



Islamabad POST

Friday, October 23, 2020

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

Romanian armed forces day on October 25: Nicolaie Goia

No other alternative to Skhirate accord: Nasser Bourita

Pakistan, EU agree to boost cooperation



Briefs

PM directs to facilitate the poor

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has emphasized that the poor should be facilitated in availing loans from banks, while taking care of their self-esteem. Chairing National Coordination Committee on Housing, Construction, and Development in Islamabad on Thursday, he asked all the provinces to massively use online portal to make the loan approval process transparent and prompt. Governor SBP Dr. Reza Baqir briefed the meeting about provision of loans to the poor and the middle class on easy installments. Heads of NBP, Allied Bank, Meezan Bank, Bank Al-Habib, HBL and the BOP updated the PM.

PPP will form govt in GB: Bilawal

DNA
GHANCHE: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has on Thursday claimed that his party will form government in Gilgit-Baltistan. The PPP chairman addressed workers convention in Ghancha area of GB and said he is not a politician who will not keep his promises. I am Bhutto's grandson and do not take U-turn, he added. "See what Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has done to Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. You and I will change the fate of Gilgit-Baltistan by working together. I am not here only for election, I still stand by the promise I made in 2018.

Government ignorant of employees: Siraj ul Haq

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Jamaat-e-Islami Emir Senator Siraj ul Haq on Thursday participated in the sit-in of the university teachers against the anti-education policies of the Higher Education Commission. Addressing on occasion, he announced full support to the demands of protesting teachers and criticized the government for not paying any attention to the problems of the government employees.

Visit of Bosnia President delayed: FO

Indian leadership must not underestimate the resolve of Pakistani nation and capacity of armed forces

NAVEED MIRAJ / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Office Spokesperson on Thursday said that the visit of the President of Bosnia has been postponed for now and new dates shall be announced soon. This was stated by Foreign Office Spokesperson Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri while responding to a question during his weekly news briefing in Islamabad. The Bosnian president was due to visit Pakistan on October 21, however due to some reasons the visit has been postponed. Bosnian newspaper had published a number of articles about illegal Pakistanis going to Bosnia and then sneaking into neighboring countries. The spokesman added any misadventure by India in Gilgit-Baltistan or Azad Jammu and Kashmir will invite a full spectrum response by it. The Spokesperson said the Indian leadership must not underestimate the resolve of Pakistani nation as well as the capacity, professionalism and the level of preparedness of our battle hardened Armed Forces. He said the entire nation stands absolutely united against any ill designs by India.

Zahid Hafeez said our advice to India would be to peacefully resolve disputes with the neighbours, including the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, for lasting peace in South Asia. Responding to another question, the Spokesperson said we have seen the malicious and fabricated news reports and propaganda campaign in some sections of the Indian mainstream and social media, planting baseless stories about Pakistan. He said such attempts by the Indian media on the behalf of the Pakistan-obsessed BJP-RSS regime are reflective of a particular, though familiar, mindset. Needless to say that Indian media continues to hit new lows. The Spokesperson said India cannot wash away the truth about its own gross and systematic human rights violations in IOJK and unabated anti-minorities policies and actions through peddling fake news and running its propaganda machinery overtime. The Spokesperson said over 800 million people in India are considered as poor, making the largest poor population anywhere in the world. He said India needs to focus on socio-economic development of its people instead of blindly pursuing its dangerous strategic ambitions.

Pak, EU agree to boost cooperation

The EU Ambassador briefed the Chairman Senate about the development cooperation

ASNAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Muhammad Saadiq Sanjrani has termed cooperation between Pakistan and European Union (EU) as significant and emphasized the need to further broaden the scope mutual collaboration in different sectors. Chairman Senate expressed these views during a meeting with EU Ambassador to Pakistan Ms. Androulla Kaminara here at the Parliament House on Thursday.



The EU Ambassador briefed the Chairman Senate about the development cooperation which is acting as a driving force behind the

Mandviwalla for further cooperation with Greece

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Chairman Senate Saleem Mandviwalla has said that Pakistan values its bilateral relations with Hellenic Republic of Greece and desires to further strengthen ties through mutual collaboration and frequent exchange of business delegations. He said that trade volume between the two sides is much below the mark as there is huge potential for bilateral trade. Deputy Chairman Senate was exchanging views with the Ambassador of Hellenic Republic of Greece. He said that both Islamabad and Athens have established diplomatic ties since long; however, there is need

further boost friendly ties. He said that 50 thousand Pakistanis are living in Greece and working different sectors. He said that Pakistani diaspora is acting as a bridge between the two countries and contributing their part in development. - DNA



ISLAMABAD: President of the International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI), Dr Hathal Hamoud Al-Otaibi and Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan, Nawaf Bin Saeed Al Malkiy called on President Dr Arif Alvi. - DNA

Pak-KSA brotherly countries: President

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has said that Pakistan attaches great importance to its cordial relations with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and wants to further expand bilateral ties with the brotherly country for the mutual benefit of the two sides. He was talking to President, International Islamic University Islamabad, Dr Hathal Hamoud Al-Otaibi and Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan, Nawaf Saeed Al Malkiy, who called on him, in Islamabad on Thursday. The President asked to develop and strengthen international linkages between IIUI and reputed foreign universities of the world and Saudi Arabia. Underscoring the increasing importance of online education, the President said that online contents of the knowledge needed to be enhanced as distant learning is cost-effective and easily accessible.

Opp wants to weaken country, says Shibli

- Says the economy has been revived and all the economic indicators are on the positive trajectory

A.M.BHATTI



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Shibli Faraz has said the opposition parties want to weaken the country and democracy. Addressing a news conference along with Adviser on Interior Shahzad Akbar in Islamabad on Thursday, he said the opposition parties want to create chaos and uncertainty as they are scared that their politics will end if Prime Minister Imran Khan succeeds in his mission to take forward the country on the path of progress and development. The Information Minister said the opposition parties can no longer hoodwink the masses through

their political drama based on vested interests. Shibli Faraz said the economy has been revived and all the economic indicators are on the positive trajectory. He admitted there is price hike but Prime Minister Imran Khan is striving hard to control the situation. He said the institutions were destroyed in the past but we are trying to bring improvement in them by appointing people of good repute there. He regretted

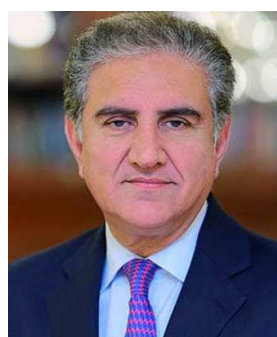
that the opposition parties want clash amongst the institutions. Regarding PPP, the Information Minister said the party has turned into a regional party. He rejected as baseless the statement made by Sindh Chief Minister at the floor of Sindh Assembly that a federal minister threatened him of the dismissal of the provincial government if a case was not filed against PML (N) leader Captain Retired Saifdar. Shahzad Akbar said the PPP government in Sindh fanned controversies on the incident that took place at the Mausoleum of founding father Quaid-e-Azam. He said the very acts of the opposition parties are only hurting the image of Pakistan.

