shameful and said that the motorway tragedy is an insult to humanity. Sardar Muhammad Rafique Gujjar further said that the federal government has changed 5 IGs in 2 years but the crime rate in Punjab could not be reduced. The statement has touched the hearts of not only the affected woman and her family but also the entire nation. In order to prevent such incidents, all the administrative bodies should come together on one page and immediately reach out to the culprits and bring them under the control of the law as a warning sign.

President's role on national issues highlighted

ISLAMABAD: A short video clip uploaded on Twitter, a popular social media handle, on Saturday highlighted the major role played by President Dr Arif Alvi on diverse issues of national importance during the last two years. According to about five-minute duration video clip, the president played a very active and leading role on different issues of national importance, ranging from Kashmir issue to women inheritance rights and redressal of public complaints.

His role will be remembered for long. The clip also contained different excerpts from the speeches made by the president on the related occasions. The president very effectively raised the issue of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and highlighting gross human rights violations and the illegal and unilateral steps of the Indian government. During the coronavirus pandemic, the president held important meetings with Ulema and succeeded in evolving a national consensus. He also kept them aware of the latest development and on other issues like Green Pakistan, free education and fake news etc. The president drastically reduced expenditures of his office and saved huge public money. — APP

Man dies in an accident with diplomat's car

From Page 01

It may be mentioned here that it is not the first incident where Pakistani people were killed and diplomats went scot free. There have been a number of such incidents however according to Vienna Convention that regulates diplomats and their activities, diplomats enjoy immunity therefore they cannot be proceeded against even if they are responsible for accidents.

FUI signs MoU with Malaysian Varsity

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Foundation University Islamabad (FUI), Pakistan has signed an MoU with University Teknologi PETRONAS (UTP), Malaysia on September 2020 to enhance scientific, technical, and engineering competencies of students and faculty. The agreement aims at academic and research collaboration covering Faculty, Staff and Students Exchange as well as Joint Research and Academic Advocacy.

Protests against Lahore motorway rape

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Women across Pakistan are protesting against the rape of a woman on the Lahore-Sialkot Motorway. The protests are being held in Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Multan and Hyderabad. On Wednesday, a woman was raped in front of her children by two unidentified men on the motorway. The case was made worse after Lahore CCPO Umar Sheikh criticised the woman's decision to take the motorway route while appearing on soon after the case was reported. "The story is that this woman, if it is in your knowledge, left Defence at 12:30am for Gujranwala," said CCPO Sheikh while talking to the news channel. "First, I am surprised that she, a mother of three children, was the only driver." She left Defence and should've taken GT Road, where there are shops and people nearby. "If you are taking the other way, then at least make sure your vehicle has fuel," he said. After the news broke out, women across the country were enraged. The recent cases of the rape and murder of a six-year-old girl in Karachi and the murder of a transgender in Peshawar added fuel to the fire. Women, men, and children have gathered outside the Karachi Press Club and are chanting slogans against lack of security. Many are even demanding that the Lahore CCPO should be removed over his victim-blaming remarks.



ISLAMABAD: Vendors along with their horses waiting for the clients at Lake View Park. — DNA

Attock Police "implicated" 6 years old girl

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The much publicized reforms and change in thana culture claimed by Pakistan Tehreek Insaf government in "Naya Pakistan" proved mere eye wash as a six years old minor girl was allegedly implicated in attacking and torture case. The case came under spotlight when Ghulam Sarwar father of six years old girl Komal moved the local court for the pre-arrest bail of

her daughter. Mohammad Naseem a resident of Mohallah Masjid Bilal while lodging his first investigation report (FIR) with city police station has alleged that Ghulam Sarwar along with his wife and two daughters forcefully entered in to his house after children quarrel over some issue and during quarrel they have beat his son with cricket bat and injured him. He added that due to attack, his son received injuries on his hand. On his complaint, assistant sub inspector Wajid Ali of city police station has

registered a case against Ghulam Sarwar, his wife and two daughters under section 337-F, 452, 147 and 149 Pakistan Penal Code (PPC). In gross negligence and professional incompetency, the said official even not bothered to investigate and inquire about the age of the "nominally accused" by booking them in such rigorous sections of PPC. When the issue of lack of professionalism and negligence came in to the notice of higher police officials, they immediately remove the name of the nominated six years old girl in challan.

