



Islamabad POST

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Hungarian envoy plants saplings to begin his 2nd term

Indonesia, Pak stand proudly together, says Andi Bastari

Italian embassy to resolve travel issues: Ambassador



Briefs

Plantation of 10 billion trees a priority: PM

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Monday said that cleanliness of cities and plantation of 10 billion trees is government's target. Addressing Clean-Green Index Encouragement awards distribution ceremony in Islamabad on Monday, he emphasized on reforestation in Pakistan to save future of the coming generations. The prime minister said we have set an ambitious target of planting 10 billion trees, while keeping our cities clean by managing solid waste is next objective.

Bilawal condemns Safdar's arrest

DNA

KARACHI: Chairman of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari telephoned vice president of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Maryam Nawaz and strongly condemned the arrest of her husband Captain (ret'd) Safdar by Karachi police, sources said. As per details, Bilawal Bhutto said that he was shocked to hear about the arrest of Captain (r) Safdar. Making an arrest late night is against traditions of Sindh, he said. Bilawal reiterated that Sindh government was not informed about the arrest. I have directed Chief Minister of Sindh to conduct complete investigation of the arrest.

PM Imran committed to solve issues

DNA

PESHAWAR: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Syed Shibli Faraz has said that Prime Minister Imran Khan is committed to the development of the country and solving its problems. Talking to media at Peshawar Press Club on Monday, he said that the government's policies strengthened the economy and economic indicators improved. He said that government is fully aware of the problems of journalists and is working to resolve the problems faced by the media industry.

Pak a 'second home', says Hekmatyar

Foreign Minister Qureshi welcomed the delegation and underscored the historic ties of amity and brotherhood between Pakistan and Afghanistan

SAIFULLAH / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, leader of Hezb-e-Islami Afghanistan, called on Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Monday. Foreign Minister Qureshi welcomed the delegation and underscored the historic ties of amity and brotherhood between Pakistan and Afghanistan. He reaffirmed Pakistan's desire to further strengthen the close fraternal relations between the two countries. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar said Afghans think of Pakistan as their second home, a statement issued by the Foreign Office said. During the meeting, the two discussed matters of mutual interest, bilateral relations between the two countries and the Afghan peace process, the statement added. The foreign minister said Pakistan will continue to play the role of a facilitator in the Afghan peace process. The Foreign Minister emphasized that Pakistan has always supported a peaceful, stable, united, democratic, sovereign and prosperous Afghanistan. Prime Minister Imran Khan has consistently underlined that there is no military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan. The

Foreign Minister added that Pakistan facilitated the process that culminated in the U.S.-Taliban Peace Agreement in Doha on 29 February 2020 and supported the commencement of Intra-Afghan Negotiations. The Foreign Minister stressed the importance of an inclusive, broad-based and comprehensive political settlement through an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned process. The Foreign Minister underscored that all parties must honour their respective commitments and work for reduction in violence leading to ceasefire. The Afghan leaders must seize this historic opportunity to achieve durable and sustainable peace in Afghanistan. The Foreign Minister also underlined the importance of exercising vigilance and guarding against the role of 'spoilers', both within and outside. The Foreign Minister highlighted the steps taken by Pakistan to support Afghanistan on its path to reconstruction and economic development as well as for improved transit and bilateral trade relations. The Foreign Minister underlined the importance of making the return of Afghan refugees to their homeland with dignity and honour a part of the peace process.



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi welcomes the leader of Hizb-e-Islami Afghanistan Gulbadeen Hekmatyar at his office. - DNA

Global corona cases surpass 40m mark

DNA

WASHINGTON: The number of reported coronavirus cases around the world has hit 40 million, according to a tally kept by Johns Hopkins University. The grim milestone of 40,050,902 confirmed cases on Monday comes as various parts of Europe and the U.S. struggle to deal with an alarming surge in infections. The dreaded "second wave" began in August in Europe, following the relaxation of national lockdowns implemented in spring. The data shows the pace of the pandemic continues to pick up. It took just 32 days to go from 30 million global cases to 40 million, compared with the 38 days it took to get from 20 to 30 million, the 44 days between 10 and 20 million, and the three months it took to reach 10 million cases from when the first cases were reported in Wuhan, China, in early January.

PDM claims IG Sindh was held 'hostage'

"When IG Police refused to act against them [PML-N leaders] in his own home. He was arrested. And he was held hostage in the office of powers"

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: PDM chairman Maulana Fazlur Rehman claimed on Monday that the inspector general of Sindh police was held hostage and forced to register the case against the PML-N leader Captain Safdar. "When IG Police refused to act against them [PML-N leaders] in his own home. He was arrested. And he was held hostage in the

office of powers that he for four hours and was forced to register an FIR," alleged Fazl in a press conference flanked by other PDM leaders. The Opposition leaders were speaking to the media hours after the early morning arrest of Maryam Nawaz's husband from a Karachi hotel in a case filed at Brigade Police Station for violating Mazar-e-Quaid's sanctity. "Now you tell me who is

in power," asked Fazl. He added that the Sindh government has clarified its point of view and said that CM Murad Ali Shah was not informed about the action. The PDM chairman also questioned what the respect of the woman was considered in a society, saying that such treatment was not meted out to a woman in any "respectable country". Fazl also claimed that the Rangers broke in the hotel room of the PML-N leaders.

UK Chief of Defense Staff hails Pak role in peace

During the meeting with COAS, matters of mutual interest including strengthening of bilateral security and defence cooperation were discussed



RAWALPINDI: A delegation headed by General Sir Nicholas Patrick Carter, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) UK held a meeting with Chief of Army Staff, General Qamar Javed Bajwa at GHQ. - DNA

DNA

RAWALPINDI: General Sir Nicholas Patrick Carter, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) UK called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa, on Monday. Matters of mutual interest including strengthening of bilateral security and defence cooperation between the two armies were discussed during the meeting. The visiting dignitary acknowledged Pakistan Army's continued efforts for regional peace and stability particularly Pakistan's efforts for Afghanistan peace process and achievements in fight against terrorism.

Swiss envoy meets COAS

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Ambassador of Switzerland to Pakistan & Afghanistan H.E. Benedict de Cerjat held a meeting with the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa at Pakistan army's general headquarters in Rawalpindi on Monday. In a statement, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said that during the meeting matters

Continued on Page 06

Italian embassy to resolve travel issues

SAPM Zulfikar Bukhari said his government was keen to send more Pakistanis to Italy



ISLAMABAD: Italian Ambassador to Pakistan Andrea Ferrarese Monday said his government was working on a mechanism to ease documents' verification process for Pakistanis, aspiring to go to Italy. The envoy told this to Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Sayed Zulfikar Abbas Bukhari during a meeting here, a news release said. Andreas Ferrarese said efforts were afoot to ensure instant resolution of problems, being faced by Pakistani expatriates at the Ital-

ian embassy. SAPM Zulfikar Bukhari said his government was keen to send more Pakistanis to Italy so that they could play maximum role in its development. He termed the inclusion of Pakistani nationals in seasonal and non-seasonal work visa category for the year 2020-21 as a positive development. Pakistan's re-inclusion in the list of the countries eligible for seasonal work visa had begun a new era of bilateral ties, he added. The SAPM said Italy had always provided support to Pakistan during the trying times. - APP

PTA restores TikTok services

DNA

KARACHI: Chinese-owned video-sharing app TikTok has been restored in Pakistan after it assured the authorities to "block all accounts repeatedly involved in spreading obscenity and immorality". The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) said in a statement on Monday that the app has been unblocked in the country which was banned on October 9 for failing to filter out "immoral and indecent" content. The telecom regulator had said that the decision to ban the app was taken after the authority received a number of "complaints from different segments of the society against immoral and indecent content on the video sharing application. "TikTok is being unlocked after assurance from management that they will block all accounts repeatedly involved in spreading obscenity and immorality," read the PTA statement.

Hungarian envoy plants saplings to begin his 2nd term

By planting this saplings he had made an humble contribution to Govt of Pakistan's tree plantation drive 'Ten Billion Tree Tsunami' spearheaded by Prime Minister Imran Khan and Ministry of Climate Change: Bela Fazekas

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Newly-arrived Ambassador of Hungary Bela Fazekas along with Mehnaz Aziz Member National Assembly and Pakistan-Hungary Parliamentary Friendship Group planted a sapling in a Park in E 7 to begin his second posting as Hungarian ambassador in Pakistan. Ambassador Fazekas also served as Hungarian ambassador to Pakistan from 2005 to 2009. While speaking on the occasion the Ambassador said, he came again to Pakistan to finish his unfinished agenda. He told the gathering that wanted to start his second term with something solid and tangible. The Ambassador said, by planting this saplings he had made an humble contribution to Govt of Pakistan's tree plantation drive 'Ten Billion Tree Tsunami' spearheaded by Prime Minister Imran Khan and Ministry of Climate Change. 'In 2005 I was the ambassador; I traveled to Balakot, Muzafarabad and other places completely destroyed by deadly earthquake. Then I also heard that thousands of people died due to landslide. It could not have happened if there were no cut-



ting of trees and massive deforestation. Pakistan, he said is gifted with natural beauty, which he could not find anywhere else. This country has the ability to develop eco tourism but in order to develop eco tourism you have to keep the country green, which can only be done by planting more and more trees. The ambassador said, selfish people never plant trees, because they think the

tree would never give shade to them, rather the tree will give shade to their children. "I am planting this tree here because I strongly believe those who plant trees believe in the future. This tree is for the future Hungarian and Pakistani generations", he added. Ambassador said in 2020 we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the opening of Hungarian embassy in Pakistan. He



said he was keen to meet people from various walks of life during his tenure. Ambassador Fazekas also thanked the Bio Lab management for sponsoring and facilitating the event. He assured, he would do his best to further promote and strengthen bilateral relations. Mehnaz Aziz Member National Assembly and Pakistan-Hungary Parliamentary Friendship Group in her remarks thanked

the Ambassador for inviting her in the tree plantation ceremony. She said Hungary was a beautiful country adding Pakistan enjoyed excellent relations with Hungary in all spheres. She especially thanked the Hungarian government for providing scholarships to Pakistani students. - Full coverage of the event shall be published in the coming issue of CENTRELINE magazine.

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Briefs

Science labs
being setup
in merged
districts

DNA

PESHAWAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister on Science and Technology Ziaullah Bangash Monday said Information Technology (IT) and Science laboratories would be established in every education institution of merged districts. Talking to APP, he said that Citizen Facilitation Centers (CFC) were being setup in merged districts to facilitate people. He said the CFC had already been made operational in Kurram district. Ziaullah Bangash said CFCs were one stop service centers to be established for facilitation of citizens to access public services. The focus was to provide consolidated access to various services such as provision of domicile certificates, route permits, driving licenses, arms licenses, death certificates, birth certificates, divorce/ marriage certificates, affidavits, provision of Fard, mutation, character certificates, challan/ fine payments, vehicles registrations, transfer of ownership etc, he added. He said that internet mobile service would be started soon in merged districts on the demand of local youth. The advisor said Haripur Digital City was being established to compete with international market. The government was providing competitive, developed land on lease basis to a diverse range of business and technology firms in the digital city, he said. He said that in order to develop the Digital City according to the industry specific requirements, the Khyber Pakhtunkwa Information Technology Board (KPITB) is collecting feedback and requirements from all potential investors.

Connected
expressway
with Motorway:
FCCI

FAISALABAD: President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) Engineer Hafiz Ihtasham Javed has said that one expressway linking motorways passing from eastern and western side of Faisalabad is quite insufficient and another expressway must be planned connecting these motorways from the lower side of the city. Addressing an FCCI meeting here on Monday, he said that Faisalabad is strategically located in the heart of Pakistan from where road communication is available through two motorways of international standards in addition to rail and air links. He said that realising the importance of link road, the government has allowed construction of an expressway, linking M4 (Pindi Bhattian-Faisalabad) with Lahore-Karachi Motorway via industrial belt of Jarawal-Khurrianwala section. He hoped that work on this project will be started very soon providing an efficient changeover route for vehicular traffic from the upper side of the city. He said that yet another expressway linking two motorways from the lower side of the city is also imperative to avoid traffic jams in city areas. Engineer Ihtasham also pointed out drain-related problems and said that the government should plan right now to construct two major drains to flush out the domestic as well as industrial effluent from the city areas. He hoped that the government would direct the departments concerned and master planners to accommodate these projects in their future planning to avoid problems relating to drainage and road connectivity. — APP

CM for establishment
of sahatul bazaars

DNA

LAHORE: On the direction of Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar, subsidised Sahul



at Bazaars have been set up in the provincial metropolis to sell flour and other essential items at notified rates. The CM directed Additional Chief Secretary

(Local Government) Tahir Khurshed to immediately take steps for extending this facility to the whole of the province and Special Secretary Local Government has been deputed as focal person for the purpose.

In this regard, the CM stated that subsidised Sahul Bazaars would provide relief to the masses and reiterated that protection of consumers' rights would be ensured. Any artificial increase in rates would not be tolerated, he warned. ACS LG said that subsidised Sahul Bazaars would soon start working in the rest of the districts.