Qureshi talks to Uzbek FM



SHUJAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has said Pakistan and Uzbekistan enjoy deep fraternal relations and leadership of both the countries is committed to further strengthen the bilateral relations. He expressed these views during a telephonic conversation with Foreign Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan Ab-



dullaziz Kamilov on Thursday. The Foreign Minister said inaugural round of bilateral political consultations between Pakistan and Uzbekistan will soon be held in Islamabad. He said Pakistan is committed to continue its reconciliatory efforts for establishment of peace in the region including Afghanistan. Both the foreign ministers also agreed to increase the trade volume between the two countries.

Saudis not against Pak on FATF: FO

NAVEED MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Responding to media queries regarding role of Saudi Arabia in assessment of Pakistan's FATF Action Plan, the Spokesperson categorically rejected the story circulating on segment of the media as false and baseless. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia enjoy strong fraternal ties and the two countries have always cooperated with each other on all matters of bilateral, regional and international importance. Pakistan greatly values its relations with the brotherly Saudi Arabia and firmly rejects such malicious propaganda. FATF will announce its assessment of Pakistan's progress on the Action Plan and the future course of action after conclusion of its Plenary Meeting.

Inside...

Students are our leaders of tomorrow, says Qasim Suri - Page 02

Rs.6.2 billion released for Rawalpindi Ring Road - Page 03

Asad urges early completion of water project for twin cities - Page 04

PDM rallies: what will happen next? - Page 05

Thailand revokes emergency decree, PM resignation demanded - Page 06

Kazakhstan to hold Majilis elections on January 10 - Page 07

No other alternative to Skhirate accord: Bourita - Page 08

Romanian armed forces day on October 25

Liberation of the entire national territory of Romania was achieved by the heroic fights of over 525,000 fully employed troops between August 23 and October 25, 1944. Nearly 58,000 of them were killed or injured. Losses incurred on the enemy stood at 89,934 troops, 76,275

STAFF REPORT / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Romania Nicolaie Goia has said Romania celebrates each year, on October 25th, the Day of the Romanian Army. October 25, 1944, the Romanian Army Day, signifies the date of complete liberation of north-western Transylvania from foreign ruling and administration. He added, the liberation of the entire national territory of Romania was achieved by the heroic fights of over 525,000 fully employed troops between August 23 and October 25, 1944. Nearly 58,000 of them were killed or in-

jured. Losses incurred on the enemy stood at 89,934 troops, 76,275 of whom were taken prisoners. Ambassador Goia said today, Romanian Armed Forces are assigned to foreign missions, contributing alongside of the allied and partner countries to the common effort of keeping peace and stability worldwide. In compliance with the commitments deriving from the international treaties, agreements and memoranda whose signing party is, Romania had contingents of different sizes from all services - Army, Air and Naval Forces - available to multinational coalitions authorized to carry on peace support, humanitar-

ian assistance, coalition, collective or individual operations in the framework UN, NATO, OSCE and EU-led Observing, Monitoring, Liaison and Training teams. The years of contribution to foreign missions meant for the Romanian Armed Forces the maintenance,



ent operations and missions out of national borders, gathering a valuable professional experience extremely useful in the transformation, operationalization and interoperability enhancement process of the Romanian Armed Forces with their NATO and EU counterparts. Romanian Armed forces wisely and skillfully planned their combat forces to fight the war on terror far away from the national borders, proving their capability and determination to fully carry out their missions. Romania remained consistent with its commitments to support the international community in the fight against terror. The contribution of the

Romanian troops to the to collective defence, peace keeping and restoration missions to enforce the stipulations of the UN Security Council Resolutions, of the international legislation and law reveals that the Romanian state complies consequently and in full faith with the commitments agreed with the allies and partners, according to the international legislation and treaties whose signing party is Romania. While concluding his message the ambassador said by performance and professionalism, dedication and determination, the Romanian Armed Forces are a true ambassador for Romania's image worldwide!

Bangladesh HC meets Foreign Secy



DNA

ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner-designate of Bangladesh to Pakistan Ruhul Alam Siddique called on Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood in Islamabad today. Underlining the historic and fraternal ties between Pakistan and Bangladesh, the Foreign Secretary underscored importance of close cooperative relations. He extended his best wishes to the High Commissioner-designate in the important mission.

Briefs

LHC bans plastic bags at milk, fruit shops

DNA

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Thursday banned use of plastic bags by milk and fruit shops and ordered Environment Department to submit implementation report on next hearing. Justice Shahid Karim, while hearing plea by Advocate Abuzar for ban on plastic bags, remarked that Environmental department should take impartial action against businesses that are using plastic bags. Petitioner had argued that plastic bags are a source of pollution and significant damage has been caused to environment from their use.

Financial irregularities detected

DNA

LAHORE: The Auditor General of Pakistan (AGP) has detected financial irregularities in Services Hospital, Lahore's Covid-19 related expenditure. According to a report of the AGP, the hospital administration inflicted a loss of over Rs2.5 million on the exchequer by purchasing shoe covers at inflated rates from companies other than those that usually supply such material to the medical facility. Besides, it disclosed, surgical masks and sanitizers were bought for Rs25.3 million at rates higher than their market prices. Rs7.2 million worth of medicines were unnecessarily purchased, it said. The report revealed that the hospital squandered over Rs2.8 million government funds on setting up Covid-19 wards without approval of the cabinet committee and spent a staggering Rs78.6 million on a total of 771 patients. In sharp contrast, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital spent Rs4.53 million on 641 patients. Withholding tax amounting to Rs9,800 and Punjab sales tax to the tune of Rs210,344 were also not levied on the hospital's purchases. Dr Ifthikhar, the medical superintendent of the hospital, said he has submitted his response to the AGP's objections. Denying any role in the irregularities, he said senior professors purchased Covid-19 related material.

CM Buzdar inspects education measures

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar chaired a meeting on Thursday and inspected measures for promotion of higher education in the province along with future plans. The chief minister directed to take effective and integrated steps for higher education and ensured provision of all resources. Usman Buzdar vowed to empower the youth by giving quality education. The Punjab CM said his government is making universities in underdeveloped areas and will improve the standards of already existing ones. Further steps will be taken after consulting with the HEC. Sardar Usman Buzdar said an effective mechanism will be created to cope with all challenges.

