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Kazakh envoy's briefing on President Kassym's address to UNGA

Pakistan, KSA iron brothers, says Saudi envoy



British envoy Christian Turner visits museum



Briefs

Legislation enacted for child protection

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Senator Shibli Faraz has said the Parliament has enacted effective legislation to protect the rights of children. During a meeting with a delegation of women members of Punjab Assembly, the minister underlined the need to ensure the implementation of laws relating to child protection. Chairperson, Child Protection and Welfare Bureau, Punjab, Sara Ahmed informed the minister about the steps being taken for the protection of children.

Govt using laws for personal benefits

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) spokesperson Marriyum Aurangzeb Friday said Prime Minister Imran Khan is imposed on Pakistan and the incumbent government wants to arrest Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif as Gilgit-Baltistan elections are nearing. The PML-N leader talked to media and said the inefficient and corrupt regime wants to rig the polls and the Results Transmission System (RTS) of 2018 is still being used.

Tareen's sugar mills' office raided

DNA
LAHORE: A team of the Competition Commission of Pakistan on Friday raided the office of JWD Sugar Mills, owned by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Jahangir Khan Tareen, in Lahore. According to sources, the team seized important record during the raid. Sources further said that the commission conducted the raid in the light of records taken from the office of the Sugar Mills Association on September 14. The team had found evidence of instructions from a senior official of the sugar mills.

PM reaffirms support to Afghan peace

PM addresses UNGA; calls for eliminating disparity among the rich and poor; urges action against money launderers and extends support for Palestine

NEHAL MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has reaffirmed Pakistan's steadfast support to Afghan peace process and noted the positive results of these efforts culminating in US-Taliban Peace Agreement and the commencement of intra-Afghan negotiations. In his telephonic conversation with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani on (Friday), Imran Khan also appreciated the steps taken by relevant sides to enable the start of intra-Afghan negotiations in Doha. He emphasized the importance of all Afghan parties working for reduction in violence leading to ceasefire. Imran Khan further underscored that all Afghan stakeholders must seize this historic opportunity and work together to secure an inclusive and comprehensive political agreement through the Afghan-led and Afghan-owed process. He said Pakistan will fully support the decisions that the Afghan people will take about their future. While speaking to the UN General Assembly, the Prime Minister said that we have to eliminate disparity among the rich and the poor. He also called for action against money launderers and the corrupt elites. The prime minister also spoke about Islamophobia and said the world must understand sensitivity of this issue for Muslim.

Qureshi lauds OIC's support on Kashmir

NAVEED MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has said that Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is a platform for Muslim countries through which we can work together by a common strategy in resolving any issue of Muslims in the world. Addressing OIC's Webinar on Golden Jubilee of OIC in Islamabad on Friday through video link, he said the hopes and aspirations of Muslim states are linked with this platform and all these countries desire for unity and increase our presence on the world as one voice. He said during the journey of half-century this second largest global platform has made many notable achievements. He said, fifty years ago today, 25 Muslim countries had pledged to work together to formulate an action plan to protect their common interests.

He said India was killing innocent people both in India and occupied Kashmir. He said Indian government was following RSS mantra thus killing Muslims and Christians.

Pakistan, KSA iron brothers: Saudi envoy

Saudi envoy said "I see doctors, engineers, Army officers, lawyers and judges among these children"

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Nawaf bin Saeed Al-Maliki visited Pakistan Sweet Home. The kids of Pakistan Sweet Home welcomed him by presenting a bouquet. He laid his hand on the heads of the girls & boys and talked with them. The children of Pakistan Sweet Home presented a guard of honor. He visited the mosque hostel and school of Pakistan Sweet Home. Saudi Ambassador Nawaf bin Saeed Al-Maliki said, that Pakistan and Saudi are like brothers we always stand side by side in every difficult time with Pakistan and this relation of brotherhood will continue forever. Saudi envoy said "I see doctors, engineers, Army officers, lawyers and judges among these children. I am a volunteer of Pakistan Sweet Home and I support Pakistan Sweet Home as much as possible. And now I am part of the Pakistan Sweet Home team".



Jamil Hashmi (R) SSP Motorway Police also expressed his views at the event and said, "I pay tribute to extra ordinary hard work of Zamrud Khan to save their future and today they are on the way to their destination."

lent marks in Matriculation and Pakistan Sweet Home has created the world's first cadet college for these orphans.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan chairs meeting on Qaumi Sehat Card Program in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. - APP

British HC visits Peshawar museum

DNA

PESHAWAR: British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Christian Turner visited Peshawar museum to explore beautifully preserved cultural treasures in Peshawar. Christian Turner shared his video message via his Twitter handle, starting with Pashtu. He said that the UK is helping the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government in various sectors. He appreciated the efforts of the provincial government to ensure women education and making them independent. Last week, the United Kingdom's (UK) credit financing agency, UK Export Finance (UKEF) has increased its financing limit to three times for British businesses looking to export to and invest in Pakistan to £1.5 billion, said British High Commissioner to Pakistan Dr. Christian Turner.

Diplomats share LoC visit experience

Being faced Armenian Aggression 30 years, we know consequences well and hope that all these conflicts will be solved by amicable way: Ali Alizada

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Ali Alizada, on Friday shared pictures of his visit to Line of Control (LoC) along with other diplomats. In a post on social-networking website Twitter, the ambassador uploaded the tour photos and wrote, "The most suffering in the LoCs is the civilians, either it is



in Kashmir, Karabakh or in other conflict places." "Being faced Armenian Aggression 30 years, we know consequences well and hope that all these

conflicts will be solved by amicable way. Wishes of patience and safe life to all of them," he said. The Azerbaijani ambassador further thanked Pakistan Army and Foreign Ministry for arranging the visit for the diplomatic community. Ali Alizada further told that the photos were taken by permission and also allowed for media. We always follow rules and it is essential. Earlier on September 24, 2020, **Continued on Page 04**

Pakistan Army conducts mily drills

ABID RAZA

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Army conducted military drills in Rahim Yar Khan and Saleh Pat on Friday, said Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) in a statement. According to ISPR, Corps Commander Karachi, Lt. General Humayun Aziz witnessed the drills and lauded operational preparedness of the personnel and standard of the military exercises. Troops from Karachi and Panu Aqil garrison participated in Field exercise. Earlier this week, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa had visited Field Firing Ranges near Jhelum to witness a demonstration of state of the art, Chinese origin third-generation Main Battle Tank VT-4. According to ISPR, COAS had expressed satisfaction

Pakistan welcomes visit of UNMOGIP

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Armed Forces Spokesman Major General Babar Iftikhar has said Pakistan always welcomed the visit of the United Nations Military Observer Group for Pakistan and

over the demonstrated performance of Tank VT-4, another addition to the inventory of Armoured Corps after the recent induction of indigenously produced Al-Khalid-1 Tank. General Qamar Bajwa had said that potent war-fighting machine would be employed in an offensive role by strike formations after induction.

COVID-19 claims 7 lives, infects 798

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: A total of 294,740 COVID patients have so far recovered in the country while 798 new cases have been registered in last 24 hours. The total active COVID-19 cases in country on Thursday were recorded 7,831, according to the latest update issued by the National command and Operation Centre (NCO). Seven corona patient, who was under treatment in hospital died on Thursday. No COVID affected person was on ventilator in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Balochistan, while 102 ventilators elsewhere in Pakistan, out of 1,912 allocated for COVID-19 patients, were occupied. Some 37,504 tests were conducted across the country on Thursday.

Kazakh envoy's briefing on President Kassym's address to UNGA

Ambassador of Kazakhstan Akan Rakhmetullin told media and think-thank that President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev delivered a statement at the UN saying the UN has in fact consolidated nations around much broader common aspirations and principles

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kazakhstan Akan Rakhmetullin arranged a media briefing at his embassy to discuss salient features of the speech of President of Kazakhstan Kassym Jomart Tokayev, which he delivered on the occasion of 75th anniversary of the United Nations. A select group of media people and members of think-thank CGSS were invited to attend the briefing. On the occasion the Ambassador also announced opening of Abai Center. Abai is a great thinker and philosopher of Kazakhstan. The Center represents the legacy of Abai Kunanbaiuly, a great poet, philosopher, and founder of written Kazakh literature, as well as the rich heritage of Kazakh culture.

CGSS lauds Kazakh embassy for opening Abai Center

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Delegation from Center for Global & Strategic Studies, Islamabad attended the Inauguration Ceremony of Abai Center at Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Islamabad. During the occasion, Akan Rakhmetullin, Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan enlightened the participants about the latest reforms and new initiatives being undertaken by the Kazakh Government particularly COVID-19. He stated that the Abai Center will share the latest findings, studies and opinions of experts to explore and study Kazakh culture.

The Ambassador told the audience that the Center shall be functional from now onwards. The Center would contain literature about Kazakhstan and Abai. He further told that in future they plan to hold interactive sessions with various Pakistani institutions in order to deepen

cooperation especially in the literary field. Ambassador of Kazakhstan told media and think-thank that President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev delivered a statement at the UN saying the UN has in fact consolidated nations around much broader common aspirations and principles. The result has

been an era of really active and broad international cooperation. However, the path has not been easy. 75 years were overshadowed by missed opportunities to find a common ground in advancing our shared goals and values, to lessen suffering in the world, the Kazakh president



further said in his speech. Ambassador Akan further told that his President had said in clear words that history of the United Nations has been a period of intense collective efforts and rich learning: from decolonization to development, from child protection to climate change, from health to human rights, from peace-keeping to peacemaking. 'Over the last three decades, Kazakhstan has participated in endeavours of every major UN body - including the Security Council - in pursuit of a range of priorities including conflict resolution, non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, combating terrorism, interfaith and interethnic dialogue, as well as promoting the interests of Land Locked Developing Countries'. The ambassador said that President Kassym also **Continued on Page 04**

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Briefs

2 men handed death penalty for raping

DNA

GILGIT: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) here on Friday handed capital punishment to two men for raping and filming a teenager in Skardu.

ATC Judge Mahmoodul Hassan announced the verdict, sentencing Muzaffar Abbas and Tajamul Hussain to death. Besides, both were also handed life imprisonment and are required to pay a fine of Rs1 million each. Another culprit, Mubarak was awarded life term with Rs0.5 million fine. The convicts had forcibly raped the teenager multiple times and filmed the sexual assault to extort money from him. On September 21, an anti-terrorism court in Sahiwal had awarded death sentence to a man for raping and killing a four-year-old girl. Ali Sher Changar was found guilty of abducting, raping and killing the minor girl.

The culprit had abducted Mariam, 4, while she was playing outside her house in Hana Ghala Mandi area of Sahiwal and subjected her to sexual assault before murdering her on December 2, 2019.

Accountability court defers indictment Durrani in assets case

DNA

KARACHI: An accountability court in Karachi deferred indictment of Speaker Sindh Assembly Agha Siraj Durrani till October 14, in assets beyond known sources of income case. Speaker Agha Siraj Durrani and co-accused in the case appeared before the court in Friday's hearing. The counsel of the accused requested the court to defer the indictment as two of co-accused Shamsad Khatton and Zulfiqar Ali are infected with the coronavirus. The accused can appear before the court after recovering their health.

However, the NAB prosecutor opposed the request of the accused and said that the counsel of the accused is doing delaying tactics. He said that a year has been passed to the reference, but the accused are still not indicted. The court, later, adjourned the hearing of the case till October 14.

On July 20 last year, the anti-corruption body had ordered an inquiry on charges of corruption against the Sindh Assembly speaker. The NAB prosecution named 20 persons including Durrani as accused in the reference filed in accountability court Karachi after an inquiry.

According to the NAB charge-sheet, the accused were involved in corruption of upto 1.6 billion rupees. The NAB Karachi had arrested Durrani from a hotel in Islamabad in February this year.

Hick of virus cases at Balochistan's educational institutions

DNA

QUETTA: 26 new coronavirus cases have been detected at educational institutions of Balochistan, the health department said on Friday.