New Naval Commander
Karachi, Coast take charge

During the separate Change of Command ceremonies, the Admirals were presented with Guard of Honour and were introduced to the Commanding Officers of units under their respective Commands



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Vice Admiral Faisal RasuLodhi assumed the responsibilities as Commander Karachi (COMKAR) and Vice Admiral Zahid Ilyas took over as Commander Coast (COMCOAST) in separate ceremonies held at Karachi. On assumption the Commandas COMKAR, Vice Admiral Faisal RasuLodhi is now the Commander of all PN establishments and training units at Karachi. Whereas COMCOAST, Vice Admiral Zahid Ilyas is now the Commander of Special Service Group (Navy),

Pak Marines and all PN units along the Coast and Creeks areas. Karachi, Vice Admiral Faisal RasuLodhi has an illustrious career with wide ranging Command and Staff appointments. His major Command appointments include Commanding Officer of PNS TARIQ, Director Pakistan Navy Tactical School and Flag Officer Sea Training. His major Staff appointments include Directing Staff at Pakistan Navy War College, Director Naval Warfare & Operational Plans at Naval Headquarters, Fleet Operation officer and Chief Staff Officer to Command-

er Pakistan Fleet, Liaison Officer US CENTCOM USA, Naval Secretary and Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Operations) at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad. The Admiral has also performed duties as Additional Secretary-III in Ministry of Defence. Vice Admiral Faisal RasuLodhi is a graduate of Pakistan Navy War College Lahore, National Defence University Islamabad and has done professional courses from United Kingdom and Philippines. He has also attained Master's Degree in International Security & Strategic studies from United Kingdom. Before assuming the duties as Commander



Karachi, the Admiral was serving as Commander Coast. In recognition of his meritorious services, the Admiral was awarded Hilal-i-Imtiaz (Military). Commander Coast, Vice Admiral Zahid Ilyas has a distinguished career with wide ranging Command and Staff appointments. His major Command appointments include Commanding Officer PNS BABUR and PNS ZULFIQAR, Commandant Pakistan Naval Academy, Commander 18th Destroyer Squadron and Commander Central Punjab/Commandant PN War College, Lahore. He has also commanded Combined

Task Force-151 (CTF-151) at HQ NAVCENT, Bahrain. His distinguished Staff appointments include Principal Secretary to Chief of the Naval Staff, Director General C4I and Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff (Training & Evaluation) at Naval Headquarters Islamabad. The Admiral has also served as Director General Joint Cantonment Gwadar Branch at Joint Staff Headquarters Rawalpindi. Vice Admiral Zahid Ilyas is a graduate of Pakistan Navy War College and National Defence University, Islamabad. He has also done Masters in Military Operational Research from United King-

dom and Senior Naval Command Course from China. Before assuming the duties as Commander Coast, the Admiral was serving as Commander Karachi. In recognition of his meritorious services, the Admiral was awarded Hilal-e-Imtiaz (Military) and Sitara-e-Basalat. During the separate Change of Command ceremonies, the Admirals were presented with Guard of Honour and were introduced to the Commanding Officers of units under their respective Commands. The ceremonies were attended by Pakistan Navy officers, CPOs/Sailors and Navy civilians.

ANF seizes
drugs worth
Rs1.5 billion

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) seized a huge haul of drugs worth Rs1.5 billion from a vehicle during a raid at Kohat Road, Peshawar. Sources said the ANF intelligence wing conducted the raid on a tip-off. During search of the vehicle, 1722 narcotics concealed in the fruit boxes was recovered. Four accused named Khayal Matt Shah, Khayal Muhammad, Attaullah and Ahsanullah were taken into custody. The recovered drugs are said to be worth Rs1.5 billion in the international market. Earlier, on October 3, it was reported that the ANF busted a gang involved in supplying drugs to government officials and private individuals in Islamabad. ANF intelligence sources said an operation was carried out in the F-7, F-10, F-11, and G-12 neighbourhoods of the federal capital, during which seven people, a woman among them, were arrested.

Young married
women killed
by family

SIALKOT: A young married woman was brutally tortured to death by accused husband and in-laws allegedly for not bringing desired items in dowry here in Hunterpura-Muradpur locality of Sialkot city. According to police, Sidra Bibi was married off to Ali Haider a few years ago. She became mother of a girl and was expecting another child. However, accused husband Ali Haider and in-laws resorted to beating her often for not bringing their desired items in dowry. The FIR revealed that accused husband Ali Haider, father in law Muhammad Anwar, mother in law Shakeela Bibi, sisters in law Muqadas Bibi, Sadia and brother in law Usama Anwar brutally tortured the pregnant woman who succumbed to her injuries. The neighbors called the police which shifted the dead body to local hospital for autopsy. Meanwhile, Sialkot District Police Officer, Hassan Asad Alvi said that Muradpur police registered a case against accused husband and in-laws on the report of Amlat Hafeez, mother of victim. DPO said that police arrested all the accused and sent them behind the bars. Further investigation was underway. — APP

Committees for
financial support
of artists

DNA

FAISALABAD: Punjab Arts Council has constituted committees for financial support of elderly artists across the province. A spokesman of Faisalabad Arts Council said a committee had also been formed at Faisalabad division in which Assistant Directors FAC, Muhammad Imran and Amina Alam were selected as members. This committee will scrutinize the lists of elderly artists. The artists have been asked to submit their bio-data at Council office. The committee will forward the names after scrutiny to Punjab Council of Arts for extending financial assistance.

Talks with India
should be held under
UN supervision

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) President Sardar Masood Khan has said that as a matter of principle, talks with India should be held only under the UN auspices, and side by side with Pakistan and India, presence of the Kashmiris on the negotiations table is a must. He asserted that the UN supervision of the talks is essential in order to carry forward and implement the Security Council resolutions on Kashmir. In an interview with a private TV channel, he said that India had always used the bogey of bilateral talks to consolidate its illegal occupation of Kashmir and to keep the United Nations and the Kashmiris out of the negotiation process, and now it can once again use the talks as a ploy to

divert attention from its recent illegal actions in IIOJK. The AJK President maintained that since the Kashmir issue has been once again raised in the UN Security Council, the talks as a matter of principle should be held in not Islamabad or New Delhi, but in New York. However, to ensure participation of Kashmiris, these can also be conducted in Islamabad, New Delhi or Muzaffarabad and Srinagar. In any case, we will have to ensure that the talks are held within the framework of the UN Security Council resolutions on Kashmir only, he asserted. Responding to a question, he said that Pakistan's stand on talks is very clear that Kashmir is not a bilateral dispute between Pakistan and India but it is an international issue which must be resolved by the UN Security Council.

PDWP approves 5
development schemes

LAHORE: Punjab Provincial Development Working Party (PDWP) on Monday approved five development schemes of various sectors with an estimated cost of Rs. 3,229.876 million. According to official spokesman, these schemes were approved in the 11th meeting of Provincial Development Working Party (PDWP) of current fiscal year 2020-21. Provincial Secretary P&D Imran Sikandar Baloch, all Members of the Planning & Development Board, Provincial Secretaries of concerned departments, Senior Chief (Coord) Javed Latif, Assistant Chief Coordination Shahid Idrees and other senior representatives of the relevant Provincial Departments attended the meeting. The schemes included Land Acquisition for Establish-

ment of Sewage Treatment Plant (Sialkot) under Punjab Intermediate Cities Improvement Investment Program (PICIP) at the cost of Rs. 822.958 million, Land Acquisition and Resettlement Assistance for Establishment of Sewage Treatment Plant (North Zone) and Effluent Pumping Station (North & South Zone) (Sahiwal) at the cost of Rs. 657.620 million, Widening/Improvement of main Lehtrar Kotli Kuliary Road, Length 24.10 km Tehsil Kotli Sattian, Rawalpindi (Revised) at the cost of Rs. 649.463 million, Dualization of Road Jandiiala Sher Khan, Hiran Minar Road, Length 11.15 Km, Sheikhpura (Revised) at the cost of Rs. 494.682 million and Rehabilitation and Widening / Improvement of Roads in District R.Y. Khan (Revised) at the cost of Rs. 605.153 million. — APP

Akhuwat for distribution
of interest free loans

ISHEAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: A welfare and civilized society demands that the economically weak and deserving people should be handed for which the social organization "Akhuwat" has brought about a great revolution in the society through its welfare schemes which is unprecedented in the world. This was stated by Chairman Pasban Group Major (ret'd) Shah Nawaz Hassan while addressing a function organ-

ized at Jamia Masjid Pasban Haram under the auspices of welfare organization Akhuwat for distribution of interest free loans to deserving families. Manager Ehsan Elahi, Khalid Mehmood Shouke and other were present. On this occasion, checks of loan were distributed among the families of Faisalabad region. Major Shah Nawaz Al Hassan while appreciating the excellent thinking and successful welfare program of the fraternal administration in accordance with Islamic teachings and

principles said that Pakistani nation has full potential but resources shortage has hampered the economic problems for which the fraternity has made a valuable contribution which is showing successful results. He asked the beneficiaries to increase their employment by working with utmost good faith and honesty and repay the loan honestly so that others can also benefit from this microfinance scheme and stand on their own feet. He congratulated the entire team of the Broth-

erhood for their dedicated service to the people and said that the Pasban Group would also stand by them in this endeavor. The Manager Akhuwat said that Dr. Anjad Sajib dream for a self-employment scheme has come true and the process that started with the repayment of a good loan of Rs 10,000 has now reached Rs 130 billion, benefiting more than 4.5 million families across the country while amount of Rs. 7.8 billion has been distributed among 175,000 families in Faisalabad region so far.



ISLAMABAD: Canadian High Commissioner Wendy Gilmour called on Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Malik Amin Aslam. — DNA

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JORDAN-PAKISTAN ties poised for quantum leap

BEBRAHIM ALMADANI

Jordan-Pakistan ties poised for quantum leap

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LARGEST CIRCULATED DIPLOMATIC MAGAZINE

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Briefs

CTP issues traffic plan for cricket matches

RAWALPINDI: The City Traffic Police (CTP) Monday issued a traffic plan to facilitate the citizens as the road from TM Chowk to Peshawar Road and MH to Kutchery Chowk would remain closed during practice session matches of Zimbabwe Cricket Team.

According to Duty Officer CTP Headquarter Muhammad Waseem, CTP had finalized arrangements to facilitate the citizens during the matches to be played in Army Cricket Stadium Saddar during Oct 21 to 25.

He advised the citizens to use alternative route to avoid inconvenience. He said the CTP would make all out efforts to regulate traffic in adjacent areas of the Stadium where the practice matches would be played.

The CTP has issued a traffic plan for the cricket matches and facilitate the citizens, he said adding, the roads from TM Chowk to Peshawar Road and MH Chowk to Kutchery Chowk would remain closed for all kind of vehicular traffic from start to conclusion of the matches.

He urged the road users to cooperate with the police personnel performing duties during the matches. He informed that 219 traffic personnel including four DSPs, 14 Inspectors, 162 Traffic Wardens and 39 Traffic Assistants would be deployed to regulate traffic and implement the traffic plan. — APP

PAL to hold 'Iqbal Ambassador Conference'

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) will hold a day-long conference titled 'Iqbal Ambassador Conference' on the occasion of the birth anniversary of the Allama Muhammad Iqbal on November 9th.

The conference aims to explore Iqbal's philosophical and practical through academic exercise and to discuss investigative ways for its implementation in different domains of an Islamic state.

The conference would also shed light on contributions of Poet of East to Urdu literature and his role in the creation of Pakistan. According to an official, the eminent Scholars from all over Pakistan and abroad will express their views and will read his famous poems to pay tribute to the Poet of Nation.

He was the founder of Two-nation theory and gave the vision of Pakistan and his services in the creation of Pakistan was unforgettable, he stated. — APP

FAO, KP Agri Dept celebrate Food Day

ISLAMABAD: The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has joined hands with the Agriculture Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to celebrate the World Food Day 2020 with the theme "Grow, Nourish, Sustain. Together. Our actions are our future". The celebration of day was amid at to pay tribute to the food heroes who, no matter the circumstances, continue to feed their communities, besides highlighting how essential food security is for everyone to create a better and prosperous society, a FAO press release issued here on Monday said.

An event arranged in Peshawar focused on supporting global Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2, ending hunger in the world by 2030. Addressing the event, KP Secretary Agriculture Dr Muhammad Israr said the poor and the hungry had been affected the most due to the pandemic-induced lockdowns, economic slow-down and loss of income. "It is high time to realize the importance of food security especially in the wake of COVID-19 situation and recognize the efforts of every single person involved in efforts to bring food to our tables," he stressed.

Uzbekistan embassy holds Uzbek language day function

The embassy also arranged an exhibition in which handicrafts from Uzbekistan were showcased. Visitors took keen interest in the exhibition



DNA REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Charge d Affairs of Embassy of Uzbekistan COL. Saadulla A Tashmatov has said Uzbek language day is celebrated on

regular basis. He said number of Uzbek language speaking people is increasing at a fast speed.

He made these remarks while speaking during a function held at the Embassy premises to celebrate the Language Day.

The Charge d Affaires welcomed the guests. He in his brief remarks highlighted the significance of the event.

He also gave certificates and awards to teachers who have been imparting Uzbek language educa-

tion in Pakistan. The embassy also arranged an exhibition in which handicrafts from Uzbekistan were showcased. Visitors took keen interest in the exhibition.