171 new infections, four deaths reported in Punjab

DNA

LAHORE: The spokesperson to Primary and Secondary Healthcare department confirmed on Thursday that 171 new cases of coronavirus reported in Punjab during the last 24 hours, taking the tally to 102,107. Four more deaths were reported while the total count reached 2,323, the spokesperson said. The province has conducted 1,493,502 screening tests so far, whereas, 9,289 patients recovered from the virus. Pakistan reported 10 more coronavirus-re-

Students are our leaders of tomorrow, says Qasim Suri

The Graduating Students of Fall 2018 & Spring 2019 were awarded degrees of BS, B.Ed., MA and MPhil



SAIFULLAH/DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Graduating Students of Fall 2018 & Spring 2019 were awarded degrees of BS, B.Ed., MA and MPhil. Deputy Speaker National Assembly Qasim Khan Suri attended the session as

a Chief Guest. The Convocation was declared open by VU Rector, Mr. Naeem Tariq. During his speech, he mentioned the achievements of Virtual University, its leading role in delivering information and communication technology-based education and highlighted the provision of qual-

ity education to the remotest areas of the country. The Rector welcomed the guests, students and their parents for gracing the event with their presence. He said parents, as well as teachers, deserved to be congratulated on the great efforts. He asked

students to always remain respectful to their parents and set targets and goals to achieve better results. The Chief Guest of the Ceremony Mr. Qasim Khan Suri stated that students of today are leaders of tomorrow. He urged the students to transform the challeng-

es into opportunities. He added that Federal Government is trying its best to facilitate the students of Baluchistan for higher education. He said very soon students of Baluchistan will get all those facilities which are available in Punjab and Islamabad. He hoped that

the knowledge being imparted to the students by VU would help them in their practical life. At the end of the Convocation Chief Guest Mr. Qasim Khan Suri along with Rector VU, Mr. Naeem Tariq distributed degrees among the passing students.

KP takes historic step for Kalash people

DNA

PESHAWAR: After deciding to enact a law for state recognition of marriages, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) has approved the establishment of Kalash Valleys Development Authority in a step to preserve the ancient culture of Kalash tribe. For the first time, a special development authority has been established specifically for the Kalash community in Chitral valley of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) having a population of around 4,000. The government documents said that the relevant officials will not allow construction of new buildings in Kalash's residing area after the establishment of the authority, whereas, all development schemes for the ancient tribe will be monitored. It said that those buildings already constructed in the living area of the Kalash tribe will not be demolished. The prime reason for the establishment of the development authority is said to have been the preservation of the ancient culture of Kalash people. In the previous move, the KP government announced to introduce Kalash Marriage Act keeping in view of rituals and traditions of the ancient community in Chitral valley. The law will be tabled in the provincial assembly after completing legal requirements by the relevant authorities. The announcement was made by the KP CM's special assistant on religious affairs Wazirzada while signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Pakistan Council of World Religions Chairman Qari Rohullah Madni.

Asad Umar, CM KP discuss projects under CPEC

ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan called on the Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar here Thursday to discuss priority projects of Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for inclusion in the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) portfolio. Senior officials from federal and provincial governments attended the meeting.

The meeting discussed projects of energy, infrastructure, communications and agriculture sectors.

The Minister directed that project proposals may be refined and finalized to ensure their early processing. He said that the respective Joint Working Groups (JWGs) should discuss the projects and accord them due priority. The minister said that the federal government would continue to consult the provincial governments for prioritizing various projects under the CPEC umbrella.

He thanked the chief minister for proactively pursuing implementation of various projects. — APP

Maryam to oversee PML-N election campaign in GB

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supreme Nawaz Sharif on Thursday directed his daughter and party's vice president Maryam Nawaz to use Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) platform to mobilize party workers. According to sources, the two PML-N leaders today held a detailed discussion today, where Nawaz Sharif directed Maryam Nawaz to oversee the election process in the Gilgit Baltistan region. The former prime minister also directed her to further mount pressure on the government besides also asking her to expedite contacts with other opposition groups in the wake of an anti-government movement. Nawaz Sharif also held a discussion regarding the PDM public gathering in Quetta on 25 October as they also discussed over the minutes of the speech to be delivered by the former prime minister in the rally. The two also

discussed the content of the letter written by the federal government to the British authorities to bring back Nawaz Sharif. It is pertinent to mention here that yesterday, Federal Minister for Science and Technology Fawad Chaudhry on Wednesday said that the government will hopefully succeed in bringing back PML-N supreme leader Nawaz Sharif from London before the 15th of January 2021. Talking exclusively with a private television channel, Fawad Chaudhry said that the officials of the British government also believed that the plunderers coming from the developing countries caused defamation of their country. He maintained that the court had convicted the elder Sharif and hoped that the UK government will soon decide about the PML-N leader. The federal government had sought Islamabad High Court's (IHC) nod to publish former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's summons in two London based newspapers.



ISLAMABAD: German Ambassador Dr. Bernard Schlagheck called on Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Barrister Dr. Muhammad Farogh Naseem at the Law Ministry in Islamabad. — DNA

Tiger Force comes into action against artificial inflation, hoarding

DNA

SIALKOT: The Tiger Force came into action against artificial inflation and hoarding as the administration of Sialkot and Lahore cities conducted separate raids on different shops and stores. After being spotted by Tiger Force volunteers, the district administration raided different go-downs and shops where they officials confiscated illegal stocks of flour, sugar and rice besides sealing the stores. The actions were also carried out in different areas of Punjab capital Lahore where the raiding officials recovered

more than 800 sugar sacks weighing 50-kilogram. Besides seizing the illegal stocks of essential commodities, the administration registered First Information Report (FIR) against four hoarders and imposed heavy fines. It emerged that Tiger Force volunteers visited different utility stores and shops in both cities as customers to monitor the prices of essential commodities. After getting reports of profiteering, responsible shopkeepers have faced action in term of fines and sealing of their shops. A report regarding actions against hoarding will be directly forwarded to Prime Minister Imran Khan. In another move, Punjab Chief

Minister Usman Buzdar handed over responsibilities to provincial ministers, advisers and special assistants for keeping an eye over the prices of essential commodities in local markets and sahalat bazaars. The CM's principal secretary issued a notice containing the directives of CM Usman Buzdar for scheduling visits of sahalat bazaars to monitor the prices. The provincial legislators will present a report to the Chief Minister Office (CMO) after checking the prices of commodities in sahalat bazaars. Moreover, the ministers, advisers and special assistants were also directed to establish open kachehris [courts] in different districts.

They were also given directives to pay visits to schools, jails, police stations and hospitals in order to ensure the provision of relief to the citizens. CM Usman Buzdar said that the incumbent government has adopted the agenda of providing more and more relief to its citizen and the provincial authorities will make maximum efforts for price controls besides showing no tolerance to hiking rates. Earlier on Tuesday, PM Imran Khan had given the first task to the Tiger Force volunteers for discouraging hoarding while chairing a high-level session regarding the ongoing efforts for price controls.

OCTOBER 2020

Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine

Find us on:

www.centrelines.com.pk
www.dnanews.com.pk
www.islamabadpost.com.pk

@PostIslamabad / @Editordnanews

A sister concern of

Islamabad POST

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





Briefs

Sindh gov't politicizing issue of IGP: Sadaqat

ISLAMABAD: PTI Member National Assembly Sadaqat Ali Abbasi Thursday said that Sindh government itself politicizing the issue of Inspector General of Police (IGP) to reap political benefit as it was the issue of provincial government and they had their own authorities to handle things in a proper way.

Talking to a private news channel, he said Sindh government has always tried to hide its corruption and incompetence by blaming the federal government for all the problems.

He said criticizing the government or its policies is the democratic right of the opposition parties, but they should exercise care while talking about the state institutions. He urged that opposition leaders should avoid such statements which could prove harmful to democracy, national integrity and security institutions and benefit Pakistan's internal and external enemies.