When contacted, spokesman of district Police Sub Inspector Tahir Iqbal has confirmed that the girl was booked in first investigation report (FIR) on the written application of the complainant. He said that at the time of lodging FIR, the complainant has not mentioned the age and it was not immediately noted by the investigation officer. He added that when the minor implication in the case was came in to the notice of the investigation officer; he subsequently removed the name of the minor girl from the case

National Academy of Higher Education to launch 4th cohort of NFDP

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE) is all set to launch fourth cohort of the National Faculty Development Programme (NFDP) 2020. Designed for candidates of HEC's Interim Placement of Fresh PhDs (IPFP) Programme (Phase-II), this online activity is led by international and national academics / scholars and is scheduled to begin on September 14, 2020 with pre-programme activities already underway. As many as 172 recently graduated PhD scholars comprise the fourth cohort. A four-week, intensive and im-

mersive learning experience for participants who have recently completed their PhDs from across Pakistan and internationally, the purpose of NFDP 2020 is to accelerate the transfer of essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes in three dimensions, including teaching and learning, research management, and professional practice. NFDP serves as an intensive coaching and mentoring of IPFP candidates, who are shortlisted after competitive selection, in order for them to be placed as Assistant Professors on a tenure track system in universities across Pakistan for one year. NAHE has already held three NFDP sessions, starting in April 2020. Due to the COV-

ID-19 outbreak across the world and related closures, the programme was redesigned to run online. The first cohort successfully concluded in May and comprised 41 Fellows, out of which 24 were female participants. As the first formal, fully-online faculty development programme of NAHE/HEC held nationally, participants represented all provinces/regions of Pakistan, and a wide variety of disciplines. The programme is led by academics and scholars from the USA, Canada, United Kingdom and Pakistan. The second cohort ran in June/July 2020 and consisted of 153 participants, of which 65 were female participants. The third cohort

took place in July/August and had 145 candidates, out of which 39 were women. The fourth cohort has 172 candidates. Upon its conclusion in October 2020, a total of 512 recent PhDs – including 173 women and several from underserved areas of the country – will have successfully participated in the faculty development programme by NAHE and will be ready to launch their academic careers in various higher educational institutes of Pakistan. "I feel proud that we were able to share world-class knowledge with future faculty members of the country. Using online technology, we were able to connect academics from GB and Baluchistan to USA, Canada and the UK.

Five SHOs reshuffled

ATTOCK: The police department reshuffled as many as 11 police officers including five station house officers (SHOs) and investigation officers (IOs) of different police stations across the district. District Police Officer (DPO) Syed Khalid Hamdani has transferred five SHOs of different police stations and six other officers in the district. According to official sources, Inspector Arshad Mehmood transferred from police lines and posted as SHO Hassanabad, Sub Inspector Saifdar Khan has been posted from Hassanabad to New Airport, Sub inspector Saqib Abbasi transferred from New Airport Police station to Rangoo Police station, Sub inspector Gulfaraz Ahmed posted from Police station Hazro to Pindigheb Police station while Aabid Hussain has been posted from Police lines to Hazro Police station. — DNA

COMSATS celebrates Int'l day of clean air for blue skies

The event was opened by Ambassador Shahid Kamal, Head of CCCS, and moderated by Dr. Anjum Rasheed, Assistant Professor, Centre for Climate Research and Development (CCRD), COMSATS University Islamabad, Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Environmental experts from China, Japan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Tanzania, and Thailand were gathered by the Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the South to mark the first ever UN's day of Clean Air for Blue Skies. Organized by COMSATS Centre for Climate and Sustainability (CCCS), the event resulted in important knowledge sharing on good practices, and experiences with regard to various dynamics of air pollution, and impact of deteriorating air quality on sustainable devel-

opment and growth. The webinar speakers included senior officials and representatives from Asia Pacific Clean Air Partnership of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), Japan; International Centre for Climate and Environment Sciences (ICES), Institute of Atmospheric Physics (IAP), China; Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (KazNU), Kazakhstan; Ministry of Climate Change (MoCC), Pakistan; and Tanzania Industrial Research and Development Organization (TIRDO), Tanzania. The event was opened by Am-



ambassador Shahid Kamal, Head of CCCS, and moderated by Dr. Anjum Rasheed, Assistant Professor, Centre for Climate Research and Development (CCRD), COMSATS University Islamabad, Pakistan.