A short video about the potentials

of Uzbekistan was also screened on the occasion.

He guests were served with traditional Uzbek cuisine, which they liked very much. Children from Uzbekistan presented short speeches in Uzbek language.



'Hunarmand Pak' resumes next week

ISLAMABAD: The National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) will restart training classes from October 26 under 'Skill for All' (Hunarmand Pakistan) Prime Minister's Kamyab Jawan Programme. Executive Director (NAVTTTC) Dr. Nasir Khan announced on Monday while saying that anti-coronavirus standard operating procedures (SOPs), will strictly be followed.

Talking to APP, he said all arrangements were finalized in this regard after which previously enrolled students were also intimated about resumption of classes by the affiliated institutions. Refuting the news item about closure of 'Hunarmand Pakistan', he said few classes under the programme were stopped in the wake of coronavirus pandemic. The executive director said the government launched 'Skill for All' project in the start of 2020 under the Kamyab Jawan Programme with Rs 10 billion seed money and set a target to train 50,000 each in high tech and traditional trades by end of the Fiscal Year 2020-21.

To a query, he said at least 37,000 young people were registered for traditional and high tech trades courses from across the country. 17,000 were enrolled from under-developed areas for imparting conventional skills such as welding, plumbing, dress-making and cooking, whereas 20,000 youth for high tech trades like artificial intelligence, robotics and cloud computing from across the country, he told. He said the enrollment of more youth for conventional and traditional trades under second phase of the 'Hunarmand Pakistan' would be started by the end of this year to achieve the set target by the end of current financial year.

Dr Nasir said work on establishment of smart labs, apprenticeship programme and opening of skill centers in the religious seminaries under the 'Skill for All' programme was also underway. The initiative was meant to increase number of country's skilled workforce by imparting six-month trainings to less developed areas youth in traditional trades, besides training to people in high technologies from across the country, the executive director noted. He stressed that youth from less developed areas were also being given opportunity to get training in high tech courses from modern institutions, located in major cities. Boarding and lodging facilities were also being provided to such students, he added. — APP

Pak, Turkmenistan must increase bilateral trade

The Turkmenistan envoy lauded RCCI efforts in promoting regional trade



FIJAZ CHAUDHRY

RAWALPINDI: A delegation led by Nasir Mirza, President, Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), called on Atadjan Movlamov, Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan and discussed ways to enhance bilateral trade relations at the Chamber of Commerce level, increase bilateral trade and exchange of delegations. The delegation included

Vice President Shahraiz A Malik, Chairman Regional Trade Khurshid Barlas and Executive Member Fahad Barlas.

Talking to the delegation, Ambassador Atadjan Mulamov said that Turkmenistan and Pakistan have deep and friendly relations. The Ambassador said that Turkmenistan desired to increase trade ties with Pakistan. Bilateral trade volume was very low and needed to be increased, he added. Pakistan could take advantage

of trade opportunities to increase cooperation in agricultural machinery and pharmaceuticals, he said. The envoy lauded RCCI efforts in promoting regional trade.

RCCI President Nasir Mirza briefed the Ambassador on the ongoing activities of the Rawalpindi Chamber and said that the Central Asian countries are big markets and there is a need to explore for joint ventures. He said there was also a need for exploring new

trade avenues, business opportunities between Pakistan and Central Asia and Turkmenistan is one of the key countries.

Pakistani traders should explore Turkmenistan for trade opportunities and added that promoting regional trade could determine Pakistan's economic direction. Bilateral trade in services, banking, tourism, halal food and agriculture can be enhanced. He also invited the Ambassador to the Chamber.

Civil society hails Zainab Alert app

ISLAMABAD: Representatives from the civil society here on Monday hailed the launching of Zainab Alert app, the move towards awareness to take timely action in case of any incident including kidnapping, missing or abuse with children. Dr Farkhanda Arange zaib Human Rights activities said that complaints would be registered through this app and will prompt the police to launch an immediate probe into the matter.

She said that launching Zainab Alert to enable both parents guardians and administration to take timely action in case of any harm done to children. It is our collective responsibility to look after children and report if we find them missing and harmed, she added.

Senior Journalist Fauzia Shahid said that the application, dedicated to a child abuse victim, helps strengthen efforts to track and trace missing children and child abuse cases.

She said that "i congratulate on launching Zainab Alert app to enable both parents/guardians and administration to take timely action in case of any harm done to children". Zainab Alert app has been integrated with district police officers throughout the country.

In Punjab 36 districts, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 33 districts and in Sindh 50 districts would be linked police officers. — APP

Ajoka Theater to start Drama Writing Course

ISLAMABAD: Ajoka Theater Pakistan will start course titled "Pakistan's Premiere Dramatic Writing Course" to develop scripts for screen and theater from October 31. The two month long course would focus on writing skills in conceiving, developing and refining writing for theater and screen and to discover and develop writing talent.

An official on Monday said that the instructor will be most famous personality from Pakistan's most published Playwright, Pride of Performance winner & former Deputy MD PTV Shahid Nadeem. He said that the course outline will shed light on that in this day and age, and with fast changing developments in entertainment industry, there is a serious lack of good, viable and creative writers.

From the intricacies of character development to the subtleties of plot progression, the course will explore developing scripts for Theatre and Screen, culminating with a performance of our writings in front of a live online audience, he stated. He said that exclusive Individual mentoring sessions will also be conducted as per student requirement. — APP

No locust in any part of country: NLCC

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Locust Control Centre (NLCC) on Monday said that due to intense survey and control operation, pest presence was not found any part of the country during last 24 hours. A press release issued by Ministry of National Food Security and Research said that the pest was completely eliminated from the effected districts of the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Sindh and Punjab.

Meanwhile, the joint teams of the Ministry of National Food Security and Research, provincial agriculture departments and the Pakistan Army were conducting comprehensive survey and control operation against the locusts in effected districts and succeeded to eliminate its threat from 61 effected districts.

Meanwhile, anti-locust survey and control operations were in progress with full force as joint teams surveyed 137,158 hectares area of effected districts during last 24 hours.

In last 6 months, the NLCC carried out locust control operation in 1,134,300 hectares areas for eradicating the pest completely and avoid its emergence. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President ICCI and chief guest Abdul Rehman Khan Vice President ICCI, M Ejaz Abbasi, Sheikh Amir Waheed President Rawalpindi Division Squash Association, Muhammad Naveed Malik, Naeem Anwar, Malik Najeeb and Engr. Azharul Islam pose for a photo with squash player at the inauguration ceremony of Junior Squash Championship. — DNA

ICCI calls for promoting sports in youth

ICCI President said that these children were the future of Pakistan as they have to take the responsibility to take the country forward towards a brighter future. He said that by focusing on sports Pakistan could produce more sports icons like Jahangir Khan, Jan Sher Khan and others

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry inaugurated the Rawalpindi/Islamabad Junior Squash Championship, which will feature 11-year, 15-year and 19-year-olds youth. The tournament was organized by the Rawalpindi Division Squash Association.

Sheikh Amir Waheed President and Naveed Malik Vice President Rawalpindi Squash Association, ICCI Vice President Abdul Rehman Khan, former President ICCI Muhammad Ijaz Abbasi, Malik Najeeb, Naeem Anwar, Engineer Azharul Islam and others were also present on the occasion. Speaking at the occasion, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that promot-

ing sports in youth was very important to protect them from drugs, video games and other negative activities. Therefore, he stressed that youth should be attracted towards sports which will promote healthy tendencies in them and enable them to play an active role in the economic development of their country upon entering into the practical life. He said that the Islamabad Cham-

ber of Commerce and Industry would fully cooperate in promoting sports activities among the children in addition to helping raise funds for this cause.

ICCI President said that these children were the future of Pakistan as they have to take the responsibility to take the country forward towards a brighter future. He said that by focusing on sports Pakistan could produce more sports icons like Jahangir Khan,

Jan Sher Khan and others. He said he wanted the Pakistani flag to always fly highest in the sports fields to make the Pakistani nation feel proud of our sportsmen.

He further said that sports tournaments including Squash should be organized on a regular basis in the country to inculcate the spirit of sports in the children, promote their competitiveness and other healthy qualities in them.

Briefs

Blind murder traced, three assassins held

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The homicide unit of police has traced a blind murder committed ten months before by unknown persons during cash snatching attempt, a police spokesman said. He said that security guard Muhammad Naseer was killed and another Rub Nawaz was injured on December 14, 2019 when they resisted three unknown persons during a cash snatching attempt. Following this incident, IGP Islamabad Muhammad Aamir Zulfiqar Khan directed DIG (Operations) Waqar Uddin Syed to ensure the arrest of the killer. He constituted a special team headed by SP (Rural) Farooq Amjad Butar including Inspector Munir from Homicide unit and others officials. This team worked hard, investigated the case following modern investigation techniques and succeeded to arrest three accused Mohsin, Hamad and Adnan while further investigation is underway from them. DIG (Operations) Waqar Uddin Syed has appreciated the performance of SP (Rural) Farooq Amjad Butar as well as his team and announced cash prizes and commendation certificates for them.

CDA for installing 3 STPs

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has stepped up its efforts to install three Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) in the federal capital to treat the water falling into Rawal Lake from the Korang River. The initiative was meant to alleviate Rawal Lake pollution, following the instructions of the apex court, CDA Director Sanitation Sardar Khan Zimri said on Monday. He said an international consultant had been hired by the civic agency to finalize a feasibility report, prepared by a local company for construction of only one STP in Bani Gala. The director said the international consultant had directed to submit the final feasibility within one month time. He said initially, the CDA was planning to set up only one STP at Bani Gala on Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) mode. Under the EPC mode, the contractor was ought to fully materialize the project on its own. Zimri said rest of the STPs at two other locations including Shahdara and Simly Dam would be established after examining the to-be built Bani Gala's STP credibility. Sharing details about the establishment of STPs in the capital city, a CDA official requesting anonymity said the idea of setting up four STPs in the outskirts of Islamabad was floated by the CDA in 2012 with an estimated cost of Rs2 billion at that time.

USF Board to provide hi-speed internet

ISLAMABAD: The Universal Service Fund (USF) Board approved award of contracts to Telenor, Zong, Ufone and PTCL worth Rs 5.11 billion through the Next Generation Broadband for Sustainable Development program and the Next Generation Optical Fiber Network and Services program. Federal Ministry of IT and Telecommunication Secretary Shoaib Ahmad Siddiqui chaired 74th Board of Directors meeting of Universal Service Fund (USF) on Monday, said a press release. PTCL is being awarded the contract of Kashmir, Ghotki, Sukkur and Khairpur districts in the province of Sindh. The Next Generation Optical Fiber Network and Services projects worth approximately Rs 3 billion is aimed at laying of 1078 km of Optical Fiber Cable to connect 140 villages and union councils thereby providing high speed mobile broadband services to an unserved population of approximately 4.7 million. Moreover, the board also approved award of contracts under the Next Generation Broadband for Sustainable Development Program worth Rs two billion to Telenor, Zong and Ufone. Telenor is being awarded the contract of Chitral, Upper Dir and Lower Dir districts in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa whereby an unserved population of around 0.7 million will benefit from high speed mobile broadband services in 648 unserved villages and an approximate unserved area of 18,212 sq. km. — APP

Foreign Secy, UN Cheif's envoy discuss Afghan peace process

On receiving Deborah Lyons here at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Foreign Secretary emphasized that international community must remain economically engaged for reconstruction and development



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Secretary Sohail Mehmood in a meeting with UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan Deborah Lyons on Monday reaffirmed Pakistan's support for the Afghan peace process and expressed commitment to foster closer bilateral relations. On receiving Deborah Lyons here at the Ministry of Foreign



Affairs, the Foreign Secretary emphasized that international community must remain economically engaged for reconstruction and development. Deborah Lyons, also the head of UNAMA media - United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, arrived in Islamabad on Sunday for meetings with senior Pakistan and international officials to discuss developments in Afghanistan and regional cooperation.

Opposition is fighting its last battle: Afridi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir Shehryar Khan Afridi on Monday accused the leadership of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) for putting Kashmir cause on the backburner and using Chairmanship of Kashmir Committee as 'bargaining chip' to PDM chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman. Addressing a press conference here at the PID along with Kashmiri activists, Shehryar Afridi shared with media the 10-year performance of his predecessor, Maulana Fazlur Rehman as Chairman Kashmir Committee, and accused him of compromising the Kashmir cause for vested interests. Flanked by APMC leader Nabila Irshad, Dr Wilayat Hussain and Dr Mujahid Gilani, Afridi said that during a 10-year tenure as Kashmir Committee Chairman, Maulana Fazlur Rehman spent Rs 463 million out of the allocated amount of Rs 474 million but did literally nothing for the Kashmir cause. "During the past ten years, the committee met only 24 times and 62 press releases were issued under the Maulana. Hence, each press release cost Pakistani exchequer 76 lakh. Only one press release was issued in two months precisely," he added. Afridi said that the Maulana did not hold even a single meeting with the foreign dignitaries to lobby on Kashmir in ten long years and when Maulana Fazlur Rehman

was supposed to visit Europe in 2016 as part of lobbying after Burhan Wani's martyrdom, Ijaz-ul-Haq had to lead a 22-member parliamentary delegation as the Maulana did not join the delegation. Similarly, he added, the Maulana was not available to present a memorandum to the UN representative in Pakistan on the first anniversary of Burhan Wani's martyrdom in 2017, and Ijaz-ul-Haq had to do the same with a delegation. "Due to consistent reluctance of the Maulana to speak on Indian forces massacre in India Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir, a sub-committee headed by Ijaz-ul-Haq was formed to deal with Kashmir diplomacy. The Maulana, however, kept enjoying perks as Kashmir Committee Chairman," he added. "The manner in which the opposition parties have been waging a political circus for the last three days by using Kashmir dispute for personal gains is is unfortunate, sad and worrying," he said. On the one hand, he added, Kashmiris are proud to bury their martyrs wrapped in Pakistani flags. "Since taking office, Prime Minister Imran Khan vowed to act as Kashmir's ambassador and has taken the Kashmir issue out of the cold and made it the focus of UN General Assembly (UNGA) and global debate," he said. He said due to effective diplomacy, the Kashmir dispute was raised in the UNGA for three times after 55 years which is unprecedented success in our foreign policy front.

