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WHO chief warns against the 'herd immunity' theory

Pakistan stands firmly for Kashmir's self-determination

Maryam Nawaz predicts govt ouster before January



Briefs

Urges nation to show unity

NAVEED MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi has urged the nation to demonstrate unity in dealing with newly faced challenges like hybrid war to destabilize the country through religious fragmentation. In an interview with a private news channel, he said India, having a history of hatching conspiracies against Pakistan and being perturbed by its economic achievements, is trying to destabilize the country through various means, including the attempts to create religious disharmony. The President said the political forces in Pakistan should also realize the fact, get united for the country's sake.

Centre not fulfilling duties

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan Gulzar Ahmed on Tuesday took authorities, in particular the federal government, to task for excessive power load-shedding in Sindh, observing that the "federation was not fulfilling its responsibility". Justice Ahmed was heading a three-judge bench hearing a suo motu case regarding unannounced electricity load-shedding in the province. Rejecting as unsatisfactory the reports presented by the federal government and the National Electric and Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) explaining the issue, the apex court asked for new reports at the next hearing scheduled for November.

Maryam predicts govt ouster before January

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: PML-N vice president Maryam Nawaz says the government can't win war against the masses as people are standing by Nawaz Sharif and soon they will get rid of this 'incompetent and incapable prime minister' following the protest drive. She told a private TV channel that the Imran Khan's government would be sent packing before January following Pakistan Democratic Movement's protest campaign.

Food prices to come down drastically

Shibli Faraz welcomes decision of the Sindh Government to release wheat as the step will help control prices of the vital staple food of the people

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Syed Shibli Faraz has said the government has evolved a comprehensive mechanism to bring down prices of essential commodities and ensure their sufficient availability across Pakistan. Briefing media in Islamabad on Tuesday about the decisions taken in today's meeting of the federal cabinet, he said that this issue will

be resolved soon. Shibli Faraz said sufficient stock of wheat is present in the country to meet requirements of the people whereas public and private sectors had been allowed to import the commodity and sufficient stock has arrived in the country and more is coming. He welcomed recent decision of the Sindh Government to release wheat as the step will help control prices of the vital staple food of the people. Rejecting the impression that Pakistan International

Airline's Roosevelt Hotel in New York has been sold out, the Minister said Pakistan has paid the liabilities of the hotel worth 1,28,000 US dollars and acquired it full ownership. He said the cabinet was informed that PIA has successfully increased its revenue. Replying to a question, the Minister said Tiger Force comprises volunteers who play their role in times of need. He regretted opposition's criticism on the Tiger Force. *Continued on Page 06*

Pak, EU desire to meet trade potential

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Our agro economy development is reasonable but we could have done better, primarily through research and transfer of technology. This was said by Federal Minister of National Food Security and Research (NFSR), Syed Fakhar Imam while meeting Ambassador Of European Union (EU), Androulla Kaminara on Tuesday. Federal Minister briefed the Ambassador about major crops of the country. Federal Minister also apprised about the menace of the desert locust has now been completely brought under control in the country and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) assisted Pakistan a lot in anti locust operations. He appreciated the EU ag-



riculture policy which benefits the farmers to the scale that is exemplary. He added that Pakistan is focusing on developing phyto sanitary systems. He said that fruits and vegetables worth 700mn USD are exported by Pakistan. Syed Fakhar Imam said that Pakistan has large live stock sector but foot and mouth disease has handicapped us. A facility is being developed in Bahawal pur for develop-

ing vaccine for this disease. He added that Cotton is one of the major crops of the country and Pakistan needs a breakthrough in cotton sector. He admired floriculture of Netherlands and showed interest in developing a niche market for Floriculture in Pakistan. On the other hand Androulla Kaminara briefed about Balochistan Rural Development and *Continued on Page 06*



ISLAMABAD: British Ambassador Christian Turner calls on Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi. – DNA

PM to inaugurate Tiger Force portal

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan will inaugurate Tiger Force portal on upcoming Saturday to provide an opportunity to the youth to play its role in price control of essential items and improving governance. This was stated by Prime Minister's Special Assistant on Youth Affairs Usman Dar, while talking to media in Islamabad on Tuesday. He said test run of the portal has already begun and so far 1,72,000 volunteers from across Pakistan have been registered with the platform. Usman Dar said that the Tiger Force has played a tremendous role in government's efforts to prevent spread of Coronavirus and it is unfortunate that opposition is unnecessarily criticizing the TF.

US man first person to get re-infected

NEWS DESK

NEW YORK: A 25-year-old man in Nevada, US became the first person in the country to contract the novel coronavirus for a second time, falling seriously ill due to the infection. A study in the Lancet Infectious Diseases journal stated that the man was the fifth known patient of the novel coronavirus who suffered from the infection for second time, and the first such patient in the US. The man, who was a resident of Washoe County, had to be hospitalised when he was reinfected with the disease. He had no history of underlying problems or serious diseases. According to US media reports, the man recovered for the second time from the coronavirus but his case raises serious questions on developing protective immunity against the infection.

FM for enhanced trade ties with UK

The British High Commissioner, during a meeting with foreign minister commended Pakistan's conciliatory efforts for peace in Afghanistan

NIHAL MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi has said Pakistan is desirous to further promote trade partnership with the UK. He was talking to the British High Commissioner Dr Christian Turner in Islamabad on Tuesday. Shah Mehmood Qureshi said Pakistan and Britain enjoy deep and longstanding bilateral relations. Alluding to the Indian atrocities in illegally occupied Jammu and

Kashmir, the Foreign Minister urged the international community to play its role for the resolution of Kashmir dispute as per the UN Security Council resolutions. The British High Commissioner commended Pakistan's conciliatory efforts for peace in Afghanistan. He was also appreciative of Pakistan's strategy against Covid-19. The two sides also held discussion for promotion of cooperation in the areas of climate change, education and tourism. Earlier on Monday, Dr

Christian Turner called on Prime Minister's Advisor on Accountability and Interior Barrister Mirza Shahzad Akbar in his office. The advisor welcomed the high commissioner and discussed the matters of mutual interest regarding interior affairs in the meeting. During the meeting Extradition Treaty and Readmission Agreement between United Kingdom (UK) and Pakistan were discussed in detail and both agreed to increase cooperation in order to finalize these agreements.

Pakistan issues over 2,000 visas to Afghan citizens

The move is part of Islamabad's new policy to improve its relations with the western neighbor

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's embassy in Kabul issued over 2,000 visas in a single day on Oct. 12, following the government's decision to facilitate Afghan citizens, an official said on Tuesday. The move is part of Islamabad's new policy to improve its relations with the western neighbor following its globally appreciated role in the Afghan peace process to end the nearly two-decade long war in Afghanistan. "Yesterday, 12 October, Pakistan Embassy in Kabul issued 2059 visas to Afghan nationals. We are working to further facilitate visa applicants," Mansoor Ahmad Khan, Pakistan's ambassador to Kabul, tweeted. He announced that his country's consulates in Afghanistan will continue issuing visas to Afghan citizens.

On Sept. 29, Pakistan's federal cabinet approved a new visa policy for Afghanistan to issue multiple entry visit visas to facilitate Afghan traders and citizens. "The cabinet has approved a new visa policy for Afghan citizens. Acquiring visas will be easy for Afghan visitors with multiple entry visit visas and long-term business, investment and student visas. A new category of health visa is also introduced which will be issued on border," Pakistan special representative for Afghanistan, Mohammad Sadiq, said after the decision. The slow pace of the talks has raised concerns of the major stakeholders at a time when there is a spike in violence in Afghanistan. Sadiq tweeted on Tuesday that he held a virtual conference with Khalilzad on further facilitation of Intra-Afghan Negotiations.

Confiscation of Nawaz' assets by October 29

ISLAMABAD: An Accountability Court (AC) on Tuesday ordered National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to ensure implementation of court directives pertaining to confiscation of Nawaz Sharif's assets in Toshakhana reference till October 29. The investigation officer of NAB informed the court that the confiscation of Nawaz Sharif's property, shares in private companies and freezing his bank accounts was underway in compliance of the court's orders. The NAB had sent letters to Security Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) and concerned banks in this regard. AC-III Judge Syed Asghar Ali conducted hearing on the case. The court adjourned the matter against former president Asif Ali Zardari and ex-prime minister Yousaf Raza Gilani without further proceeding due to absence of defense lawyers in line of bar's strike. The court also granted one-day exemption from hearing to Asif Zardari, Yousaf Raza Gilani and Omni Group's head Anwar Majeed. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Dr. Fouzia Saeed, Director General PNCA, Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada in a group photo with winners of painting competitions. Ms. Hafsa Iqbal got first position. (More coverage in tomorrow's newspaper). – DNA

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China accuses US of 'stirring up confrontation' in Asia-Pacific – Page 07

Pakistan stands firmly for Kashmir's RSD – Page 08

Indonesia to host Trade Expo 2020 virtually

DNA

KARACHI: The Government of Indonesia is once again hosting its biggest annual international business exhibition, the Trade Expo Indonesia (TEI) on 10 - 16 November 2020. The 35th TEI will now be held virtually, and can be participated by visitors from around the world, including Pakistan. For the past few years, Indonesia has achieved positive trend of export growth in a variety of products and services on the global market. In order to maintain and improve Indonesia's trade performance, the Government of Indonesia has been pro-

active in inviting and bringing in buyers and investors for a direct deal with Indonesian providers of export products and services at this annual trade show. To accommodate the current global situation, the format of this year's exhibition has been changed into Trade Expo Indonesia - Virtual Exhibition (TEI-VE). TEI-VE is an international B2B-focused tradeshow that is designed to boost export growth and market expansion. The 35th TEI-VE in 2020 brings up the theme "Sustainable Trade in The Digital Era" to promote quality products made in Indonesia via virtual exhibition platforms for the

global market, develop business networks, investment and present showcases of Indonesian premium and best products. Along with the exhibition, TEI-VE also presents a series of side events such as Trade, Tourism and Investment (TTI) Forum, Business Matching, Business Counseling and Regional Discussions. The Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in Karachi, invites all members of Pakistan-based Chamber of Commerce, Associations, as well as private business communities to participate in TEI-VE 2020 by scanning the QR code below, visiting this link, or fill out the offline form attached.

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



Briefs

Multan: 11 profiteers held

DNA

MULTAN: As many as eleven profiteers were arrested with fine worth Rs. 211,000 collectively imposed on them after crackdown held in past twenty four hours in different parts of the city, official sources revealed Tuesday. Checking drive led by Secretary RTA Ahmad Raza Khan was initiated at Gulghast area. Similarly Special Price Magistrate Naem Chungazi reviewed prices of edible food items at Makhdoom Rashid Road, while a team led by Special Magistrate Malik Numan held surprise visit to Gulshan Market, Sameejabad, Wapda Town and Mubeen Market. Those who were fined included Latif Store, Al Ayub Poultry Shop and others. Strict warnings were also issued to all of the concerned departmental and general stores.

Country records 530 more corona cases

ISLAMABAD: The total active COVID-19 cases in Pakistan on Tuesday were recorded 8,651 as 530 more people tested positive for the deadly virus during the last 24 hours. Eight corona patients, 07 of whom were under treatment died in hospital and one died out of hospital on Monday, according to the latest update issued by the National Command and Operation Centre (NCCO). No COVID affected person was on ventilator in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Balochistan, while 80 ventilators elsewhere in Pakistan, out of 1,884 allocated for COVID-19 patients, were occupied. Some 30,022 tests were conducted across the country on Monday, including 10,241 in Sindh, 10,453 in Punjab, 3,249 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), 4,523 in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), 1024 in Balochistan, 302 in Gilgit Baltistan (GB), and 230 in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). Around 304,609 people have recovered from the disease so far across Pakistan making it a significant count with over 90 percent recovery ratio of the affected patients. Since the pandemic outbreak, a total of 319,848 cases were detected so far, including AJK 3131, Balochistan 15,541, GB 3,955, ICT 17,428, KP 38,367, Punjab 100,892 and Sindh 140,534. Around 3,914,818 tests conducted, 735 hospitals with covid facilities with 852 patients admitted across the country. About 6,588 deaths were recorded in country since the eruption of the contagion, including 2,556 Sindh one of them died in hospital on Monday, 2,264 in Punjab five of them died in hospital and one out of hospital on Monday, 1,264 in KP, 189 in ICT, 146 in Balochistan, 91 in GB and 78 in AJK. A total of 3,914,818 corona tests have been conducted so far, while 735 hospitals are equipped with COVID facilities. Some 852 corona patients were admitted in hospitals across the country. — APP

'FWCCI to prepare roadmap for enhancing women role'

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FWCCI) will prepare a roadmap for this year in order to further enhance the role and share of women in the national economy, said FWCCI president Tehmina Pasha. In a statement issued here Tuesday, she said that a five-member committee had been constituted to finalize the salient feature of roadmap in consultation with all stakeholders. She said the committee would comprise Senior Vice President Shahida Aftab, Vice President Robina Shafiq, immediate Past President Quratul Ain, Founder president Rubina Amjad, and Executive Committee Member Nimra Rahim. She further said that maximum sector specific standing committees would be constituted to facilitate the women-led businesses in the area. She said the best and collaborated efforts would be made to enhance membership to 500 during this year. She said that Women Expo-20 had also been planned in December mid this year and all renowned industries and brands would be invited to set up their stalls in the Expo. She said that FWCCI would launch training programme for access to finance in collaboration with HASHO Foundation Islamabad and in this connection MOU will also be inked very soon. — DNA

Commander Iraqi air force visits air headquarters

The Air Chief highlighted the brotherly relations and collaboration between the two sides. Both the dignitaries agreed to further augment the already existing cordial relations between the two air forces

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Major General (Pilot) Shihab Jahid Ali Shakarchi, Commander Iraqi Air Force, along with his delegation visited Air Headquarters, Islamabad today. Upon arrival, the distinguished guest was received by Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force. A smartly turned out contingent of the Pakistan Air Force presented Guard of Honour. The visiting dignitary paid homage to PAF martyrs by laying a floral wreath at Yadgari-Shuhada (martyrs' monument). The General also had a detailed meeting with Chief of the Air Staff. Both Commanders discussed various matters pertaining to security and mutual cooperation. Commander Iraqi Air Force lauded the professionalism of PAF personnel and the exceptional progress made by PAF over the years, through indigenization. The Air Chief highlighted the brotherly relations and collaboration between the two sides. Both the dignitaries agreed to further augment the already existing cordial relations between the two air forces. Later in the day, Commander Iraqi Air Force also called on General



Nadeem Raza, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, at Joint Staff Headquarters, Rawalpindi. Matters of bilateral professional interest and further strengthening of security and defence cooperation between the two countries were discussed during the meeting.