He said after a long struggle the democratic system was moving towards stability and we are proud of our institutions and their performance as well.

MNA Sadaqat Abbasi further said that the opposition parties are getting united only for protecting plundered national wealth, "otherwise they have different agendas. We face no threat from them." — APP

CPR two-day workshop concludes

ISLAMABAD: General Secretary, Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH), Sanaulah Ghumman, Thursday said avoid to use sugary drinks, tobacco and fats which increased the risk of heart attack and cancer.

He said this while addressing a two-day cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training workshop at the Prime Minister's House organized by Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH) said a press release issued here.

He said that diet was better than cure, heart attack, cancer were deadly diseases, which are expensive to treat. Instead of trying to recover, you should try to avoid sugar drinks, tobacco and fat. Life is precious, value it.

All the staff of the Prime Minister of Pakistan were trained in First Aid Prevention (CPR) for Prevention of Heart Attack. A drama on "Harkat Dil Nawae Zindagi" based on CPR training with practical observation was also shown.

Dr. Shehnaz Hameed Mian said that the American Heart Association brings innovation in CPR training every two years. It is very important to compress the chest pressure during CPR. During a heart attack, if the brain does not receive oxygen and blood, then brain death occurs, after which it does not make sense to be physically alive. The fastest medical aid in the world takes 8 to 10 minutes. If the CPR is done on time, the patient will be able to reach the hospital. — APP

AC Taxila recovers 1200 sugar bags

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Taxila Assistant Commissioner (AC) Thursday raided and recovered 1200 sugar bags illegally stored in a godown.

According to a spokesman, the administration on the directives of Punjab government conducted raid and recovered 50 kg sugar bags which were not mentioned in the record. The godown was sealed and the traders were warned not to indulge in hoarding as strict action in accordance with the law would be taken against the violators without any discrimination.

He informed that the sugar bags recovered from the godown would be auctioned in Sahulat bazaars.

He said, the administration on the directives of the Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar was taking action against profiteers and hoarders.



CAPTION: A ISLAMABAD: Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President ICCI presenting a souvenir to Tariq Masood Murtaza, Chairman Rawalpindi Development Authority. Miaan Akram Farid, Ms Fatima Azim, Abdul Rehman Khan, Khalid Iqbal Malik, Abdul Rauf Alam, M Ejaz Abbasi and Mian Shaukat Masud are also present. — DNA

Rs.6.2 billion released for Rawalpindi Ring Road

Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) appreciated the initiative of PTI government for starting the R3 project that was the dire need of the twin cities

IBRAR KHAN / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Tariq Mehmood Murtaza, Chairman Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) said that an amount of Rs.6.2 billion has been released for land acquisition of Rawalpindi Ring Road (R3) project and Prime Minister Imran Khan along with Chief Minister Punjab Usman Buzdar would soon perform the ground-breaking of this project of vital importance.

He said that 65.5 KMs long 6 lanes R3 would change the lifestyles and set new horizons of development in the twin cities. He said that the R3 will not only reduce the traf-

fic congestion in the twin cities, it will also provide a clean, healthy and safe environment besides making significant contributions to national development.

He said that business hubs, industrial zones, transport terminals, wholesale markets, logistic and education hubs, health city, dry port, recreational parks and residential estates would be constructed on both sides of the R3 that would uplift the economy of the region and provide plenty of jobs. He expressed these views while addressing the business community at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI). Tariq Mehmood Murtaza said that the cost of the R3

project was estimated at Rs.50 billion and after the financial closure, its construction would be completed within 2-3 years. He said that the R3 project would be executed on the public-private partnership (PPP) model and stressed that the business community should actively participate in its construction to capitalize on its investment potential. Muhammad Abdullah Deputy Project Director, RDA gave a detailed presentation on R3 project to the business community. In his welcome address, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) appreciated the initiative of PTI govern-

ment for starting the R3 project that was the dire need of the twin cities. He said that multiple specialty zones could be built on both sides of the R3 project and stressed that the sitting President of ICCI should be included in the RDA Board to get the input of the private sector and address its genuine concerns for the smooth execution of R3 project on PPP mode. He said that for each SEZ, 1000 to 1500-acre minimum land should be acquired to facilitate the investors. He further said that Sec-4 must be used to acquire land on an immediate basis for SEZs that are desperately needed for jobs creation, industrial promotion and economic

revival. He said that the existing 3 industrial estates in Islamabad have saturated due to which investors of this region were compelled to move to other areas and stressed that RDA in collaboration with ICCI should build a new industrial estate at a location that should be easily accessible to the investors of the twin cities. He assured that ICCI would fully cooperate with RDA for timely execution of the R3 project.

Mian Akram Farid, Chairman, Founder Group said that the government should set up new industrial estate near Islamabad International Airport and the private sector should be provided the opportu-

nity to invest in the industrial and commercial zones of the R3 project. He said that one window facility for investors in industrial zones should be provided as many local and overseas Pakistanis were keen to invest in SEZs of R3. Fatma Azim Senior Vice President, Abdul Rehman Khan Vice President ICCI, Khalid Javed, Zubair A. Malik, Abdul Rauf, Khalid Iqbal Malik, Mian Shaukat Masud, M. Ejaz Abbasi, Naeem Siddiqui, Tahir Ayub and others also highlighted the concerns of various sectors and stressed that RDA should address them for the smooth execution of R3 project.

641 VIPs fined during ongoing year

The VIPs fined included 52 MNAs/MPAs, 16 Senators, 112 army officials, 197 govt officials, 24 senior police officers, 86 diplomats

ISLAMABAD: Remaining steadfast to one of the basic objectives of eliminating VIP culture, Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) fined 641 VIPs during the on going year including parliamentarians, diplomats and bureaucrats. "Elimination of VIP culture and equal application of law were the operational codes of the ITP which has become the model of excellence for all law enforcement agencies in the country," SSP (Traffic) Farrukh Rasheed told APP on Thursday. He said performance of traffic police personnel was being reviewed continuously and every possible effort would be made to improve it. The VIPs fined included 52 MNAs/MPAs, 16 Senators, 112 army officials, 197 government officials, 24 senior police officers, 86 dip-

lomatics, 54 media persons and 47 Judiciary officers among others. "Whether there is any VIP or common people on the road, everyone is equal to us and it is our responsibility to save his life through ensuring implementation on traffic rules," the SSP maintained. He said ITP will provide maximum facilities to road user and will ensure safe travel on Capital roads. Farrukh Rasheed said that fine tickets were issued not as a punitive measure but to make citizens more law abiding to ensure safety to their own lives on roads. He said that ITP personnel would continue their efforts for ensuring safe road environment in the Capital and urged the people to cooperate with them to make this city accident-free. — APP

Strict enforcement of SOPs urged

ABBOTTABAD: Commissioner Riaz Khan Mahsud Thursday ordered the district administrations to ensure strict implementation of the preventive standard operating procedures (SOPs) particularly in schools, wedding halls, restaurants, markets, public transport and other public places.