VU conference on post pandemic research trends

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Virtual University of Pakistan organized a two day conference on "Post Pandemic Research Trends in Ecological Sustainability: Challenges and Opportunities for IT". Federal Secretary IT and Telecom Mr. Shoaib Ahmed Siddique was the chief guest of the ceremony. Rector, Virtual University Mr. Naeem

Tariq also attended the session along with eminent scholars from around the globe. Prof. Dr. Marcos De Donato from Mexico discussed Genetic and Genomic improvement for sustainable animal production. Prof. Dr. Mohammad Ali (TI) Vice Chancellor Quaid e Azam University, Islamabad discussed "Ecological Sustainability And Current Challenges", Dr. Rushdi Sabah Abdulkader, Assistant Professor Kirkuk

University shed light on "Plants And Environmental Challenges" Prof. Dr. Amtul Bari Tabinda, Professor, Government College University, Lahore discussed the "Impact of COVID-19 Lockdown on Ambient Air Quality of Islamabad and Lahore Cities". Prof. Dr. Syed Muhammad Saqlan Naqvi (TI) Vice Chancellor Bacha Khan University discussed "Health and Medicines in Genome and Post-Pandemic Era".



ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, Executive Member, ICCI, congratulates Shahbaz Majeed, newly elected President, Haripur Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Former ICCI President Zafar Bakhtawari, Sheikh Abdul Razzaq, Khalid Chaudhry, Nisar Mirza, Babar Chaudhry, Zia Chaudhry and Malik Mohsin Khalid are also present on the occasion. — DNA

Razak hails progress in regulatory reforms

"America's failure on Covid-19 is almost unimaginable," Summers said. "Heck, if the US had handled the pandemic as well as Pakistan, we would have saved in neighbourhood of \$10 trillion

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Adviser to the Prime Minister on Commerce and Investment, Abdul Razak Dawood on Monday appreciated the progress made by Board of Investment (BOI) in provinces and regions reforms regarding Pakistan Regulatory Modernization Initiative (PRMI). The adviser said this while chairing the 4th meeting of the Steering Committee on Pakistan Regulatory Modernization Initiative (PRMI), in the Board of Investment (BOI), said a press release issued by Ministry of Commerce here. Highlighting the role of business community in regulatory reforms, he requested business community / Chambers to work

in close liaison with the BOI and provincial governments and play their role in Regulatory Modernization in the country. Razak Dawood emphasized that with regulatory modernization, carrying out business in the country will be simplified resulting in inflow of investment resulting in growth and employment generation. The Adviser to PM on Institutional Reforms, Secretary Commerce, Secretary BOI, delegates from provinces and regions, representatives of private sector and Pakistan's international development partners (World Bank, DFID and JICA) attended the meeting (in person and through videoconferencing). Secretary, BOI Ms. Fareena Mazhar, shared the progress since the previous meeting of Steering Committee



while the delegates from provinces and regions briefed the Steering Committee about reforms undertaken by them and their initiatives on regulatory mod-

ernization. Secretary BOI Ms. Fareena Mazhar, while concluding the session acknowledged the efforts of all stakeholders and stated that federal and pro-

vincial Governments are determined to improve the business environment in the country. She expressed her gratitude to all stakeholders for their support

for BOI in PRMI project. Additional Secretary, BOI Mukarram Jah Ansari, apprised the forum that BOI has created a digital platform for PRMI. He gave a detailed review of the website on PRMI which included a library of all documents and records, progress made and future programmes, a digital catalog of mapping exercise undertaken by BOI and World Bank consultants, issues highlighted by Chambers of Commerce regarding impediments being faced by Businesses and a feedback mechanism. He briefed that this digital platform is open for all, including Govt Departments and Businessmen who can provide feedback, highlight any discrepancy in mapping, and also approach BOI to highlight sector specific issues.

WHO hands over relief items to NDMA

DNA

ISLAMABAD: World Health Organization (WHO) on Monday handed over medicines supplies, 350 blankets, medical tents and 5,000 mosquito nets to National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) for devastated and marooned people of flash flood hit areas of the country. The WHO has also provided 1,000 testing kits and medicines for flash flood hit area people. Speaking on the occasion, Chairman NDMA Lt Gen Muhammad Afzal lauded the role of WHO specially the role of its head of mission Dr Palitha Gunarathna Mahipala in providing relief to disaster hit people, said a press release.

2 held for running illegal LPG agencies

RAWALPINDI: Police on the special directives of City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Ahsan Younas conducted raids and arrested two accused for running illegal Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) agencies. According to a Police spokesman, Rattaamral police netted Noor Muhammad and Muhammad Shah for operating illegal LPG agencies. Police confiscated LPG cylinders and refilling gadgets from their possession and registered separate cases against the accused, he added. He said, police would continue their operation against the rules violators and the illegal petrol and LPG agencies would be sealed. He warned the violators to stop the illegal business immediately otherwise strict action in accordance with the law would be taken. — APP

IRSA releases 112,600 cusecs water

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Monday released 112,600 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 67,900 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1527.47 feet, which was 141.45 feet higher than its dead level 1386 feet. Water inflow in the dam was recorded as 39,600 cusecs and outflow as 58,000 cusecs. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1215.95 feet, which was 175.95 feet higher than its dead level of 1040 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 8,700 cusecs and 35,000 cusecs respectively.

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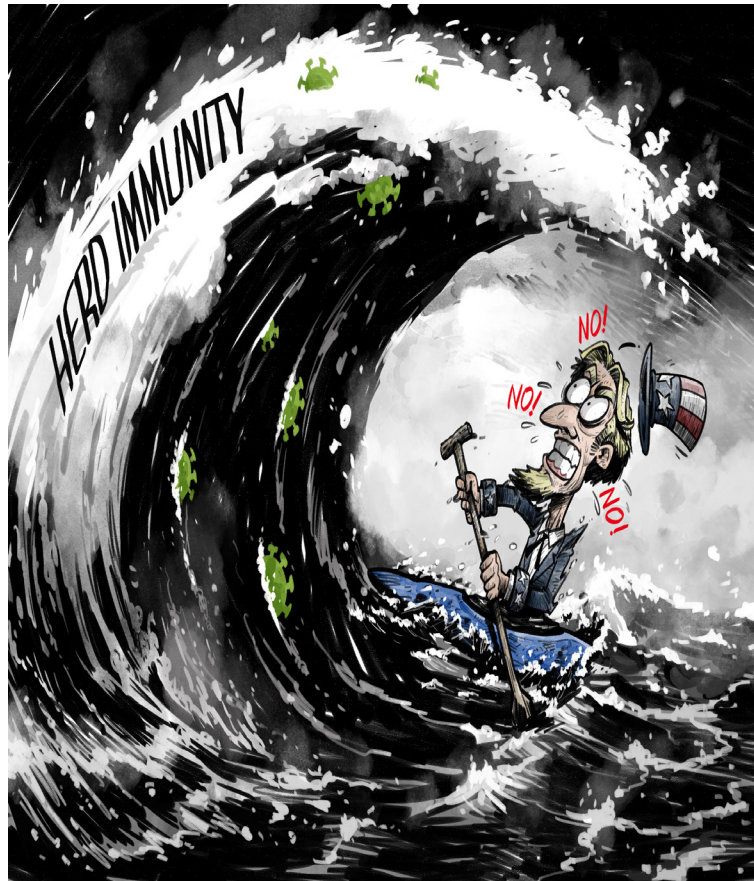
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Climate disaster

THE UN has said that climate change is largely to blame for a near doubling of natural disasters in the past 20 years. The fact is that global climate change is no longer a problem that may occur in the distant future; the catastrophe is already upon us – and it's growing at an unprecedented scale. Years of rising temperatures and melting polar ice caps have caused a massive increase in natural disasters. Famine has become more commonplace and may even have contributed to the civil wars we see around us. Coastal areas around the world may soon be inundated, creating millions of climate refugees. And yet the international community has been slow to respond. The reality also is that emissions have continued to rise by 1.5 percent annually over the last decade, which is in the opposite direction of what is needed. Four years after the Paris accord on climate change was signed, the world has unfortunately moved in the opposite direction. This means that instead of the 2C increase target, the world is on track for a 3.2C temperature rise, which could cause chaos around the world. Criminally, the current model of economic growth around the world remains fuelled by oil and gas. This is unlikely to change radically soon. Even in advanced industrial countries, investment in green technologies is higher, but still nowhere near the levels needed. In Pakistan, the PTI government has at least acknowledged just how much of a threat climate change poses to us but there is a long way to go in fixing what is broken or has been neglected. As one of the countries predicted to suffer the most due to climate change, Pakistan should be operating on an emergency footing. We will only overcome the worst effects of climate change with concerted global action but every country needs to start doing its bit now. Around the country deforestation continues apace. Already a water-insecure nation, we are projected to have an emergency on our hands in the next two decades as the Indus and its tributaries dry up. Yet, beyond lip service, the world has done nothing to prepare for the calamity that awaits.



Hafeez Centre fire

THE fire at Hafeez Centre may well have been caused by short-circuiting, but that does not mean that the electronics trade in Lahore, and indeed in the Punjab, will escape. The destruction of the stock of the largest electronics market of the city means that prices of computers and mobile phones will skyrocket, but only for the time being, until fresh supplies come in. However, as this is a capital-intensive business, with small items costing large sums, this need not be a rapid process. However, it is a safe prediction that a large number of small traders, who had just a small shop in Hafeez Centre, will be hit hard by the loss of their stock. This is not the first fire in a multi-story building in Lahore, or even Karachi, which indicates that the problem is generic, and may have the same cause or causes. Short-circuiting is avoidable, and one reason is miserliness about the quality of the wiring at the time of construction, this being one place where the builder might make savings. As such buildings are made for sale, not use, builders need to be kept on their toes by careful quality checking. Then there is the proliferation of flammable material, especially where so much packing material is used. Efficient disposal should be the responsibility of the market's traders' association, but such bodies have developed other roles: as they have become subject to electoral politics, they see themselves mostly as traders' mouthpieces. That usually means making sure that their members avoid taxes, rather than making sure that they dispose of waste properly. It is something of a mercy that the fire broke out on a Sunday, when the market was closed. That did mean that there were no casualties, and there were none of the heart-rending scenes that might have been seen if, as happened on previous occasions, some hapless shopkeeper or customer, was trapped on some upper floor by the inferno. An inquiry into the incident followed by the relevant authorities formulating and implementing building codes is necessary to avoid any such future disasters.

US Indo-Pacific alliance: A new threat to peace

Lt. Col (R) Khalid Taimur Akram



The US is portraying itself as a beacon of peace and stability, merely to maintain its dominance in the Indo-Pacific region. To garner support, US is strengthening its cooperation with its traditional allies such as Australia, Japan, and South Korea, and is also promoting the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue with Japan, India, and Australia – its key allies in pursuing the Indo Pacific Strategy

THE US presence, rhetoric and diplomacy concerning the Indo-Pacific region are of utmost importance. In the US Indo-Pacific Strategy Report (IPSR) released in 2019, the Indo-Pacific region is referred to as a mega-region that spans between the west coast of the United States of America and the western coast of India. The concept has been part of the US strategic policymaking since 2017. Indo-Pacific alliance can be viewed as a practical manifestation of the Indo-Pacific Strategy of the United States of America, which highlights the geostrategic priorities of Washington in the Indo-Pacific region. The US Indo Pacific Strategy can be viewed as an extension of the Obama administration's pivot to Asia or Rebalance to Asia policy.

The Indian Ocean holds immense geostrategic, geo-economic, and geopolitical significance and has

been a major point of struggle and interest for many states even in the past. The significance of the Indian Ocean can be measured through Mahan's Theory of Sea Power that signifies the Indian Ocean utmost importance and maintains that "he who will rule these waters will rule the world". The importance of the Indian Ocean Region for the three power claimants i.e. the US, China and India is evident through their growing involvement in the IOR.