Health minister to scale up services of Sehat Insaf Card



DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Health Minister Dr Yasmin Rashid reviewed arrangements to scale up services of the Sehat Insaf Cards Programme in a meeting at Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education Department here on Tuesday. Present in the meeting were Secretary Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education Department Barrister Nabeel Awan, GM Punjab

Health Initiatives Management Company, Khurram Lodhi, Manager Hasnaat Ahmed, Deputy Manager Anas Bin Mahmood and Professor Javed Chaudhry. Specialized Healthcare & Medical Education Department Barrister Nabeel Awan shared fresh proposals as the minister reviewed progress on existing interventions to scale-up services of the Sehat Insaf Cards Programme, stated official spokesman. The

Minister said the target of Universal Health Coverage would be achieved as per vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan and hinted health coverage of over 10 million families. She said the beneficiaries of the cards would be increased to include widows, zakat beneficiaries, and deserving families of students of government schools. In the next stage, over one million government servants would be given the facility, she added. Dr Yasmin said that cardholders could avail health services from different hospitals, adding that they would be able to get treatment from cardiology institutes in Punjab also. She said the programme was being appreciated everywhere, and added that provision of health cards to people living below poverty line was high priority of Prime Minister Imran Khan.

SHC grants bail to two accused in Dr Maha case

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court (SHC) on Tuesday granted bail to two absconding accused in a case related to the death of Dr Maha Shah in Karachi's Defence Housing Authority. A two-judge SHC bench approved the bail of Junaid Khan and Waqas Hussain Rizvi subject to submission of a surety bond of Rs100,000 each. The court restrained the police from arresting them and issued a notice to the prosecution department to submit a reply by November 12. The bench directed the accused to join the trial in the case. They both had escaped from the courtroom on September 21 when a sessions court revoked their interim pre-arrest bail. Police had initially said that the doctor had allegedly committed suicide by shooting herself in her home. — DNA

UET Peshawar, P&DD sign MoU

PESHAWAR: The University of Engineering and Technology (UET) Peshawar and the Planning and Development Department (P&DD) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tuesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to cooperate in the fields of Information Technology. The Secretary, Planning and Development Hamayun Khan and Pro-Vice Chancellor UET Prof. Dr. Qaiser Ali signed the MoU which also provided for monitoring and compliance level of different departments within the policy framework. The signing ceremony was also witnessed the award of a project funded by the Governance and Policy Project of the World Bank to UET Peshawar on "Integration and standardization of Management Information Systems for Effective Public Investment Management". Addressing on this occasion Secretary Planning and Development Hamayun Khan said that P&D under

the vision of the provincial government intended to introduce standardization of management information systems for effective public investment management to utilize the public money in more transparent, efficient and intelligent manner with utmost target of people's prosperity and improvements in lives. He added that (MoU) was considered as the first step in the process of developing an agreement that enables the P&D to get benefit from the expertise of the scholars of UET Peshawar. The P&D will also support fresh graduates to be engaged as paid internship in the projects in which UET would be engaged for technical support to the Planning and Development Department, he added. Prof Dr. Qaiser Ali said, UET having foreign qualified human resource was committed to work with Government and industry under the guidelines of HEC and PEC. — APP

Food Authority seizes 700kg counterfeit tea

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Safety Authority on Tuesday seized 700 kg adulterated and hazardous tea during a raid conducted in Sheikh Abad area here. According to the authority, the adulteration mafia was busy in making counterfeit tea at the roof of two houses in Sheikh Abad area when raided. Non-food grade color was being used in production of forged tea, the authority said adding both the houses were sealed and further legal action would be initiated. Around 700 kg counterfeit tea was recovered from houses. Assistant Director, Wasif Shah, Uzair and other Food Safety officers took part in the action. The authority said that no compromise would be made on adulteration. It said the counterfeit tea was being supplied to different districts of the province. — APP

Police burn huge quantity of seized narcotics

KARAK: The district police Tuesday burnt huge quantity of confiscated narcotics under the supervision of District Police Officer and Senior Civil Judge here. The cases of the seized narcotics were already been decided in the district courts and police today disposed of 90949 kilogram hashish and 3482 kilogram heroin in a district ground. Talking to media persons on the occasion, SP Investigation Zahir Shah said that police have started indiscriminate actions on drug peddlers to achieve the dream of narcotics free society. Senior Civil Judge Fazal Wadud Jan said that court's proceedings depended on police, investigation and evidences. The performance of police department in the district was satisfactory owing to which large numbers of criminals were sentenced accordingly. — APP

ATC awards death sentence in SHO murder case

DNA

PESHAWAR: An Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) of Mardan on Tuesday awarded death sentence to a convict involved in murder of SHO Zaida police station Asghar Khan and leaving to other police officials injured during a raid in August 2016. The ATC also awarded life imprisonment to another accused for possessing hand grenade. The case was investigated by Inspector Syed Jamil Khan, tasked by the District Police Officer (DPO) Swabi and Superintendent Police (SP) Investigation. The accused Muneeb S/O Liaqat had killed Station House Officer (SHO) Muhammad Asghar Khan and injured ASI Naem Khan and constable Murtaza Khan on the evening of August 16, 2016. SHO Zaida police station, Asghar Khan along with other police officials were engaged in a search operation and during a raid on a house, accused Muneeb opened indiscriminate firing to avoid arrest. As a result Asghar Khan sustained multiple bullet wounds and later succumbed to injuries.

Police arrest 22 outlaws including 2POs

DNA

HANGU: The district police during last three days arrested 22 outlaws including two proclaimed offenders (Pos) and recovered arms and narcotics from their possession. In a statement issued here Tuesday, search and strike operations were carried out against anti-state elements in different areas on the directives of District Police Officer Hangu Shahid Ahmad Khan. During the raids the police stations of City, Doaba and Ortal arrested 22 criminals, including two proclaimed offenders wanted in murder and attempted to murder cases. One rifle, one shotgun, 160 cartridges of different bore and 680 grams of hashish have been recovered. The cases registered in relevant police stations and investigation was underway.



KARACHI: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi offering Dua after wreath laying at Mazar-e-Quaid. — Agencies

SC adjourns Railway Golf Club Implementation case

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Tuesday adjourned hearing of Railway Golf Club implementation case for one month. A three-member bench of the apex court headed by Justice Umar Ata Bandial and comprising Justice Faisal Arab and Justice Ijaz Ul Ahsan heard the case. During the course of proceedings, the court directed the Railways and former management of the golf club to provide records to Ferguson Company within a month. The court directed that all records from 2015 to 2019 should be provided within a month. The representative of Ferguson Company said that once the record was received, the audit would be completed in 5 to 6 months. The court di-

rected the Chairman Railway to prepare advertisement for bidding of lease. The text of the advertisement and pre-qualification should be verified from the Privatization Commission, the court ordered. The court instructed the present management of the railways to run the club in a better way and get more revenue. The court asked the club management to get better revenue like Gun and Country Club Islamabad. Justice Bandial said that the Gun and Country Club Islamabad had saved Rs. 300 million in the last one year. The Gun and Country Club was a smaller club than the Railway Golf Club, he added. He said that the court hoped Railway Golf Club will collect much more revenue than Gun and Country Club. Later, hearing of the case was adjourned for one month.

FPCCI signs MoU with Industries Department, PITB

Addressing the ceremony, FPCCI President Mian Anjum Nisar said that the FPCCI, ICI&SDD and PITB would cooperate in identifying and augmenting potential areas of mutual cooperation for improving business rankings, besides jointly arranging seminars and conferences regarding ease of doing business

DNA

LAHORE: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) on Tuesday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Punjab Industries, Commerce, Investment & Skill Development Department (ICI&SDD) and Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) to facilitate the business community, promoting industrial development, trade and investment in the province. According to FPCCI spokesperson, under the MoU the FPCCI, Industries Dept and PITB have agreed to establish close cooperation to facilitate in ease of doing business and advancing facilitation of trade and industry. The MoU was inked by FPCCI President Mian Anjum Nisar, Industries Department Di-

rector General Rana Abdul Shukoor and PITB Chairman Azfar Manzoor on behalf of their respective organizations. The MoU was inked in order to facilitate the business community and spread awareness regarding government business initiatives. Under the agreement, the Punjab Information Technology Board will establish facilitation desks for traders and businessmen at 26 chambers across Punjab while the FPCCI would ensure coordination with all the chambers across Punjab for the establishment of these desk at their office premises, besides ensuring deployment of a trained human resource by the respective chamber at the established desk. Addressing the ceremony, FPCCI President Mian Anjum Nisar said that the FPCCI, ICI&SDD and PITB would cooperate in identifying and augmenting potential

areas of mutual cooperation for improving business rankings, besides jointly arranging seminars and conferences regarding ease of doing business. Mian Anjum Nisar said that they would ensure participation in advisory councils, committees and consultancy services regarding Ease of Doing Business. The apex body and government departments would also jointly initiate the R&D initiatives relevant to EODB and other technology development and research areas, he added. He said that under the MoU, the PITB would take the responsibility of procurement of furniture and IT equipment under the approved project "Improvement to the Arrangement for Starting a Business (Phase-II)" required for establishment of facilitation desks. "The PITB would also train nominated human

resource by the chambers for initiatives regarding Ease of Doing Business, besides facilitating to conduct awareness session", he added. FPCCI President said that the MoU was aimed at enhancing cooperation between the two organizations to work together for the trade and investment friendly atmosphere in the country. He asked the government to devise a comprehensive reforms program, where private sector should be given the primary role as they were the main employers and beneficiaries of the workforce in the country. He added that abundant availability of human resource, flexible labour laws, and availability of raw material make Pakistan the best place for investment. Industries Department Director General Rana Abdul Shukoor, on this occasion, said that ICI&SDD was one of the major government

institutions striving to promote industrial development, trade and investment in the province. The main focus of activity was promotion of trade and investment in the province. He said that the government was keen on creating a business-friendly investment climate in line with the federal government policies and present the province of Punjab as an attractive investment destination for the entrepreneurs and investors. The PITB chairman addressing the MoU ceremony, said that PITB aims at not only modernizing the governance techniques through transparency induced methods but also increasing the digital literacy of the citizens. The PITB was committed to effectively and efficiently provide IT services and infrastructure to the government and local and international businesses, he added.

Briefs

FBR briefs PAC on its policy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) Tuesday briefed the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on its strategy to liquidate refunds with particular reference to existing claims relating to Sales Tax and Income Tax along with detailed report of refunds made during the previous six months including amounts and description of recipients and their balance claims.

The senior officials of FBR briefed the committee in a meeting held here at Parliament House under the chair of MNA Rana Tanveer Hussain, chairman of the committee. The committee informed that FBR policy is to liquidate all legitimate refund claims of taxpayers, in accordance with law expeditiously and to provide hassle-free income tax refunds with least possible human interaction ensure transparency.

The officials of FBR informed the committee in a written brief that sale tax refunds have two main components refunds to five ex-zero rated sectors (Faster), and sales tax refunds of other sectors both export as well as non-export. The committee further informed that "presently, FBR is following the policy of allowing refunds to these Faster related refunds claimants within 72 hours of filing of refund claims as per law. At present Inland Revenue does not have any pending refunds related to Faster.

Police bust gang involved in online frauds

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Secretariat police Tuesday busted a network of fraudsters involved in online financial scams and recovered laptops, 15 cell phones and 35 mobile Sims of various cellular companies.

On a tip off about presence of gang near Bari Imam area involved in financial scams, SP (City) Omer Khan constituted a special team under supervision of Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Secretariat Iqbal Hussain. This team including SHO Secretariat police station and other police officials arrested three persons red handed and recovered laptop, 15 cell phones and 35 mobile Sims of various cellular companies.