With the latest detection of the COVID-19 cases, the number of total cases that have been reported at the educational institutions of Balochistan stands at 406. The health department has conducted 4,237 tests so far to detect the deadly virus in the educational institutions. Earlier this week, the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) had granted permission to enter into the second phase of re-opening schools for secondary students across the country. The NCOC in its declaration stated that the academic sessions of secondary students from Class VI to Class VIII will be resumed across the country from September 23. It is pertinent to mention here that 39,296 students were randomly tested for the novel coronavirus at 763 schools across Punjab after the reopening of educational institutions on September 15.

Of them, 38,716 samples came back negative while 81 students were turned out to be positive. 45 of the affected students belonged to Gujranwala, 12 Gujrat, nine Nankana Sahib, and two Lahore, two Bahkar, and one DG Khan.



ISLAMABAD: Sajid Shahzad, Vice Chancellor, Minhaj International University Lahore, presenting book to President Arif Alvi, at Aiwa-e-Sadr. – DNA

Speaker invites parliamentary leaders to discuss electoral reforms

We, as representatives of People of Pakistan, should effectively address these concerns by proposing suitable mechanisms and amendments in the existing laws/rules/procedures from the apex forum of Parliament

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser has called a meeting of the parliamentary leaders in the National Assembly on September 28 here at Parliament House.

In this regard, the speaker has written letters to the parliamentary leaders in-

iting them to attend the meeting, said a press release issued here on Friday. The speaker in his missive to the parliamentary leaders said that there had been ongoing debates and concerns with regard to holding of fair and transparent elections in Pakistan as well as in the context of upcoming elections of Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly.

He said "We, as represent-

atives of People of Pakistan, should effectively address these concerns by proposing suitable mechanisms and amendments in the existing laws/rules/procedures from the apex forum of Parliament."

He asked them to share proposals for bringing required reforms in the existing electioneering process in Pakistan as well as for the upcoming

elections of Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly to introduce more robust, fair and transparent election process.

He was certain that with their valuable input and cooperation, they would be able to bring more transparency and fairness in the electioneering process and would be lived up to the expectation of the citizenry. The speaker requested

them to attend the meeting to share their proposals/ concerns and suggest an inclusive mechanism for reforming the election process in the country.

The parliamentary leaders invited to attend the meeting include Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Hussain Qureshi, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, leader of the Opposition, Bi-

lawal Bhutto Zardari, Asad Mahmood, Chaudhary, Tariq Bashir Cheema, Federal Minister for Housing and Works, Mohammad Akhtar Mengal, Dr. Khalid Magbool Siddiqui, Khalid Hussain Magsi, Ghous Bux Khan Mahar, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, Federal Minister for Railways, Nawabzada Shazain Bugti and Amir Haider Azam Khan.

Sherry slams govt over price hike



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Leader of the PPP in the Senate, Senator Sherry Rehman slams the federal government for increasing the prices of electricity and essential products in a time of high employment and extreme inflation.

"The government has been up to nothing but dropping one inflation bomb after the other on the people. The country is already struggling to recover from the devastating impacts of the coronavirus pandemic and the heavy rainfalls, which destroyed the livelihoods of many". "The increase in price of electricity is yet another blow to the business industry, which is already suffering losses as a result of lockdowns during the Covid-19 outbreak and again due to the devastating

rainfall in the city.

It has caused losses of billions of rupees to the economy. Even the business community has expressed their reservations over this decision."

Senator Rehman added. "The country is already experiencing gas shortages and the federal government has now decided to increase prices of electricity and many essential products. Across the world, governments' are working hard to provide relief to their people. In Pakistan however, the federal government is burdening the poor and vulnerable."

Commenting on the recent price hike in medicine prices, the Senator added, "Recently, we witnessed a 260% price hike for 94 life-saving drugs. All this is happening during a national health crisis. How can this government be so insensitive?"

"The federal government has bowed down to the medicine, sugar and wheat mafias, while there is no relief for the people affected by COVID-19. This is not the first time the government has been quick to respond to the wishes of the wealthy class", the Senator added.

Faisalabad: Divisional Commissioner reviewed the anti dengue measures

He cleared that the carelessness and dereliction from duties should not be tolerated and stern action would be taken against the officials showing poor performance in this regard

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: The meeting to review the Anti Dengue campaign was held at Commissioner office which was presided by Divisional Commissioner Ishrat Ali. Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali, CEO DHA Dr. Mushtaq Sipra, DHO Dr. Bilal Ahmad, District Coordinator Epidemics Control Dr. Aurangzaib, Dr. Wadim Akram and other officers from different departments attended the meeting while Deputy Commissioners of Jhang, T.T. Singh and Chiniot joint the meeting with video link. Divisional Commissioner reviewed the performance of departments in connection with anti dengue and said daily activity could not stop to curb the chances of dengue. He said that the officers of concerned departments should be active in field to achieve the desire results of the anti dengue campaign. He asked for



submitting departmental performance reports regarding surveillance and prevention activities daily. He cleared that the carelessness and dereliction from duties should not be tolerated and stern action would be taken against the officials showing poor performance in this regard. Di-

visional Commissioner said that the strict monitoring of the anti dengue measures is being carried out by the Divisional Administration to make the preventive and precautionary measures a success on durable basis. He asked the concerned departments to take the dengue issue very serious and

dengue surveillance, clinical & medical services awareness campaign and other departmental measures should be implemented with full responsibility. During the meeting District Coordinator for Epidemics diseases Dr. Aurangzaib gave detailed briefing on indoor and outdoor surveillance.

CM Punjab Usman Buzdar Chairs meeting to review matters of PKLI, Nursing cadre

A mega package will soon be announced by the CM for the nurses. Usman Buzdar said that the Punjab government has introduced revolutionary reforms in the health sector and more than 50 lakh 'Sehat Insaf Cards' have been distributed among the deserving people

DNA

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Sardar Usman Buzdar has given in-principle approval to taking various measures including up-gradation of the nursing service structure while presiding over a high-level meeting. It is decided to streamline the promotion criterion of the nurses and the meeting also gave in-principle approval to awarding MPhil and PhD scholarships to the nursing sector. CM Usman Buzdar said that nursing

schools will be given the status of colleges, along with the provision of hostel facility, so that the residential problems of the nurses could be solved permanently. He said that nurses would be sent abroad on scholarships and necessary measures will be taken to ensure the betterment of the nursing sector. A mega package will soon be announced by the CM for the nurses. Usman Buzdar said that the Punjab government has introduced revolutionary reforms in the health sector and more than 50 lakh 'Sehat In-



saf Cards' have been distributed among the deserving people. Its scope will further be extended gradually, he said. The Chief Minister directed that a com-

prehensive campaign should be launched for creating awareness among the beneficiaries of Sehat Insaf Cards besides examining to include social security

hospitals in the panel. The Punjab Health Initiative Management Company's board should immediately be completed, he added. Usman Buzdar, while directing to prepare a business plan for Pakistan Kidney and Liver Transplant Institute, said that the health department, with the consultation of concerned authorities, should present final recommendations so that decisions could be taken for the effective working of the institution. Secretary Specialized Health and Medical

Education gave a briefing regarding proposed measures for the betterment of nursing cadres, Sehat Insaf Cards and Pakistan Kidney and Liver Transplant Institute. The chief minister was briefed that 62 kidneys and seven livers have been transplanted so far in PKLI. Provincial Ministers Dr Yasmin Rashid, Hashim Jawan Bakht, Chief Secretary, Chairman Planning and Development, Secretary Finance, Secretary Information, Dean PKLI and others attended the meeting.

Additional SHO shot dead in Karachi shootout

DNA

KARACHI: The additional SHO of the Gulistan-e-Jauhar police station was shot dead during a firefight with suspected robbers on Friday. A police official said the robbers attempted to loot a citizen as he got into his car after withdrawing cash from the ATM of a private bank at Khalid Bin Waleed Road. On getting information, Ferozabad police reached there in no time and gave chase after the culprits tried to flee the scene. In the meantime, the police said a message was sent on the wireless about the robbers trying to evade arrest, mobilizing the entire district's police.

A check post was set up near Safari Park. Upon seeing the policemen there, the robbers opened fire at them and an encounter ensued, as a result of which the sub-inspector was killed. Sub inspector Raheem Khan was killed in the shootout, confirmed East SSP Sajid Sadozai. The police have summoned a heavy contingent to the scene. His body has been shifted to a nearby hospital. The police said four suspects in a white car opened fire from their car and hit the SI who was in the front seat of the police van. They then abandoned their car after some distance and fled. One or two were injured.

Interim charge sheet in Shahbaz Tatla murder case

DNA

LAHORE: Police investigators have filed an interim charge sheet in the sessions court against suspects including Mufakhar Adeel and Asad Bhatti over allegedly murdering former assistant advocate general Shahbaz Tatla.

The charge sheet filed by the police officials made terrifying revelations regarding the murder of the senior lawyer Shahbaz Tatla whose dead body had been dissolved in acid after being suffocated to death by the accused persons. According to the charge sheet, Mufakhar Adeel and Asad Bhatti had intoxicated Shahbaz Tatla after abducting him from Kalma Chowk. Tatla had been taken to a storeroom in the residence where Mufakhar Adeel allegedly tapped his mouth and nose. Later, the former lawyer had been suffocated to death after a pillow ended up on his head by Adeel. Both suspects had dragged the dead body to a blue-coloured drum and poured acid into it which dissolved the Tatla's body. The investigators also claimed in the charge sheet that the culprits emptied the drum in the gutter of the residence and threw the drum, acid, pillow, Tatla's clothes and other belongings to a nullah. Earlier on March 10, police had announced the arrest of Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Mufakhar Adeel for his alleged role in Shahbaz Ahmad Tatla murder case.

Severe load shedding irks people in Karachi

DNA

KARACHI: The people in different areas of Karachi are facing immense problems due to severe unannounced electricity load shedding. According to details, Orangi Town, Malir, Liaquatabad, New Karachi Town, Lines Area, Manzoor Colony Gulistan-e-Johar, North Nazimabad, and others are suffering from nine to ten hours of power outages. The unannounced power cuts have badly distributed routine and business life in the metropolis. Speaking to a private channel, Chairman Businessman Group, Siraj Kassam Teli said that monopoly of K-Electric is badly affecting the port-city. He demanded the federal government to give rights to other companies in the city to supply electricity as this will ultimately create competition and situation will get better in future. On the other hand, Spokesperson of K-Electric, Noor Afshan admitting the power cuts under load management system, said that only one power plant of KE is operating on furnace oil and the production from the gas-based power plants situated in Site and Korangi is affected due to low gas pressure. She said that KE is currently facing a shortage of 250 to 300MW.

Briefs

FGEI delegation visits FDE Islamabad

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A delegation of the Federal Government Educational Institutions (Cantt/Garrisons) Directorate (FGEI) visited the sister organization Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) Islamabad for better collateral coordination and In-depth discussion was undertaken on improving quality of education in public sector education institutions.

Both organization shared views on the teaching and administrative practices followed to cope-up with the current situation.

Sister organizations were agreed for mutual coordination, cooperation for raising standards of education and information sharing on best practices.

Police launch search operation in Taxila

RAWALPINDI: Police on special directives of City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi on Friday launched a search operation in Taxila and adjoining areas in the jurisdiction of Taxila Police Station. According to a police spokesman, heavy police contingents, Elite Force, Special Branch personnel and Ladies police under the supervision of SHO Taxila Police Station conducted search operation in the area and searched 149 houses while 345 persons were also interrogated.

Police also checked particulars of various 71 tenants, he added. The spokesman said the search operations to net criminals and proclaimed offenders were regularly being conducted in different areas of the district particularly to ensure law and order. — APP

Polio drive concluded in Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI: Chief Executive Officer (CEO), District Health Authority, Dr Sohail Chaudary on Friday said the polio campaign which started in the district on September 21 has concluded successfully. The CEO said over 875,000 children below five years age, were administered anti-polio drops during the campaign launched in all tehsils and towns of the district. He informed that 3000 mobile health teams, 496 area in-charges, 287 fixed points, 119 transit points and 221 Union council medical officers participated in the drive to complete the task of immunization. Sohail said he himself monitored the campaign and visited various areas to inspect the working of polio teams. Meanwhile, In-charge Anti-polio drive Chaudary Muhammad Hussain told APP that around 700 children were missed during immunization for certain reasons including being out of city or not present at homes. He said that the missed children would be covered during forthcoming week. — APP

Police arrests 3 criminals

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) today carried out a search and inspection of a sugar mill head office in Lahore, to impound proofs of the group's suspected involvement in anti-competitive activities in violation of the Competition Act, 2010. As part of an ongoing enquiry into the possible anti-competitive activities in the sugar industry, the CCP on 14 September 2020 carried out a search and inspection of the Pakistan Sugar Mills Association's Lahore and Islamabad offices and impounded PSMA's record including the correspondence done through letters, emails, and whatsapp messages, between various members and office bearers of PSMA.



ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, M Ahmad Waheed being presented with bouquet on completion of his term as President ICCI. Senior business leader Malik Sohail Hussain is also seen in picture. — DNA

RTC explores gaps in Pakistan's relations with African countries

The notions were expressed at the roundtable titled 'Connecting with Africa: Prospects and Opportunities for Pakistan', which was organized by Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad. The sitting was chaired by Executive President Khalid Rahman

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has missed out big time by not capitalizing on its peacekeeping missions to African countries and its rendered diplomatic support for the right of self-determination of many in 1960s and 70s.

The need is now to revitalize that social, political and diplomatic footprint in the region, while creating new economic opportunities aimed at sustaining mutually beneficial ties.

The notions were expressed at the roundtable titled 'Connecting with Africa: Prospects and Opportunities for Pakistan', which was organized by Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad. The sitting was chaired by Executive President Khalid Rahman. Ambassador (r) Tajammul Altaf, who served in the discussed region as a Pakistani diplomat for three years, stated that the continent of Africa had so much to offer but there were a lot of gaps



in Pakistan's foreign policy to benefit from that potential. The region, according to the former diplomat, had a collective GDP of more than USD3.4 trillion and had an import market of approximately USD4500 billion. Dr Najimdeen shed light on different geo-political, geo-strategic and cultural dimensions to approach this issue while maintaining that there was a lot in between Pakistan and African countries to collaborate on. Beginning from Economic perspective, he said that

there could be 3 to 4.6 billion of trade between the two regions. D Yamin emphasized on benefiting from Pakistan's peacekeeping missions in Africa as well as from its African diaspora.

He said that Pakistan has deployed over 5000 troops in Africa to date which go there, build good relations, build hospitals, parks, schools, etc., but come back without capitalizing on these contributions. He stressed that Dr Bahar pointed out that Pakistan was a second home for many

African students who come to the country in big numbers every year to pursue their higher education and then go on to serve in their home countries on important positions. This important pool however instead of being engaged after that, gets disconnected and the huge potential of this sustainable resource is sadly lost.

Yaqoob stressed on looking at Africa from a perspective of bilateral relations and not that of a colonial mindset. She said that the continent of Africa was an emerging

market where Pakistan does not have any footprint. There are no policymakers or businessmen focusing on this area and there hasn't been any private institution studying its huge potential.

Dr Abbas' speech focused on identifying overarching umbrellas which can bring both regions closer to each other. He pointed out that the two regions had quite a few similarities like both of them were rich in crude production but lacked sorely in value addition. Acceptance and rejection of Western education was a concern at both ends whereas none of them was able to make much advancement in ocean economies.

Rahman too stressed the policymakers in Pakistan to focus on Africa in a constant and coherent way by facilitating and strengthening social and mental connectivity between the two regions. He said that Africa, like Pakistan, was a victim of global political paradigm and hence there were quite a few social and political agendas the two regions could pursue mutually.

AIOU trains 70% of teachers

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) secures a unique honor for provision of training to almost seventy percent of the teachers appointed in schools, colleges and universities throughout the country.

AIOU, under its teachers training program, has offered admissions in teachers training programs including one year M.Ed as well as one year, 1.5 year and 4 year B.Ed programs. M.Ed program is offered in five fields including Elementary Teacher Education, Teacher Education, Distance & Non Formal Education, Science Education and Special Education.

Eligibility criterion for 1.5 year B Ed program is MA/ MSc or BS/BA Honours (4 year) with second division. On the other hand, for 2.5 year B Ed program (Science Education) candidates with second division in BA/ BSc or equivalent can apply. However, 4 year B Ed program is offered in two fields and candidates with intermediate in second division are eligible to apply for this program.

Admission forms and prospectus for these programs are available at 54 regional offices/ model study centers of the university in northern areas, AJK and all four provinces as well as more than 100 coordinating offices established throughout the country. Admission forms and prospectus are also available online on the university website (www.aiou.edu.pk). — APP

12 lawbreakers arrested

RAWALPINDI: Police have arrested 12 lawbreakers including three for possessing illegal weapons besides recovering three pistols 30 bore with several rounds from their possession.

According to a police spokesman, Banni police held Nadeem Shoukat for having a 30 bore pistol. Sadiqabad police also recovered a 30 bore pistol and several rounds from the possession of Muhammad Adnan while another accused namely Muhammad Pervaiz was sent behind the bars for carrying a 30 bore pistol.

Meanwhile, City, Banni, Gujranwala, Ratta Amral, Pirwadhai, Wah Cantt, Rawat and Airport police conducted raids in different areas and arrested eight accused namely Abid Hussain, Jameel Shoukat, Adeel Kiani and Haris Sajawal for possessing 1155 grams charras, 30 liters liquor and seven rounds of 30 bore pistol. — APP

QAU, SSDO collaborate in research, education

QAU VC said the initiative would provide new avenues to students for exploring knowledge

ISLAMABAD: The Quaid-e-Azam University (QAU) and Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to collaborate in education, research, training activities, besides capacity building of students in diverse fields. The MoU was signed by QAU Vice Chancellor M Ali and SSDO Executive Director Kausar Abbas held here the other day, a SSDO news release said. Under the MoU, both the organizations would jointly carry out the research work, develop hard and soft resources of knowledge and education and hold conferences, seminars, lectures, workshops and consultative meetings in the fields of mutual interests. According to the MoU, a committee would be constituted, comprising members of both the organization to execute the agreement. QAU VC said the initiative would provide new avenues to students for exploring knowledge. Kausar Abbas said collective efforts would be made for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in education sector, projecting Paigham-e-Pakistan campaign, promoting peace and harmony, and preventing extremism. — DNA

IHC hears Margharzar Zoo case

DNA

ISLAMABAD: IHC Friday conducted hearing on case pertaining to death of animals at the Margharzar Zoo and remarked that it has already declared the zoo will no longer exist. IHC Chief Justice Athar Minallah said, "Those animals were locked at zoo which live in mountains. Bears are habitual of snow but were kept in warm weather here. Those who value life do not harm animals. "Rapes with women and children will not occur if the society is sympathetic towards animals. Those who take care of animals will also look after women and children."



ISLAMABAD: PRCS, NESPAK sign agreement for Ninety Six mitigation projects in Azad Kashmir. — DNA

Eighteen group signs Mahira Khan as brand ambassador

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Eighteen, the luxury real estate project, signs Mahira Khan as their brand ambassador; the actress is set to appear in Eighteen's new TVC campaign. Mahira Khan has previously worked with the brand as well and was a part of the first ever TVC of Eighteen, a star-studded affair where Mahira Khan was featured alongside other top celebrities of Pakistan. Eighteen's CEO, Tarek Hamdy added, "Mahira is admired and revered by Pakistanis all over the world. She has been an integral part of Eighteen's journey and she understands our brand values and ethos, so we are absolutely delighted to be work-



ing with a talent like her. Since her work goes beyond boundaries, it resonates with not only Pakistanis but also with our expat audiences residing all over the world.' Eighteen is a golf course community located in the suburbs of Islamabad offering world-class amenities to its residents.

Home to the finest commercial and residential spaces with state-of-the-art amenities to deliver the promise of destination living. It is an exclusive joint venture of Egypt-based Ora Developers, and Saif Group and Kohistan Builders (KBD) of Pakistan. Located 10 minutes from the New Islamabad International Airport, the grand project occupies a focal place in the twin cities.

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Briefs

Police urges students to avoid drugs

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Police officials Friday urged the students to demonstrate responsible attitude and remain away from the unlawful practices like use of drugs, smoking and amateur driving. Following the directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Muhammad Aamir Zulfiqar, SP (Industrial Area) Zubair Ahmed Sheikh along with DSP Ghulam Muhammad Baqir visited the Islamabad Model College for Boys Sector I-10/2 under Public Relation and Educational Programme. They met with the students and shared the safety tips against COVID-19 virus.

The students were also briefed about the various wings of police as well their functioning and also efforts of the force to ensure protection to the lives and property of the citizens. The female cops and police officers from Counter Terrorism Department (CTD), Bomb Disposal Squad, Islamabad Traffic Police, Special Branch, police stations were also present on the occasion. They urged the students to remain away from the unlawful practices like use of drugs, smoking and amateur driving. SP (Industrial Area) asked the students to focus on curriculum as well physical activities and ensure bright future of the country through hard work.

FIA traces gang of ATM hackers in Rawalpindi

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has traced a gang involved in the hacking of Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) in Rawalpindi. The FIA launched an investigation into the matter after receiving numerous complaints of cash transfers from the bank accounts of the consumers. The initial investigation revealed that a gang of five people including two government employees are involved in transferring cash from the accounts of people after hacking the ATMs.

The gang is operating from Rawalpindi. The suspects have been traced by the FIA and two of them are working in government offices.

CGSS lauds Kazakh embassy for opening Abai Center

From Page 01

Ansar Mahmood Bhatti, Chief Editor, Daily Islamabad Post, CENTRELINE magazine and DNA News Agency and Member Board of Experts, CGSS stated that the Abai Center will enhance the relationship of Kazakhstan with various countries across the globe and will promote Kazakh culture in the world. Furthermore, he stated that the contributions of Abai are important to introduce in Pakistan for the young scholars. Ms. Mehreen Gul, Director, CGSS was also present on the occasion. She highlighted that CGSS can also contribute to promote the literature work of Abai to enhance the academic cooperation between Pakistan and Kazakhstan.

Pakistan welcomes visit of UNMOGIP

From Page 01

India, international media, and diplomats to any area of the LOC and provided them access to the local population to assess the ground situation themselves. According to an ISPR press release, during their visit to the LOC, he told foreign diplomats that there had been some 2,333 Indian ceasefire violations and unprovoked firing incidents across the Line of Control during 2020 leaving 18 civilians martyred, 185 injured.



ISLAMABAD: Mayor of Islamabad Shaikh Anser Aziz visiting Islamabad Graveyard and reviewing expansion arrangements. – DNA

Speakers emphasize on promoting digital economy at SDPI seminar

Member PM's Task Force on IT, Mr Pervez Iftikhar opined that the regulations of Pakistan Telecommunication Authority and State Bank of Pakistan at present are not conducive enough to bring investment in this sector from abroad

FIAZ CHAUDHRY

ISLAMABAD: The policy and regulatory facilitation could help the digital economy of Pakistan to grow and reach at its best potential and hence, to contribute to the national economy more robustly. The experts on trade and economy said this while speaking at public private dialogue on 'Pakistan in digital trade - challenges and opportunities' organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), here on Thursday.

Member Prime Minister's Task Force on IT, Mr Pervez Iftikhar, while presenting an overview of IT and Telecom sector in Pakistan, opined that the regulations of Pakistan Telecommunication Authority and State Bank of Pakistan at present are not conducive enough to bring investment in this sector from abroad. The processes are tedious, and the availability of market data desired by investors is missing. He added further that the public sector is not investing own budget in the production and facilitation of dig-

ital technologies and data protection law much desired by local and foreign investors is still awaited. Therefore, such a regime is encouraging even the local Pakistani firms to keep their data services outside of Pakistan, he concluded.

Managing Director, Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB), Mr Osman Nasir, was of view that the lack of venture capital and comprehensive insurance framework in digital sector is discouraging investors. He said that the double taxation treaties also need to be promoted to

boost trade-in-services in addition to efficient judicial system.

"PSEB is helping to set up a private trading index for technology companies on PSX," he said and added further that PSEB is also working to address any adverse perceptions about Pakistan as an investment destination. Dr Vaqar Ahmed, Joint Executive Director, SDPI, emphasized that digital economy requires allowing greater trade in IT and ICT products and the promotion of stronger digital infrastructure. He

explained that government's response to crises like Covid19 and monsoon rains remained weak in some regions of the country due to poor internet connectivity. He said: "The bottlenecks preventing global brands in IT sector to come to Pakistan include high fixed and sunk costs, weak data protection, complex tax regime, lack of trained human resources, discrimination in public procurement, and inability of local lending institutions to understand financing needs of firms".