To pursue its interests, the US has various basing facilities in the Indian Ocean along with the presence of the US Indo-Pacific Command (IPCOM) to serve its greater interests in the region. The US has advocated the development of the Indo-Pacific Economic Corridor to reaffirm the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP). Although the US is a resident and a sovereign power across the Pacific Ocean, its growing interest in the Indian Ocean cannot be denied and overlooked. The strategic interests of the US in the Indian Ocean region and its willingness to tackle shared challenges in the region have compelled Washington to rely more on its strategic proxies in the IOR that is predominantly India.

Indo Pacific Alliance According to the National Security Strategy (NSS) of 2017 and the National Defense Strategy (NDS) of 2018, the US considers China as a strategic competitor and a revisionist power. Trump administration's perspective about its increasing involvement in the Indo-Pacific region together with its containment of China policy is an evidence that the US with India's support is trying to enhance its influence in the region and is channelizing all its sources and potential alliances to counter China's growing involvement in the India Ocean as well as its claim over the South China Sea, thus intensifying its Malacca Strait dilemma.

Indo Pacific Alliance being a practical manifestation of the Indo-Pacific Strategy of the US which is directed towards countering China's rise and to revise the regional order would be the best option for the US to pursue these objectives. Through this alliance, the US is considering to further strengthen the already existing Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) which consists of Japan, Australia, India, and the US which is an informal strategic formation with the sole purpose to counter China's growing involvement in the Indian Ocean region which for many is the practical manifestation of China's "String of Pearls" policy in the form its naval presence in Pakistan, Djibouti, Hambantota in Sri Lanka, the Maldives and many others.

The US is portraying itself as a beacon of peace and stability, merely to maintain its dominance in the Indo-Pacific region. To garner support, US is strengthening its cooperation with its traditional allies such as Australia, Japan, and South Korea, and is also promoting the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue with Japan, India, and Australia – its key allies in pursuing the Indo Pacific Strategy. The US demands its allies India, Japan, and Australia to equally contribute in the pursuit of security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region and to protect against US' interests against what it perceives as the 'common threat' - China.

The US administration is now keen to implicitly exhibit China as a competitor. The Trump administration's Indo-Pacific policy can be viewed through the prism of US affirmation to endure economic and strategic stability in the in the region and for that, the US is pursuing active partnership and cooperative relations with its allies. To strengthen their efforts and to adopt a prolific

policy to achieve their objectives all the partners are actively pursuing coordinated policies and strategies.

Not only the US, its allies are also seeking security assurances from the US so that in case of any aggression against them the US must extend support. Furthermore, together with the US support they are aiming to develop a joint combat force which will enable them to adopt credible deterrent posture against their adversaries. Practically, the US has already started the projection of its power in the Indian Ocean region as well as in the Pacific Ocean region predominantly in the South China Sea and in Taiwan Strait where the US is carrying out the Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPs), which involves various strategic allies of the US, especially India.

The major Allies and their stakes in the Indo-Pacific Region

The geographical context of the Indo-Pacific Alliance refers to the increased linkages between the littoral states of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. China's swift and enduring economic and strategic rise is a matter of concern for the potential alliance between India, US, Japan and Australia. Japan is an important strategic ally of the US in the Asia-Pacific region. For Japan this alliance will be the best opportunity to deal with its issues particularly with China over the Islands in the East China Sea and also to cater China's growing economic and military potential in the Asia Pacific region.

India has always been a great supporter of US' Indo-Pacific Strategy and the reason is well known. It interprets the idea of this alliance as a way to enhance maritime influence. For India this alliance will provide ample opportunities to enhance its political, economic, and military cooperation with the United States of America and also to promote its economic and strategic interests in East and Southeast Asia. This will enable India to increase its influence in garnering the international support as well. Furthermore, linking with the US Indo-Pacific Strategy, India is considering to complement its Act East policy, thereby, promoting its strategic goals without compromising its strategic independence. Australia's willingness to join this Indo-Pacific alliance can be viewed in the context of enhanced trade linkages between the US and Australia. Australia though wants to increase its influence in South East Asia yet its main focus is to achieve economic benefits. While discussing the US Indo Pacific Strategy one cannot overlook the Potential of Southeast Asian countries which is a link between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. Due to their geostrategic location, these countries will provide great support to the US to materialize its intentions vis a vis the Indo Pacific region. However, the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries are extremely cautious regarding the US ambitions especially when Trump has continued to show lack of interest in the ASEAN summit.

US Interests

The trajectory of the US policymaking pertaining to the Indo-Pacific region solidifies this claim that through this strategic alliance, the US is intending to enhance its dominance and also to serve its strategic interests in the region. The US withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement has also made it difficult to understand that what the US is aiming to do. However, the US has promised to invest approximately 113 million dollars to develop technology, ener-

gy and infrastructural sectors, which will be according to many international experts, conducive for promoting regional integration and development. If the US is successful in establishing its economic and strategic influence in the region, it will not be a good news for China, which is already having tensions with other regional countries over islands in East and South China Seas. Here China needs to adopt a vigilant policy to counter US strategic interests and increased involvement in the Indo-Pacific Region.

The US is also enhancing its security cooperation with Pacific countries like the UK, Canada, and France. Moreover, the US is continuously widening its engagement with India to improve its diplomatic, economic, and security relations. Having a common regional as well as Global competitor China is a major stimulating factor between the US and India in enhancing their cooperation. The US is aiming at offsetting the Chinese-led Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to cater China's growing involvement and influence in both the Indian Ocean as well as the Pacific Ocean region. The policymakers in Washington are focusing more on defaming BRI by Partnering with regional players, for instance, India, Japan, and South Korea to replace it. For instance, the Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development (BUILD) Act President introduced by President Trump in 2018 is aiming at developing the US International Development Finance Corporation to invest in various developing countries in the Indo Pacific region, thus enhancing US presence in the region.

In the meanwhile, NATO's sidelining policies vis a vis the US overextended military involvement though seems shocking for Pentagon, but realistically the US is already in a transitional phase where it is in the middle of its face-saving by planning its withdrawal from Afghanistan. Skeptics are of the view that through putting emphasis on this alliance, President Trump is making its position strong for the coming US presidential elections. For many, this will serve as a wild card for Trump to be reelected as the President of the US in the upcoming elections scheduled to be held in November this year.

The Indo Pacific Alliance: A threat to regional stability The US Indo-Pacific strategy and the concept of Indo-Pacific alliance are purely China-centric. The US is using indirect approaches such as trade wars, global supply chain disruptions, technology transfer blockages, diplomatic and military coercion, sanctions are few of the steps taken by the US to disrupt China's global expansion. Yet the US does not seem to be successful so far. There are prospects that this alliance will disrupt the regional security and stability.

The regional states will face a greater threat to their security and economic stability due to the power tussle between the existing hegemon the US and emerging economic power China. The power competition between these two superpowers has the potential to destabilize the regional peace and if both opted to go for the war then the consequences would be catastrophic and unbearable for the regional countries. So, it is important for the US to rethink its policy vis a vis Indo Pacific region because if the tensions between Beijing and Washington escalated it will definitely turn into a disastrous conflict that will have catastrophic implications for the regional stability in particular and world peace in general.

– The writer is an Executive Director at Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad

The government will not fall from the opposition!

Attiya Munawer



Although the PPP wants to move forward in politics by forgetting the bitterness of the past, but it does not forget to exercise caution in future events

THE opposition is going to launch an anti-government movement from the platform of PDM. Pakistan Democratic Movement is an alliance of different ideological political parties. The nature of complaints of each political party from the present government is also different. However, the opposition has joined the alliance. The main reason for the differences between major parties PPP, PML-N and JUI-F is that in the last election their victory was turned into defeat by some unseen forces, that's why Nawaz Sharif said in his speech: We have no grievances against Imran Khan, but with those who imposed them. The opposition seeks redressal of its grievances, in this regard, after the failure of all reconciliation efforts; the path of anti-government movement was taken. The government can be sent home constitutionally with a no-confidence motion or by resigning from the assemblies, but the PDM seems to be in a dilemma.

In fact, the PPP has no complaints against the present government, which the PML-N and the JUI have. PPP has won the last election in Sindh with great difficulty, so they do not want to lose the government by resigning; they have fewer complaints from the Election Commission and are more interested in saving themselves with their corrupt earnings. PPP rarely speaks against the Establishment, even if something is said; its tone is lighter than that of the PML-N. There is also a historical reason for this that a few years ago when Nawaz Sharif was the Prime Minister, Asif Ali Zardari had made a strong statement against the Establishment and after making the statement Asif Ali Zardari went to

Islamabad to meet Mian Nawaz Sharif but he refused to do so. This meant to convince the establishment that he disagreed with Asif Ali Zardari's statement regarding the establishment. Asif Ali Zardari was disappointed because Nawaz Sharif did not give him time to meet and left for America a few days later.

Although the PPP wants to move forward in politics by forgetting the bitterness of the past, but it does not forget to exercise caution in future events. Asif Ali Zardari has repeatedly recalled the misdeeds of PML-N. However, at the moment, the opposition parties have been forced to come together on the platform of PDM. The PDM's agenda is to overthrow the government, the PML-N is ready to resign, while Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman of the JUI-F is already on all fours, but the real problem is with the PPP. If it resigns from the assemblies for holding mid-term elections and the government of Sindh province falls out of his hands, is it necessary that mid-term elections be held, and if so, will it get the government of Sindh province again? That is why PPP does not talk about resignations, while other parties keep saying that resignation is our last option, before that the government will leave. It is unknown what magic wand PDM will use to get rid of the present government.

The question on everyone's mind is how successful will the opposition meetings be and will the PDM movement against the government be successful? No doubt rising inflation has caused unrest among the people. The government seems to have failed to control inflation, yet people are not ready to try the same politicians again, opposition should try as much as it

wants to deceive the people by chanting the tune of inflation. They are not ready to give in to the deception, so the success of the PDM meetings or the pressure of the movement is not going to fall the government, in this regard, Sheikh Rashid is right to say that the big sit-ins and movements of the past failed to overthrow the government, then how will the PDM movement succeed in overthrowing the government?

The people are well aware that the personal agenda of the PDM is to overthrow the government. They have come not to save democracy, but to endanger it. The opposition wants to gain power instead of the people. And democracy can be saved only by getting people out of their misery & problems, while people have never been the priority of the opposition leadership. The opposition leadership is not worried about inflation, unemployment and people's problems; they are worried about holding meetings and overthrowing the government because if the government does not fall, they will have to go behind bars. Such meetings and rallies devoid of love of people can do no harm to the occupants of the seats, temporarily stirring occurs, and then mutual affairs with the ruling forces are settled. In the last six or seven years, a large section of the people has come to know why political movements and rallies are held. The day when the majority of the people find out, if so, then the real threat will be to the power of the incumbents. If democracy is in jeopardy, then politicians are also responsible for it. As long as political leaders continue to wield the knife of democracy to achieve their goals, democracy can never be secure and strong.

Briefs

Europe tightens virus curbs

BRUSSELS: A raft of European nations including Italy and Belgium took desperate new measures on Monday to try to combat a second wave of coronavirus infections as the worldwide case-load topped 40 million.

The latest global milestone came just hours after the number of people who have died from Covid-19 passed 250,000 in Europe, according to an AFP tally, as the pandemic rages across much of the continent.

Many governments are seeking to avoid the full-on lockdowns imposed in the first wave as they battle to keep their economies going but in some countries, people are chafing against the new restrictions on daily life. In Belgium, where hospitalisations rose 100 per cent in just the last week, bars and restaurants were closed on Monday for a month and a curfew will be reinforced overnight.

"Managers, chefs, dish-washers, everyone is suffering," Angelo Bussi said as he put the key in the lock of his Brussels restaurant late Sunday. "We don't feel like anyone cares. It breaks my heart," he told AFP before shrugging and walking off into the night. "Ah, well there we are, see you in a month."

Japan, Vietnam join hands on S-China Sea

TOKYO: Japan and Vietnam on Monday agreed to join hands and cooperate on regional issues, including disputed South China Sea, local media reported.

Speaking to reporters along with his Vietnamese counterpart Nguyen Xuan Phuc in Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga called Vietnam a "cornerstone" of efforts to realize a "free and open Indo-Pacific" and vowed Japan's continued contribution to "peace and prosperity in the region", according to Kyodo News Agency. Suga, who arrived on his first overseas trip since taking office last month, said he agreed with his Vietnamese counterpart on export of military equipment and technology, including patrol planes and radar, to Vietnam. According to Suga, these latest equipment would help improve surveillance capabilities of Vietnam. Hanoi also has a dispute with China over the South China Sea. Competing claims of territorial sovereignty over islands and smaller features in the South China Sea have been a longstanding source of tension and distrust in the region. — APP

Over 80 people kill in Vietnam

WEB DESK

HANOI: Heavy rains, floods and landslides have killed nearly 84 people in Vietnam, local media reported on Monday. Heavy rains lashed the central parts of the Southeast Asian nation, resulting in human losses. At least 38 people are still missing, Vietnam News Agency reported. The deceased also include search-and-rescue workers.

At least 13 officials and soldiers were killed by a landslide in Thua Thien Hue province, while on their way to the Rao Trang-3 hydropower plant. Vietnam's Office of the Steering Committee on Natural Disaster Prevention and Control said 52,933 houses were submerged, while 24,734 were seriously damaged.