They have been identified as Zaheer Abbas, Abil and Anees and confessed to mint millions of rupees from simpletons on the name of of BISP and through jazz cash. They have admitted their involvement in such activities for last one year. SP (City) Omer Khan appealed the victims to coordinate with their relevant police stations. IGP Islamabad Muhammad Amir Zulfiqar and DIG (Operations) Waqar Uddin Syed appreciated the performance of Secretariat police team and announced cash prizes and commendation certificates. - APP

Efforts to mitigate disasters' risks urged

DNA

LAMABAD: Pakistan has called for redoubling global efforts, including sharing of experiences, knowledge and transfer of technology, to mitigate risks of disasters and to save lives.

In a statement on the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Foreign Office said these efforts should be made under the United Nations and other international platforms. The Foreign Office said Pakistan has strengthened the response capacity of its institutions at the national, provincial and district levels. It said the strength of our governance systems was tested in the first wave of COVID-19 pandemic. While we have successfully contained the initial outbreak and continue to mitigate its long-term socio-economic impacts.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Markazi Anjuman e Tajiran Rawalpindi led by President Malik Shahid Ghafoor Piracha presenting bouquet to Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan President ICCI during their visit to ICCI. Mian Akran Farid Chairman founder group, M Ejaz Abbasi, Mian Shaukat Masud, Ajmal Balouch, Sheikh Abdul Hafeez, Taj Abbasi, Malik Afzal, Khalid Chaudhry, Naveed Malik, Fahim Khan and others are also present. - DNA

Business community rejects deployment of tiger force

Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, ICCI stressed that before taking such measures, the government should first take stakeholders on board as one-sided decisions have always damaged the business and economic activity

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: The business community of the twin cities in a meeting chaired by Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry strongly condemned the deployment of tiger force to control prices and called upon the government to urgently withdraw it in order to save the traders from unnecessary problems including blackmailing. They said that tiger force was a political force and they would not accept its deployment in markets as it would create more problems including the use of blackmailing tactics against traders. They said that district administrations were present in every district and the government should use them to control prices instead of using a political force as its approach could be biased.

These views were expressed when a delegation of Markazi Anjuman-e-Tajiran Rawalpindi/ Punjab led by its President Malik Shahid Ghafoor Piracha visited ICCI and congratulated the new office bearers of Chamber. Sheikh Abdul Hafeez President Anjuman-e-Tajiran Rawalpindi Cantt, Taj Abbasi President All Pakistan Furniture Association and representatives of various other market associations of Rawalpindi were also in the delegation.

Addressing the meeting, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) stressed that before taking such measures, the government should first take stakeholders on board as one-sided decisions have always damaged the business and economic activity. He said that some shops were being sealed under the pretext of price control drive, which was not

a wise approach and if there was any issue, things should be sorted through dialogue.

He said that to combat the impact of Covid-19 pandemic, governments in the world provided relief to businesses, but in Pakistan businesses were being burdened with more taxes through new SROs. He emphasized that the government should provide relief to the business community by allowing them to pay taxes in instalments. He assured that ICCI would cooperate with them in resolving the key issues of the business community of the twin cities. Mian Akran Farid, Chairman Founder Group expressed great reservations over the tiger force for price control and urged the government to withdraw it.

He said that the government should focus on reducing tax rates and broadening of tax base to improve tax revenue of the country. He said devaluation of the rupee

was the main cause of rising inflation and the government should address this issue. He said that due to Covid-19, many traders were facing problems in paying rents of shops and stressed that the government should announce a relief package for them.

Malik Shahid Ghafoor Piracha President Markazi Anjuman-e-Tajiran Rawalpindi/ Punjab, Sheikh Abdul Hafeez President Anjuman-e-Tajiran Rawalpindi Cantt., Taj Abbasi President All Pakistan Furniture Association expressing their views said that government officials were imposing heavy fines on small traders for high prices while they have no role in hiking prices of commodities as devaluation was the main source of rising inflation in the country. They said such tactics against small traders should be avoided.

Ms. Fatma Azim Senior Vice President and Abdul Rehman Khan Vice President ICCI thanked the

visiting guests from Rawalpindi. They said that the business community of twin cities was facing common issues and their unity would help in resolving them.

Ajmal Baloch, President, All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajiran also condemned the use of the tiger force for control of prices and said that instead of using political force that would create more divisions, the government should use its own machinery to control the prices. Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi, Mian Shaukat Masud, Khalid Chaudhry, M. Zafar Qadri and others also spoke at the occasion and said that government should announce relief packages for every industry on the pattern of construction industry package that would put the economy on fast track growth.

They said tiger force would be misused and traders would be blackmailing, so the government should withdraw it immediately.

SAPM praises digitizing tax payment system

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Sayed Zulfiqar Abbas Bukhari has praised the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration for enabling the residents to pay their vehicles' taxes through online system.

In a tweet, he said the initiative would provide a huge relief to the citizens, describing it a big shift from the older system.

"Citizens of Islamabad will

now pay their vehicle taxes online via ICT City App. Alternate banking channels / 1-link payments are also linked for ease. Well done ICT administration! This is a huge relief for citizens and a big shift from the older system," the SAPM tweeted.

Islamabad Excise and Taxation (E&T) Department has recently launched an online payment system, aimed at enabling the vehicle owners to pay their token tax, registration and transfer fees from any part of the

country through e-banking and other digital mode of transactions.

Talking to APP, E&T Director, Bilal Azam said, "This is a step forward for converting the E&T operations into one-window facility by 2021 under Prime Minister Imran Khan's 'Digital Pakistan' vision."

Bilal said, "From onwards, around 1.1 million vehicles' owners need not to visit the E&T office as they can submit their token tax, registration and transfer fees

through ATM (automated teller machine), debit cards and e-banking after registering themselves at the 'City Islamabad App'.

The director said the vehicle owners had been giving overwhelming response as a large number of owners had started making their vehicles related payments through multiple financial institutions such as Allied Bank, Askari Bank, First Micro Finance Bank, Habib Bank Limited, Meezan Bank and others. - APP

'Panahgahs' to be transformed into model facilities

The spokesman said Tarlai shelter home had already been converted into a model facility, providing all the facilities such as food, stay and sanitation at par with one-star hotel

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM) was striving to transform all the five shelter homes (Panahgah) of federal capital into model facilities by the month-end. "The PBM has taken the charge of five 'Panahgahs' and vigorously implementing its rehabilitation and remodeling plan by following the instruction of Prime Minister Imran Khan," the PBM spokesman told media.

The prime minister has recently handed over the administrative control of five 'Panahgahs' of Islamabad to the PBM for providing safe, secure and conducive environment to the daily wage earners through its up-gradation at par with one-star hotel. Currently, 'Panahgahs' are operational in five areas of Islamabad including Peshawar Morr, Sabzi Mandi (Sector I-11), Tarlai and Bara Kahu. He said an integrated system was being installed in all the shelter homes to provide food, stay and proper hygiene to the 'Panahgah' dwellers under an umbrella. Close-Circuit Television (CCTV) Cameras would be installed to ensure safe and secure environment at the facilities. Besides, a digital system would also be put in place to keep data of all the daily wage earners staying at the shelter homes. The spokesman said Tarlai shelter home had already been converted into a model facility, providing all the facilities such as food, stay and sanitation at par with one-star hotel. He said the model would be replicated in all the shelter homes, functioning across the country. - APP

'Opposition forwarded NRO draft to govt'

"They have given a message to end cases and they will call-off protest." The senator said that the govt is ready for talks but no one would be given NRO

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Senator Faisal Javed Khan on Tuesday claimed that the opposition parties have sent a draft of the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) to the federal government through Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi. Faisal Javed Khan said that protest

is the right of the opposition parties, but no one would be allowed to create law and order situation. He claimed that opposition parties are still in search of the NRO and went to say that a draft has been forwarded to the PTI government. "They have given a message to end cases and they will call-off protest." The senator said that the government is ready for talks but no one would be given NRO.

Earlier on October 9, Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan had said that all the opposition leaders had gathered at one platform to save their corruption. Addressing the seminar of PTI Lawyers Forum in Islamabad, he had said that opposition parties had only one agenda to halt the process of accountability. "They do not believe in rule of law in the country."

Pakistan-Sudan enjoy close business relations

Embassy of Sudan's Charge d' Affaires M Bashir visited Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry

FIJAZ CHAUDHRY

RAWALPINDI: Sudan offers promising investment opportunities and Pakistani businessmen should explore Sudan for making direct investment and joint ventures to earn attractive returns. This was stated by Sudan's Charge d' Affaires Muhammad Bashir during his visit to the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) here on Tuesday. He was accompanied by Trade and Commercial Counselor's M. Nooruddin and Abu Bakr Hussain.

Muhammad Bashir said that there are very close friendly relations between Pakistan and Sudan. The exchange of delegations is needed for the promotion of bilateral



trade. There are many opportunities to explore trade in agriculture and minerals sectors, he added. He said that this was his first visit to any chamber. He appreciated the role of the Rawalpindi

Chamber in promoting trade and business activities. He also invited RCCI to attend the International Trade Fair Khartoum which will be held in January 2021.

On this occasion, the President of

the Chamber Nasir Mirza said that the Chamber is ready for all kinds of cooperation for the exchange of delegations and holding of bilateral business conferences.

There is a huge opportunity for

joint ventures in different sectors mainly, agriculture, IT and pharmaceuticals, he added.

The trade relations between the two countries need to be strengthened at the level of the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber has also launched a series of webinars to promote trade with African countries through the Business Africa Forum, despite the Corona epidemic. Nasir Mirza further added that the ease of doing business ranking of Pakistan has improved. Sudanese investors can take advantage of investment opportunities in Pakistan, he added.

Senior Vice President Osman Ashraf, Vice President Shahraiz A Malik, members of the executive committee and members were also present on the occasion.

Secretary Interior visits visa counter

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary for Interior Haji Shaukat Ali Tuesday visited visa counter to listen personally visa related problems of foreigners.

The parliamentary secretary listened grievance of visa seekers individually and issued on spot directives for their redressal, said a statement issued here.

He also suspended the Visa Section Officer for dereliction of his duty. Speaking on the occasion, Haji Shaukat said foreigners were our guests and no negligence would be tolerated for providing facilities to them.

All citizens of other countries were equal to us and its our mission to provide them best facilities, he added. He said all out efforts were being made to provide best facilities to the foreigners under the vision of Prime Minister.

The parliamentary secretary said "We are eager to have a cordial relations with other countries and policies are being made simplified in this regard." - APP

Police raids shisha serving restaurants

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The federal capital administration had fined three restaurants in Bahria Town for serving Shisha (hookah) to the customers and apprehended 10 people. According to assistant commissioner (rural area) Abdullah, Lohi Bhir police took action on the directions of chief commissioner, Islamabad, Aamer Ali Ahmed, the other day, following public complaints on Pakistan Citizens Portal. The authority raided cafes including Maya, Retro and Moody's in phase four and six of Bahria Town and confiscated hookah, flavors and other material.

The accused were shifted to the police station and first information reports were registered against the cafe owners. He said the local administration continued actions against the restaurants that was destroying the youth by serving them shisha. Parents and students were also being sensitized about the harmful effects of shisha to ensure their protection against this menace. It may be mention here that in October 2016, the federal government had completely banned the shisha smoking across the country and import of tobacco used in its making.

Stay against Cynthia's repatriation extended

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday extended its stay order till October 23, on possible repatriation of American blogger Cynthia D. Ritchie after expiry of her visa.

Chief Justice Athar Minallah conducted hearing on a petition moved by Cynthia D. Ritchie against her deportation by the government. Senior lawyer Ahmed Raza Qasuri submitted power of attorney on behalf of American blogger and prayed the bench to grant time for argument which was granted by the court.

At the outset of hearing, the chief justice asked about the case which was sent to the lower court by the bench to this Qasuri pleaded that his client's petition had been dismissed and now they wanted to file appeal against this verdict.

The chief justice remarked that the government was not bound to issue visa to anyone as it was not its right, adding that this was an international practice. PPP's lawyer prayed the court to issue orders to deport the American citizen after dismissal of her case in the lower court. The chief justice remarked that it was not a simple case, the woman had leveled serious allegations against the leadership of PPP. Justice Minallah said that whether the federal government had ordered an inquiry pertaining to these allegations.

Briefs

Female artists display calligraphic art work

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A calligraphic exhibition by group of female calligraphers was displayed here on Tuesday under banner of Musawara in collaboration with Punjab Council of the Arts (PUCAR). The exhibition was inaugurated by Director PUCAR Waqar Ahmed flanked by senior calligraphers Moryad Fazil, Abdul Rehman Tabani and Muhammad Azeem Iqbal. Soudah Sultana, Zainab Sarfraz, Amna Arshad, Huma Humayon, Khola Gul, Javeria Zaib, Hafsa and Wajha Raja participated in the exhibition and showcased their calligraphic work. More than 50 art pieces in different medium and style were put on display. The exhibition entitled "Takhliq" was arranged for two days in which students of different universities participated. Addressing at the inaugural ceremony, Waqar Ahmed said that calligraphy was the legacy of Muslims and interest of younger generation in this art especial females was appreciable. He added that aim of the exhibition was to encourage new talent and provide them platform.