PNCA organized folk musical evening

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Council of the Arts organized a colorful musical evening to celebrate and pay tribute to traditional Ajrak makers of Sindh. Famous singer and song writer Saif Samejo with his band "Sketches" presented folk, Sufi and modern music which is his trademark when it comes to portray the rich culture and traditions of Pakistan. DG(PNCA) Dr. Fouzia Saeed introduced the band. She appreciated their way of music and efforts to keep Sufi music alive. She appreciated them being original in their work in this era of commercialism. Dr. Fouzia also highlighted the efforts of PNCA for revival of folk, traditional music and all kind of arts. Saif Samejo is greatly inspired by poetry of Sufi Poets specially Shah Abdul Latif Bhutai and Sachal Sarmast. His songs "man moriya" and "JOGI" are clear indication of love and appreciation of Sindh Sufi poetry. Famous folk singer "Bhora Lal" was there with him to create magic and spreading message peace and harmony. Audience were also electrified by Sufi rock fusion in his own specific style.

ICCI urges MCI to implement IHC stay order

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Tahir Abbasi Senior Vice President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry's, Ajmal Baloch All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajran and Traders Action Committee Islamabad, Khalid Chaudhry former Senior Vice President ICCI and Mehboob Ahmed Khan current Executive Member ICCI held a meeting with MCI Director Revenue Amir Shehzad and stressed upon him to ensure the implementation of Islamabad High Court stay

order against the hike in property tax in Islamabad. Tahir Abbasi said that ICCI had obtained a stay order from the Islamabad High Court against the exorbitant hike in property tax by the MCI. But despite that stay, the Directorate of Revenue has issued property bills with new rates that included the previous outstanding bills with interest. He said this move of MCI has created a lot of concerns in the business community. He said that doing so despite the stay order of IHC was prima facie a violation of the court order.

Zaidi inaugurates Online Portal for Seafarers and Manning Agents

DNA

ISLAMABAD: (Raja Furqan Ahmed) Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Ali Haider Zaidi inaugurated Online Portal for Seafarers and Manning Agents and Shipowners and a website for Ports and Shipping Wing. Secretary, Maritime Affairs Rizwan Ahmed, Director General Ports and Shipping Shakeel Ahmed Mangnejo and Additional Secretary of Ministry Nadir Mumtaz were also present on the occasion. Federal Minister said that a major milestone has been achieved by the Ministry of Maritime Affairs for digitalization of data, facil-

itation of seafarers, manning agents and ship owners by the inauguration of a one-window online portal. He said that the online portal will help the seafarers in the issuance of their Seafarers Identity Card, Seafarer service book, online verification for Visa issuance and resolution of other issues faced by them. Ali Haider Zaidi said that previously Seafarers had to travel to Karachi and faced issues due to red-tapism. The portal has brought transparency in the system which will help eradicate malpractices that previously prevailed in the shipping office. The website for Ports and Shipping division has also been launched for the very first time

in history. In a bid to bring across the board accountability and transparency, Maritime Affairs has moved to the e-filing system, has ensured the updated website of the organizations to encourage accessibility and transparency. He said that the ministry is making efforts to further improve the services by launching an online portal. He said that this initiative would make the life of Seafarers easy and will address their problems at the earliest. The minister said that ferry service would be launched after making all the preparations, adding that in this regard Ministry would conduct meeting with all the stakeholders.



Adiala Jail packed beyond capacity

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail is packed beyond capacity, housing over 5,000 inmates, far more than its existing capacity of a little over 2,000, according to a report. The report furnished to the Ministry of Interior states that the prison has a staggering 257 per cent more prisoners than its sanctioned capacity as it houses 5,591 prisoners against its maximum capacity of 2,174. The inmates include 3,385 under-trial prisoners (UTPs) and 1,884 convicts, the report said, adding the prison also houses 322 inmates awaiting court verdicts in their cases. 1,430 of the prisoners kept in Adiala Jail belong to Islamabad while 300 prisoners have been brought from other provinces. Earlier this year, the Ministry of Human Rights had furnished a report to the Supreme Court on the measures it had been taking to contain the spread of the coronavirus among inmates, painting a grim picture of conditions in the country's overpopulated prisons. The report stated prisons across Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are packed beyond capacity.

QAU, SSDO collaborate in research, capacity building

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Quaid-e-Azam University (QAU) and Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to collaborate in education, research, training activities, besides capacity building of students in diverse fields. The MoU was signed by QAU Vice Chancellor M Ali and SSDO Executive Director Kausar Abbas held here the other day, a SSDO news release said. Under the MoU, both the organizations would jointly carry out the research work, develop hard and soft resources of knowledge and education and hold conferences, seminars, lectures, workshops and consultative meetings in the fields of mutual interests.

Diplomats share LoC visit experience

From Page 01

ambassadors and defence attaches of 24 countries had visited the LoC to inspect India's border violations. Director General Inter-Services Public Relations (DG ISPR) Major General Babar Iftikhar briefed the dignitaries about the atrocities being committed by New Delhi. The DG ISPR said, "Indian troops deliberately target the civilian population and have committed 2,333 ceasefire violations in 2020 martyring 18 civilians and injuring 185 persons. The number of ceasefire violations started increasing since 2014. "The purpose of this provocation is to divert the world's attention from the brutalities being committed against the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) and the minorities in India. "Kashmiris have been held hostage on their own land. The United Nations (UN) has issued a detailed report regarding the Indian barbarity in occupied Kashmir, and this issue should be solved under the UN resolutions."

Kazakh envoy's briefing on President Kassym's address to UNGA

From Page 01

informed the august gathering about his country's steps regarding coronavirus pandemic preventive measure. He told that COVID-19 has proven surprisingly difficult to be overcome. A second arms race looms. Our strategic development goals are suffering setbacks. The President also commended the strong leadership by Secretary-General António Guterres, and support his ongoing work to boost effectiveness, transparency and accountability of the UN. Kazakhstan adds its voice in a clear statement of commitment to the UN mission and Charter, and to the shared aspiration of building a more peaceful, just and prosperous world.

No political differences on Kashmir issue: Mushahid

SHUJAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed has said that there are no political differences and divergences on Kashmir issue; the entire political spectrum shares the same line and passion to address this issue and ensure protection of fundamental rights of people of Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir he made these remarks during the Senate foreign Affairs Committee meeting held today at the parliament House which was briefed by the Federal Minister for Human Rights, Dr. Shireen M Mazari and Mr. Omar Waraich, Head of Amnesty International for South Asia Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed said that Pakistan has become the center point of strate-

gic issues which is an important window of opportunity given the fact that our strategic move have compelled India to take defense position at various international fronts. He acknowledged that support to the Kashmir cause by the United Nation Secretary General and United General Assembly President during their visit to Pakistan and letter from 14 US Senators demanding sanctions on India are successful interventions steered by Pakistan. Dr. Shireen M Mazari, briefed the Committee on Human Rights Diplomacy; Challenges and opportunities for Pakistan. She highlighted that notion of diplomacy has been changed; war has been replaced by 'hybrid warfare'. No State is sovereign per se as they have voluntarily chipped away their sovereignty by agreeing to international agreements to govern their interstate rela-

tions in a growing number of fields. The Human Rights Diplomacy stresses the need to identify four main actors including States, Inter-Governmental Organizations (e.g. U.N., QAS, NATO, etc.) NGOs and European Union (EU). Pakistan should utilize this evolving concept of Human Rights Diplomacy for highlighting the human rights violations in the Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IOJK); the interventions can include, lobbying with the EU and its Member States for revocation of the India's Generalized Scheme of Preferences (GSP) Standard Status, imposition of sanctions on India in line with EU's Directorate General for External Policies' guidelines, 2015. Pakistan has to move proactively on multiple international forums in a coordinated manner; advisory opinion of ICJ on the matter would be a viable way forward. Mr. Omar

Waraich, Head of Amnesty International briefed the Committee on the role of Amnesty International in promoting Kashmir cause. He informed that Amnesty international works in IOJK and in reviewing the human rights violations with grave concern. In this regard several reports have been issued highlighting the atrocities and human rights violations. Mr. Abdul Hameed Loan from All Parties Hurriyat Conference was also present in the briefing. The Committee also examined the matter of amount contributed by Pakistan so far towards financing of South Asian University (SAU) established by SAARC countries, which was raised by Senator Nuzhat Sadiq, life threats/extortion demands received by Senator Hilal ur Rehman from banned TTM (Jamal ul Ahrar) operating from Afghanistan, issuance of Notice by FBR to the Ambassador of Palestine.

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India's losing battle

IN a major interview after his release from house arrest, former chief minister of India-held Kashmir, Farooq Abdullah, has bitterly criticised the Indian government's scrapping of the special status of the occupied territory and said that Kashmiris would rather accept Chinese rule than Indian.

The pro-India Kashmiri leader who is seen by most Kashmiris as a betrayer to their cause, acknowledged that Kashmiris felt like "slaves" and would rise up in protest once the draconian curfew was lifted. He was very clear that the abrogation of Kashmir's special status as a semi-autonomous region was unacceptable to every Kashmiri and he would struggle to have the status restored.

It is clear that India's move last August to scrap Articles 370 and 35A of its constitution and deprive IJK of its special status has had disastrous results. The step by the BJP government has confirmed beyond a shadow of doubt what the people of Kashmir had feared all along, ie New Delhi wants to forcefully take control of their land by changing its demography and diluting its Muslim and Kashmiri identity.

The intent is unambiguous: convert IJK into a Hindu-majority area and deprive Kashmiris of the political and administrative strength that comes with being a majority in their own land. In the process, however, India has alienated every Kashmiri including its puppets like Farooq Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti. By converting IJK into an open-air jail, India has forced Kashmiris – even those previously aligned with it – to resist this occupation by whatever means possible.

This situation cannot be sustained. A growing number of voices within India are also calling out the BJP government for depriving IJK of its special status. Internationally also India is finding it hard to justify its actions. The resistance from the people is certain to increase with time.

Countries that can influence India should persuade Mr Modi to return to the path of sanity. In this context, sanity and rationality demand that India restore the special status of occupied Kashmir. The UN resolutions recognise the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir as disputed territory and the dispute's final resolution lies in the implementation of these resolutions.



After the pandemic

WHAT will the world look like once the Covid-19 crisis is over? And will it be over at any point in the near future? This was a question that came up strongly at the UN General Assembly meeting general debate, where nations from around the world demanded the development of a vaccine and equitable distribution, so that all people will be able to access it, no matter whether they come from a rich or poor nation. At the moment, one of the biggest problems facing the world is that rich countries have already bought up large shares of any vaccines that may be developed and will be marketed so that they obtain the largest portions of the substance which can save people from a deadly disease. The fact that Washington, Beijing and Moscow have refused to collaborate on collective action to save the world makes things even more complex. Leaders from Africa, South America, the Pacific Islands and other countries have demanded that any vaccine be distributed in such a way that it reach all people. The challenge, of course, for the world is an enormous one; 7.8 million people need a vaccine all at the same time. As UN experts point out, such a situation has never risen before. This has been seen as the biggest crisis since World War II. If this organisation works, it may make it possible for many more to obtain the vaccine than would otherwise have been the case.

The challenge is also a difficult one. The WHO is supporting Covax and trying to ensure distribution of any potential vaccine in a way that is not discriminatory in favour of rich countries. This is difficult and demanding. We will wait to see how much cooperation the world is able to display. The manner in which this happens may determine the shape of how the UN, and other similar organisations, is laid out in the future. The crisis we face today has to be solved. How this happens is now the critical question for almost every nation in the world; let us not forget how the African continent was treated and the delay in providing them with medicines that could treat the HIV virus.