The speakers of the event, inter alia, highlighted the causes of air pollution and related social and policy issues; deleterious impacts of air pollution on human health in the Asia Pacific; emphasized the urgent need for relevant policy interventions; need for useful research technique, data bases, and monitoring systems. Discussions took place on challenges and possible eco-friendly solutions in various areas including industries, transport, brick kilns, SMEs, agriculture, and waste management, among others. International financing mechanisms, technology platforms

and investment channels were identified as some means to help fill critical funding gaps for climate action solutions. Introduction of Euro-V fuel in Pakistan in the backdrop of old vehicular fleet, non-compliant refineries and unprepared government machinery came up as a matter of concern. The webinar resulted in useful recommendations with regard to science and research-backed solutions for combating air pollution; better integration of SDG on climate change in policies for greater benefit and strengthening necessary partnerships at the regional and international levels.

Briefs

Journalists resign from Hungary news site

DNA

BUDAPEST: Dozens of journalists have walked out of Hungary's top independent news site in protest at the removal of its editor-in-chief, as fears grow of government interference. Index.hu is Hungary's most-read news portal and a rare independent voice in a media landscape increasingly controlled by allies of Prime Minister Viktor Orban.

On Wednesday, its editor-in-chief Szabolcs Dull was fired, with management claiming he had leaked internal documents to other media.

That prompted three senior editors to resign on Friday, followed by more than 70 journalists - the overwhelming majority of the newsroom.

In a statement, they condemned Dull's dismissal as "an overt attempt to apply pressure on Index.hu".

Dull himself warned last month that the site was in "grave danger" from a proposed organisational overhaul.

That followed a purchase of 50 percent of Index's advertising agency by powerful pro-Orban businessman Miklos Vaszily in March.

In recent years, most independent outlets have either gone out of business, or been bought by government allies while receiving lucrative flows of state advertising.

Russia holds regional polls

NOVOSIBIRSK: Russians on Sunday voted in regional elections overshadowed by the poisoning of the main opposition leader Alexei Navalny, who had urged supporters to vote tactically to push out the ruling party backing President Vladimir Putin.

In 41 of the country's 85 regions, Russians are voting for regional governors and lawmakers in regional and city legislatures as well as in several by-elections for national MPs. Voters went to the polls on Sunday morning, wearing compulsory masks and gloves and undergoing temperature checks to protect against coronavirus infection, AFP journalists saw in the Siberian city of Novosibirsk.

The vote is seen as a key test of the Kremlin's control of local politics as the United Russia ruling party has seen a drop in popularity amid simmering public anger over falling incomes and economic woes.

One voter in Novosibirsk, 57-year-old retired army officer Vladimir Semyonov, told AFP that he had voted for an opposition candidate, "not one of those they always offer us, to change something, so we don't have stagnation."

The poisoning of Navalny, Russia's most prominent opposition figure, could also influence voters.

After he was evacuated from Siberia to Berlin, German doctors said Navalny had been poisoned with a Novichok nerve agent.

His associates believe the use of the banned chemical weapon shows only the Russian state could be responsible.

Navalny has sought to promote tactical voting, urging his supporters to back whichever is the strongest candidate to defeat the ruling party. He had been in Siberia to promote his "smart voting" campaign when he fell ill. - APP

6 footballers found with Covid-19

KUALA LUMPUR: Six footballers from two countries have tested positive for the Covid-19 virus, the Asian Football Confederation said, as Champions League matches were set to kick off in Qatar Monday.

The annual tournament was due to resume after a six-month suspension since March. The AFC said five players from Saudi Arabia's Al Hilal and another from Qatar's Al Duhail were found with the virus following tests on all teams taking part in the western region of the tournament.