Police arrest 5 for possessing illegal weapons

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Police in their crackdown against illegal weapons rounded up five persons from different areas and recovered weapons from their possession, said police spokesman. He informed that Airport, Pirwadhah, Rattaamral and Kotli Sattian police on the directive of Rawalpindi City Police Officer (CPO), launched crackdown and arrested five persons namely Mohib ur Rehman, Muhammad Aziz, Muhammad Qasim, Muhammad Sarjeel and Siraj ul Haq and recovered five illegal 30 bore pistols and huge quantity of rounds of different bores from their possession. He said that the police were conducting operations against law violators on a regular basis without any discrimination. He said, the police would continue their operations against criminals and proclaimed offenders.

HEC invites proposals under TTSF project

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has invited faculty members of public and private sector universities to submit research proposals focused on transfer of university developed technologies and products to industry and commercial sector. According to an official of HEC, the Technology Transfer Support Fund (TTSF) is a key element of the Higher Education Development in Pakistan project supported by the World Bank and implemented by the HEC. The TTSF is anticipated to support promising partnerships between academia and industry to facilitate the transfer of university developed technological research to industry and the commercial sector. The TTSF will provide funds to selected institutions based upon a competitive, peer reviewed evaluation of proposals. The amount of funding for TTSF awards may range between Rs. 7.5-15 million with a maximum project duration of two years and must include in-kind or cash contributions from the industry collaborators. About the applicant eligibility, the official informed that the Lead Principal Investigators (PIs) must be a regular faculty member (PhD or FCPS/MCPS/FRCS) of the Higher Education Institutions (public or private) or hold a contract equivalent to the length of project duration. The co-financing including in kind or cash contribution by the industry partner is mandatory. The project proposals on prescribed application template must be submitted via HEC online portal till October 16. The applicants can visit HEC website <http://www.hec.gov.pk/site/TTSF> and email info-r&d@hec.gov.pk for further information. — APP

Climate change becoming a complex gamble to win: Dr Steffen Kudella

Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad and Hanns Seidel Foundation, Pakistan jointly organized a Roundtable Discussion on "Water Security Challenges and Conservation Strategy"

STAFF REPORT/DNA

ISLAMABAD: Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad and Hanns Seidel Foundation, Pakistan jointly organized a Roundtable Discussion on "Water Security Challenges and Conservation Strategy for Pakistan" at Islamabad Club. The discussion commenced with the opening remarks of Major General Syed Khalid Amir Jaffery HI(M), (Retd), President CGSS. He welcomed the participants of the session and stated that water management is a significant issue from defence point of view also that needs to be addressed. Dr. Steffen Kudella, Resident Representative, Hanns Seidel Foundation, Pakistan in his welcome remarks stated that climate change is becoming a complex gamble to win. Pakistan is one of the most significant country of South Asia and relying on one river system would be risky. Furthermore, he stated that water needs to become a topic of regional dialogue and in collaboration of CGSS, we plan to organize broader events to discuss this issue with a broader regional audience. Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, Chairman, Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) stated that Pakistan has abundant water but the problem lies with efficient absorption and retaining mechanism. One major problem is development of water resources. Currently, we are storing only 9-10% of the water,



which must be stored at least 40% according to the international standards. Second most important issue is water resource management, 60% of water is lost due to improper storage system. Thirdly, is the governance aspect. The water is provided free of cost and there is no incentive for saving wa-

ter. We must emphasize on efficient utilization of water. Mr. Ahmed Kamal, Chairman, Federal Flood Commission, Ministry of Water Resources, Govt of Pakistan stated that Pakistan has good resources of water but we are not managing it to the optimal level. Water scarcity is going to effect Pakistan by our

own follies. Pakistan has been severely impacted in the last 5 years by the virtue of viable climate change. He recommended that small water conservation strategies must be adopted in various parts across the country which will enable to retain water in adequate amount. Dr. Yusuf Zaraf, TI, For-

mer Chairman, Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) stated that unfortunately, in Pakistan, water has always been linked with power. On 4th August 2017, the Government decided to have a separate Ministry for water issues. Agriculture consumes 95% of water. In the recent times,

due to bad governance, we have increased the crops that consume more water. However, we have not opted for low delta water crops. Dr. Hassan Abbas - Chairman Forte, Integrated Water Resources Management stated that to treat the problems, the cause must also be identified. He stated that the best cooper-

ation related to water is in terms of navigation. The issue of storage is important and must be highlighted. Other panelists of the Discussion deliberated upon water security challenges and conservation strategy for Pakistan in a concise manner to find applicable solutions and appropriate policy options and actions. The panelists discussed the prevailing water challenges to Pakistan and its conservation strategy. The loopholes in current water policy were also highlighted while presenting suggestions regarding restructuring the existing water policy for constructive outcomes. Other panelists of the Discussion included:

- Brigadier Muhammad Aslam Khan (Retd) - Chairman Gomal Damaan Area Water Partnership Pakistan
 - Dr. Bashir Ahmad, Director Climate Change, Alternate Energy and Water Resources Institute, National Agriculture Research Council
 - Engr. Dr. Basharat Hasan Bashir, Expert in Alternative Energy
 - Dr. Muhammad Zia ur Rahman Hashmi, Head, Water Resources and Glaciology Section of Global Change Impact Studies Centre (GCISC)
 - Mr. Kanwar Muhammad Javed Iqbal, Lead Researcher, National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA)
- The event was attended by approximately 27 participants and was moderated by Lt Col Khalid Taimur Akram (Retd), Executive Director, CGSS.

Senate body directs CDA to ensure cleanliness

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change Tuesday directed Capital Development Authority (CDA) to ensure cleanliness and maintenance in capital city particularly Faisal Masjid. The committee also recommended that a tree plantation drive should be started in surroundings of Faisal Masjid, Islamabad. The committee met here at Parliament Lodges in chair of Senator Sitara Ayaz, chairman of the committee. The meeting was also attended by Senator Faisal Javed, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Senator Samina Saeed, Senator Sana Jamali, Senator Muhammad Ali Khan Saif, Senator Kesho Bai, Senator Muhammad Akram and Senator Musadik Masood Malik.

The committee also recommended that street lights should be installed in around Faisal Masjid. Senator Faisal Javed also raised the issue of traffic lights on Margalla road. Ministry of Climate Change briefed the committee on the import of animals and birds. The committee was informed that ministry allows imports and exports of wildlife species on recommendation of Provincial/Territorial Wildlife Departments. In view of coronavirus 2019 outbreak and due to its zoonotic origin on recommendation of ministry of National Food Security and Research import of wildlife species was suspended. The committee was further informed that as COVID-19 situation is not clear so far, it has been decided that temporary ban on import of wildlife species will be in place until December 31, 2020.

Two-day int'l conference on Olive Culture from Oct 20

ISLAMABAD: A two-day international conference on Olive Culture in Pakistan titled 'An Intervention for Combating Land, Water and Environment Desertification' will commence from October 20 in Khuzdar, Balochistan. The conference is co-organized by Directorate of Research, Innovation and Commercialization University of Engineering and Technology Khuzdar, Balochistan is aimed at enhancing olive oil production in Pakistan. About 500 participants including faculties, researchers, policy makers, traders, producers,

students and other stakeholders will share their knowledge on the theme of the conference. Research papers could be submitted till October 15, and the accepted one's would be published in special edition of journal UET. Pakistan has been constantly and chronically deficient in edible oil production with more than 80 percent of the domestic requirements are met through imports. Oilseed production in Pakistan receives less attention than staple and cash crops like wheat, rice, cotton and sugarcane. — APP

IRSA releases 117,300 cusecs water

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 117,300 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 77,000 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1531.59 feet, which was 145.59 feet higher than its dead level 1386 feet.

MoU signed to promote women well being

DNA

ISLAMABAD: COMSTECH and Pink Pakistan Trust have joined hands to work towards the achievement of shared objectives of good health and well being of women in Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) region. In this regard, a Memorandum of Understanding

(MoU) was signed between the two organizations in a ceremony held at COMSTECH on Tuesday. The MoU was signed by Coordinator General, COMSTECH, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary and the President Pink Trust Pakistan, Dr. Zubaida Qazi. According to the MoU, COMSTECH and Pink Pakistan Trust will work together for spreading

awareness to reduce the mortality rate of breast cancer and promote women well being and empowerment. Both the parties will jointly organize awareness sessions, seminars, conferences, workshops and training research and counseling support for eradicating breast cancer to the women of the marginalized communities of the OIC

member countries. COMSTECH through its various Inter-Islamic Networks and programs shall partner with the Pink Pakistan Trust towards spreading awareness regarding breast cancer and early detection of breast cancer purely on voluntary basis for the welfare and well being of marginalized communities to work for the noble cause.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassadors of Poland, Belgium and the Netherlands meets Senators Mushahid Hussain and Talah Mahmood. — DNA

Conclusion of mega corruption cases priority

The meeting was informed that the Prosecution Division had been revamped by inducting experienced legal consultants/special prosecutors. Due to constant deliberations, monitoring and performance analysis of Operations and Prosecution Division

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Justice Javed Iqbal Tuesday said logical conclusion of white collar crime mega corruption cases was a challenging task as the bureau was determined to root out corruption by putting double efforts for ensuring corruption free Pakistan. The meeting chaired by Justice Javed reviewed the overall performance of NAB.

The forum was informed that Operation and Prosecution Divisions of NAB were working closely and pleading cases in the respected courts. The meeting was informed that the Prosecution Division had been revamped by inducting experienced legal consultants/special prosecutors. Due to constant deliberations, monitoring and performance analysis of Operations and Prosecution Division, the overall conviction ratio was approximately 68.8 percent in the respected Accountability

Courts which is one of the best conviction ratios as compared to other anti corruption organizations in Pakistan. NAB has not only recovered Rs 466 billion since its inception but deposited in the national exchequer. Speaking on the occasion, the chairman said NAB was an apex national anti corruption organization which had no affiliation with any party, group or individual. NAB will not come under any pressure/criticism of any accused person and will continue to work transparently,

fairly, professionally and independently on the basis of solid evidence against the accused persons as per law. NAB was the only Organization in the world to which China has signed an MOU to oversee CEPC projects in Pakistan. NAB has introduced a Combine Investigation Team (CIT) system in order to benefit from the collective wisdom of senior supervisory officers. This system is not only lending quality. NAB has established its own forensic science Laboratory in NAB Rawalpindi

which is helping in improving the quality of investigations on a scientific basis. NAB has received more complaints in 2020 as compared to the same period of 2019 which shows that people have shown trust upon NAB. The Chairman NAB directed all bureaus of NAB to use all available resources to nab corrupt and arrest of proclaimed offenders and absconders so that they could be brought to justice and to recover looted money and deposit in national exchequer which was our national duty.

PIPS to remain closed till Oct 16

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services, PIPS has been closed on Tuesday for three days after detection of more fresh coronavirus cases. Under precautionary measures, the PIPS's office would remain closed till October 16, said a press release issued by Senate Media Secretariat here. However Parliament Lodges office Islamabad and coordination offices in provincial assemblies would remain opened. Official of PIPS would also remain available for official business, it further said.

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Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

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Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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

Food on the table

THE World Food Programme, one of the biggest humanitarian programmes in the world, has won the Nobel Peace Prize for 2020. This is a suitable honour for a programme that has for decades provided food aid to 690 million hungry people around the world. It is no doubt disturbing that while so much food is wasted around the world, and many countries have surplus amounts, people still go hungry everywhere on the globe. Climate change, conflict and now the Covid-19 pandemic have made things even worse for these persons. The award therefore appears to be a notably suitable one in these times.

The World Food Programme was founded in 1961 by the UN and it is active in 80 countries today and provides a variety of aid based on the need of that country, including 'cash for food' programmes, and direct supplies of food, especially for children and women, who are usually particularly deprived.

The WFP has also pointed out, while accepting the award, that it has worked with governments and many of the partners to make its success possible. Its services are enormous. They are often overlooked, including in our country, where the group at one point faced some harassment in certain areas with the accusations that it was promoting the idea that people in Pakistan go hungry as a kind of propaganda against the country.

The reality is that, while Pakistan has a surplus amount of wheat for most years since 2018, there has been a growth in hunger, because people do not have the cash to access this food. As a result, 18 percent of children under the age of five are severely malnourished, and 40 percent suffer stunting or an inability to reach the expected height for their age. Other children suffer wasting or an inability to reach expected weight for their age. The problem is an enormous one.

During the earthquake of 2008 in Azad Kashmir and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the WFP played a primary role in leading relief efforts and saving people from literal starvation. Its efforts deserved to be credited, so do its millions of workers who operate all over the world. The Nobel Prize has gone to a truly worthy organization this year. We hope that the prize also draws the world's attention to hunger and the need to address this most basic requirement of humans, no matter where they live and what they do.



PDM's first outing

AFTER a few revisions in its schedule of activities, the anti-government 11-party opposition alliance dubbed the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) will hold its first rally in Gujranwala this Friday with leaders of all major parties including PPP, PML-N and JUI-F expected to make fiery speeches there. The arrest of one of the central figures of the movement, PML-N president and leader of the opposition in the National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif, just a few weeks prior to the PDM's first outing is perhaps a message from the government to those who have cases pending with the NAB but are not incarcerated, that they too could meet a similar fate in the coming days, but that remains to be seen. The PTI government has so far not made any direct attempt to cause hindrances in the PDM's plans but if their actions during the JUI-F's 'Azadi March' last year, where containers were placed on roads to block the procession, is any indication, some blockages can be expected. While Gujranwala's local administration is yet to give permission for the rally, the opposition parties have already decided on a plan of action if law enforcement agencies are used to obstruct them by encouraging their workers, wherever they may be on the day to block roads. This would be a disastrous outcome and the government would receive most if not all of the blame if something untoward were to happen. However, it seems the government is looking towards another strategy to force PDM into delaying its plans: Covid-19 infections.