A beginning to seek peace in Afghanistan

Frank F. Islam



The United States and the Taliban signed a peace agreement on February 29. Among other things, that agreement: Stipulated that the US would withdraw its 13,000+ troops in phases over a span of 14 months. Banned the Taliban from engaging with any extremist group to work against the US and its allies worldwide. Called for an exchange of 5,000 Taliban prisoners and 1,000 Afghan security personnel

ON September 12, representatives of the Afghan government and the Taliban met in Doha to start the Afghan Peace Process negotiations. U.S. Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo referred to these negotiations as a "truly momentous breakthrough." Max Boot, an expert for the Council of Foreign Relations disagreed. He advises "...no one should expect a breakthrough quickly – or at all. The two sides are too far apart and the conditions are not propitious to end the civil conflict that has been raging in one form or another since 1978." Are the negotiations themselves a breakthrough? I think not. They are simply a beginning.

The United States and the Taliban signed a peace agreement on February 29. Among other things, that agreement: Stipulated that the US would withdraw its 13,000+ troops in phases over a span of 14 months. Banned the Taliban from engaging with any extremist group to work against the US and its allies worldwide. Called for an exchange of 5,000 Taliban prisoners and 1,000 Afghan security personnel.

In an earlier column, shortly after the peace agreement was signed, I wrote that there was much that needed to be done to convert the uncertainty created by that peace agreement into an opportunity. There is a chance now to seize the opportunity.

Because the fact remains that, even though the parties are at the negotiating table, there is still much uncertainty. The extent of that uncertainty is demonstrated by the harsh reality that it took more than one half a year to get there. This delay was caused by a number of factors including: The Afghan government not participating in structuring the peace agreement. The Taliban violating the truce required by the agreement by engaging in considerable violence in early March. The violence lessened after that. And, the major stumbling blocks to moving forward be-

came the prisoner exchange and other critical unsettled issues such as the future political roadmap for Afghanistan, human rights, and the Taliban's connection with Al-Qaeda and other affiliated groups.

In early August, the Afghan government approved the release of the final 400 Taliban fighters. This was followed by a round of talks between Taliban leaders, led by political chief Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, and Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi in the last week of August which helped set the stage for the peace negotiations.

There are some current conditions that could contribute to their being consummated successfully. They include: the economic needs of Afghanistan; Afghanistan's collaboration with other regional allies; the desire of the U.S. public to see the "endless war" in Afghanistan brought to a halt; and, the U.S. presidential elections.

The continuing war has devastated trade and commerce in Afghanistan. In 2020 the situation has worsened. According to a July report from the World Bank, "Afghanistan's economy is set to contract by between 5.5 percent and 7.4 percent in 2020 because of COVID-19, exacerbating poverty, and leading to a sharp decline in government revenues."

That is the bad news. The good news is that Afghanistan has been working with regional allies China and Pakistan to reduce the violence in Afghanistan which could help increase future trade and development. It has a trilateral MOU in place on cooperation in counterterrorism. If peace could be reached, this relationship could facilitate Afghanistan's participation in the multi-billion-dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to connect the whole region economically.

India, has already invested \$2 billion in aid and reconstruction activities in Afghanistan. Peace in Afghanistan could lead to the development of other initiatives in the form of projects such as the Central Asia-South Asia power project

(CASA-1000), an electricity-transmission line in the region, and the China-Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Iran railway. The Afghan peace process is also linked to U.S. public opinion. A recent report of the Eurasia Group Foundation (ERF), a US based nonprofit, revealed a significant surge in public support of the planned withdrawal of American forces from Afghanistan. The ERF found "strong public support among both Republicans and Democrats for the planned withdrawal of all remaining troops over the next 14 months."

Both U.S. presidential candidates want to reduce America's footprint in Afghanistan. President Donald Trump would eliminate it entirely. Democratic candidate former Vice President Joe Biden, who was a strong opponent of the Afghanistan troop increase by the Obama administration, would retain a small contingent of 1,500 to 2,000 for special operations against ISIS and other insurgent groups. Importantly, as the Washington Post noted in a September 14 editorial, "The chance for an Afghan peace will depend on the willingness of the U.S. president to maintain U.S. forces in place until the Taliban show a genuine will to settle. "The conditions described provide the context for peace but will be totally insufficient for accomplishing it. That will require authenticity, compromising and collaboration at the negotiating table. It will require respecting the existing Afghanistan constitution and protecting progress that have been made in Afghanistan on key issues such as women's rights, civil liberties and the democratic process.

The Taliban and the Afghan start these negotiations light years apart philosophically and decades apart experientially. Time will tell whether they can cross those distances and use this beginning to give the Afghan citizens the happy ending they deserve

– Frank F. Islam is an Entrepreneur, Civic Leader, and Thought Leader based in Washington DC. The views expressed here are personal

World must honor COVID-19 victims by returning to multilateralism

Ban Ki-moon



In the Middle East and other conflict-riven regions, the UN and its principles of multilateral cooperation remain indispensable for finding long-term, sustainable solutions that will guarantee peace, stability and prosperity. The principles of international law are the bedrock of our global order, providing a crucial framework for defending rights

THE coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has shone a light on the acute vulnerabilities of a deeply interconnected world. No country, regardless of its size, wealth or technological sophistication, can tackle this crisis alone.

Owing to the pandemic, the UN General Assembly is being held under exceptional circumstances, with heads of state participating "virtually" rather than traveling to New York City. The unique nature of this year's gathering should serve as a reminder that the only way to overcome the threat of COVID-19 is through international cooperation, transparency and adherence to shared rules and regulations.

It is a poignant irony that the pandemic has struck on the UN's 75th anniversary. Born from the wreckage of the Second World War – a wholly human-made calamity – the world's premier international forum embodied the postwar leaders' determination that future generations must be spared the kind of suffering they witnessed. In the Middle East and other conflict-riven regions, the UN and its principles of multilateral cooperation remain indispensable for finding long-term, sustainable solutions that will guarantee peace, stability and prosperity. The principles of international law are the bedrock of our global order, providing a crucial framework for defending rights and exercising power in the face of global challenges.

We can see this clearly in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which has lasted for almost as long as the UN itself. The best solution will be two states – Israel and Palestine – for the two peoples, based on the internationally recognized pre-1967 borders and in accordance with UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 2334, among others.

The recent establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and two Gulf countries,

the UAE and Bahrain, is a significant political development that I hope can help overcome decades of estrangement and mistrust. But I still believe that the only way to achieve true "normalization" between Israel and the Arab world is for all parties to work toward a durable two-state solution that delivers peace, justice, dignity and security to Palestinians and Israelis alike. People's inalienable rights should never be bartered away by others.

In 1945, many hoped that the world had finally learned the lessons of two disastrous world wars. In the words of the UN Charter, the body was created to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war," and to pursue peaceful and inclusive paths to global prosperity and democracy. The web of UN-centered international covenants and institutions that has been established since then is far from perfect. Yet, for more than seven decades, it has decisively supported the pursuit of peace, security, human rights and economic and social improvements around the world.

To highlight this legacy, The Elders – a group of independent global leaders founded by Nelson Mandela, of which I have the honor to serve as deputy chair – recently released a report on the defense of multilateralism. In it, we issued five calls to action for today's leaders: Recommit to the values of the UN Charter; empower the UN to fulfill its mandate for collective action on peace and security; strengthen health systems to tackle COVID-19 and prepare for future pandemics; demonstrate greater ambition on climate change to meet the Paris Agreement targets; and mobilize support for all of the Sustainable Development Goals.

All countries must recognize that the only way to achieve these objectives is through effective multilateralism, which is ultimately in everyone's interest. More often than not, the UN's failure to

meet its stated goals has been the result of member states – particularly but not exclusively the five permanent members of the Security Council (the US, UK, France, Russia and China) – not meeting their responsibilities. When countries place narrow national interests above common priorities, everyone loses out.

To be sure, this past July, I welcomed the UN Security Council's unanimous adoption of Resolution 2532, which called for a global cease-fire to avert further humanitarian catastrophes in the context of the pandemic. I also strongly supported this initiative when UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres first proposed it in March. Yet I was disappointed to see so many valuable months wasted in arguments over the details of the text. Squabbles over semantics in the face of bloody conflicts and an unprecedented pandemic sent a terrible message to the global public. Beyond the direct health effects, the economic fallout from the crisis will be long-lasting and severe, creating ripple effects that will be felt in many fragile and conflict-affected parts of the world for some time to come. This was no time to play diplomatic hardball.

Since then, the World Food Programme has warned that we may be headed for the worst humanitarian crisis since the Second World War, with as many as 600,000 children likely to die from famine and malnutrition in hard-hit countries like Yemen, Somalia, Nigeria, and South Sudan.

The COVID-19 crisis is a somber reminder of our common human bonds and vulnerabilities. If we fail to respond to the pandemic and other shared threats with a renewed sense of solidarity and collective action, we will have dishonored the victims of the virus and betrayed the hopes that the UN's founding generation had for us.

Courtesy: Arab News

Briefs

Google Maps to now show coronavirus hotspots

DNA

SAN FRANCISCO: Internet search giant Google has announced to update its free Maps application this week with colour-coding that highlights areas infected with cases of COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus. In a blog post published Thursday, the search giant said Maps will be enhanced if a user taps the new "COVID-19" option in the layers feature in the top corner of the screen. It will provide data using the latest seven-day average of cases per 100,000 people in areas being viewed, it added. A label will also let users know whether the number of COVID-19 cases in a particular spot is trending up or down, according to Maps product manager Sujoy Banerjee. "In some regions, you might find additional information related to COVID-19. If you select the alert on the Google Maps home screen, you'll find locally relevant links based on your current map view," it added. The tool is meant to provide "critical information about COVID-19 cases in an area so you can make more informed decisions about where to go and what to do," Banerjee said. Data used in the COVID layer comes from sources including Baltimore-based Johns Hopkins Hospital, the New York Times, and Wikipedia, which get information from public health outlets such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and government health ministries, according to Banerjee.

Turkey slams US House Speaker

DNA

ANKARA: Turkey's foreign minister on Friday harshly criticized US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi over her anti-Turkey remarks. Speaker Pelosi's rise to become Speaker of the House is what is truly worrisome for American democracy, given her blatant ignorance. You will learn to respect the Turkish people's will," Mevlut Cavusoglu wrote on Twitter. On Wednesday, during a press conference, US President Donald Trump was asked if there would be a peaceful transition of power if he loses the 2020 elections. "Well, we'll have to see what happens," Trump said. On Trump's remarks, Pelosi said: "We do know who he admires. He admires [Russian President Vladimir] Putin, he admires [Kim Jong Un, he admires [Recep Tayyip] Erdogan in Turkey." "But I remind him, you are not in North Korea, you are not in Turkey, you are not in Russia, Mr. President - and by the way, you are not in Saudi Arabia. You are in the United States of America, it is a democracy, so why don't you just try for a moment to honor your oath of office, to the Constitution of the United States?" she added.

Japan to allow new visa applicants from October

DNA

TOKYO: Japan will relax from October its border restrictions aimed at controlling the spread of the novel coronavirus to allow entry for new visa applicants other than tourists from all regions. The change was announced Friday during a meeting of the government's subcommittee on the virus and was set to be approved at the subsequent meeting of the government's virus task force, in a long-anticipated move to relax the nation's strict travel restrictions. The restrictions were introduced in April as a temporary border control measure aimed at curbing transmission of the virus. Under the existing travel controls, travelers from 159 countries and regions have been denied entry in principle. So far, exceptions have been made for foreign nationals with valid residence statuses, some newcomers in urgent situations as well as certain visa applicants whose families live in Japan or whose presence is necessary for their employer to continue business operations.



Athletes fitness, grooming and competency course concludes

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Services Sports Control Board with the collaboration of Pakistan Sports Board organized Athletes Fitness, Grooming and Competency consolidation course concluded here at Pakistan Sports Complex Islamabad on Friday. Federal Minister for Inter Provincial Coordination (IPC) Dr. Fahmida Mirza graced the closing ceremony and distributed certificates to the participants while President Services Sports Control Board Rear Admiral Moazzam Ilyas, Secretary Services Sports Control Board Lt. Col. Ghulam Shabbir and other dignities were



also present on the concluding ceremony. As many as 80 participants from all provinces, AJK, FATA and Gilgit Baltistan attended the five days long course. Nine lecturers were given by four experts from world athletics and five experts by profession on the different issues related to Athletes Fitness, Grooming and Competency. Speaking on the occasion Dr. Fahmida Mirza said that prime minister has a clear vision to put Pakistan on the path of progress and prosperity. This course would be helpful to promote athletics and fitness skills adding that collective efforts during this difficult time would help to promote the sports", She added.