Over 107,500 hectares of rice and food crops were damaged by the floods, while more than 461,000 cattle and poultry were dead or swept away in the raging waters. The landslides and floods also damaged 12 national highways and local roads. Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc launched a nationwide campaign to raise funds for poor households and flood victims. Heavy rains have been pelting Vietnam since Oct. 10. The Southeast Asian country is bracing for its seventh typhoon — Nangka — this year. Meteorological officials have predicted continuous rainfall in the region, at least until Oct. 20, due to low pressure in the north of the South China Sea, also known as the East Sea in Vietnam.

'Armenia leaders could be tried for war crimes'

Armenian forces bomb civilians, and that is a 'war crime' according to the Geneva Convention, Armenia is a state that does not even respect the law of war, "Turkish speaker said



DNA

BAKU: Turkey's Parliament Speaker Mustafa Sentop, who is in Azerbaijan on a three-day official visit to hold talks on the ongoing Upper Karabakh conflict, said on Monday that Armenia is committing war crimes and its leadership could be tried by the International Criminal Court (ICC). "Armenian forces bomb civilians, and that is a 'war crime' according to the Geneva Convention," he said. Armenia is a state that does not even respect the law of war. So, it would be absurd

to expect that it would respect the cease-fire." Relations between the two former Soviet republics have been tense since 1991, when the Armenian military occupied Upper Karabakh, an internationally recognized territory of Azerbaijan. Fresh clashes erupted on Sept. 27, and Armenia has since continued its attacks on civilians and Azerbaijani forces, even violating humanitarian cease-fire agreements. A second cease-fire went into effect Saturday midnight (2000GMT) after the Oct. 10 truce — meant to allow an exchange of prisoners and the recovery of bodies — and was

breached hours later by Armenian missile attacks on Azerbaijan's city of Ganja. Turkey has supported Baku's right to self-defense and demanded a withdrawal of Armenia's occupying forces. On the contrary, Sentop said: "Azerbaijan abides by the international law and the war ethics. It is just using its right to self-defense by the 51st article of the Charter of the United Nations. Azerbaijan's army only fights with the military targets." He added that it was the responsibility of the co-head states of the OSCE Minsk Group to solve the dispute fairly "but they are donat-

ing arms to Armenia." The OSCE Minsk Group — co-chaired by France, Russia and the US — was formed in 1992 to find a peaceful solution to the conflict, but to no avail. "This is the reason this problem is lingering on for the last 30 years. It is because they do not want to do so," he said. Reiterating that Azerbaijan-Turkey ties are unique, Sentop said the "one nation, two states" slogan is not hollow, and it is evident from bilateral cooperation in every field. "Our bonds will last forever," he asserted. "We support Azerbaijan

not only because of our bonds, but because Azerbaijan is right. Upper Karabakh has never been a separate place from Azerbaijan." He added: "Karabakh is a territory of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan is right both in terms of history and international law. The United Nations Security Council has decisions to end the occupation, unconditionally. In all decisions of international organizations, Armenia is reported to be an occupier." The speaker, along with his delegation of deputies from different parties, also called on Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev.

UK tells firms to brace for no-deal Brexit

FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: The United Kingdom is urging businesses to step up preparations for an exit from the European Union without a trade deal when transitional arrangements end, telling them in a campaign that "time is running out". Talks between the UK and EU on a trade deal ended in recrimination last week, with both sides saying the other needed to compromise.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said on Friday there was no point in continuing discussions and it was now time to prepare for an exit without a trade deal. Senior minister Michael Gove, however, said on Sunday the door was still ajar for talks to continue.

Johnson and Gove will hold a call with business leaders this week, the government said, while 200,000 traders will receive a letter setting out new customs and tax rules. "Make no mistake, there are changes coming

in just 75 days and time is running out for businesses to act," Gove said in a statement. "It is on all of us to put in the work now so that we can embrace the new opportunities available to an independent trading nation with control of its own borders, territorial waters and laws." The British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) said the government was responsible for any lack of preparation on the part of business. "Facing the triple threat of a resurgent coronavirus, tightening restrictions and a disorderly end to the transition period, it is little wonder businesses are struggling to prepare," BCC director-general Adam Marshall said.

"Many firms will be tired of posturing, cliff edges and deadlines, while others are still grappling with fundamental challenges as a result of the pandemic." He said a deal was still possible. "Much may change for business at year-end, but a deal would give firms more clarity so that they can plan and adjust."

12M kids out of school due to virus

WEB DESK

YAOUNDE: Twelve million children have been forced out of school in the wake of the novel coronavirus pandemic, as well as widespread conflict, across Africa's Central Sahel region, a humanitarian group said Monday. In a statement, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) said children had missed up to four months of school across Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger due to COVID-19 restrictions, while 776,000 could not attend school the entire year due to insecurity in the region.

"Children are in the midst of a dual health and security threat in the Central Sahel. All the 40,000 schools in the region were forced to close because of the pandemic, pushing students from pre-school to secondary levels out of class in an area where access to education is often already hampered by growing insecurity, repeated displacement and poverty," the statement quoted Maureen Magee, the Regional Director of NRC in Central and West Africa, as saying.

'Armenia continues to attack civilians'



DNA

BAKU: The conflict unleashed by Armenian continues and Armenian continues to attack Azerbaijani civilians, cities, and villages, Assistant to the President of Azerbaijan, Head of Foreign Policy Affairs Department Hikmat Hajiyev said, Trend reports. Hajiyev made the statement during a press briefing held on Oct. 19.

He noted that even hospitals schools and kindergartens are also not spared by the Armenian armed forces. "As a sign of goodwill Azerbaijan agreed to a humanitarian ceasefire regime, however right after the agreement was reached Armenian armed forces launched missile attack on Ganja, second largest city of Azerbaijan. Armenia hit the residential area in Ganja, the city which is far away from

the conflict zone. No military facilities, no military object are placed in this city," Hajiyev said. Hajiyev also noted that Armenian armed forces attacked Azerbaijani Mingachevir, Khizi which are near the Azerbaijani capital city of Baku.

"Armenia behaves and acts in an irresponsible manner, far away from rules of interstate relations. Armenian armed forces are fighting against Azerbaijani civilians, including babies, children. Thus, taking into consideration these actions Armenia cannot position itself as a defender of human rights as it attacks the civilian population of Azerbaijan," he said. Hajiyev added that these actions of Armenia cannot break the will of the Azerbaijani people and Azerbaijani people continue to demand justice, i.e. liberation of occupied territories.

Kashmir solidarity matches played

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: 19 October 2020: Kashmir sidity Boys and Girls friendly matches were played at Iqbal Stadium in collaboration with Divisional District District Sports Departments and Jugnu Sports Club Pakistan. Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali hit the cricket ball and inaugurated the matches. Divisional Sports Officer Tariq Nazir, District Sports Officer Sajida Latif, President Jugnu Club Pakistan Nasira Kafeel, Patron General Rana Iftikhar, Caretaker Iqbal Stadium Naveed Nazir, Coordinator Atif Nomi Malik, President Futsal Association Hafiz Azhar Mahmood besides spectators were also present. In connection with Solidarity Kashmir, T10 match was played between girls, T20 between boys and fistal match between boys were played. Deputy Commissioner appreciated the efforts of the organizers to arrange solidarity friendly matches and said that youngsters expressed full solidarity with Kashmiries and has given a clear message that they are with Kashmiris at every turn and will not leave till Kashmir's independence. The Deputy Commissioner appreciated the excellent sportsmanship of the players and said that sports instills discipline in the youth and the quest for advancement. The district administration will continue to organize sports and other competitions including cricket. He also announced cash prizes for the teams and distributed shields of appreciation among the organizers. President Jugnu Sports Club Pakistan Nasira Kafil thanked Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali for his visit and appraised him of the performance of Jugnu Club.

Swiss envoy meets COAS

From Page 01 of mutual interest and regional security situation were discussed. The ISPR said that the visiting dignitary appreciated the bilateral relations enjoyed between Pakistan and Switzerland and pledged to further improve the same. The Switzerland ambassador acknowledged Pakistan's contribution for conflict prevention in the region, the ISPR added.

New round of UN-hosted Libya talks begin

DNA

GENEVA: The military track of the intra-Libyan negotiations resumed on Monday with a 5+5 Libyan Joint Military Commission (JMC) meeting in Geneva under the acting UN special envoy Stephanie Turcos Williams. The meeting began with the playing of the Libyan national anthem, followed by opening remarks by Williams and the heads of both delegations. The work of the 5+5 JMC, the security track, is one of the three intra-Libyan tracks on which the UN support mission (UNSMIL) is working to try to bring peace to the North African country. The others are economic and political tracks, which emerged from the 2020 Berlin Conference on Libya at the end of January, said the UN. These tracks were endorsed by Security Council Resolution 2510 of 2020, which called on both parties to reach an agreement for a permanent cease-fire to their years' long conflict. The second round of the UN-sponsored talks on Libya, between the warring sides, ended in Geneva on Feb. 23.

"On this occasion, UNSMIL appreciates the leadership of both parties for facilitating this round of talks. "It also thanks to the members of both delegations for traveling to Geneva during these unusual conditions due to the COVID-19 pandemic," the UN said in a statement. The UN said that the launch of this round of talks was marked by "in-person meetings" between the delegations of the two conflicting parties in Libya. The deliberations of this round will continue until the 24th of this month. UNSMIL hopes that the two delegations will solve all outstanding issues to achieve a complete and permanent cease-fire across Libya, said the UN.

SCO presents cultural, sports events plan

This year, due to the epidemiological situation, the SCO Secretariat and the People's Government of Yunnan Province made a decision to hold the 5th Kunming Marathon on December 6 in an online format, said Vladimir Norov

DNA

From yoga and boxing to a drawing competition. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization or SCO presented programs of cultural and sports events for the next year in Beijing. The organization had to be creative due to the pandemic and switched most of the competitions and performances to the online format. Organizers assured that this will not make it less spectacular. On December 6, thousands of athletes from dozens of countries will go to the marathon, each of them from their homeland. "This year, due to the epidemiological situation, the SCO Secretariat and the People's Government of Yunnan Province made a decision to hold the 5th Kunming Marathon on December 6 in an online format. Professional athletes and running enthusiasts from all over the world can take part in our marathon via a special application, which will be available online in Chinese, Russian and English languages," said Vladimir Norov, Secretary-General of the Shanghai Coopera-

tion Organization. The Shanghai EXPO of arts will be held in December for the 24th time, presenting paintings of children

who took part in an online exhibition. Participants from 15 SCO member states have previously submitted more than 500 works

to the competition. Moreover, the organization will mark next year its 20th anniversary on a grand scale. It plans to hold a

number of events, including the Forum on Traditional Chinese Medicine, film festivals and student football tournament.



Briefs

Chinese soldier captured in Ladakh

WEB DESK

BEIJING: The Indian army says it has apprehended a Chinese soldier after he strayed across a contested de facto border in the western Himalayan region where both countries have amassed thousands of troops following a deadly clash in June. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) soldier was captured in the Demchok area of eastern Ladakh and would be returned after the completion of formalities, the Indian army said in a statement on Monday. "The PLA soldier has been provided medical assistance including oxygen, food and warm clothes to protect him from the vagaries of extreme altitude and harsh climatic conditions," the statement said. The PLA has yet to issue a statement on the matter. The nuclear-armed neighbours have been locked in a months-long border confrontation in the Ladakh region, with troops killing each other in hand-to-hand combat and firing shots in the air. The standoff began in May and escalated in June to the deadliest violence between the two sides in decades. Twenty Indian soldiers were killed and dozens of others injured. China is believed to have also suffered casualties but has not given any details.

After that clash, the two countries partially disengaged from the site in Ladakh's Galwan Valley and at least two other places, but the crisis has continued in at least three other areas, including the glacial Pangong Lake.

12 bodies found in Libya mass graves

WEB DESK

TRIPOLI: Twelve unidentified bodies were found in mass graves in the Libyan city of Tarhuna, south of the capital, Tripoli. The bodies, found on Sunday, were recovered from the newly discovered mass graves, Abdul-Aziz Jafri, a spokesman for the General Authority for Research and Identification of Missing Persons, told Xinhua news agency. A fact-finding mission to Libya was established by the United Nations' top rights body in June after prosecutors from the International Criminal Court said that mass graves discovered recently may constitute war crimes. At least eight mass graves were discovered at the time, in an area retaken by Libya's internationally recognised Government of National Accord (GNA) from renegade military commander Khalifa Haftar's forces. According to the Tripoli-based GNA, most of the graves were found in Tarhuna, Haftar's last stronghold in western Libya.