The orders were issued while communicating the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's fear about reemerging of coronavirus in Hazara, Malakand and Peshawar divisions in the next two-three weeks due to intensified chilled weather. Chairing a meeting of the Deputy Commissioners at his office, Mahsud urged the need for dispelling the false impression about the complete disappearance of coronavirus and said that strict administrative measures for persuading people to follow the SOPs in letter and spirit could only sensitize them about the prevalence of the fatal pandemic. — APP

Nausheen warns of second wave of COVID-19

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary, National Health Services Regulations and Coordination Nausheen Hamid Thursday warned public that second wave of COVID-19 might grip the country as the weather is getting colder and cases are continuously rising.

Talking to a private news channel, she assured that her ministry is ready to cope with a possible second wave of the virus but advised the nation to wear face masks and avoid unnecessary visit in public places to avert the virus spread in winter. She said there is a fear that onset of winter could result in second wave of coronavirus, adding, the next wave could be deadlier than the first. She warned that strict measures could be initiated to contain the infection if people don't stop violating government guidelines, as the country's COVID-19 positivity rate



increased above 2% as compared to past few weeks. Nausheen Hamid said the NCOC is closely monitoring the situation and if there is no improvement in SOPs compliance observed, NCOC will have no choice but to revert to strict measures leading to re-closures of services.

She stressed that although Pakistan has been successful in battling the pandemic in first phase but it's still important for people to keep following the coronavirus SOPs. She mentioned that after reopening of Marriage halls and public places we saw crowds of people flocking the places which is the major factor behind the rising number of cases in the country and which leads us to second phase of Covid-19. "Those who have respiratory diseases or are suffering from other illnesses are most at risk if there is a second wave," she added.

Gov't striving to reduce prices, says Usman Dar

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Youth Affairs Usman Dar on Thursday said the government was striving to reduce prices of commodities and provide relief to the people. Talking to a private news channel, he said Prime Minister Imran Khan is taking personal interest to reduce inflation as soon as possible and he was making all out efforts for the purpose.

He said inflation had made the global issue because big economic powers were also badly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, adding our neighboring countries including Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan were facing this issue so Pakistan was not only facing inflation as alone.

The SAPM said coronavirus pandemic, recent floods, heavy rains and locust were major causes of prices increasing in the country but the government was trying to make normalize the situation in this regard.

Replying to a question, he said according to United Nations Food Organizations Agencies and Asian Development Bank reports Pakistan had faced Rs 500 to 700 billion loss just in agriculture sector during the pandemic. Usman Dar expressed hope that the government would overcome on the issue of increasing prices in coming few weeks, adding the government had imported wheat and sugar for smoothly supply to the people. — APP

App launched for special children

ISLAMABAD: Minister of Human Rights, Dr. Shireen M Mazari on Thursday launched a Mobile App for Differently-Abled Children to help create awareness about education, training and rehabilitation services available for such children in Special Education Centers and Institutions. The use of this App will assist them in selection of suitable educational institution near to their residence and they can apply online without physical access to institutions/centres working under Directorate General of Special Education (DGSE). The parents of Differently-abled children can also obtain detailed information about services, facilities and admission policies of the Centres. Addressing the launching ceremony here, the Minister commended the initiative of DGSE in collaboration with National Information Technology Board (NITB), saying the development of this App is a milestone to bring approximately 30,000 out of school differently-abled children in educational stream. She said the app would assist them in selection of suitable education institutions including schools running under Federal Directorate of Education (FDE). On the occasion, Director General Special Education (SE), Sheikh Azhar Sajjad said his Directorate was providing appropriate environment and opportunities to promote social progress, education and rehabilitation for differently-abled children/persons. — APP

Around 61 MMCFD gas being extracted

ISLAMABAD: Exploration and Production (E&P) companies are producing around 61 Million Cubic Feet per Day (MMCFD) gas from five fields located in different parts of the Rawalpindi district. "Overall, 60.9 MMCFD gas has been extracted from the Rawalpindi district fields during July 2019 to May 2020," according to an official document available with APP. As per the field-wise details, Pakistan Petroleum Limited produced 60 MMCFD gas from its Adhi field, while Oil and Gas Development Company Limited, Pakistan Oilfields Limited and OPII accumulatively extracted 0.9 MMCFD gas from four other wells including Misakiswal, Bhangali, Pindori and Turkwal. — APP

Mehfil-e-Naat organised at PUCAR

Pir Syed Haider Ali Shah Gillani presided over the Mehfil-e-Naat. While speaking on the occasion, he said that "Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) is more important than their lives

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A special Mehfil-e-Naat was held at Punjab Council of the Arts with collaboration of Saqie-Kausar Naat Council in connection with the sacred month of Rabi ul Awal. Naveed al Hasan Shah, Muhammad Alamgeer Qadri, Saeed Ahmed Jalali, Muhammad Azeem Qadri, Qari Sajjad Qureshi, Ghulam Rasool Chishti, Nabeel Bhatti, Israr Hussain, Tahir Majed, Inam ul Haq, Shabir Ahmed presented naat on the occasion. Qari Sajjad recited Surah Al Rehman in his beautiful voice, which received thunder applause from the audience. Pir Syed Haider Ali Shah Gillani presided over the Mehfil-e-Naat. While speaking on



the occasion, he said that "Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) is more important than their lives. Holy Prophet (PBUH)'s life is way out for the Muslims. We can succeed in this life and life after death by following the Sunnah Of Holy Prophet (PBUH)". Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmed said that, the birth of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is much bigger event for Muslims than Eid. "On 12th Rabi ul Awal Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) came to this world as blessing for mankind. By following Holy Prophet (PBUH), we can succeed in this world and life after death as well", he added. A special prayer was offered at the end of Mehfil-e-Naat for Muslim Ummah and safety of the country. Chairman Saqi Pakistan Naat Council Muhammad Fayyaz thanked the chief guest and the participant.

Briefs

RCCI organizes training on Import/Export, WeBOC, DTL

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) in collaboration with Pakistan Horticulture Development & Export Company (PHDEC) organized a one-day training workshop on the subjects of Basics of Export, Web Based One Customs (WeBOC) and Drawback of Local Taxes and Levy (DLTL). The training session was chaired by Shahraiz Ashraf Malik, Vice-President RCCI and General Manager Agri Products, Sarfraz Hussain Iqbal from PHDEC. The training workshop was attended by a large number of importers, exporters, and women entrepreneurs. The trainers from NUST, PRAL and Customs provided the audience with the solutions of real life issues in the way of use of WeBOC and claiming DLTL. The audience shared their issues and solutions were discussed in a bid of knowledge sharing with each other. Speaking at the occasion, Vice President Shahraiz Malik appreciated PHDEC efforts in knowledge sharing and capacity building of stakeholders especially in horticulture sector.

Chairman CDA orders cleanliness of city

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Aamir Ali Ahmad directed the concerned authorities to ensure the sanitation of the parks, public places, and green belts here on Thursday. He expressed this during his visit to F-9 park, G-6, G-7, G-8, G-9, F-6, F-7, F-8, and parks and green belts of other sectors. Aamir Ali Ahmad directed the officers of the Environment department for prompt sanitation of parks, nullahs, green belts, and other public places. He also directed the officers and workers of the environment department to ensure the cutting of shrubs on daily basis. Chairman CDA asked the environment department to plant fruit trees on the barren land of the city. Making capital green is the top priority of the CDA. The environment department should utilize all the available machinery and men power for the beautification of the city, he further said.