Federal Minister for Science and Technology Fawad Chaudhry tweeted the other day urging opposition parties to 'be responsible' and postpone their rallies for three months amid 'fears of a second wave of the coronavirus'. Not only is this conveniently self-serving advice but also hypocritical. A few days back Prime Minister Imran Khan attended a public meeting held by the 'In-saf Lawyers Forum', an affiliate of the PTI, and will be holding a meeting with his 'Tiger Force' members at a convention center in Islamabad later this week as well. While Mr Fawad Chaudhry's concerns are valid, they are not genuine; the implementation of SOPs must be across the board and not opposition-specific. The government should allow peaceful demonstrations to continue and leave it up to opposition parties to ensure that all their activities are carried out safely with all Covid-19 SOPs being followed.

Taliban no easy pushovers on negotiation table

Sajjad Ashraf

The Taliban understand that puritan application of Islamic injunctions during their previous regime during the late 1990s alienated them from virtually all countries. Influenced perhaps, by the public opinion their actions have indicated that they may be ready for compromises in certain areas. In break from their previous government policies they allow girls schools in areas under their control. This time the Taliban seem more inclined to let the systems evolve rather than impose it through a state diktat. Based on their objectives, Taliban seeks to draw their support from the communities they represent

THE talks in Doha between the Taliban and the Kabul regime that began seven months late on September 12 are in hiatus over disagreements on how to frame a code of conduct that will guide the broader talks. Their differences over the procedural are wide. It is only after a framework is agreed that the two sides will come to tackle substantive issues like ceasefire, type of governance, power sharing, and a host of difficult issues that will need to be resolved.

Seeking to build support for ceasefire while the negotiations continue between the two sides, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani was in Doha seeking Qatar's offices in persuading Taliban for flexibility over ceasefire, power sharing or other knotty issues.

Earlier, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, Chairman of Afghanistan's High Council for National Reconciliation – the body created to lead negotiations with the Taliban – visited Pakistan for similar purpose. Underscoring Pakistan's central role in the peace process, Abdullah asked Pakistan's powerful military to use its influence to press the Taliban to reduce violence.

Dr. Abdullah, a member of erstwhile Northern Alliance which led the 2002 putsch against the Taliban, a former foreign minister and three-time presidential candidate, retains a significant following especially among the non-Pashtuns in Afghanistan. As Northern Alliance drew its support from powers antithetical to Pakistan, Dr. Abdullah's public pronouncements reflected those interests. Recognising Pakistan's centrality in the peacemaking process he is now 'encouraged' by the tone of his conversations in Pakistan.

Intra-Afghan dialogue
The Taliban, who have fought their way from

a rag tag group of resistance fighters to a formidable force have crafted clear positions and did not concede much ground on their fundamental objective of getting the US out of Afghanistan. They only reluctantly acquiesced to an intra-Afghan dialogue, representing 'Afghan Groups.'

Now, when they have entered into negotiations, their focus remains on the nature of the state they want established, on power sharing, on how the government is to be sustained. Issues, which the western groups or the Kabul regime consider important like status of women, fundamental rights come secondary for them. Ceasefire, which is important for Kabul is the least important for them because they do not want to give away their battlefield advantage.

For Taliban, faith guides the state ideology and Sharia will be the 'operative framework' to run the affairs of the state. For Kabul, the country already has a constitution that holds Sharia above others thus making the character of the state sufficiently Islamic allowing for protecting women's rights, freedom of expression and electoral democracy.

The Taliban understand that puritan application of Islamic injunctions during their previous regime during the late 1990s alienated them from virtually all countries. Influenced perhaps, by the public opinion their actions have indicated that they may be ready for compromises in certain areas. In break from their previous government policies they allow girls schools in areas under their control. This time the Taliban seem more inclined to let the systems evolve rather than impose it through a state diktat. Based on their objectives, Taliban seeks to draw their support from the communities they represent.

Ideologically hardline
Whether the interlocutors agree to an inter-

im arrangement before a new dispensation, power sharing is the most intractable issue. And here lies the dilemma for the Taliban political leadership.

Having engaged the most powerful military for two decades, and compelling them to seek exit, Taliban interlocutors are looking at a lion's share of power. The rank and file who gave away their lives and limbs for the principle of getting the 'occupation forces' out will be loath to leaving authority in the hands of others. Hoping for a ceasefire is therefore, a pipe dream. They are captives of their battle hardened psychological make up that anything less than total victory is surrender, which endangers the movement's unity.

The alignment of political positions that either side holds is likely to be slow. There will be stalemates or even walk outs in frustration. Pushing the interlocutors to hasten the process will produce results that either side may not be fully committed to hold. The outside powers should let Afghan interlocutors to move at the pace they are comfortable with, to arrive at a durable peace. After all Vietnam's formal peace negotiations dragged through 1968 to January 1973 when the peace agreement was signed.

The western concept of democracy is America's deadliest export. There are several failed and costly experiments like Vietnam, Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan and many more – countries where people belong to a different culture. It is time Western powers realise that 'their democracy' is not the best governance system for people with totally different history and ethos. Peaceful transition in Afghanistan will only hold if it is supported by the conservative elements who hold a sway over the Afghan society.

– Courtesy: Gulf News

The lesson from the pandemic

Jose Maria Vera

Consider Thailand, where the official COVID-19 death toll remains below 60. The country provides universal healthcare. It also does so by spending only \$277 per capita on health. The US, in comparison, spends \$11,000 per capita on its famously privatised system. Or consider South Korea, which responded to the pandemic by instituting universal emergency relief payments for 22 million households. The country in recent years has boosted the minimum wage, increased taxes on the richest while boosting spending on health and education

WOULD we have been better off in New Zealand? "Or South Korea?" I've been asked so many questions like these since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nowhere feels safe enough. But some countries clearly have been in a better place to weather the pandemic than others. My colleagues in Africa point to Senegal. In Europe, Norway.

It is time to ask: just how ready were each of our governments for this crisis? And what could they be doing to avert more death, hunger and destitution? How can they rise out of this pandemic stronger? Development Finance International and Oxfam's recently published "Commitment to Reducing Inequality Index", which ranks 158 countries on labour rights, taxation, and spending on health, education and social protection, provide the data we need to answer these crucial questions scientifically.

The headlines of the report make for challenging reading:

- Heading into the pandemic, only one in six countries were spending the internationally accepted basic level on healthcare – 15 percent of the total budget.
 - Only 22 percent of the global workforce had adequate social protection, leaving billions unprotected.
 - In more than 100 countries at least one in three workers had no labour protections, such as sick pay.
 - Nearly half of all countries do not have adequate legislation on sexual assault and 10 countries, such as Singapore, have no laws on equal pay or gender discrimination.
- This is despite outrage at inequality being at an all-time high. Leaders from the International Monetary Fund's Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva to China's President Xi Jinping and Pope Francis have all spoken out against inequality in recent years. It is increasingly hard to find a leader who does not say they care about inequality. Yet, the data show that such concern is not translating into policies. With notable exceptions, inaction on inequality has left most countries catastrophically unprepared to weather the pandemic.

That is, millions of people have died, and hundreds of millions are falling into poverty, unnecessarily. Consider India, which currently has the fastest growing coronavirus caseload of any country in the world. India's leaders would do well to read the index carefully. The country is among the world's worst performing countries in tackling inequality. Only half of India's people have access to the most basic health services, with its health spending proportionally the world's fourth lowest. Rather than strengthen policies during the pandemic, several states in India have used COVID-19 as a pretext to increase daily working hours and suspend minimum pay legislation.

This is not about rich countries doing well and poor countries doing poorly. The United States, a rich G7 country in which more than 200,000 people lost their lives to COVID-19, for example, trails 17 low-income countries like Liberia on labour laws in the index due to anti-union policies and a low minimum wage. The toll the pandemic is taking on the US is impacted by intersecting inequalities. In the US, COVID-19 landed on a healthcare system that excludes millions of people living in poverty, especially Black and Latinx communities. Only one in 10 Black households has health insurance, compared with seven in 10 white households.

Unlike India and the US, and many other countries, however, some countries clearly have been better positioned to weather today's pandemic. Consider Thailand, where the official COVID-19 death toll remains below 60. The country provides universal healthcare. It also does so by spending only \$277 per capita on health. The US, in comparison, spends \$11,000 per capita on its famously privatised system. Or consider South Korea, which responded to the pandemic by instituting universal emergency relief payments for 22 million households. The country in recent years has boosted the minimum wage, increased taxes on the richest while boosting spending on health and education. That is inequality-busting leadership. Spain, where I live, has shown how progressive policies are possible in introducing a permanent basic income for over two million people.

Moreover, some countries are recasting their entire strategies to tackle inequality. New Zealand, another success story of the pandemic, has centred its entire budget on "wellbeing" to tackle issues like child poverty, challenging the old and stubborn obsession with the gross domestic product (GDP) and little else. Vietnam, meanwhile, is considering making reducing inequality core to its upcoming 10-year plan – which would be a welcome step.

And so, the lessons are clear. First – that governments need to get a handle on inequality. It is not inevitable, like rain from the heavens. It comes down to government choices – as the pandemic profoundly exposes. The ability to go to the hospital, or have a safety net when losing your job, has shaped our experience of this pandemic. That governments have done too little to tackle inequality has made us less safe.

Second – that governments rich and poor have huge scope to act. If Sierra Leone – a poor nation – can make bold reforms to make secondary education free and clamp down on tax evasion by mining companies, or if Costa Rica has been able to achieve near-universal primary healthcare in 10 years, so can others. It is clearer than ever that political will, not sound economics, is the barrier to change.

And third, that governments can better reduce inequality within their borders if they cooperate across them. Governments would be wise to act together on areas of common interest – expanding protection to workers, providing debt cancellation to poor countries and pursuing solidarity taxes on wealth and income. International cooperation is vital to avert the kind of austerity we saw after the global financial crisis, and we are likely to see promoted after the pandemic. The perils of the pre-COVID-19 era, in which taxes and labour rights were lowered and public goods were privatised in the pursuit of limitless growth, has been readily exposed. The enduring legacy of the pandemic must be a new race to the top, in which governments cooperate in their shared commitment to reducing inequality.

– Courtesy: Al Jazeera

Briefs

2 Palestinians injured in W. Bank

FOREIGN DESK

RAMALLAH: Two Palestinian farmers were injured Tuesday in a settler attack in the occupied West Bank, according to a local official. Dozens of farmers and volunteers were harvesting olives in the town of Burqa, east of Ramallah, when they were attacked by settlers under the protection of Israeli army, Walid Assaf, the head of a local committee against the construction of Israeli settlements in the West Bank, told Anadolu Agency. He said two farmers were injured and taken to hospital for treatment. On Monday, five Palestinian farmers were injured in a similar settler attack.

The olive harvest season in the West Bank usually witnesses attacks by Israeli settlers, who seek to prevent Palestinian farmers from reaching their farmlands in the occupied territory, according to Palestinian officials and local residents.

Food prices to come down drastically

From Page 01

Responding to another question, Syed Shibli Faraz said any gathering of the opposition is not a worrisome matter for the government and we are busy in our routine activities. He said the rejected politicians with no future are trying to hide their corruption, hence they do not want a stable government and economic development in Pakistan.