'We present the example of tolerance and coexistence'

DNA

BAKU: "Despite the enormous difficulties caused by Armenian occupation, Azerbaijan managed to build a stable, modern, democratic and multicultural country. Development of democracy and human rights protection are among top priorities of our government. All fundamental freedoms are fully provided, including freedom of expression, media freedom, freedom of assembly, religious freedoms, as well as development of civil society. We launched broad political dialogue initiative several months ago. All major political parties supported this initiative. The political dialogue which successfully started would help to strengthen our political system and serve

the cause of sustainable development of Azerbaijan," said President Ilham Aliyev as he addressed the general debates of the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly in a video format, media reports. "Multiculturalism is the way of life for the people of Azerbaijan. We present to the world the example of tolerance and coexistence. The "Baku Process" launched by Azerbaijan in 2008 to strengthen dialogue and cooperation between the Muslim world and Europe, is supported by the United Nations. The UN General Assembly's resolutions have recognized the World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue held in Azerbaijan every two years as a "key global platform for promoting intercultural dialogue," the head of state emphasized.



Brazil postpones famous Rio carnival 2020

DNA

RIO DE JANEIRO: Rio de Janeiro's carnival parade, due to be held next February, has been postponed indefinitely, organisers say. The samba schools involved in the parade had previously warned it would be difficult to organise without a vaccine. Rio's carnival attracts millions of visitors every year. Brazil has been one of the countries worst affected by the pandemic with 4.5 million infections and more than 138,000 deaths. Jorge Castanheira, president of samba league Liesa said schools would not have time to prepare or organise for the February event. "We are looking for an alternative solution, something we can do when it's safe to contribute to the city. But we aren't certain enough to set a date," he said. The announcement applies to Liesa's formal carnival event but does not apply to the local street parties that take place at the same time. It is currently unclear if those will be allowed to take place. There is concern that the economic impact of Brazil's delayed carnivals could hit families who depend on the events for income.

Fridays for Future: Climate strikers are back

The Fridays for Futures movement, which started with activist Greta Thunberg skipping school to sit alone outside the Swedish Parliament in 2018

DNA

BERLIN: Hamstrung by coronavirus lockdowns, frustrated school strikers have spent months staging digital protests against world leaders failing to act urgently on climate change. Today they are taking to the streets once more. The Fridays for Futures movement, which started with activist Greta Thunberg skipping school to sit alone outside the Swedish Parliament in 2018, has become a global youth force calling for climate justice. But a surge in support last year was hobbled after coronavirus lockdowns closed schools and kept children at home. The protest on Friday is the group's first global action since the pandemic struck and follows meetings between prominent activists and world leaders. Last month, Thunberg and three other climate activists presented German Chancellor Angela Merkel with a letter signed by nearly 125,000 people demanding EU leaders "stop pretending that we can solve the climate and ecological crisis without treat-

ing it as a crisis." They have called for an immediate halt to investments and subsidies in fossil fuels and, in Germany, pressured the government to bring forward its deadline to phase out coal from 2038 to 2030, and to go carbon-neutral by 2035 instead of 2050. Line Niedeggen, a physics student at the University of Heidelberg and Fridays for Future spokesperson, believes Germany has a responsibility to lead on climate action. Historically it has been one of the world's biggest carbon emitters, she says, is also rich enough to adopt cleaner energy systems, and last month it adopted presidency of the EU Council. "We have to use this role as the leader of one of the biggest emitters in the world to start a change of direction because, scientifically, 2020 is the last year we can make changes to actually reach 1.5 degrees," Niedeggen told media. Last November, the head of the UN Environment Program was among the public and scientific figures to warn that 2020 offered a last chance to cut emissions.

Then, few could have suspected this deadline would coincide with an unprecedented public health emergency. The pandemic has dealt climate activism a blow. Niedeggen says that as a movement demanding that the world act on scientific advice, the school strikers took lockdown restrictions extremely seriously, halted public protests immediately and took their activism online. On April 24, Fridays for Future organized a "digital strike," with Niedeggen hosting a that racked up close to a quarter of a million views. "We were not physically standing together, but we were all fighting together," she says. Activists also gathered thousands of placards from across Germany to lay out in front of the German Bundestag around the central slogan: "Fight every crisis." Still, corona inevitably pushed climate change down the agenda, and according to a poll conducted by Postbank only 6% of German 16 to 18-year-olds joined an online strike, compared to nearly a third who had been to a physical Fridays for Future protest.

Paris: Two documentaries on mountaineering in Pakistan screened

Charge d'Affaires i. Mr. M. Amjaz Aziz Qazi held a meeting with the organizers of the festival Ms. Manon Grimwood and Mr. Cyril Salomon and said that Pakistan welcomes tourists from across the globe to visit the country which is gifted with epic landscapes and challenging mountain tops

DNA

PARIS: Two documentaries based on the expeditions of mountaineers and paragliders from France and Poland to the high mountainous areas of Pakistan were screened at a film festival in Paris, France on September 23-24. The summer edition of the festival was held at Grand Rex cinema in Paris. Some of the mountain climbers and paragliders who went to Pakistan for their expeditions were also present on the occasion. The

Embassy of Pakistan was represented by Charge d'Affaires a.i., Defence Attaché, Press Counsellor and Head of Chancery. Lost in Karakoram, a 30-minute documentary regarding paragliding in Pakistan's Karakoram Range. Directed by Damien Lacaze, Antoine Girard and Jeremie Chénal, the documentary regarded this area as one of the most beautiful mountain venues in the world. The film was based on French paragliders' attempt to ascend the 7027-meter high Spantik peak. The second documentary titled The Last Mountain is of 83 minutes duration. Di-

rected by Darius Zaluski, the film is based on the 2018 K-2 expedition of Polish mountaineers. The documentary informed that K-2 is world's only 8000+ meter peak that has never been climbed in the winter. During this challenging expedition, a couple of members of the Polish team went to rescue a French mountaineer Elizabeth Revol and her Polish teammate who were trapped on nearby Nanga Parbat. a. Charge d'Affaires i. Mr. M. Amjaz Aziz Qazi held a meeting with the organizers of the festival Ms. Manon Grimwood and Mr. Cyril Salomon and said

that Pakistan welcomes tourists from across the globe to visit the country which is gifted with epic landscapes and challenging mountain tops. The organizers said that Pakistan is one of the key destinations for French mountaineers and people like to watch the breathtaking landscapes and beautiful mountains. They said these films were also shown in Switzerland, Denmark and Czech Republic as part of the same film festival. Screenings in other European countries were cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Bayern beat Sevilla to win UEFA Super Cup

DNA

BUDAPAST: Bayern Munich were taken to extra time by a durable and resilient Sevilla in front 15,180 fans in Budapest before adding the Uefa Super Cup to their Champions League trophy. The showpiece was watched by supporters inside the 67,000-capacity Puskas Arena, the first major European match to allow fans since the coronavirus pandemic forced the game into lockdown. And they witnessed a hard-fought encounter which saw Sevilla take the lead from the penalty spot on 13 minutes when Lucas Ocampos scored an outrageous "no look" penalty after Ivan Rakitic was bundled over by David Alaba. Bayern equalised before the break, Leon Goretzka scoring from Robert Lewandowski's superb touch, with both sides having opportunities to win after the break. Lewandowski and Leroy Sane saw goals chalked off for Bayern but the biggest chance fell to Sevilla substitute Youssef En-Nesyri in the closing moments, seeing his shot touched away by Manuel Neuer with only the keeper to beat. Bayern, who last lost in December 2019, clinched victory with substitute Javi Martinez's 104th-minute header after Sevilla keeper Yassine Bounou could only push out Alaba's shot. Bayern Munich had to dig deep for victory but there is a fierce conviction in Hansi Flick's side that made this win almost inevitable, despite another mammoth effort from Sevilla, who had that great chance late on through En-Nesyri.

4 injured in Paris knife attack

DNA

PARIS: Four people were injured Friday in a knife attack near the former headquarters of satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo in Paris. Two of the victims are in a state of "absolute urgency," according to statements by the police on twitter. Reports indicate that the injuries were possibly made by a machete or an ax. One suspect has been arrested in the Place de la Bastille square, less than a mile from the Charlie Hebdo building, while two assailants remain on the run. Police also established a security perimeter around the magazine's former offices after a suspicious package was found in its vicinity. A police search continues in the area of the nearby Boulevard Richard Lenoir. Law enforcement has warned the public to avoid the area.

Venezuela blasts Canada for legitimizing Juan Guaido

DNA

CARACAS: Venezuelan foreign minister slammed his Canadian counterpart on Thursday for reiterating support to opposition leader Juan Guaido shortly after President Nicolas Maduro's address to the UN General Assembly. "The people of Canada deserve a sovereign foreign policy, not a government subordinated to the interests of [US President] Donald Trump, which supports imposing illegal 'sanctions', generating needs and crimes against humanity against the Venezuelan people," Jorge Arreaza said in response to comments by Canadian top diplomat Francois-Philippe Champagne, quoting his tweet. Champagne tweeted Wednesday: "People of #Venezuela deserve free & fair elections. Canada continues to support the people of #Venezuela & Interim President @jguaido in their fight to restore #democracy." Maduro and Guaido each gave speeches to the Assembly. The self-proclaimed interim president was recognized by more than 50 countries as they are engaged in a power struggle for almost two years. UN member states predominantly recognize Maduro as the legitimate leader of the South American country. Maduro in his long speech invited international observers to witness and verify the legitimacy of the Dec. 6 parliamentary elections.

Briefs

Facebook suspends fake Russian accounts

DNA

NEW YORK: Facebook has said it dismantled three networks of fake accounts which could be used by Russia's intelligence services to leak hacked documents as part of efforts to disrupt the upcoming US election.

The company said on Thursday that the accounts, which it suspended for using fake identities and other types of "coordinated inauthentic behaviour", were linked to Russian intelligence and people associated with a St Petersburg-based organisation accused by US officials of working to sway the 2016 presidential vote.

The Russian foreign ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Moscow has repeatedly denied allegations of election meddling and said it does not interfere in the domestic politics of other countries. Nathaniel Gleicher, Facebook's head of cybersecurity policy, said there was no immediate evidence that hacked documents were about to be leaked, but by suspending the accounts, Facebook hoped to prevent them being used in any subsequent operation. "Our team watches for the threats and trends that we need to be ready for and one that we are very aware of ... is a hack-and-leak operation, particularly in the next 6-8 weeks," he told Reuters News Agency.

Record COVID-19 cases in France, UK

DNA

LONDON: The United Kingdom and France logged record daily jumps in coronavirus cases on Thursday, with hospitals in Paris, planning for fewer surgeries in "a race against the clock" amid mounting fears over a possible influx of COVID-19 patients. Meanwhile, health authorities in Spain warned of "tough weeks ahead" for the residents of Madrid as the country's COVID-19 infections topped 700,000 following a surge in cases in the capital region. The resurgence of cases in the UK, France and Spain come as Europe braces for a second wave of coronavirus infections, partly due to the relaxing of virus-related curbs during the summer.

In the UK, health authorities recorded 6,632 infections on Thursday - the country's highest in a single day since the beginning of the pandemic. The figure took the UK's total to more than 418,000 cases. Yvonne Doyle, medical director of Public Health England, said the new cases were a "stark warning for us all" and urged the public to download the government's contact-tracing app and follow new restrictions to control the spread of the virus. "The signals are clear. Positivity rates are rising across all age groups and we're continuing to see spikes in rates of admission to hospital and critical care."

Ashgabat hosts People's Council of Turkmenistan meeting

DNA

ASHGABAT: Turkmenistan on Friday hosted via a videoconference meeting of the People's Council of Turkmenistan, the highest nationwide assembly of the Central Asian country.

Chaired by President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, the meeting based in the capital city Ashgabat was attended virtually by council members throughout the country, senior governmental officials, members of public organizations, students, and representatives of the mass media.

Berdimuhamedov said as the result of hard work done in Turkmenistan, world-class social conditions were created for the nation, adding that these achievements were attained due to the friendship, sweat, and high spirituality of the people. He also signed a law during the council meetings on amendments and additions to the nation's Constitution.