"Those who tested positive are under medical supervision in a quarantined environment," the AFC said in a statement. It added that a member of Al Hilal's management team also had the virus. The identities of the seven were not revealed. The news comes days after the AFC said "several members" of the United Arab Emirates-based Al Wahda FC team, who were second in the League's group A section, had tested positive for the virus. - APP



OSLO: Members of Sinsen Cricket Club Oslo, Norway posing for a group picture after winning the Norway Cricket League. Executive Editor of Daily Islamabad Post, CNETRELINE Mubashar Bhatti also seen in picture. (2nd from right standing). Sinsen cricket club won Norwegian cricket league three years in a row. - DNA

Turkmenistan remains an isolated and repressive country: HRW

Report says government brutally punishes all unauthorized forms of religious and political expression

DNA

ASHGABAT: Human rights watch has released its report about Turkmenistan. The Turkmen government's dire human rights record saw no improvements in 2019. Turkmenistan remains an isolated and repressive country under the authoritarian rule of President Gurbanguly Berdimukhamedov and his associates.

Turkmenistan's economic crisis continued in 2019. The government abandoned subsidies on water, gas, and electricity. Emigration from the regions most affected by the crisis continued, but authorities attempt to bar people from traveling

abroad to seek work. The government brutally punishes all unauthorized forms of religious and political expression. Access to information is tightly controlled by the state. No independent human rights monitoring groups are allowed. Dozens of forcibly disappeared are presumably held in Turkmen prisons.

There is a total absence of media freedom in Turkmenistan. The state controls all print and electronic media. Foreign media outlets have almost no access to the country. The government retaliates against local stringers for foreign outlets. The state continues to limit and tightly control internet

access. In January, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) reported that the government allegedly uses imported, privately developed surveillance equipment to track and block websites, identify people which use services to bypass blocks, intercept phone calls, and block mobile messengers.

RFE/RL and the Turkmen Initiative for Human Rights (TIHR), an exile group, reported that in January the government started blocking all Virtual Private Networks (VPN) services. According to an exile-run news website, Turkmen.news, by the end of July most VPN servers were not accessible.

In March, the border control authorities, without explanation, barred Soltan Achilova, an independent journalist, from boarding a flight to attend a conference abroad. On August 20, the Security Ministry informed her that she may travel abroad.

On March 23, Saparmamed Nepeskuliev, a freelance contributor to Turkmen.news and RFE/RL left Turkmenistan. Prior to his departure, he wrote on his Facebook page that since his 2018 release from prison, plainclothes security service agents openly followed him wherever he

went and surveilled him at home. Independent groups cannot openly carry out human rights work inside Turkmenistan. Operating a non-governmental organization without registration is punishable by a fine, short-term detention, and confiscation of property. Registration requirements remain burdensome. Civil society activists are constantly threatened by authorities.

On September 6, labor rights activist Gaspar Matalaev was released from prison, after fully serving a three-year prison sentence on unfounded fraud charges in retaliation for monitoring state-sponsored forced

labor in the cotton harvest. An activist for Baloch minority rights, Mansur Mingelov, convicted in 2012 on bogus narcotics and other charges continued to serve his 22-year sentence. In June, Turkmenistan's ombudsperson, Yazdursun Gurbannazarova, published the second annual report on the institution's work. She received 985 complaints, the majority of them on housing issues and disagreement with a wide range of court decisions. Sixteen were resolved. Gurbannazarova also reported that she received 150 complaints of civil and political rights violations, three of which were resolved.

Belarus police detain 250 protesters

DNA

MINSK: Belarus police detained at least 250 protesters as tens of thousands demonstrated in the capital Minsk ahead of talks between strongman Alexander Lukashenko and Russia's Vladimir Putin.

Demonstrators hit the streets of the capital ahead of talks between Alexander Lukashenko and Russia's Vladimir Putin. Security forces dressed in riot gear used barbed wire to seal off the central

square in the capital. "Some 250 people were detained in various districts of the capital," the interior ministry said in a statement, adding those arrested were carrying flags and "offensive" placards. Oktyabrskaya Square in central Minsk was fenced off with barbed wire with armed law enforcement forces seen behind it. Independence Square was also fenced off.