'Armenia is attacking civilian areas'

BAKU: Azerbaijan and Armenia have been engaged in fresh clashes over occupied Karabakh and its surrounding districts despite a ceasefire deal brokered by Russia to try to end the worst outbreak of hostilities in the region in decades. Azerbaijan's Defence Ministry said in a statement on Tuesday that Armenian armed forces continue to fire at civilian areas of Goranboy, Tartar and Aghdam regions grossly violating the three-day-old humanitarian truce. In another statement on Tuesday morning, Azerbaijan accused Armenia of shelling the territory of the Tartar. Azerbaijan Air Defence Units have destroyed two UAVs in the direction of the Tovuz region of the Armenia-Azerbaijan state border on the night of October 12, and yesterday at about 10:00 local time, one UAV was brought down in the direction of the Aghdam region. — DNA

Pak, EU desire to meet trade potential

From Page 01

Community Empowerment (BRACE) for rural development. She mentioned that NFSR is implementing partner of this programme. She mentioned that that it is a 5 year plan, which also includes improvement in production of live stock. She mentioned that EU is also one of the financier of FAO. And she apprised that cotton is very much link with GSP plus status. She asked to develop fish industry because there is a lot of potential for Pakistan for fish export. It was mentioned that Pakistan and EU signed Strategic Engagement plan last year for transfer of technology. Pakistan exports rice, mango, vegetables, spices, tobacco, etc. to EU states; however, the current level of bilateral trade between Pakistan and EU countries does not fully reflect the potential of our agro-products, which may need to be enhanced further. Whereas we are importing chickpeas, instant gum, potato seeds and food stuff etc. from EU countries. EU is main buyer of sheep casing from Pakistan. EU can support our meat industry by allowing the import of other meat and chicken products. EU can help Pakistan to increase agriculture production and increase export of regulated goods. Critical support in farming, technology and techniques will be imperative; therefore, there is dire need of collaboration between the agriculture sectors. The EU may provide technical and financial assistance in the livestock sector of Pakistan like risk based Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) control in Pakistan, virtual based Disease Information & Surveillance System in Pakistan and establishing FMD Free Zones in Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Denmark to Pakistan Lis Rosenholm reviewing guard of honour on the occasion of presenting her credentials to the President of Pakistan. — DNA

WHO Chief warns against 'herd immunity' theory

Never in the history of public health has herd immunity been used as a strategy for responding to an outbreak, let alone a pandemic. It is scientifically and ethically problematic

FOREIGN DESK

GENEVA: The World Health Organization's director-general said using herd immunity as a strategy to respond to the novel coronavirus outbreak is "scientifically and ethically problematic". Speaking at the latest media briefing in Geneva, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, commented on recent discussions about the concept of reaching so-called herd immunity by letting the virus spread. He said that herd immunity is achieved by protecting people from a virus, not by exposing them

to it. "Never in the history of public health has herd immunity been used as a strategy for responding to an outbreak, let alone a pandemic. It is scientifically and ethically problematic," Tedros said, adding that not enough is known about immunity to COVID-19. "Most people who are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 develop an immune response within the first few weeks, but we don't know how strong or lasting that immune response is, or how it differs for different people. We have some clues, but we don't have the complete picture," he said. He also noted examples of



people being infected with COVID-19 and then catching it for a second time. Tedros also said that the vast majority of people in most countries remain at risk to this virus. "Seroprevalence surveys suggest that in most countries, less

than 10 percent of the population have been infected with the COVID-19 virus," he said. "Letting the virus circulate unchecked therefore means allowing unnecessary infections, suffering and death." He reiterated that although older people and those with underlying conditions are most at risk, people of all ages have died from the disease. "We're only beginning to understand the long-term health impacts among people with COVID-19. I have met with patient groups suffering with what is now being described as 'Long COVID' to understand their suffering and needs so we can advance

research and rehabilitation," he said. "Allowing a dangerous virus that we don't fully understand to run free is simply unethical. It's not an option." The WHO director-general said his organization is hopeful that countries will use targeted interventions where and when needed, based on the local situation. "We well understand the frustration that many people, communities and governments are feeling as the pandemic drags on, and as cases rise again," he said. "There are no shortcuts, and no silver bullets. The answer is a comprehensive approach, using every tool in the toolbox." — APP

Azerbaijani PGO gives updates on civil casualties, damages

MONITORING DESK

BAKU: Some 42 Azerbaijani civilians were killed, 206 wounded as a result of the provocations of the Armenian armed forces from Sept. 27 up till now. 13 citing the Azerbaijani General Prosecutor's Office. Some 241 civilian facilities, 1,479 houses, and 66 apartment buildings were damaged. Armenian Armed Forces launched a large-scale military attack on positions of the Azerbaijani army on the front line, using large-caliber weapons, mortars, and artillery on Sept. 27. Azerbaijan responded with a counter-offensive along the entire front. As a result of retaliation, Azerbaijani troops liberated a number of territories previously occupied by Armenia, as well

as take important, strategic heights under control. The fighting continued into October 2020, in the early days of which Armenia has launched missile attacks on Azerbaijani cities of Ganja, Mingachevir, Khizi as well as Absheron district. The conflict between the two South Caucasus countries began in 1988 when Armenia made territorial claims against Azerbaijan. As a result of the ensuing war, Armenian armed forces occupied 20 percent of Azerbaijan, including the Nagorno-Karabakh region and seven surrounding districts. The 1994 ceasefire agreement was followed by peace negotiations. Armenia has not yet implemented four UN Security Council resolutions on the withdrawal of its armed forces from Nagorno Karabakh and the surrounding districts.

China, Russia, KSA set to join UN Human Rights Council

DNA

NEW YORK: China, Saudi Arabia and Russia are poised to join the United Nations Human Rights Council, raising alarm among rights groups who say the countries are among the world's "worst rights violators". The UN General Assembly is expected to hold elections on Tuesday for 15 seats in the 47-nation council, with the new members serving for three years from January 2021. "Electing these dictatorships as UN judges on human rights is like making a

gang of arsonists into the fire brigade," Hillel Neuer, executive director of UN Watch, an independent human rights group based in Geneva, said in a statement. "Serial rights abusers should not be rewarded with seats on the Human Rights Council," said Louis Charbonneau, UN director at Human Rights Watch (HRW). Saudi Arabia was previously on the council until 2019. China, which is under fire over its treatment of ethnic Uighurs in the far western region of Xinjiang and its imposition of a National Security Law in Hong Kong, could also return as a member.

'Missile attack on Ganja manifestation of Armenian fascism'

BAKU: President Ilham Aliyev has said that Armenia's recent attack on civilians in Azerbaijan's Ganja city using "Tochka-U" missiles is another manifestation of Armenian fascism. Aliyev made the remarks in an interview with Turkish TV channel on October 12. Ten civilians were killed and dozens others were injured when Armenian forces launched a missile attack on Ganja, Azerbaijan's second largest city that is located far from the conflict zone.



President Aliyev described the attack on Ganja as a crime against humanity, saying that this crime once again has shown that "the Armenian state is a state of terror, a fascist state". "Armenians of the world, Armenia's supporters, their benefactors and Islamo-

phobic circles will no longer be able to conceal this crime because everything is already obvious. There were statement for the press at the scene yesterday and representatives of foreign embassies who are visiting the site today

see everything with their own eyes. Once again, they see who is causing this conflict, who pursues an aggressive policy, who is committing crimes against the civilian population." Aliyev said that despite the barbaric shelling of civilians in Ganja, hours after the humanitarian truce entered force, Azerbaijan is showing patience. "After such a barbaric shelling of Ganja, every Azerbaijani is outraged and an adequate response is required. But we are giving an answer on the battlefield. We avenged yesterday's victims on the battlefield. Our attitude is this: we have never fought and are not fighting civilians. This is one of the qualities that distinguish Azerbaijan from Armenia," the president said. — DNA



ANKARA: Pakistan's Ambassador to Turkey Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi met with President of Yunus Emre Institute Prof. Dr. Şeref Ateş. Both sides agreed to deepen mutual collaboration, including through hosting exhibitions and facilitating exchange of artists as well as more people-to-people exchanges. — DNA

YFK, OIC Youth Indonesia jointly organize webinar on Azerbaijan

Apart from this Muslims in Burma and Kashmir are also victims of the aggressions. The best way to address these issues is to lie in unity and joint collaboration

DNA

ISLAMABAD: YFK-International Kashmir Lobby Group and OIC Youth Indonesia jointly organized a Zoom conference on the topic of Azerbaijan Conflict: Role of Political Elite and Civil Society on Sunday. Analysts, re-

searchers, representatives of Youth and journalists from Pakistan, Azerbaijan and Indonesia took part in the event. Mr. Syafiq Efendi, President of OIC Youth Indonesia, in his inaugural remarks said that as young people and future leaders we must think much bolder and broader and outside the box. The elections in

the US have much significance in the near future because whatever will be the final results it will have an impact on the region, Islamic world and across the globe. Islamic countries must unite and collaborate with each other especially for the conflict of Armenia and Azerbaijan. Apart from this Muslims in Burma and

Kashmir are also victims of the aggressions. The best way to address these issues is to lie in unity and joint collaboration. Mr. Tantan Taufiq Lubis - Chairman of Indonesia National Youth Council stated that I would like to tell you how Armenia and Azerbaijan can benefit from the Indonesian experience re-

garding the conflicts. While addressing the conflicts rather it will be Kashmir or international relations that have importance to resolve the issue and that are the experience of Indonesia. One will have to see the Indonesian foreign policy based on free and active relations with all countries including Azerbaijan and

Armenia. Tantan Taufiq Lubis said that we believe in peace and social justice and are pleased that the international community has started taking interest to solve the problem whether it will be from Azerbaijan or Kashmir. We hope diplomacy will finally solve the problem of Nagorno Karabakh through negotiations.

Paris hospitals near Covid saturation

PARIS: Hospitals in Paris could have up to 90 percent of intensive care beds packed with Covid-19 patients as soon as next week, the system's chief warned Tuesday, as France braces for new measures to slow a surge in cases. "It's inevitable," Martin Hirsch, the head of the 39 hospitals in Paris and its suburbs, told the Parisien newspaper.

"By around October 24, there will be a minimum of 800 to 1,000 Covid patients in intensive care, representing 70 to 90 percent of our current capacity," he said. The prospect puts more pressure on President Emmanuel Macron, who is widely expected to announce tighter restrictions in a prime-time TV interview Wednesday night. He met with top ministers Tuesday morning to evaluate potential measures for slowing a second wave of infections. In his last major TV interview, to mark the Bastille Day holiday in July, Macron ordered that face masks be used in all enclosed public spaces nationwide. Since then, they have also become compulsory on the streets of Paris.

Media reports have speculated that new measures could include curfews in Paris and other cities placed on maximum alert because of fast-rising Covid cases that are again straining hospitals. On Saturday, the number of new infections rose by 26,896 in 24 hours - a record. "Individual responsibility is 50 percent of this. We won't succeed if people don't get serious," a government source told media. Asked what he would like to see, Hirsch called for tighter work-from-home requirements and new measures to ensure social distancing. — APP

Thailand plans quarantine travel for foreign tourists

MONITORING DESK

BANGKOK: Thailand is planning to allow short-term tourists to travel to designated areas in some provinces during their 14-day coronavirus quarantine period, an official said on Tuesday. However, residents of the provinces must approve the new Alternative State Quarantine scheme before it can be introduced, said Thares Krassanairawong, head of the health service support department. Provinces that are ready to open must also make sure that routes for foreign visitors will not be used by local residents, he said. "Foreign visitors must accept travel routes set by the provinces. Most importantly, they must come from countries with low risk of COVID-19 and no local infections in the last three months," he explained. Tourists must stay in home quarantine for 14 days before leaving for Thailand and test negative for COVID-19 three days before departure. "They have to book flights and accommodation through travel agents only. Hotels where they stay must be hotels with SHA [Safety and Health Administration] standards," Thares added. Tourists will be required to use tracking devices and be accompanied by representatives of COVID-19 response agencies at all times.

Somalia army kills 11 militants

MOGADISHU: At least 11 al-Shabab extremists were killed on Tuesday by the Somali National Army (SNA) in a security operation in the southern region of Lower Shabelle, a military officer said on Tuesday. The operation started when the army received intelligence that the militants set up secret prisons in the outskirts of Barire town and the forces advanced targeting those areas, said Ahmed Hassan Ziyad, commander of SNA's 143rd Unit. "The offensive was successful, there was stiff resistance from the militants, but we overpowered them, killing 11 of them including a senior leader named Abu Abdullahi Mustaf," Ziyad said. He added that the army also freed locals who were confined by the militants in the secret prisons. In recent months, the government forces have intensified operations against al-Shabab militants in the southern regions where the militants hold swathes of rural areas, conducting ambushes and planting landmines. — APP

Briefs

Russia daily deaths hit new record

MOSCOW: Russia reported on Tuesday its highest-ever number of daily deaths and cases of people infected with Covid-19, fuelling concerns that a second wave of the pandemic is hitting the country. There were 13,868 new infections and 244 virus deaths, the government's coronavirus crisis centre said, with both figures surpassing previous records set since the start of the outbreak. With the fourth-highest infection tally in the world, Russia has recorded just under 23,000 fatalities since the start of the pandemic – a much lower figure compared to other badly-hit countries. Officials have earlier said they are only counting deaths directly caused by the virus leading critics to accuse Russia of under-reporting Covid mortality to downplay the scale of the situation. Speaking to journalists on Monday, President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov said "more advanced treatment protocols" are leading to a lower death rate. Although virus cases in Russia have been on the rise for several weeks, authorities are reluctant to again introduce strict lockdown measures.

At the start of the pandemic, Russia imposed sweeping restrictions, shutting all non-essential businesses and controlling the movements of infected individuals using a tracking app. Most restrictions were lifted in June ahead of a vote on constitutional amendments which could see Putin stay in power until 2036. – APP

Italy imposes new anti-virus curbs

MONITORING DESK

ROME: Italian premier Giuseppe Conte on Tuesday issued a new decree imposing stricter anti-coronavirus restrictions, including bans on private parties and early closures for bars and restaurants. Under the new rules, private parties in closed spaces and outdoors are banned, but the measures also include "strong recommendations" against private gatherings at home with more than six people who do not live together. The new measures came after long negotiations with the regions, as limits on private gatherings were opposed by some local governors. Bars and restaurants will have to close at midnight, while food and drinks cannot be consumed standing outside starting at 9 p.m. Discos and nightclubs remain closed. Contact sports are also banned, if not organized by associations, which can maintain social distancing rules. The decree, signed in the early hours of Tuesday, is valid for 30 days.