CDNS achieves collection of Rs 16 bln

ISLAMABAD: The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has achieved a collection net target of Rs 16 billion by October, 10 of fiscal year 2020-21. The CDNS has set Rs 249 billion annual collection target for the year 2020-21 as compared to Rs 352 billion for the previous year's 2019-20 to enhance savings and promote saving culture in the country, senior official of CDNS told APP here on Thursday. The CDNS has set Rs 352 billion annual collection target for the year 2019-20 as compared to Rs 350 billion for the previous year's 2018-19, he said. The directorate has also revised and increased the gross target of Rs1570 billion for the fiscal year 2019-20, he said. Replying to a question on current revision of CDNS certificate profit rates applicable from October 14, 2020, he said CDNS has remained the same the interest rate on the savings certificates investment due to the market situation and of Pakistan Investment Bonds (PIB) policy decision. He informed that the CDNS interest rates are linked with the policy of PIB, set by State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). He said the rate of profit on Defense Saving, regular income saving, special saving and short-term certificates had remained the same. A Senior official said that the profit rate on special saving certificates has remained the same at 7.77 percent. He informed that on Defense Saving Certificates, the rate is also the same at 8.49 percent. — APP



RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Horticulture Development & Export Company in collaboration with the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce & Industry @Rcci organized a day workshop on "Basis of Export, WEBOC & DTL". DNA

Asad urges early completion of water project for twin cities

The minister directed for weekly review of progress by Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Planning Commission to ensure that bottlenecks are removed immediately

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar Thursday urged all concerned consultants to ensure early completion of water supply project for the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Chairing a review meeting on feasibility and land acquisition for construction of water supply project from Indus Water System at Tarbela Dam to Islamabad and Rawalpindi, the minister directed for weekly

review of progress by Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Planning Commission to ensure that bottlenecks are removed immediately. Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on CDA Affairs Ali Nawaz Awan, Member National Assembly (MNA) Raja Khuram Nawaz and senior officials participated in the meeting. The meeting was informed that CDA had awarded the consultancy contract for the

water supply project and the consultants would start work immediately. The representatives of the consultants shared their timelines with the minister, who directed that no time overrun would be allowed. Asad Umar also directed that consultants should explore new/ innovative technologies and make recommendations for expediting the execution phase of the project. He assured that necessary resour-

es would be made available for early execution of the project. It was directed that consultants would submit a draft Inception Report in a month's time for review and devising strategy for proceeding further. Federal Minister Asad Umar also held a meeting on staffing and other issues faced by educational institutions in Islamabad on Thursday. SAPM on CDA Affairs Ali Nawaz Awan, MNA Raja Khuram

Nawaz, Parliamentary Secretary Wajih Akram, Secretary Education and senior officials participated in the meeting. The meeting was briefed about the current status of issues related to up-gradation of schools and provision of buses for transportation of students. It was decided that the proposal in this regard will be submitted to the Federal Cabinet by Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training with the next fortnight. — APP

MoCC Red Data survey continues

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Climate Change has maintained the country's first National Red Data Book survey of mammals under Ten Billion Tree Tsunami project (phase-I) despite major cut in PSDP releases of 80 percent in funds being provided under the project amid COVID-19 pandemic. Project Director TBTT Joint Secretary MoCC Suleman Khan Warraich told APP on Thursday that there was no such credible data available related to mammals and other native wildlife species for informed decision making. "All the policies formed earlier have been developed superfluously based on estimated data of mammals. Due to Prime Minister Imran Khan's keen interest in biodiversity and ecosystem conservation the ministry has taken an initiative to develop first ever National Red Data Book on Mammals of Pakistan based on population estimates, under the umbrella of Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Programme, Phase-I." He added that the Red data book is the publication of risk assessment of species in every country across the globe. "It provides complete information of rare and endangered species and their habitats. Pakistan, for the first time is going to make a comprehensive National Red Data Book of mammals, which will provide population status of species at national level. It

will assist to devise monitoring and conservation strategies for threatened species at regional level." Warraich said a 45-member team comprising of MoCC, Zoological Survey of Pakistan, Punjab Wildlife and Parks Department, local universities' interns, media interns and international organisations namely IUCN and WWF was formed to conduct survey of Punjab Urial (Ovis vignei punjabensis). He added that the prior governments had neglected such survey which hampered the way of informed decision making and therefore, this initiative would help in assessing the outcome of earlier policies particularly that of trophy hunting aimed at reviving the dwindling number of endangered species. The Survey, he said started from October 10 and would conclude at October 25 where the teams would return consequently to tabulate the data. The survey was being carried in the five districts of Punjab including Jhelum, Chakwal, Attock, Mianwali and Khushab. The TBTT project director noted that transparency and international standardisation was ensured through double observer method to estimate the population of Punjab Urial. "It will also help to suggest new protected areas or to increase the areas of existing protected areas for the conservation of Punjab Urial." — DNA

Islamabad zoo bears to be shifted to other countries

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The two bears at the Islamabad zoo are being shifted to other countries, the Islamabad High Court was informed on Thursday. Deputy Attorney General Syed Tayyab Shah submitted a report in court and said that the government has issued an NOC for the two

bears to be shifted abroad. One is being shifted to Jordan, while another one to Bulgaria, he said. Chief Justice Athar Minallah asked about the health of Kaavan, the sole elephant at the zoo. Dr Amir Khalil's team will visit him on Sunday and his cage has been prepared, the court was told. The court summoned a progress report and adjourned the case till Novem-

ber 27. Many activists rejoiced after the court had ordered the transfer of animals from Marghazar zoo to suitable sanctuaries on May 22. The verdict was announced on three combined petitions: relocation of two brown bears, treatment of Kaavan, and stopping the shooting of stray dogs. Kaavan, Pakistan's last Asian elephant, is being shifted to Cambodia.