LONDON: Sahibzada Jahangir, Spokesperson of Prime Minister on Trade and Investment in UK and Europe, in a meeting with High Commissioner of Pakistan to the UK, Moazzam Ahmad Khan. - DNA

Indian farmers block roads, railways over farm bills

Opposition parties and trade unions across several Indian states, including Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Odisha and Karnataka, have voiced support for farmers as protests mount against the new laws passed earlier this week.

DNA

NEW DELHI: Farmers in India blocked roads and railway tracks on Friday in a protest against new legislation that they say could pave the way for the government to stop buying grain at guaranteed prices, leaving them at the mercy of private buyers. Large protests have been organised in Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh the main food-growing states in the country.

As part of a nationwide shutdown called by India's leading farmers' organisations, grow-

ers held demonstrations in many parts of the country and blocked highways leading to New Delhi using trucks, tractors and combine harvesters. Opposition parties and trade unions across several Indian states, including Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Odisha and Karnataka, have voiced support for farmers as protests mount against the new laws passed earlier this week. Authorities on Friday had to cancel several train services on some routes, as farmers started blocking highways and railway tracks. Farmers' bodies also or-

ganised protests in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state of Gujarat in western India. Modi's government has defended the bills - recently approved by parliament - as reform measures that will help rid India's vast agriculture sector of antiquated laws and allow farmers to sell to institutional buyers and big retailers like Walmart. "For decades, the Indian farmer was bound by various constraints and bullied by middlemen. The bills passed by Parliament liberate the farmers from such adversities," he said in a Twitter post.

The government has also insisted that the new rules give farmers the option to sell their produce to private buyers but it would still buy staples such as rice and wheat at guaranteed prices. Part of Modi's agricultural reform policy, the laws will also allow traders to stock food items. Hoarding food items to make a profit is a criminal offence in India. But such assurances have failed to mollify millions of farmers who make up an influential voting bloc in states such as Punjab and Haryana - India's northern farm belt that borders the capital, New Delhi.

Modi, who was re-elected with an overwhelming majority in 2019, now faces the biggest farmers' protest just weeks before an assembly election in Bihar, India's third-most populous state. Farmer Karam Singh accused the government of trying to make traditional wholesale markets redundant. Farm leaders say India's more than 7,000 regulated wholesale markets have played a crucial role in ensuring timely payments to growers. Singh said the new law has made nearly 85 percent of India's poor farmers, who own less than 2 hectares

(5 acres) of land, vulnerable to being shortchanged by private buyers. "The private sector will give us a good price for one or two years, but what about after that?" he asked. "The government should guarantee the private sector will give us more than the government price." The main opposition Congress party has called the bills "black law" and "pro-corporate". Its top leader Rahul Gandhi accused Modi of "making farmers 'slaves' of the capitalists...". Police in various states have beefed up security in the hope of heading off any violence, especially around New Delhi.

US: Louisville protests continue despite curfew

DNA

NEW YORK: With a curfew in place through the weekend, about a hundred protesters in violation of the rule sought refuge at the First Unitarian Church to protest over the lack of criminal charges in the police killing of Breonna Taylor. More than 1,000 people have defied a second night of curfew in the US city of Louisville to protest over the lack of criminal charges in the police killing of Breonna Taylor, with some seeking refuge in a church.

Two officers were shot during clashes in Louisville a day earlier, after authorities announced a grand jury had decided not to charge anyone in connection with the death of Taylor - a 26-year-old black woman shot dead in her apartment by police earlier this year. "Until we afford Black people the basic rights promised by our founders - life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness - and end the rampage of

the devil of racism, we will know no peace," her family's lawyer Ben Crump said in an opinion piece in The Washington Post. Over a thousand people protested Thursday evening in the city centre, much of which was closed to traffic, with several shops boarded up in anticipation of more violence. "No way can we be peaceful any longer," said Michael Pyles, a 29-year-old black man who said he has been protesting for 120 days, and had a

9mm handgun on his hip. "We're out here to protect our people and the people who support us," he said. "We are under attack." Grace Pennix, 19, who is also African American, said she can't help but place herself in Taylor's shoes. "I often be passing by my front door and thinking, dang, the police could be coming at my door and shoot me and kill me just like they did with Breonna. "It could be me, my friend, cousin, aunt, mom," she said.

Kim apologises for killing of S Korean official



DNA

PYONGYANG: North Korea's leader Kim Jong-un has issued a rare personal apology for the killing of a South Korean official, Seoul says. Mr Kim reportedly told his South Korean counterpart Moon Jae-in that the "disgraceful affair" should not have happened. South Korea has said the 47-year-old man was found by troops floating in the North's waters. He was then shot dead and his body was set afloat, according to Seoul. The killing - the first of a South Korean citizen by North Korean forces for a decade - has caused outrage in the South. The border between the Koreas is tightly policed, and the North is thought to have a "shoot-to-kill" policy in place to prevent coronavirus from entering the country. The apology came in the form of a letter sent to President Moon which acknowledged that the incident should not have happened, according to South Korea's presidential office, also known as the Blue House. Mr Kim called it a "disgraceful affair" and said he felt "very sorry" for "disappointing" Mr Moon

and the South Korean people, the Blue House said. It is the North's first official comment on the incident. The North also gave the South the results of its investigation - it said more than 10 shots were fired at the man, who had entered North Korean waters and then failed to reveal his identity and tried to flee, South Korea's director of national security Suh Hoon said. However the North insisted that it had not burned the man's body but rather the "floating material" that was carrying him. "The troops could not locate the unidentified trespasser during a search after firing the shots, and burned the device under national emergency disease prevention measures," Mr Suh told a briefing, referring to the North Korean account. The presidential office in Seoul has also decided to release recent letters between the two leaders. In them Kim Jong-un said he understood "more than anyone the kind of pressure and hardship" required to overcome the coronavirus pandemic and damage from recent typhoons. It was the "heartfelt truth" that he shared the "pain and suffering of the Southern people", he said.

GNA head says fragile Libya peace at risk

DNA

TRIPOLI: The head of Libya's internationally recognised government has called on rival forces to lay down their weapons, warning that they risked compromising a fragile ceasefire in the war-ravaged country. In a video address to the annual United Nations General Assembly on Thursday, Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj welcomed commitments by political leaders in eastern Libya to stop violence and resume oil production. "However, we have not yet seen cooperation from armed groups and the aggressive militias," he said. "In fact, we have only seen hostile remarks from their spokesmen and violations by their forces," added al-Sarraj, who heads the Government of National Accord (GNA).



"Therefore, we would hold them responsible for any military confrontations and any resulting casualties and destruction." Al-Sarraj delivered his pre-recorded remarks to the world body's first-ever virtual general assembly from Tripoli, the seat of the GNA. Al-Sarraj has headed the GNA since its formation in late 2015 as a result of a UN-brokered political agreement aimed at uniting and stabilising Libya after the turmoil that followed the toppling of longtime leader Muammar Gaddafi in 2011.

Turkish military support for the GNA in June allowed it to repel a 14-month offensive by forces loyal to eastern-based renegade military commander Khalifa Haftar, who is supported by the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Russia. Al-Sarraj slammed Haftar's attempt to take over the capital, calling it a "tyrannical attack" that risked returning the country to dictatorship. Still, he welcomed political dialogue with all factions and regions of Libya, except those who have "spilled Libyan blood". The GNA and a parliament in the eastern city of Tobruk loosely allied with Haftar last month agreed on a ceasefire and elections by March next year. After recent talks between the two sides in Morocco, al-Sarraj said he was willing to step down as a new government comes together.

Turkey orders dozens of arrests

DNA

ANKARA: Authorities in Turkey have issued arrest warrants for 82 people, including an opposition party mayor, over protests six years ago. The warrants relate to October 2014 protests in Turkey sparked by the seizure of the mainly Kurdish Syrian town of Kobane by the ISIL (or ISIS) armed group. Ankara accused officials of the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) of urging people to take part in the protests across Turkey that left 37 dead. The HDP blamed Turkish police for the violence. In a statement on Friday, the Ankara chief public prosecutor's office said police were on the hunt for the suspects in the Turkish capital and six other provinces. "The Ankara Prosecutor's Terror Crimes Investigation Bureau has launched an investigation on the PKK terrorist organisation and its so-called executives, as well as certain political party executives and members ... and, at the current stage, ordered the detention of 82 suspects," the office said. The government accuses the HDP of having links to the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The HDP denies the links. The prosecutor's office did not specify what offences the suspects were alleged to have committed. However, it said crimes committed during the protests included murder, attempted murder, theft, damaging property, looting, burning the Turkish flag and injuring 326 security officials and 435 citizens.

'Floods-hit Sudan facing unprecedented challenges'

DNA

KHURTOM: Humanitarian workers in disaster-hit Sudan are in danger of running out of funds to continue operations, the United Nations has said, warning that heavy rain and flooding were continuing to pose "unprecedented challenges" for thousands of

vulnerable families across the country. Flooding and landslides triggered by torrential downpours have affected nearly 830,000 people, destroyed hundreds of thousands of homes and damaged large tracts of farmland just before harvest, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Sudan said on Thursday.

Yet, the "funding to respond is extremely low", it said. Sudan - which is battling multiple crises, including armed conflict and outbreaks of COVID-19 and polio - only received 15 percent of the \$110m required for healthcare needs, OCHA said in a statement, and only 22 percent of the \$71.6m requested for water and hygiene needs.

Cameroon: NGOs call for urgent humanitarian response

DNA

YAOUNDE: Several international NGOs on Thursday called for an immediate scale-up of the humanitarian response to address soaring needs in the Cameroon's Far North Region. According to a statement signed by several organizations, three suicide attacks took place between Aug. 1 and Sept. 14 in camps and localities hosting internally displaced people. Thirty civilians were killed and more than 40 injured in the attacks, it said. "These attacks are part of a significant increase in violent incidents in Cameroon's Far North Region, in recent months," the statement added. "Survivors are forced to flee, leaving everything they own behind to save their lives. Most of them have no place to sleep and almost no access to water and health care," said Fabienne Mially, from Premiere Urgence Internationale, lead of the Rapid Response Mechanism in the region. "It is unacceptable that people who went through so much violence and despair are not receiving the support they need," Mially said.

Vatican official resigns after scam

DNA

VATICAN CITY: Embroiled in a controversial property deal, Cardinal Giovanni Angelo Becciu, a senior Vatican official, resigned unexpectedly on Friday, the Holy See said. Cardinal Becciu was involved in a deal to buy a luxury London property with church funds, apparently as an investment. The highly controversial deal was subsequently the subject of a financial investigation. The cardinal has denied any wrongdoing. A statement from the Holy See said: "The Holy Father accepted the resignation from the office of Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints and from the rights connected to the Cardinalate, presented by His Eminence Cardinal Giovanni Angelo Becciu." Cardinal Becciu was previously the Substitute for General Affairs - the second most senior official - in the Vatican's powerful Secretariat of State for six years. In this position, he met with the Pope daily and was one of his most trusted aides.

Libya: 13 people drown in migrant shipwreck off

DNA

TRIPOLI: Over a dozen migrants trying to reach Europe drowned in the Mediterranean Sea when their small dinghy capsized off the coast of Libya, the United Nations reported Friday, the latest shipwreck to underscore the deadly risks facing those who flee the war-ravaged North African country. Libyan fishermen spotted the sinking boat late Thursday, said the International Organization for Migration, and managed to pull 22 people from the water, including those from Egypt, Bangladesh, Syria, Somalia and Ghana. But at least 13 of the other passengers were missing and presumed drowned. Three dead bodies were found floating in the water, including one Syrian man and woman. The boat had set off from the town of Zliten, east of the Libyan capital of Tripoli, late on Wednesday. The Libyan Coast Guard said that it had ordered the rescue, and that search teams were scouring the area for more victims. "So many boats are leaving these days, but autumn is a very difficult season," said Commodore Masoud Abdal Samad. "When it gets windy, it's deadly. It changes in an instant."