It also includes the recently-introduced rules that make protective masks mandatory indoors and outdoors, "when in proximity to others not from the same household." The government approved the additional measures amid a spike in the numbers of new infections, which continued to rise at around 5,000 a day in the past week. – APP

Cyprus abolishes passport scheme

NICOSIA: Cyprus has announced it will abolish a controversial passport scheme following an investigation by Al Jazeera that revealed how high-ranking politicians were willing to issue passports to convicted criminals. The interior and finance ministries said in a statement posted in Greek on Twitter that the citizenship through investment programme in its current form will be abolished from November 1. "The proposal was based on the longstanding weaknesses but also on the abusive exploitation of the provisions of the programme," Tuesday's statement said. In addition, Cypriot Attorney General George Savvidis announced it would start an investigation into possible criminal offenses. "What has been published in the last few hours by the Al Jazeera news network is causing outrage, anger and concern among the people," his statement read. – DNA

China accuses US of 'stirring up confrontation' in Asia-Pacific

Wang issued the statement on Tuesday, following his meeting with his Malaysian counterpart, Hishammuddin Hussein, during which he also highlighted China's leadership in fighting the coronavirus pandemic, and urged the Associated of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to work together to prevent "external disruptions"

DNA

KUALA LAMPUR: Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi has accused the United States of "stirring up confrontation" in the Asia Pacific, declaring as a "security risk" Washington's plan to form an Indo-Pacific alliance, seen as a strategy to counter Beijing's own growing assertiveness in the region.

Wang issued the statement on Tuesday, following his meeting with his Malaysian counterpart, Hishammuddin Hussein, during which he also highlighted China's leadership in fighting the coronavirus pandemic, and urged the Associated of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to work together to prevent "external disruptions."

Wang's trip to Kuala Lumpur is part of a tour of Southeast Asia and comes just days after US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo visited Tokyo and held a four-way summit with foreign ministers from Japan, India and Australia.

Wang likened the emerging US-led alliance to NATO in Europe and said that the US is doing could "mark the beginning of a dangerous and



slippery" step.

"What it pursues is to trumpet the old-fashioned Cold War mentality, and to stir up confrontation among different groups and blocs, and to start a geopolitical competition," he said. "In this sense, the strategy itself is a security risk if it is forced forward it will wind back the clock of history."

Wang said the US is bent on maintaining its dominance in the region, contrary to the "spirit of mutual benefit and win-win" policies being pursued by Asia-Pacific nations.

"In our view, the future of the region should be determined by the people in the region. For East Asian countries, we have the right to achieve our own stability.

We also have the right to pursue independent foreign policy."

For his part, Malaysian Foreign Minister Hishammuddin Hussein called on China and the US to "resolve to strengthen their mutual trusts" and engage in talks "to manage the differences." Hishammuddin also thanked Wang for making Malaysia a "pri-

ority recipient" of China's coronavirus vaccine, which is under development and could be available "as early as November".

While China has emerged stronger in the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic, it has been criticised for its growing aggressiveness in its foreign policy in recent months – from the deadly confrontation with India in the disputed Ladakh region to its continuing expansion of artificial islands in the South China Sea and its hostilities towards Taiwan. China has also taken punitive actions against countries, including Australia, that expressed opposition to Beijing's policy towards the pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong and the minority Muslim Uighurs in Xinjiang. The US sees the emerging Quad grouping with Japan, India and Australia as a platform to strengthen its position with regional allies towards China.

The US has also sought to boost the military defences of Taiwan, which China considers as a renegade province.

Most Asian allies have welcomed those recent actions by Washington towards Beijing, including the deployment of several warships in the South China Sea.

Tikhanovskaya gives Lukashenko ultimatum to resign



DNA

MINSK :Belarus's exiled opposition leader on Tuesday gave strongman President Alexander Lukashenko a deadline of two weeks to resign, halt violence and release political prisoners, warning he would otherwise face a crippling general strike.

Svetlana Tikhanovskaya, who maintains she was the true winner of an August 9 election, issued what she said was a "people's ultimatum", demanding Lukashenko quit power by October 25 and halt the "state terror" unleashed by authorities against peaceful protesters. "If our demands are not met by October 25, the whole country will peacefully take to the

streets," she said in a statement released in Lithuania, where she is currently based in exile after leaving Belarus following the election.

"And on October 26 a nationwide strike will begin at all enterprises, all roads will be blocked, and sales at state stores will collapse," she said. "You have 13 days."

Unprecedented protests broke out after Lukashenko claimed victory in August elections over Tikhanovskaya, a 38-year-old political novice whose husband Sergei Tikhanovsky was planning to challenge Lukashenko in the elections but was then himself jailed.

Over the past weeks riot police detained thousands of demonstrators who have reported torture and abuse in custody, prompting international condemnation and Western sanctions. Several people have died in the crackdown.

On Monday, the ex-Soviet country's interior ministry threatened to fire on protesters, marking a major escalation in the two-month standoff between Lukashenko and demonstrators.

Lebanon: Govt rejects appointed demarcation delegation

FOREIGN DESK

BEIRUT: Lebanon's government on Monday objected to the presidency's mechanism for appointing a negotiating delegation for demarcating its southern borders with Israel. The government said in a statement that it sent the General Directorate of the Presidency a reminder of Article 52 of the Lebanese Constitution. The article states: "The President of the Republic shall negotiate and ratify international treaties in agreement with

the Prime Minister. These treaties are not considered ratified except after approval by the Council of Ministers. They shall be made known to the Chamber and Deputies whenever the national interests and security of the state permit." The government said that negotiations and the assignment of delegations to negotiate should be decided "by joint agreement between the president of the republic and the head of government, and any other approach constitutes a clear violation of the constitution with the consequent results."

Turkey calls for dialogue on Aegean, East Mediterranean

DNA

ANKARA: Turkey is calling for dialogue to resolve matters in the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean regions, the country's defense minister said Monday.

"Do not test us. Let's solve whatever needs to be done through talks, through dialogue," said Hulusi Akar, speaking at a ceremony marking the start of the new academic year at the National Defense University's Air Force Academy. Turkey is in favor of good neighborly relations, respecting bilateral agreements in accordance with international law and customs in resolving all its problems, he said on developments in the Aegean, Eastern Mediterranean and Cyprus. On the other hand, Turkey has not seen such an approach from others or response to its efforts to resolve the problems in accordance with international law – DNA

Armenia committing war crimes: Azeri parliament speaker

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijani Parliament Chairperson (Speaker) Sahiba Gafarova had a phone conversation with Chairperson of the Federation Council of Russia's Federal Assembly Valentina Matviyenko, Trend reports referring to the parliament. During the conversation, Gafarova informed the council's chairperson about the deliberate shelling of the civilian population and infrastructure of Azerbaijan by Armenia. She said that on October 11, Armenian Armed Forces made a missile attack on the second-largest Azerbaijani city, Ganja, as a result of which 10 civilians were killed and more than 30 were injured, including young children. The speaker of parliament stressed that these attacks by Armenia on the civilian population and civilian objects are a war crime and a gross

violation of international law, including the requirements of the 1949 Geneva Convention. She noted that the Armenian side continues to fire at the population and civilian objects even after reaching an agreement on a humanitarian ceasefire on October 10, following the Moscow meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia with the mediation of Russia. Gafarova added that along with Ganja, the city of Mingachevir, where the industrial infrastructure and the largest hydroelectric power station in the South Caucasus are located, was also subjected to artillery and missile attacks.

The speaker emphasized that the military-political leadership of Armenia is fully responsible for the current tense situation in the region. Matviyenko expressed concern about this situation, stressing the importance of ensuring the ceasefire. Arme-

nian Armed Forces launched a large-scale military attack on positions of the Azerbaijani army on the front line, using large-caliber weapons, mortars, and artillery on Sept. 27. Azerbaijan responded with a counter-offensive along the entire front. As a result of retaliation, Azerbaijani troops liberated a number of territories previously occupied by Armenia, as well as take important, strategic heights under control.

The fighting continued into October 2020, in the early days of which Armenia has launched missile attacks on Azerbaijani cities of Ganja, Mingachevir, Khizi as well as Absheron district.

Following almost two weeks of intensive military confrontations, Armenia and Azerbaijan, with Russia's mediation, have agreed on a temporary ceasefire for humanitarian purposes, for the exchange of prisoners of war as well as bodies of the dead.

Machu Picchu reopens for one Japanese tourist

LIMA: Peru's best-known tourist site Machu Picchu has opened after months of coronavirus closure, but for just a single visitor – a Japanese man stranded in the country by the pandemic.

"The first person on Earth who went to Machu Picchu since the lockdown is meeeeeeee," Jesse Katayama posted on his Instagram account alongside pictures of himself at the deserted site. "This is truly amazing! Thank you," he added in a video posted on the Facebook pages of the local tourism authority in Cusco, where the famed site is located. Katayama spoke against the backdrop of the majestic mountaintop dotted with ancient ruins that once attracted thousands of tourists a day but has been closed since March because of the coronavirus. The Japanese boxing instructor, identified by local media as a 26-year-old from Nara, has been stuck in Peru since March, when he bought a ticket for the tourist site just days before the country declared a health emergency. He told a Peruvian newspaper he had only planned to spend three days in the area, but with flights cancelled and movement limited by the virus, he found himself stuck there for months. Eventually, his plight reached the local tourism authority, which agreed to give him special permission to visit the Inca city, reopening the site just for him. "I thought that I wouldn't be able to go, but thanks to all of you who pleaded with the mayor and the government, I was given this super special opportunity," he wrote in Japanese on his Instagram account. Machu Picchu is the most enduring legacy of the Inca empire that ruled a large swathe of western South America for 100 years before the Spanish conquest in the 16th century. The ruins of the Inca settlement were rediscovered in 1911 by the American explorer Hiram Bingham, and in 1983, UNESCO declared Machu Picchu a World Heritage Site. It was originally scheduled to reopen to visitors in July, but that has now been pushed back to November. Just 675 tourists a day will be allowed in, 30 percent of the number allowed before the pandemic, with visitors expected to maintain social distancing. – APP

Following almost two weeks of intensive military confrontations, Armenia and Azerbaijan, with Russia's mediation, have agreed on a temporary ceasefire for humanitarian purposes, for the exchange of prisoners of war as well as bodies of the dead.

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BAKU: Ambassador of Pakistan to Azerbaijan Bilal Hayee receives Irada Gadirova, an Azerbaijani historian and travel blogger. Given her interest in the rich culture and diversity of Pakistan, she was encouraged to visit Pakistan. – DNA

EU insists on UK deal enforcement powers

At an EU summit starting on Thursday, France and other fishing nations will highlight the importance of preserving quota rights in British waters

MONITORING DESK

BRUSSELS: European Union leaders have warned they will not tolerate any effort by the British government to override the agreed Brexit treaty and will insist on tough enforcement measures for any trade deal with the United Kingdom. Michel Barnier, the EU's chief negotiator, will be urged by the bloc's leaders to ensure that so-called "level playing field" guarantees for EU businesses competing with British ones have the right to take action if the UK breaches its commitments, the Financial Times reported. At an EU summit starting on Thursday, France and other fishing nations will highlight the importance of preserving quota rights in British waters, the newspaper reported. The bloc wants to secure consistent rights to fish in British waters, while Britain wants a deal in which quotas are

set each year. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson set a deadline of this Thursday for agreement on a trade deal, to coincide with the summit in Brussels. Barnier is reported as seeking a few more concessions from the UK before entering the last intense phase of negotiations on a deal, and has said that Oct 31 is a more "realistic deadline".

Britain departed from the EU on Jan 31 but remains in a transition period until the end of this year. Rules, regulations and budget payments continue until then. Both sides have said an agreement on any trade deal needs to be struck in October to ensure sufficient time for ratification. The British prime minister's office confirmed that Johnson spoke on the phone with German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Sunday, and told his counterpart that progress must be made in the EU trade talks to bridge the "significant gaps". The prime minister held

EU agrees common rules for travel restrictions

FOREIGN DESK

BRUSSELS:EU countries on Tuesday agreed common criteria to coordinate coronavirus travel restrictions, in an effort to end the confusing patchwork of national rules that has developed during the pandemic. Ministers from the 27 countries agreed the new guidelines at a meeting in Luxembourg, putting in place a common mapping system to define risk areas in the EU – but the new recommendations are not binding on member states. Under the plan, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control will publish a weekly map of the EU using a traffic light colour system to indicate the level of risk in each area.

Levels will be determined by a variety of epidemiological factors including new virus cases per 100,000 population in the preceding 14 days, and the level of positive tests. A fourth colour, grey, will be allocated to areas with not enough data. Travellers coming from a red, orange or grey zone could be required to quarantine or take a test for Covid-19, while those coming from a green zone would not face any measures. EU countries would not be able to refuse entry to people coming from other member states – which Hungary is currently doing, with exceptions for Czechs, Poles and Slovaks. The plans also include exceptions for people doing "essential" jobs as well as a common contact tracing form for travellers.

similar discussion with French President Emmanuel Macron on Saturday. Downing Street said Johnson told Merkel that "while achieving a deal in the coming days would be beneficial for both sides, the UK was also prepared to end the transitional period on Australia-style terms".

Barnier last week urged EU governments to give him more room to move on fishing rights, according to the Financial Times. The UK's chief negotiator, David Frost, said Britain was willing to discuss state aid policy commitments that "go further than you normally do in a free trade agreement". The Financial Times reported that European leaders would press Barnier to ensure any level playing field arrangements could be enforced, and that the bloc could take "interim" and "autonomous" measures, as well as "cross-retaliate" against different sectors of the UK economy.