ISLAMABAD: Members of women chamber of commerce and Industry led by Samina Fazil presenting bouquet to Ambassador of Portugal. — DNA

Govt finalizes evidence based universal health coverage benefit package

The study, published in the journal Environment International, found that SARS-CoV-2 is rather moderately infectious and a person would need to remain in a poorly ventilated room for a considerable amount of time to receive an infectious dose of SARS-CoV-2

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination in partnership with the provincial and area departments of health and partners has finalized an evidence based Universal Health Coverage (UHC) benefit package for Pakistan. This was informed at the inter-ministerial health and population forum which was held here to review and provide concurrence on the UHC benefit package. The meeting was attended by all health ministers, ministers of Population Welfare and health secretaries and Director General Health Services from all the provinces. Special Assistant to Prime Minister on National Health Services

Dr. Faisal Sultan, addressing the forum said "Pakistan is the first country in the world to have used localized evidence on burden of disease and costing data to develop an essential package of health services and UHC benefit package of Pakistan." He said that achievement of this milestone and implementation of the package in future will help the country in improving health outcomes and making speedy progress towards UHC. Dr. Faisal said "Now we have to move together towards the delivery of essential package of health services to every citizen in the country." In partnership with WHO and the Bill & Malinda Gates Foundation

(BMGF), the Disease Control Priorities-3 Secretariat provided technical support to the government of Pakistan through LSHTM, Radboud University, Health Planning, System Strengthening and Information Analysis Unit of the Ministry of NHSR&C, Aga Khan University and Health Services Academy to assist the development of the UHC benefit package of Pakistan. The provincial health ministers reflected their support for the Universal Health Coverage Benefit Package. Dr. Yasmeen Rashid, Health Minister Punjab, mentioned that Universal Health Coverage being the outcome and driver of progress, is at the centre of all efforts for devel-

oping our nation. Prioritizing investments in essential health services will bear dividends that will help in taking the country and province forward". Dr. Azra Pechuho, Health Minister Sindh, reflected that health is a human right and quality essential health services should be available to everyone, every time, with a special focus on equity for the most vulnerable in society. Dr. Taimoor Khan Jhagra, Health Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, said that investments in provision of essential health services underpin the reforms that the health care system in Pakistan has been seeking. Universal Health Coverage Benefit Package provides the opportunity of

reforming our health care system. Dr. Rubaba Buledi, Parliamentary Secretary on Health for Balochistan, said "Investment in health and reaching out to each and every member of our society is a responsibility that we feel very strongly about and we would ensure all the efforts to take forward the cause of health of our people." Dr. Imam Yar Baig, Health Minister Gilgit Baltistan said that "Universal Health Coverage Benefit Package underpinned by evidence is critical for Gilgit-Baltistan considering its difficult terrain and challenges of the health system. UHC BP will help a long way in achieving our health goals, he added. — APP

7th Literature Festival from Oct 23rd to 30th

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A week long 7th Islamabad Literature Festival (ILF) will be held from October 23rd to 30th, aiming to promote intellectually stimulating literary and cultural activities. Organized by Oxford University Press Pakistan, the literature festivals infuse new life into the intellectual well being of people and provide an opportunity for exchanging constructive thoughts and ideas across the social and economic boundaries. A large number of book lovers and culture enthusiasts visit the festival to learn more about the literary endeavors of Pakistani authors from all parts of the country and to experience the nation's cultural heritage from close quarters, an organizer said on Thursday. He said that ILF has become a regular event for the culture and literary devotee.

PNCA to hold live classical music" on Oct 24

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA) will hold an evening titled "Raagistan Live Classical Music" on its premises on October 24. The evening will feature different classical music including Khayal, Thumri, Kafi aiming to keep alive the culture of the classical music. The event was meant to promote the virtues of peace and harmony to rekindle the classical music developed many years ago by the Classical singers, an organizer said on Thursday. Renowned Akbar Ali of the Jalandhar Nalan Gharana will mesmerize the audience with his classical master peace of Thumri and other form of classical music. Strict SOPs will be followed with participants bound by rules to practice social distancing along with face masks and hand sanitizers.

UN Day to be marked on Saturday

ISLAMABAD: Like other parts of globe, United Nations Day will be marked on October 24 across the globe including Pakistan which highlights and reflects on the work of the United Nations (UN) and its family of specialized agencies. On and around October 24, many activities will be organized by all parts of the UN, particularly in the main offices in New York, the Hague (Netherlands), Geneva (Switzerland), Vienna (Austria) and Nairobi (Kenya). These include: concerts; flying the UN flag on important buildings; debates on the relevance of the work of the UN in modern times; and proclamations by state heads and other leaders. The foundations for a "League of Nations" were laid in the Treaty of Versailles, which was one of the treaties to formally end World War I. The treaty was signed in Versailles, France, on June 28, 1919. The league aimed to encourage disarmament, prevent outbreaks of war, encourage negotiations and diplomatic measures to settle international disputes and to improve the quality of life around the world. However, the outbreak of World War II suggested that the League of Nations needed to take on a different form. The ideas around the United Nations were developed in the last years of World War II, particularly during the UN Conference on International Organization in San Francisco, the United States, beginning on April 25, 1945. The UN was officially created when a UN charter was ratified on October 24 that year. United Nations Day was first observed on October 24, 1948. The UN recommended that United Nations Day should be a public holiday in member states since 1971. There were also calls for United Nations Day to be an international public holiday to bring attention to the work, role and achievements of the UN and its family of specialized agencies. These have been spectacular, particularly in the fields of human rights, support in areas of famine, eradication of disease, promotion of health and settlement of refugees. — APP

Mountain of debt

THE power sector's outstanding debt, known as 'circular debt' in common parlance, is reaching new heights as the government gropes in the dark to find a solution to a problem that is becoming untenable. A new Nepra report estimates the debt to have increased by more than a third to Rs2,150bn in the last fiscal from Rs1,600bn a year ago. Although the power-sector regulator recognises in its State of the Industry 2020 report the "contribution" of the economic impact of the Covid-19 health crisis on consumers to the increase in debt last year, it does not mince words in highlighting the real issues of poor governance and mismanagement plaguing this sector and causing the accumulation of debt over the last one decade and a half. The Nepra report acknowledges that electricity theft had increased and more people had delayed or defaulted on payment of their bills owing to financial stress during the pandemic. But at the same time, it says that the government's policies of raising tariffs and resorting to revenue-based blackouts (on high-loss feeders) are to blame for the increased power theft and defaults, which, in turn, are adding to circular debt liabilities.

It is sad to note that political expediency has kept successive governments from fixing the long-term problems of governance and inefficient management of state-owned distribution companies to stop further accumulation of circular debt. The circular debt challenge will continue to threaten the sustainability of the power sector as well as the fiscal stability of the country unless reforms are implemented immediately. Little progress has been made so far on power-sector reforms since 1990, when the government first adopted a road map to privatise public-sector power generation, transmission and distribution firms in order to create a competitive electricity market in the country.

The process could not move ahead after the formation of Nepra to regulate the sector in the late 1990s and the sale of KESC in the mid-2000s. Several attempts have been made to develop an effective competitive electricity market in the country and numerous deadlines have been breached. Turkey had started working on its power-sector reforms at almost the same time. Thirty years later, it has developed a functional competitive market while we have yet to take off.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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

ABC CERTIFIED

Vol: 01 Issue: 180

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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



Controlling prices

PRIME Minister Imran Khan must learn from the latest meeting of the Federal Cabinet that food inflation is a serious problem for the government, and that his excuse that his orders are not being implemented will not wash. The Cabinet meeting's tenor should have made him realize that the wheat and sugar crises are not causing worries among backbench rowdies in the PTI parliamentary party, but also among the members of the Cabinet itself. If his claims of having foreseen the shortage and of having ordered imports are true, he should understand that this only raises questions about why he is unable to get his orders implemented. The only charitable explanation is that offered by the opposition narrative that he is only a front for forces that have selected him. However, if that is the case, it still does not explain why he accepts such a position of powerlessness.