Demonstrators were heading towards the Palace of Independence, President Lukashenko's residence.

Dozens arrested at Melbourne anti-lockdown protest

DNA

MELBOURNE: Authorities in Melbourne arrested more than 70 people for flouting stay-at-home orders to protest against lockdown restrictions Sunday, with some demonstrators clashing with riot police at a market in the city. About 250 people attended the illegal protest - the second in as many days in the city - promoted by coronavirus conspiracy groups on social media.

The demonstrators ignored official warnings and public health orders to gather at the central Queen Victoria market, calling for an end to a weeks-long lockdown of Australia's second-biggest city. They were met by a heavy police presence, with scuffles breaking out as the riot squad swept through market's fruit and vegetable aisles.

Police arrested 74 people and fined 176, saying in a statement that "many protesters were aggressive and threatened violence

towards officers". One man believed to be a "primary agitator" is facing charges of incitement while another was charged with assaulting police, according to the statement. Last weekend, "Freedom Day" events were held across Australia to protest what some labelled the government's "overblown" response to the pandemic, which has killed more than 900,000 people worldwide. The latest rallies come ahead of the gradual easing of virus restrictions

in Melbourne, with daily outdoor exercise increased to two hours and small "social bubbles" allowed for people living alone from Monday. Victoria Premier Daniel Andrews, who has previously branded the protesters "selfish", said Sunday the state could not afford to reopen too quickly. "No one is enjoying the reality we face, but none of us have the option of ignoring the reality that we face," he said. "We cannot open up now and stay open. It would not be safe, it would not be smart."

Saudi artist to display her latest work in Jeddah for National Day

For this year's National Day celebrations, Sharbatly was commissioned to paint four old cars, repurposing them into art to be displayed at the new waterfront and Jeddah's main squares

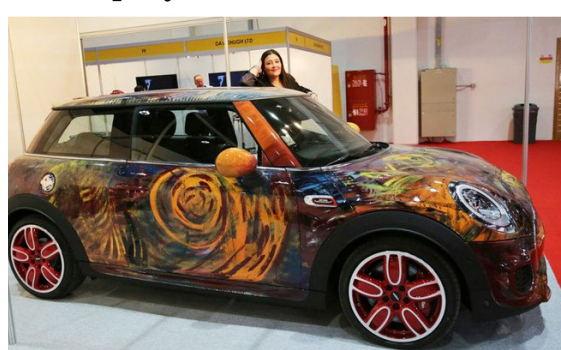
DNA

RIYADH: Saudi abstract artist Shalimar Sharbatly is set to showcase her latest work in Jeddah as part of the Kingdom's 90th National Day celebrations.

The municipality of Jeddah, in cooperation with the artist, has launched the "Draw the Nation" initiative, which will see the art displayed to the public from Sept. 23. Sharbatly, a pioneer of the "Moving Art" school, is widely known for her style of painting on cars. A custom-designed, hand-painted Porsche 911 and a Formula 1 racing vehicle that she painted, known as "La Torq," are the most notable of her works.

The Porsche was showcased at the Paris Motor Show, and "La Torq" was unveiled at the 2017 Grand Prix de Monaco. Both vehicles were also exhibited at the Louvre museum in Paris, in the "Moving Art" exhibit in 2017.

For this year's National Day celebrations, Sharbatly was commissioned to paint four old cars, repurposing them into art to be displayed at the new waterfront and Jeddah's main squares. Sharbatly spoke to Arab News about her background in art, the challenges she faced in creating the artworks, and her feelings about being able to represent the Kingdom for the National Day celebrations. Born to a mother who was also an artist, Sharbatly says that she "opened her



eyes to an art studio." "My earliest memories are of that studio, the sounds of Fairuz, and Abdel Halim (Hafez), and Julio Iglesias, and feeling like I wasn't like other children," she said. With her mother's support, she was able to nurture her skills from the age of 6, and won her first award at 8. When she was only 16, she had her first show in Cairo in 1988. Fans of her early

career include renowned Egyptian painter, Salah Taher, and the poet, Farouk Juwaidah, who attended the show and complimented her work. She has showcased her work internationally, is recognized as the first Saudi female artist to be commissioned by the government to create artwork, and in 2017 was chosen as a goodwill am-

bassador for her contributions to humanitarian issues and civil society.