IMF calls for 'action' in virus-hit MENA region

DUBAI: The IMF on Monday urged Middle East and North African countries to accelerate reforms and diversification efforts as the energy-rich region faces unprecedented challenges due to the coronavirus and low oil prices. In its latest regional economic outlook report, the International Monetary Fund projected the economies of the MENA region to shrink by five percent this year compared with a July estimate that they would contract by 5.7 percent. The region was expected to suffer its worst economic performance since 1978 when it was convulsed with unrest and shrank by 4.7 percent, according to World Bank data. "We should look at what is happening today as a call for action, and also as an opportunity to stimulate the transformation of the economy and create more opportunities, especially for the youth," Jihad Azour, the IMF's Middle East and Central Asia director, told AFP. "We expect that both growth and unemployment to be affected this year, and overall this crisis could bring growth down by five percent as well as also unemployment could go up by five percent." Years of devastating conflicts in several Arab countries - including Syria, Yemen, Iraq and Libya - have already battered their economies and created widespread poverty. - APP



ABUJA: Senators from Pakistan visiting Nigeria to take part in a conference. - DNA

Ersin Tatar elected new Turkish Cypriot President

With all of the ballots counted, the Ankara-backed Tatar secured 51.74 percent of the vote on Sunday, ahead of the incumbent Mustafa Akinci, at 48.26 percent, according to official media

DNA

NORTH NICOSIA: Right-wing nationalist Ersin Tatar has won a leadership runoff vote in the self-declared Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). With all of the ballots counted, the Ankara-backed Tatar secured 51.74 percent of the vote on Sunday, ahead of the incumbent Mustafa Akinci, at 48.26 percent, according to official media. Tatar, who favours stronger ties with Turkey, had won 32.5 percent of the vote in last week's first round, with Akinci closely following with 29.84 percent in a vote marked by low turnout. Tatar appears to have benefited from a higher turnout in the runoff. He managed to rally sup-

porters from the approximately 200,000-strong electorate who may not have voted in the first round. In a victory speech to his supporters, Tatar, who controversially received the open backing of Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan during the election campaign, thanked the Turkish leader and said: "We deserve our sovereignty - we are the voice of Turkish Cypriots. "We are fighting to exist within the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, therefore our neighbours in the south and the world community should respect our fight for freedom ... because we deserve it." The TRNC is recognised as an independent state only by Turkey. Other countries consider it part of Cyprus. The island's internationally-recog-



nised government has its seat in the Greek Cypriot south and is a member of the European Union. Cyprus has effectively been partitioned since 1974 when Turkish troops seized its northern third in the wake of an Athens-backed coup by Greek Cypriots seeking union with Greece. Akinci, 72, supports the long-stand-

ing, United Nations-backed efforts to reunite the island as a "bizonal, bicomunal federation" after the successful conclusion of negotiations, while Tatar, 60, backs separate sovereign administrations. A first test for the winner will be a meeting with Greek Cypriots and Cyprus "guarantors" - Greece, Turkey and Britain - that UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is expected to call soon. The aim will be to figure out if there's enough common ground to restart dormant peace talks. Nearly 50 years of UN-facilitated attempts at achieving reunification based on a federal framework have failed. Ahmet Sozen, the chairman of the department of political science and international relations at the Eastern Mediter-

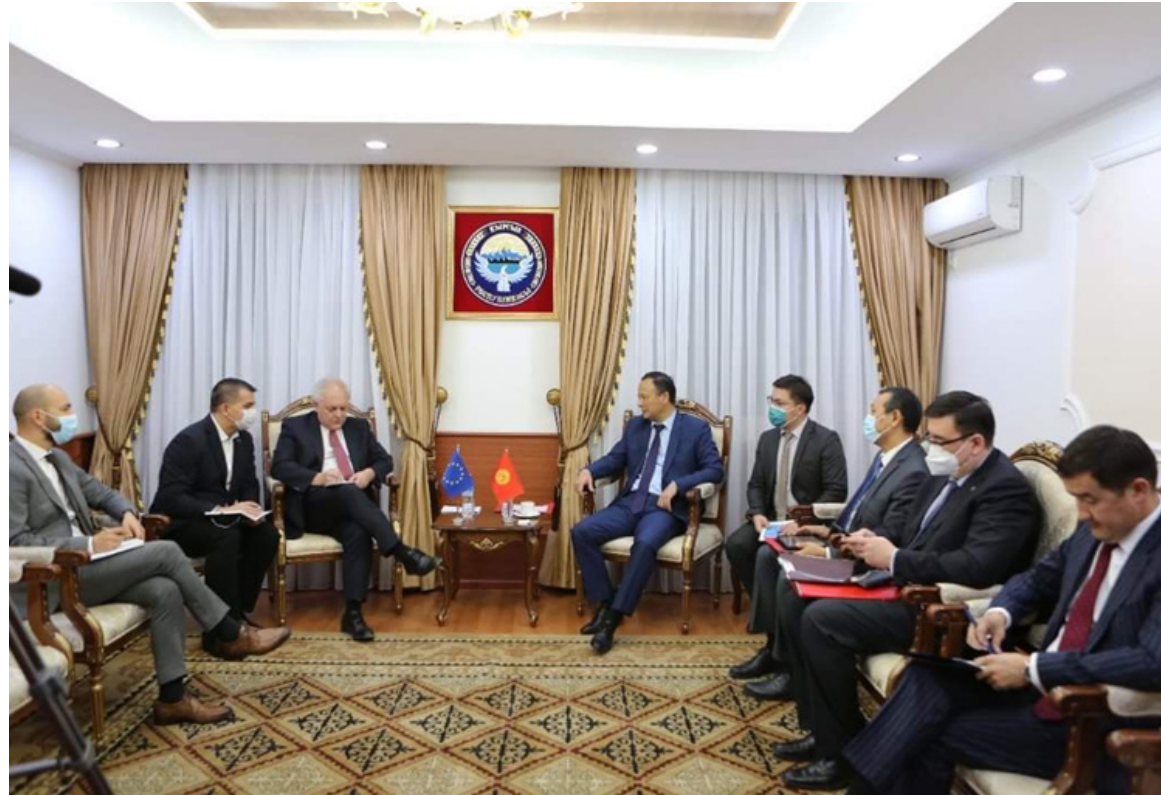
anean University, told Al Jazeera from Famagusta that the close results point to a split in the society. "There will be a split, a polarisation in the society between those who supported a federal solution and those who are saying that we shouldn't lose time on federal solution, we should look for alternative solutions," he said. Speaking alongside Erdogan earlier this month, Tatar said the TRNC was reopening public access to the fenced-off seaside ghost town of Varosha for the first time since Turkish forces invaded the north. The move, which could hurt efforts to revive dispute-settlement talks, drew EU and UN criticism and sparked demonstrations in the Republic of Cyprus.

EU condemns Armenian attack

DNA

BAKU: The European Union has condemned the Armenian attack on Azerbaijan's Ganja city that killed 13 civilians and injured 52 others. "The European Union deplores the strikes on the Azerbaijani city of Ganja during the night of 16-17 October resulting in civilian loss of life and serious injury. All targeting of civilians and civilian installations by either party must stop. The ceasefire of 10 October must be fully respected without delay," the European Union said in a statement published on October 17. EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Joseph Borrell issued a separate statement on October 18 condemning

the attack. "(...) The EU deplores that, unfortunately, violations continue, with reported fighting in and around Nagorno Karabakh. This leads to more civilian suffering. It aggravates the conflict between States and respective societies, rendering the healing of wounds even more difficult. The population in Nagorno Karabakh has already experienced excessive suffering. Overall, the conflict has led to extensive and unacceptable civilian casualties. The EU strongly condemns all such attacks irrespective of their origin," the statement reads. Borrell stressed the immediate need to stop attacks on civilians, underlining that the EU remains ready to support the parties and the OSCE in a long-term solution to the conflict.



BESHKIK: Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic Ruslan A. Kazakbayev received Eduard Auer, Head of the European Union Delegation, Cengiz Kamil Firat, Ambassador of Turkey and Mr. Hidayat Orujov, Ambassador of Azerbaijan. - DNA

Azerbaijan: Ombudsman issues appeal regarding shelling on cemetery

The regular shelling of civilian settlements and holy places by the Armenian armed forces proves once again that Armenia, a mono-ethnic state, took the fascism as an ideology and is intolerant of people of other nationalities and faiths

FOREIGN DESK

BAKU: The Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) Sabina Aliyeva issued an appeal in connection with the intentional intense shelling of the city cemetery in Terter by the Armenian armed forces, on Sunday with reference to the Office of the Ombudsman. We, with sense of sorrow, are proclaiming that Armenian armed forces, since September 27, 2020, have been continuing to intensively launch fire using heavy artillery and special rocket systems on densely populated civilian settlements, social, cultural and strategic facilities, historical, cultural, religious buildings of Azerbaijan and even the cemeteries that are touching moral values of the people. The Armenian side, in violation of the agreed humanitarian ceasefire declared from October 10, 2020, have continued to deliberately fire at the densely populated settlements of

Azerbaijan. Subsequently, 4 civilians were killed and 4 were wounded due to the Armenian armed forces' intentional attack on the city cemetery during a funeral in Tartar district at early hours in the morning of October 15, 2020, in flagrant violation of general norms and principles of 1949 Geneva Conventions, which is a particularly barbaric act and a crime against humanity. The regular shelling of civilian settlements and holy places by the Armenian armed forces proves once again that Armenia, a mono-ethnic state, took the fascism as an ideology and is intolerant of people of other nationalities and faiths. Unlike an aggressor Armenia, Azerbaijan is a multiethnic, tolerant, and multicultural state, where different people of various religious backgrounds co-exist at friendly and brotherhood environment. Azerbaijan as an independent state with democratic principles creates equal opportunities for all peoples living on its territory, irrespective of their religion, language, race,

etc. grounds. Azerbaijan as a meeting point of various civilizations, for centuries, was recognized as a place of national and cultural diversity, where people of different ethnicities and confessions have been living in the environment of peace, tranquility, mutual understanding and dialogue. Only in Baku, there are over twenty

associations and cultural centers of the Russians, Ukrainians, Kurdish, Laks, Lesgins, Slavs, Tats, Tatars, Georgians, Ingilovs, Talishs, Avars, Meskhetian Turks, Europeans and Mountain Jews, Georgian Jews and Germans. Along with mosques, in the capital city, there are also Catholic and Orthodox churches, Jewish

synagogues as places of worship for believers. In Azerbaijan, there have been developed a special model of interreligious dialogue that is a good practice for many polyethnic regions of the world. Today, in numerous higher educational facilities of the world is taught a course on "Azerbaijani model of multiculturalism". Representatives of various religious communities in our country also appealed to the world community and religious leaders to protest against the constant shelling of densely populated civilian settlements in Azerbaijan, as well as against the terror act as killing of civilians during the funeral in the city cemetery in Tartar by the Armenian Army. We would like to emphasize that the Government of Armenia and its diaspora are biased and systematically trying to present the Nagorno Karabakh conflict and Armenia's military aggression against Azerbaijan as a religious confrontation



France rallies after teacher beheaded

DNA

PARIS: Tens of thousands of people rallied in Paris and cities across France on Sunday in solidarity with a secondary school teacher who was beheaded outside his school in an attack that shocked the country. Samuel Paty was killed on Friday, after he had discussed cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad with students during a civics class. Demonstrators on the Place de la Republique held aloft posters declaring: "No to totalitarianism of thought" and "I am a teacher" in memory of Paty. "You do not scare us. We are not afraid. You will not divide us. We are France!" tweeted Prime Minister Jean Castex, who joined the Paris demonstration. Castex was accompanied by Education Minister Jean-Michel Blanquer, Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo and junior interior minister Marlene Schiappa who said she was there "in support of teachers, of secularism, of freedom of expression". Politicians from the other major parties also attended.

Flood death toll in Cambodia rises to 25

PHNOM PENH: Flash floods in Cambodia have so far claimed 25 lives and forced the evacuation of 37,396 people, Seak Vichet, a spokesman for the National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM), said on Monday. Tropical storm-triggered rains caused floods in 19 of the kingdom's 25 cities and provinces since the beginning of the month, he said, adding that 312,224 people have also been affected. "As of Monday morning, the floods have killed 25 people," he told Xinhua, adding that the worst-hit provinces included Banteay Meanchey, Battambang, Pursat and Kandal as well as South-western suburb of Phnom Penh. The floods have also inundated 73,720 houses and 293,177 hectares of rice and other crops, the spokesman said. Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training spokesman Heng Sour said on Monday that 77 garment and footwear factories in Phnom Penh and Kandal province have been hit by rain-induced floods, and 23 of them suspended their operations temporarily. Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen wrote on his official Facebook page on Monday that the government has so far raised more than 7 million U.S. dollars from charitable people to help the flood-stricken victims.

US legislators call on Egypt to release prisoners

MONITORING DESK

NEW YORK: More than 50 United States politicians are calling on Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi to release activists, journalists, lawyers and prisoners of conscience. In a letter released on Monday, 55 congressional Democrats (and one independent) urged el-Sisi to release those "unjustly detained for exercising their fundamental human rights". The letter is spearheaded by three Democratic lawmakers: Ro Khanna, Jim McGovern and Sherrod Brown. "The unjust detention of Egyptian human rights defenders, peaceful political activists and other prisoners of conscience is in direct opposition to the rights and freedoms enshrined in Egyptian and American law," said McGovern. The politicians warned that the continued unjust imprisonment might result in their deaths in the face of significant COVID-19 outbreaks in Egyptian prisons. "We are deeply disturbed that in the middle of a pandemic, the Egyptian government continues to wrongfully hold these political prisoners in overcrowded prisons - places where we know COVID-19 can spread like wildfire and cause severe illness and death," added McGovern. "Even in the middle of a global pandemic, President Sisi continues to lock up prisoners in notoriously overcrowded, dangerous prisons," said Khanna.