Police officer shot dead at Custody Centre

DNA

LONDON: A police officer has been shot dead at Croydon Custody Centre in south London. The male officer was shot five times when a man, who was being detained, produced a weapon during a search. The suspect then turned the gun on himself. The officer was treated at the scene overnight

and died in hospital. A 23-year-old man is in a critical condition after being treated for gunshot wounds. Prime Minister Boris Johnson said "We owe a huge debt to those who risk their own lives to keep us safe." In a post on social media he also said: "My deepest condolences go to the family, friends and colleagues of the police officer who was killed

in Croydon last night." The suspect has been arrested on suspicion of murdering the officer, who is believed to have been a few weeks away from retirement. No police firearms were discharged during the incident at about 02:15 BST at the Windmill Road centre, the Met Police said. The officer's family are being supported by specialist officers.

Briefs

Probe restarted in PTI foreign funding case

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: The scrutiny committee of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Thursday started the investigations into PTI's foreign funding case afresh after an initial report submitted by the panel on August 17 was rejected for being incomplete and not in detail. It was rare that the scrutiny report was prepared after over 70 meetings and two and half years of the committee deliberations that was initially mandated to complete scrutiny in one month, according to a report published in media. PTI foreign funding case is pending since November 2014, witnessing various hiccups. However, even today, it is hard to speculate as to when it will be decided, the publication reported. Sources told the publication that in the meeting, the scrutiny committee restarted from scratches by seeking to verify the evidence submitted by the petitioner that includes evidence on illegal funding, money laundering, concealment of bank accounts, and receiving funds in private bank accounts of PTI employees.

Pakistani Hindus protest outside Indian embassy

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Members of Hindu community from across the country are holding sit-in in front of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad to protest against mysterious death of eleven Pakistani Hindus in Jodhpur, India, last month. A large number of Hindus, led by MNA and Patron-in-Chief Pakistan Hindu Council Dr Ramesh Kumar, reached Islamabad late Thursday night from Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and various other parts of the country in a caravan. Minister for Science and Technology Fawad Hussain also visited the sit-in Friday afternoon to express solidarity with the participants. Talking to media on the occasion, he said the government will fully back Hindu community of Pakistan in their demand for transparent investigation into Jodhpur incident. The Minister said Modi's government converted India into a fascist state, which is threat for its neighboring countries indulging Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and China.

Pakistani enterprises participate in China Textile Exhibition

The organizer said that under the premise of ensuring the perfect epidemic prevention measures, the scale of the exhibition was not degraded. "We provide one negotiation space for exhibitors, and enterprises can also communicate in the booth."

DNA

BEIJING: China Textile Joint Exhibition was held by China National Textile and Apparel Council (CNTAC) in Shanghai National Exhibition and Convention Center (NECC-Shanghai), providing an attractive environment for revival of textile industry, following the outbreak of COVID-19. Several Pakistani textile enterprises also took part in this event to display products made in Pakistan such as cotton yarn, socks,

hats and so on. According to Gwadar Pro on Friday, the China Textile Joint Exhibition, held on September 23rd -25th was having four sub-exhibitions, attracted exhibitors from Pakistan, Austria, South Korea, France, Germany, Italy and other countries. A total of 4,500 exhibitors participated in the joint exhibition, with an exhibition area of 300,000 square meters. The organizer said that under the premise of ensuring the perfect epidemic prevention measures,

the scale of the exhibition was not degraded. "We provide one-to-one negotiation space for exhibitors, and enterprises can also communicate in the booth." This joint exhibition provides a platform for exhibitors to negotiate, it also promotes the economic recovery in textile sector. The organizer said that the textile industry has been hit hard by the epidemic. "As the half-year quarantine at home, consumers have formed the habit of buying textiles online. However, due to the particularity of textile

industry, it is difficult for online transactions to let buyers know the texture of the fabric. Therefore, inter-enterprise transactions require a lot of comparison and contact purchase." Ather Iqbal, a Pakistani exhibitor said, "we have been working with China for ten years. China's textile technology is far ahead, the quality of products is excellent, and the prices are reasonable. Meanwhile, the textile market in China is also massive." "Under CPEC, both Pakistani and Chinese governments have implemented many favorable

policies, such as tariffs and trade procedures, which have greatly increased our enthusiasm for cooperation," he added. "COVID-19 epidemic in China has been very efficiently controlled and the measures to ensure the operation of economy have been well developed, so our cooperation with Chinese textile enterprises has not been greatly affected by the pandemic. In the future, we will further strengthen our cooperation with Chinese enterprises and expand our textile trade with them," Iqbal said.

World Bank approves \$450m for Pakistan

DNA

PESHAWAR: The World Bank has approved \$450 million for Pakistan, which will be spent on hydropower and renewable energy projects in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Bank says that by working on these projects, the cost of power generation will be reduced and reliance on expensive imported fuel will also be curtailed. The funds were approved by the WB Board of Directors in Washington. WB Country Director for Pakistan Najib Benhassine said that KP will invest in hydropower and solar projects, which will help Pakistan become a low-carbon economy.

Abbas asks UN for Mideast conference next year

"It should aim to end the occupation and grant the Palestinian people their freedom and independence in their own state along the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital and settle final-status issues, notably the refugee question," he said

DNA

RAMALLAH: Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas appealed on Friday to the United Nations to arrange an international conference on the peace process, in the wake of Gulf Arab recognition of Israel. In an address to the UN General Assembly, Abbas asked Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to convene the meeting "early next year" and bring in "all relevant parties". "The conference should have full authority to launch a genuine peace process based on international law," Abbas told the virtual General Assembly in a recorded address. "It should aim to end the occupation and grant the Palestinian people their freedom and independence in their own state along the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its cap-



ital and settle final-status issues, notably the refugee question," he said. Abbas made his appeal amid concerns among Palestinians of dwindling support in the Arab world for their decades-long campaign for an

independent state. The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain earlier this month agreed to recognise Israel, a major coup for the Jewish state and diplomatic win for United States President Donald Trump. The two Arab states, while saying they still support a Palestinian state, share concerns of Israel and the US about neighbouring Iran. "It is delusional to think that the Palestinian people could be sidelined," Abbas said, and added: "You should all know that there can be no peace, no security, no stability or coexistence in our region without an end to the occupation and without a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian question." The Palestinian Authority has refused diplomatic efforts by the Trump administration, saying it is biased toward Israel.

Turkish delegation calls on Admin Karachi

DNA

KARACHI: Turkish delegation on Friday called on Administrator Karachi Iftikhar Ali Shallwani at Karachi Metropolitan Corporation building. The delegation comprising Dursun Ali, Bayron Ali, Muhammad Suleman and others. Speaking on the occasion, Shallwani said that Karachi offers plenty of opportunities especially in the development sector. Karachi faces challenges water scarcity, lack of transport and collapsed sewerage system and we have to learn from Turkey's experience and expertise to overcome these issues. The Administrator said that last week Turkish Counsel General came to KMC and tender support for tram service in Karachi, adding that they welcomed the Counsel General offer. He also invited Turkish construction sector work in Pakistan particularly Karachi.

Pak-SiChuan Chamber of Commerce established in Chengdu, China

BEIJING: Pakistan-SiChuan Chamber of Commerce was established in Chengdu, China to promote bilateral trade and open avenues of socio-economic partnership. It's inaugural meeting was held in Chengdu, on Friday. According to Gwadar Pro, the PSCC was initiated by Sichuan enterprises invested in Pakistan. The chamber has been approved by China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and supported by The China Department of Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It set up a secretariat in Islamabad and a representative office in Chengdu, China. The PSCC will provide both Pakistani and Chinese enterprises a platform for resource sharing, service convergence, project alignment and advantage display. Muhammad Mudassir Tipu, the director general (China), the former Consul General of Pakistan in Chengdu, and the speaker at the World Economic Forum, delivered a speech at the meeting that CPEC is fruitful and the friendship between the two countries is unbreakable. In the future, Southwest China, represented by Sichuan Province, will play an important role in the CPEC. "Sichuan province, in fact, the southwest of China is critically important region for Pakistan and CPEC," Tipu said, "a lot of economic opportunities are being created between the southwest of China and the northeast of Pakistan. For example, two mega projects have been brought into CPEC in this region, Azad Patten Project and Kohala Power Project." "Including energy projects, a lot of infrastructure projects under CPEC has been completed. Now, CPEC is coming to its second phase which is focused on industrial and socio-economic development. We have identified nine special economic zones which will attract a lot of investment to Pakistan," he added. "The CPEC Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) meeting to be held in October or November this year will also be a key element to further deepen bilateral cooperation." - DNA

UN agency advises Pakistan to suspend new pilot licences

DNA

MONTREAL: The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has advised Pakistan to undertake "immediate corrective actions" and suspend the issuance of any new pilot licences in the wake of a scandal over falsified licenses, according to an official and a document seen by Reuters. The recommendations from ICAO, a specialised agency of the United Nations that works to ensure safety in

international air transport, come days after a criminal probe was opened into 50 pilots and five civil aviation officials who allegedly helped them falsify credentials to secure pilot licences. "Pakistan should improve and strengthen its licensing system to ensure that it takes into account all necessary processes and procedures and prevents inconsistencies and malpractices before new licences are issued and privileges of suspended licences are re-established," said ICAO.

National Newspaper Readership Day observed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Newspaper Readership Day was observed on Friday. In his message, President Dr. Arif Alvi highlighted its importance by saying, "Despite the growth of electronic and digital media, newspapers still play a significant role in creating awareness and educating the people about various economic and social issues. Similarly, the Prime Minister also expressed his support towards the day and congratulated the APNS for such a step.

Pakistanis can now travel to Saudi Arabia without any restrictions: Foreign Office

FIAZ CHAUDHRY

ISLAMABAD: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia lifted travel restrictions imposed on Pakistanis, allowing passengers from the country to travel to the kingdom on iqama or a visit visa. This was revealed by the spokesperson of the foreign office, who said that it will be mandatory for persons to take a PCR test in Saudi Arabia after they arrived in the country. "The PCR test will have to

be undertaken within 48 hours of arriving in Saudi Arabia," he said, clarifying that Saudi Arabia had not imposed any special travelling restrictions on Pakistanis. "Pakistanis can travel to Saudi Arabia with ease without any restrictions," he said. Saudi Arabia had imposed a travel ban on European, African and Asian countries such as Switzerland, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Sudan, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Eritrea, Kenya, Djibouti, and Somalia.

The ban had been imposed after the number of COVID-19 cases in the kingdom had jumped to 45. The development comes a day after the Saudi government on Thursday granted special permission to Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) to operate 21 additional flights - on weekly basis - between the two countries. According to the spokesperson of the national carrier, PIA had requested the Saudi authorities to allow additional flights, keeping in view the urgent need of

many of the Pakistanis to reach Saudi Arabia for the renewal of their Iqamas. He said with an increase in the number of flights PIA will be able to transport 25,500 passengers from Pakistan before the 30th of this month - which is the deadline for many ensuring their presence in the kingdom. On Wednesday, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistanis, Sayed Zulfiqar Abbas Bukhari had asked Saudi Arabia to increase flights and extend Iqama for Pakistani workers.

Senior Indian diplomat summoned

A.M. BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: A senior Indian diplomat was summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs today to register Pakistan's strong protest over ceasefire violations by the Indian occupation forces along the Line of Control (LoC) on 24th September 2020, resulting in serious injuries to two innocent civilians. Due to indiscriminate and unprovoked firing by the Indian occupation forces in Baroh Sector of the LoC, 35 year old Shakeel Ayub/s/o Muhammad Ayub and 8 year old Luqman Shakeel s/o Shakeel Ayub, residents of Baroh Village, 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 2340 ceasefire violations to date, resulting in 18 shahadats and serious

Two more Kashmiris martyred

ISLAMABAD: Indian troops in their continued state terrorism martyred two Kashmiri youth in Islamabad district, in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. According to Kashmir Media Service the youth were killed by troops during a cordon and search operation in Bijbehara area of the district. Four persons were critically injured after explosive material of Indian troops went off in Bijbehara operation site. The troops also launched cordon and search operations in Shopian, Pulwama and Budgam districts. - APP

injuries to 187 innocent civilians. Condemning the deplorable targeting of innocent civilians by the Indian occupation forces, it was underscored that such senseless acts are in clear violation of the 2003 Ceasefire Understanding, and are also against all 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.

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