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UK unemployment jumps to 4.5%

LONDON: Britain's unemployment rate has jumped to 4.5 percent as the coronavirus pandemic continues to destroy jobs, official data showed on Tuesday. The reading for the June-August period compared with an unemployment rate of 4.1 percent for May to July, the Office for National Statistics said in a statement. Early estimates for September meanwhile "suggest that there is little change in the number of payroll employees in the UK; up 20,000 compared with August", the ONS said. Since the start of the UK pandemic in March, the number of payroll employees has divided by a net 673,000, the data showed. "The latest batch of data show that the labour market has been somewhat weaker than previously thought and that the fallout from the Covid-19 recession is intensifying," noted Paul Dales, chief UK economist at Capital Economics research group. – APP

Briefs

Suspect Abid discloses details

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: A Lahore anti-terrorism court on Tuesday sent the prime suspect in the motorway gang-rape case, Abid Malhi, to jail on a 14-day judicial remand.

Abid Malhi, the prime suspect in the Lahore motorway rape incident, has spilled the beans on how he managed to hide from the police for almost a month before he was finally arrested on Monday evening.

"I travelled through various cities in public transport," the suspect was quoted as saying. "Me, Shafqat and Bala Misri went [to the highway] to commit robberies near Karol village," Abid Malhi said in his statement to the police, according to sources. "Misri did not proceed with us. However, Shafqat and I went towards the jungle in Karol." He said the car's flashing indicators had caught their attention and, upon seeing a woman inside, Malhi told her to come out.

He said that when the woman refused to come out of the car, he broke the vehicle's window and dragged her outside. "After robbing the woman of her watch, jewellery and money, we told her to go down the motorway," he reportedly said. "When the woman refused to do so, we took her children off the motorway, and the woman followed to protect them." Malhi then revealed that the suspects gang-raped the woman when she came down the motorway to secure her children. The suspect also revealed that he and his accomplice had fled when the Dolphin Police force arrived while firing shots into the air.

Closure of Roosevelt Hotel to be investigated

FIYAZ CHAUDHRY

ISLAMABAD: Following media reports on the closure of Roosevelt Hotel, National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Chairman retired Justice Javed Iqbal on Tuesday ordered the director-general of NAB Rawalpindi to launch an investigation into the PIA-owned asset in New York.

"The investigation will review why there was a need to close down Pakistan's national asset Roosevelt Hotel located in central New York," said a press release issued by the accountability watchdog. It also said that the bureau will investigate the reasons behind the alleged losses in thousands of dollars to the government. NAB further said it will identify those responsible for allegedly neglecting their national duties to turn the Roosevelt hotel into a profit-making entity. Last week, PIA's iconic Roosevelt Hotel announced that it will close its doors to customers permanently from October 31 due to financial constraints.

Nawaz violating SOPs, Police informed

DNA

LONDON: London police were asked to look into former prime minister Nawaz Sharif roaming the streets of the British capital with six people, in violation of the coronavirus laws imposed in the country. On Tuesday, a Twitter user shared a video of Nawaz entering a park in London with an entourage that included former state minister Abid Sher Ali. Minutes after the video was shared, Twitter user @usarxaza claimed that the former prime minister was violating UK law by roaming with an entourage of "more than six people". "More than 6 people are not allowed to be together in the UK at the moment. He is breaking the law there too," tweeted usarxaza. Soon after the tweet, Met Police's contact centre asked the user to direct message them so they can "discuss the matter further".



KAKUL: Palestinian military officers passed out from the Pakistan Military Academy (PMA) 142 Long Course. - DNA

Pakistan stands firmly for Kashmir's RSD

Dr Yusuf said that PM Imran Khan's govt was dedicated to pursuing economic security, but policy makers in New Delhi remained blind sighted by Hindutva ideology

KHAYAM ABBASI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: In the first interview by a senior Pakistani official to an Indian news outlet since India's unilateral and illegal actions on 5th August 2019, SAPM Moeed Yusuf spoke with India's renowned journalist Karan Thapar on Tuesday, saying that Pakistan stood firmly for peace in the region through dialogue but New Delhi's draconian policies towards Kashmiris had made talks impossible. He reiterated Prime Minister Imran Khan's stance that if India took one step forward, Pakistan would take two steps forward. He outlined pre-conditions necessary for any dialogue and said that New Delhi must release all political prisoners in IOJK, lift the military siege, reverse the domicile bill and stop all human rights violations against Kashmiris before

any dialogue could begin. He reminded Indian audiences that today, even pro-India Kashmiri politicians have publicly admitted that no one in IOJK was willing to live under Indian occupation anymore. Dr Yusuf emphasized that Kashmiris remain the principal party in the dispute according to Pakistan and their wishes and aspirations should be addressed in any dialogue. Drawing a contrast between Pakistan and India, Dr Yusuf said that Prime Minister Imran Khan's government was dedicated to pursuing economic security and connectivity for the prosperity of Pakistan and the region, but policy makers in New Delhi remained blind sighted by Hindutva ideology. He said India had lost the neighbourhood because of the expansionist policies of the BJP government, while Pakistan was pursuing peace in its neighbour-



hood. Responding to Indian allegations about terrorism, Dr Yusuf said that Pakistan had facilitated investigations in all cases pending in courts but India was delaying the investigations by not providing evidence in the case. He said not finding a resolution to terror cases helped India in its false narrative of terrorism. Dr Yusuf called out India for being unable to bring the perpetrators of the Samjhuta and Babri Masjid

cases, Malegaon blast case and others to justice while it accused Pakistan of delays which spoke to double standards. Taking an aggressive approach towards Indian sponsored terrorism in Pakistan, the SAPM on National Security revealed new details about millions of dollars in payments made to TTP leadership by RAW officer through Indian Embassy funds. He said Pakistan knew the names and ranks of officers in touch with terror leadership and would soon reveal Indian activities to the world through a detailed dossier based on lengthy investigations. He also revealed that India had financed anti-Pakistan terrorist groups and supported their merger with the TTP earlier this year. For the first time, Dr Yusuf also blamed India for sponsoring the heinous AFS attack in which over 100 innocent children lost their lives, saying that Pakistan had record of eight

phone calls made from India to TTP commander before the attack. He added that Indian intelligence handlers based in a neighbouring country had directed the attacks on the Chinese consulate in Karachi, PC hotel in Gwadar and the PSX attack in the last two years. He also revealed how BLA terrorists were receiving treatment in a hospital in New Delhi. Debunking latest propaganda by India on GB and Kashmir issue, Dr Yusuf said Pakistan stood by UNSC resolutions as the way forward for resolving the dispute and fulfilling the aspirations of over 8 million Kashmiris. He said Indian propaganda would not shake the principled stance of Pakistan on the Kashmir issue. The SAPM said that PM Imran Khan had directed his office to open space for the government in the region and find solutions to lingering problems, but his counterpart in India was pursuing an opposite direction.

Risk mitigation important: Asad Umar

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning Asad Umar on Tuesday emphasised that "risk mitigation" is important to stop the second wave of the novel coronavirus in the country.

The minister stressed the importance of risk mitigation in the morning session of the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC). The meeting was also attended by all the chief secretaries of the provinces via a video link.

"Actions have consequences and so far we as a nation and all stakeholders have taken right steps which helped us in saving precious lives and contain the disease spread," Umar told the officials. He also attributed the people's "proactive response" for the country's successful control of the coronavirus.

"The people of Pakistan have shown great maturity and responsibility to not only protect themselves but following guidelines to ensure other's safety and wellbeing," said the minister. He also lauded media for their "effective messaging" for behaviour change and help in reaching out to masses.

'Govt using containers to stop rally'

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) spokesperson Murrum Aurangzeb on Tuesday said the government leaders are unable to keep Pakistan Democratic Movement's (PDM) Gujranwala rally out of their minds.

The PML-N leader talked to media and said the agenda of all government meetings these days is PDM's Gujranwala rally which has completely preoccupied the incumbent regime.

Murrum Aurangzeb further said that the government is trying to not let the PDM hold the gathering and is placing containers on roads to stop it.

Pak embassy holds tourism promotion conference



DNA

JAKARTA: The Embassy of Pakistan in collaboration with the Batiq Travel Services Indonesia, held a Tourism Promotion Conference on Tuesday, in the Embassy's Compound. The Conference was planned while strictly adhering to the protocols related to Covid-19, by the Governorate of Jakarta. The event was attended by over Twenty Travel Agencies and Tour Leaders including a few firms involved in Umra and Religious Tourism. The country head of the Sri Lankan Airlines in Jakarta, also attended the event.

The Charge d'Affaires, Mr. Sajjad Haider Khan welcomed the guests and appreciated their participation in the event despite relatively difficult times. Subsequently, Mr. Khan gave a detailed briefing on Pakistan covering history, geography, economy, and most importantly the thriving Tourism Potential of the country. Mr. Khan informed the audience about the immense potential that Pakistan holds for almost all fields related to Tourism including, adventure tourism, Halal Tourism, Religious Tourism, and Mountaineering etc. Mr. Khan especially highlighted the rich religious and cultur-

al heritage present in Pakistan including Mughal Era Mosques, Forts, Shrines, Buddhists religious & heritage sites, and the Sikh religious sites including the Kartarpur Sahib. He also shared some of the recent acknowledgments of Pakistan's Tourism potential by world class Magazines and societies such as Forbes, Condé Nast Traveller's, British backpaker's society, and recently, the well-known Indonesian Travel Blogger "Trinity". The program also included a documentary on Pakistan, a Presentation on Pakistan Online Visa System by the officer in charge, and a special video message from Ms. Trinity, top Indonesian Blogger who visited Pakistan in 2019. Based on her personal experiences, Ms. Trinity gave strong words in support of Pakistan as she declared Pakistan as the best among the 99 countries that she had visited. A separate photographic exhibition of major tourist places of Pakistan was also organised in a section of the building.

Trump tests negative for coronavirus

DNA

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has tested negative for the novel coronavirus on "consecutive days," White House physician Sean Conley said Monday. The development came as Trump is all geared up to hold a campaign rally Monday evening in Florida. "In response to your inquiry regarding the President's most recent COVID-19 tests, I can share with you that he has tested negative, on consecutive days, using the Abbott BinaxNOW antigen card," said Conley in a statement. According to the statement, the president "is not infectious to others." Trump returns to the campaign trail on Monday night with a rally in Sanford, Florida, his first since he disclosed on Oct. 2 that he tested positive for COVID-19. Critics fault Trump for failing to encourage supporters at campaign events, and even White House staff, to wear protective masks and abide by social-distancing guidelines.

British Airways touches down in Lahore

LAHORE: British Airways' first flight touched down in Lahore Tuesday morning. Lahore, the city of gardens, is the second city in Pakistan to be connected to London Heathrow as the airline already flies daily from Islamabad. The airline's new service from Lahore will offer seamless transfer options from London Heathrow to Manchester, the United States and Canada. Flights will run four times per week on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, operated using a three-class Boeing 787 Dreamliner with World Traveller (long-haul economy), World Traveller Plus (long-haul premium economy) and Club World (long-haul business class) departing from Heathrow Terminal 5, landing into Lahore's International Airport.



The British Deputy High Commissioner to Pakistan, Alison Blackburne said; "I'm delighted to welcome the first ever British Airways flight to Lahore. The first of many, this new direct flight will allow thousands of people who travel between our two great nations to visit friends and family, and support increased trade links. Indeed, this is a sign of confidence in Pakistan and the best of UK Pak Dosti." Sohail Ali, Senior Vice President, Middle East and Africa, said: "It gives me great pleasure to welcome our first flight to Lahore today. We are delighted to start direct flights four times a week offering seamless travel options from Lahore to London, Manchester and the US. "Following the relaunch of services from Islamabad to Heathrow earlier this year, this new flight from Lahore reinforces our commitment to Pakistan and will help boost travel, tourism and trade between the two countries." - DNA

President apprises ambassadors of Indian atrocities

Various ambassadors designates presented their credentials to the President Arif Alvi

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Residents Ambassadors-designate of Brazil, Denmark, Sweden, Greece, Hungary and Ukraine presented their credentials to President Dr. Arif Alvi in a credentials ceremony, at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Tuesday. Felicitating the newly appointed Residents Ambassadors-designate to Pakistan, the President expressed the hope that the bilateral relations of their respective countries with Pakistan would further improve in all areas of mutual trust including the economic, political, cultural and diplomatic relations. Mr. Olyntho Vieira, Ambassador-Designate of Brazil, Ms. Lis Rosenholm, Ambassador-designate of Denmark, Mr. Henrik Persson, Ambassador-designate of Sweden, Mr. Andreas Pa-

stavrou, Ambassador-designate of Greece, Mr. Bela Fazekas, Ambassador-designate of Hungary and Mr. Markian Chuchuk, Ambassador-designate of Ukraine presented their credentials to the President.

Later, the Residents Ambassadors separately called on the President. Speaking on the occasion, the President said that Pakistan was keen to promote relations with all friendly countries in the areas of mutual interest.

The President apprised the Ambassadors about the smart lockdown policy of the Government which successfully contained the spread of Covid-19 pandemic. He remarked that Pakistan was making efforts for promoting peace

and stability in the region. The President also highlighted the gross human rights violations being committed by India against the Muslims of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK). He said that India had

unleashed a reign of terror by persecuting the minorities. He urged the international community to take note of atrocities being perpetrated by the Indian security forces against Muslims and other minority groups.