Indonesia, Pakistan stand proudly together; ties cemented: Andi Bastari

Indonesia has been ranked as the ninth-fastest growing tourist sector in the world, the third-fastest growing in Asia, fastest-growing in Southeast Asia and the destination of about 16.10 million foreign tourists in 2019: Deny Basuki



Charge D'Affaires, Mr. Andi Ahmad Bastari



Counselor Mr. Deny Tri Basuki



Ansar Mahmood Bhatti, Editor Daily Islamabad Post // DNA News Agency // CENTRELINE Magazine



A.M.BHATTI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Charge D'Affaires, Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Islamabad, Mr. Andi Ahmad Bastari has said Pakistan and Indonesia stand proudly together as two of the largest Muslim populated countries and emerging economies of creative and talented people. In recent years, Indonesia-Pakistan bilateral relations have seen significant development as the two countries continuously endeavor to expand their all-round cooperation including in the areas of trade & economy, academic linkages and tourism. He made these remarks during a get-together organized by the Indonesian Embassy. Stakeholders from the tourism industry, media, travel agents and participants of the FAMTRIPS were invited to attend and share their experiences. He further said it was great pleasure and honor for him to chair this meeting with the representatives of the travel and tourism and media industry and have been participating in the Embassy's FAMTRIP Program that aims to build strong Indonesian tourism profile in Pakistan. Indeed, this meeting provides us a timely platform where we can discuss, exchange views and learn from one another experiences and suggestions to have better understanding of the issues and plan better next time when organizing promotional programs and events, he added. Mr. Bastari said, tourism has been one of the fastest growing industries in the

world. In addition to the opportunities for recreation and cultural exchange, tourism industry has emerged as a big source to generate employment opportunities, grow service sector and help earn foreign exchange. Hence, tourism spur the overall economic growth worldwide. Indonesia takes pride of its world class tourist destination. It receives millions of foreign tourists from all corners of the world annually. In 2019 alone, Indonesia received over 16 million tourists from around the globe, he added. However, it is also true that in the absence of the insufficient marketing and promotion the outbound tourists in Pakistan are unaware of the huge and diverse tourism opportunities in Indonesia and resultantly tourist's number from Pakistan to Indonesia has remained far below its true potential. Similarly, Pakistan also offers many great opportunities to the international tourists such as ecotourism and adventure tourism in its northern areas and the archaeological and heritage tourism in the world famous cities of Taxila, Lahore and Mohenjodaro. The Embassy is of the view that there exists immense scope of the two way tourism between the two countries and a coherent projection plan based on local dimensions could easily send the tourists traffic number up manifold. Mr. Deny Tri Basuki the Counselor also spoke on the occasion. He said The FAMTRIP, to some extent, has been helpful in creating awareness in Pakistan about tourism opportunities in Indonesia. However, there is still lot more needed to be done to bring

the tourists traffic between the two countries to its true potential. Since most of the distinguished guests at this event have been to Indonesia, therefore, taking into consideration—Mr. Ansar Bhatti views, Mr Aftab, Mr Saifuddin as well as my dear journalists and tour operators experiences, and their suggestions was important to help improve the FAMTRIP effectiveness to better achieve its ultimate objective. Mr. Deny said Indonesia has been ranked as the ninth-fastest growing tourist sector in the world, the third-fastest growing in Asia, fastest-growing in Southeast Asia and the destination of about 16.10 million foreign tourists in 2019. Despite blessed with internationally recognized great diverse tourism potential, our two brotherly countries with roughly half a billion combined population, had unsatisfactory and negligible two way tourists' traffic between them. If examined the recent statistics, one is flabbergasted/surprised to discover that the number of tourist arrival in Indonesia from Pakistan has remained very nominal and lagged way behind, even when compared with the countries in the South Asian region. In 2019 Indonesia received roughly 15 thousands visitors from Pakistan, and this meager number was only the half of the Sri Lankan 30 thousands tourists that visited Indonesia last year. Estimates suggest that Pakistan was a booming market for about 50 million domestic tourists while outbound tourist's number from Pakistan had also surged and crossed 2 million mark lately.

These fantastic numbers were self-explanatory and should give us more confidence that Pakistani tourist arrivals in Indonesia could significantly grow and required synergized efforts involving marketing and promotion, use of the technological tools, designing affordable travel packages and visa facilitation, he added. Mr. Deny said that civil aviation authority has approved Lion Air which is the Indonesia's largest privately run low-cost airline to come to Pakistan and will start its operation as soon as the situation is right. Recently, the Embassy has doubled the number of the Visa Drop box facility companies. This step is intended to facilitate visa applicants and tourists better. He added, Tourism has been one of the sectors hardest hit by the coronavirus outbreak as countries around the world imposed travel restrictions and suffered economic slowdown. The Indonesian Government has been able to contain the spread of the virus and was now gearing up to reopen tourist destinations for the international tourists by the end of the year. Understandably, it will take some time before the tourism and leisure activities are back to pre COVID levels. Raza Aftab, Ansar Mahmood Bhatti, Saifuddin also spoke on the occasion and shared their experiences with the audiences. The Embassy also showcased various videos prepared by FAMTRIP participants, which drew great attention of the attendees. — Full coverage of the event shall be published in the coming issue of CENTRELINE magazine.

Briefs

'COVID-19 shows health is critical to security'

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Protection Dr Santia Nishtar represented Pakistan at an online event, arranged by the World Bank Group to highlight current challenges to poverty reduction. Participating in the debate, she said the COVID-19 pandemic has shown like never before how critical health is to the security of each country. She said Pakistan has been extremely responsive working across all ministries to ensure a one government approach to health, poverty alleviation and ensuring an economic recovery that works for everyone.

22 to 35% increase in prices of 253 medicines

AGENCIES

LAHORE: The DRAP has increased prices of 253 medicines upto 22 to 35 percent. The notification in this regard has been issued by the regulatory body. This is the second increase in the prices of medicines in a month. President Pakistan Drug Lawyers Forum (PDLF) Noor Mohammad Mahar has demanded of the federal government to take back the recent hike in the prices of medicines. He said that notification which was issued on October 5 has been made public today.

No one allowed to oppose Army: Ashrafi

ABID RAZA

LAHORE - Prime Minister's Special Assistant on Interfaith Harmony Maulana Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi has said nobody will be permitted to speak against the Pakistan Army. Addressing the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Conference at the Alhamra Hall, Ashrafi said Nawaz Sharif and Asif Zardari have just a single plan and it is simply to spare themselves from court

cases and to secure their looted cash. Traitors would be responded in the same ways they used against respected generals, he said. Nawaz himself is a dictator who could not even bring democracy to his own party. Ashrafi also thanked the students of madrassas for boycotting PDM's Gujranwala anti-government rally. Together we will thrash the conspiracy against Pakistan and our beloved army at the international level to curb sectarianism in the

country, he added. Special assistant to PM said Interfaith Harmony Council comprising all schools of thought are being formed, through which issues can be resolved at the local level. Prime Minister Imran Khan will be briefed about the council next week. He also mentioned the assassination of Maulana Adil Khan as a great loss for Pakistan. It is a challenge for the provincial and federal government to arrest the killers, he added.

Pakistan army establishes free medical camps

GILGIT: Pakistan Army established a Free Medical Camp at district Nagar Khas along with wholehearted support of Healthcare Department of the district. The Camp provided diverse treatment to 1024 patients by General Physician, Medical Specialist, Surgical Specialist, Gynecologist, Psychiatrist and Dental Surgeon. Patients included 512 general medical and surgical patients, 275 children, 139 Gynea, 270 dental and 28 Psychiatrist patients. — APP

Chinese NGOs donate 20,000 masks

ISLAMABAD: All 20,000 masks donated by Beijing People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (BPAFFC) and other Chinese NGOs, were distributed to local communities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. All Pakistan-China Friendship Association (APCFA) received the masks after customs clearance and distributed the masks to local communities' members including health workers in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. APCFA also distributed masks to pedestrians on streets who haven't worn masks. According to Gwadar Pro, recipients received the masks with much thankfulness and pleasure. They believe that those masks are useful and meaningful for Pakistani people, especially in the severe pandemic period. APCFA wrote a letter to BPAFFC, saying "We are happy to receive from our friends in China - BPAFFC, Beijing Minhe Foundation for International Exchanges and the Beijing NGO Network for International Exchanges the timely donation of 20,000 medical masks as a token of people-to-people friendship and steadfast support to us in Pakistan. We convey our special thanks to BPAFFC, the Minhe Foundation and the Beijing NGO Network for International Exchanges for their outreach and efforts to organize with the Embassy of Pakistan in Beijing and the Pakistan National Disaster Management Authority-NDMA the transportation of the masks on special NDMA flights despite the restricted air travel in the pandemic times. It is a testimony of the two countries' true friendship that is rooted in the hearts of their people." "We will continue to stand resolute and united in these demanding times, for together we are stronger," wrote in the letter. — DNA

UNICEF to stockpile over half a billion syringes

DNA

ISLAMABAD: As the world awaits COVID-19 vaccine, UNICEF has begun laying the groundwork for the rapid, safe and efficient delivery of the eventual vaccine by purchasing and pre-positioning syringes and other necessary equipment. According to the press note issued on Monday, as soon as COVID-19 vaccines successfully emerge from trials and are licensed and recommended for use, the world will need as many syringes as doses of vaccine. To begin preparations, this year, UNICEF will stockpile 520 million syringes in its warehouses, part of a larger plan of 1 billion syringes by 2021, to guarantee initial supply and help ensure that syringes arrive in countries before the COVID-19 vaccines, said a press release. During 2021, assuming there are enough doses of COVID-19 vaccines, UNICEF anticipates delivering over 1 billion syringes to support COVID-19 vaccination efforts on top of the 620 million syringes that UNICEF will purchase for other vaccination programmes against other diseases such as measles, typhoid and more. "Vaccinating the world against COVID-19 will be one of the largest mass undertakings in human history, and we will need to move as quickly as the vaccines can be produced," said Henrietta Fore, UNICEF Executive Director. "In order to move fast later, we must move fast now. By the end of the year, we will already have over half a billion syringes pre-positioned where they can be deployed quickly and cost effectively. That's enough syringes to wrap around the world one and a half times."

PIA to resume UK flight operation from October 30

KARACHI: Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) will restore its flight operation for United Kingdom, with a new fleet of aircraft, from October 30, said Abdullah Khan, spokesman of the flag carrier here on Monday. Mentioning that booking for the seats have already been started, he said that during the first phase there would be flights from Islamabad to London; Lahore to London and Islamabad to Manchester. The aircraft procured for the operation were said to be newly built and in accordance to European standards with particular care to meet the specific needs of envisaged passengers, mainly being expatriate Pakistanis. "Hence due care has been made for 'Halal Food' coupled with comfortable seats and best possible in-flight entertainment," said the spokesman Abdullah Khan expressed his confidence that target passengers mainly being Pakistani origin would prefer the national flag carrier committed to provide them services parallel to any other international airline. — APP

CPEC to help improve security situation in Pakistan

The pandemic has a fatal impact on the tourism industry. Therefore, the government of Pakistan should continue to take resolute and effective measures to prevent the new wave of pandemic spread

DNA

BEIJING: With development of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), improvement of the infrastructure and the security situation, and especially when the novel coronavirus pneumonia is effectively controlled, Pakistan's eco-tourism will definitely develop greatly in the days to come. This was stated in a report published by Gwadar Pro on Monday. Quoting Prof. Cheng Xizhong, China's former Defense Attache in South Asian countries, it was suggested that there are various ways

and means to further develop the tourism sector. First, Pakistan's tourism industry is now at the participation stage of the development life cycle of tourist destinations, so a good job should be done in market segmentation and attraction of foreign adventure tourists. Second, Pakistan's security situation has gradually improved in recent years. The Pakistani government should consolidate its achievements in fighting terrorism and maintaining stability. In particular, Pakistan's security agencies should further strengthen the security protection of for-

eign projects and personnel, so as to give foreign tourists a strong sense of safety. Third, resolute measures should be taken to control the spread of the second wave of COVID-19. Novel coronavirus pneumonia is a serious disaster in South Asia. Now, more than 7.45 million confirmed cases have been diagnosed in India, and the death toll has exceeded 110 thousand. The number of confirmed cases will soon surpass that of the United States and India will become the most serious pandemic country in the world. Obviously, India has completely failed to

control the pandemic. Bangladesh, with a population of 160 million, has more than 380,000 confirmed cases with nearly 6000 deaths. Nepal, with a population of only 27 million, has nearly 130,000 confirmed cases. By contrast, Pakistan's prevention and control measures are very strong and effective. Especially with the implementation of smart lockdown and standard operating procedures (SOP), Pakistan has successfully managed to control the spread of COVID-19. The pandemic has a fatal impact on the tourism industry. Therefore, the government of Pakistan

should continue to take resolute and effective measures to prevent the new wave of pandemic spread. Prof. Cheng Xizhong added, that he strongly believe that Pakistan has great potential to develop eco-tourism. According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), in 2019, the contribution rate of tourism industry to Pakistan's GDP was 5.9%, creating 3.9 million jobs. According to my calculation, if Pakistan's tourism industry develops to the level of China, its contribution rate to Pakistan's GDP will increase by 5.1% to 11%, and additional 2.37 million jobs will be created.