Though Sharbatly finds painting cars to be a challenging experience, she also finds it very rewarding. "It's very difficult to paint on cars. You're almost at war with the paints, because they tend to dry out very quickly. But I've grown accustomed to it after so many years. I used to say that the paints would wound me when I fought with them, but now I have tamed them so that they listen to me," she said.

"Experience makes you innovative, and innovation makes you creative, and creativity is what makes the world around you easier to mold to your will," she said.

On the topic of this year's National Day, Sharbatly said that she felt honored to be participating and giving back to the country in the best way she knew how.

"In these current circumstances, with the coronavirus pandemic happening and our government stepping up to offer treatment to everyone and keep us all safe, our nation needs a lot from us right now. I can tolerate the heat and the difficulty of the work if it means I can contribute to beautifying the country as much as I can," she said.

She also expressed her gratitude to the mayor of Jeddah, Saleh Al-Turki, for supporting the initiative, and for providing the old cars and vehicles to be turned into artworks.

McGregor arrested for attempted sexual assault

DNA

PARIS: Conor McGregor has landed in hot water with the authorities in France after being arrested for alleged "attempted sexual assault and sexual exhibition" in Corsica.

The ex-UFC featherweight and lightweight champion was arrested and questioned by police before later being released. His management told TMZ Sports that McGregor "strenuously denies" the charges.

The news was first broken by AFP Sport, who tweeted to say that McGregor had been arrested for "indecent exposure," but a follow-up tweet provided more context to the incident following a statement from the prosecutor's office.

"Following a complaint filed on September 10 denouncing acts that could be described as attempted sexual assault and sexual exhibition, Mr. Conor Anthony Mac Gregor was the subject of a hearing by the police," the statement read.

McGregor was due to participate in a charity water-bike race with Princess Charlene of Monaco, but now looks set to miss the event, which takes place Saturday and Sunday between Corsica and Monaco.

Australia warns foreign journalists against 'slanted view'

DNA

SYDNEY: Australia's Home Affairs Minister, Peter Dutton, warned foreign journalists that they may be investigated if they give a "slanted view" of the country. Meanwhile, cops in Victoria have crushed lockdown protests with an iron fist.

Dutton's comments came several days after the arrest of Cheng Lei, an Australian journalist with China's broadcaster, and after the evacuation of two Australian journalists from China last week.

"If people are here as journalists and they're reporting fairly on the news, then that's fine," Dutton told media on Sunday, adding that these journalists shouldn't give "a slanted view to a particular community." Dutton added that the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation - comparable to the British MI5 or American FBI - questioned some journalists this summer, but would not confirm if they were Chinese nationals, as had been reported.

Dutton's comments came amid a diplomatic spat with China over the evacuation of the Australian journalists. Beijing has accused the Australian government of "interference in a Chinese legal case" by pulling them out of China. The minister didn't directly address Chinese journalists in Australia, but indirectly cautioned any foreign reporters who may be "interfering or conducting espionage-type activities."

However, they also come amid growing government authoritarianism in Australia. The state of Victoria has imposed one of the harshest lockdowns anywhere in the world, with citizens of Melbourne under an 8pm curfew (extended to 9pm from Monday) and forbidden from leaving home without a work permit.

Erdogan warns Macron not to 'mess with Turkey'

DNA

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has warned his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron "not to mess" with Turkey. The comments come after France's Macron criticism of Ankara over the current tensions in the eastern Mediterranean.

His comments come as tensions between the NATO allies escalate over disputes in the eastern Mediterranean. Erdogan also said that Macron was targeting him. "Don't mess with the Turkish people. Don't mess with Turkey," Erdogan said during a televised speech in Istanbul on the 40th anniversary of the 1980 military coup.