In principle, no official who dares act against the will of the Prime Minister should be left to boast of his temerity. If indeed his orders were not obeyed at any stage, he should remove those responsible, no matter how highly placed they might be. Mr Khan is engaged on a difficult task, and he does not need to fail in the transformation of the entire society because of entirely avoidable food inflation. If his orders were indeed disobeyed, Mr Khan should also think of the consequences for his drive against corruption. The opposition narrative of an incompetent administrator has gained much strength from the failure of the National Accountability Bureau to obtain evidence against the PML(N) leaders whose alleged malfeasances the PTI had campaigned on. Mr Khan needs to determine to what extent his own lack of administrative experience, and that of his colleagues, has contributed to this, as well as to the food inflation which the opposition is busy exploiting. He might not have noticed, though others have, that one person is responsible for both, Accountability Adviser Shehzad Akbar, whose failure to implement the government's own wheat and sugar commission's recommendations led to the present crisis, and whose failure in the accountability drive is an open book, despite his tall claims at longwinded press conferences.

PDM rallies: what will happen next?

Mehr Tarar

The big news last week was the united opposition's newly named Pakistan Democratic Movement's first and second rallies, on October 16 and 18, respectively, in Gujranwala, Punjab-PML-N's bastion-and Karachi, Sindh-PPP's stronghold.

The first one grabbed headlines because of the self-exiled, former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's attacks on the serving COAS General Qamar Javed Bajwa and ISI DG Lieutenant General Faiz Hameed, alleging them of engineering the 2018 elections that brought Sharif's nemesis Khan into power for the first time. The second rally was massive and loud

A Confession: I have never been to a political rally. Despite my childhood interest in jalsas in which speeches of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto inculcated in me something akin to lifelong love for politics I don't find political gatherings of the last thirty years much interesting. The last time a leader's words riveted me was Benazir Bhutto's speeches in her flawed but passionate Urdu in 1988.

After the dismissal of Benazir's first government in 1990 political speeches took a new turn, ceding space to lexicons that despite their best efforts for an appearance of sincerity lacked the rawness that emanated from that feeling from the gut to do something real to change the lives of people. New narratives emerged, one being that of political "victimisation." It continues to date. From 2011-2018, Imran Khan's speeches infused a new spirit in the decaying old tradition of political oration to rally disparate people to a single cause. Not a great speaker, Khan made up-and still does-in sincerity and passion what he lacked in articulateness, ability to elaborate things well. His occasional faux pas, no-holds-barred attacks on his opponents, and at times, unnecessary harshness made his speeches a topic of daily conversation, invoking praise and censure in unequal measure. Khan's oratory while making him a target of his opposition's wrath endeared him to a new audience: the young of Pakistan. Khan became the voice of the hitherto unheard Pakistan. Until March 2013, I used to watch in bits televised political rallies. Until I realised that I had a lifelong disdain for bluster and rhetoric and loudness and crass attacks on the opposition and big promises and empty words. I stopped watching television. It's been seven years, and now when I've started hosting a weekly interview show I still don't watch TV. For information, I rely on Twitter and YouTube, occasionally. Absence of political speeches has added a calmness to my still-obsessed-with-politics mind. Yes, I continue to believe that positive, grassroots, honest politics have the power to change the fate of a na-

tion, individually, collectively.

The big news last week was the united opposition's newly named Pakistan Democratic Movement's first and second rallies, on October 16 and 18, respectively, in Gujranwala, Punjab-PML-N's bastion-and Karachi, Sindh-PPP's stronghold. The first one grabbed headlines because of the self-exiled, former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's attacks on the serving COAS General Qamar Javed Bajwa and ISI DG Lieutenant General Faiz Hameed, alleging them of engineering the 2018 elections that brought Sharif's nemesis Khan into power for the first time. The second rally was massive and loud. It was also noticeable because of the absence of the London speech of PML's new orator-in-chief, Nawaz Sharif. The reason being given was his bad throat.

The most important slogan of PDM is "Vote ko izzat do" (Honour the vote). The 17.5 million votes that Imran Khan's party bagged in 2018 elections do not count as votes in this crusade of the sanctity of vote. Khan won five National Assembly seats, a first in the complex history of Pakistan's elections, but that is a mere insignificant fact that is brushed aside while lambasting the "legitimacy" of an election in which the victor PTI was the party that despite never being in power had defeated the two major traditional winners: PML-N and PPP.

The significance of October 18 is the 13th anniversary of the Karsaz bombing of Karachi. Two bombs, in rapid succession, exploded in the procession of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto to when she returned to Pakistan after years of self-exile. Two hundred people dead, more than 500 injured, the attack was deadly, and had a clear target: Benazir Bhutto.

The thing people, both pro and anti-PDM, talked about the most before the Karachi October 18, 2020 jalsa was the political sloganeering at the mausoleum of Pakistan's founder Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Headed by Maryam Nawaz Sharif's husband Captain (Retd) Mohammad Safdar, the sloganeering was not merely in bad taste in terms of disrespect to the sanctity of the tomb of Pakistan's most important and

most respected leader, it was also a criminal act. The law is unambiguous: "No person shall organise, convene or take part in any meeting or demonstration or procession or engage in political activity of any kind within the Quaid-e-Azam's Mazar or within a distance of ten feet from the outer boundary thereof."

An aside: The next morning, October 19, at 7:06 am, Maryam tweeted: "Police broke my room door at the hotel I was staying at in Karachi and arrested Capt. Safdar."

For clarity: The Sindh Police is under the Sindh government of PPP, Maryam's new alliance partner in PDM.

See, that is the thing with political rallies. They end up taking so much space in my writing even when I do not watch them on television. I thought I'd write a few words on the rallies before moving on to the subject that I chose for this week: work being done by the Punjab and federal governments. Next week, inshaAllah.

A vibrant opposition is essential for a thriving democracy, to keep a government on its aching toes. Suppression of the voices of opposition is anathema to the idea of a free country that revels in its disparateness, its splendid togetherness of opposites. Khan's government is doing what a confident ruling party should be doing when faced with a strong opposition: allow all political activities and censor nothing in media. The PEMRA gag on televising of Nawaz Sharif's "anti-state" speeches is the only real issue PDM has faced so far.

The most interesting aspect of PDM's emergence is the uniting of parties that are so different in their ideologies that even their common thread of hatred of Imran Khan wouldn't be able to keep them together for long. That is merely my opinion. The October 18 image of Maulana Fazlur Rehman sitting with Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari and Maryam Nawaz Sharif on his left and right is the starkest image of personal and political expediencies resulting in the unlikeliest of unions. Superfluous to add: It is a union made in political hell.

Courtesy: Gulf News

Daunting impacts of child poverty cannot be ignored

Sara Al-Mulla



New Zealand has made great strides in safeguarding and promoting children's well-being. Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, who also assumes the role of minister for child poverty reduction, is leading efforts to make the country the best possible place for children and young people to live

CHILDHOOD is a magical time in our lives, full of precious experiences, memorable moments and adoration that our families curate for us. We only begin to appreciate this chapter in our lives as we progress into adulthood and see the value of all the factors that have shaped us. Sadly, the coronavirus disease pandemic has exacerbated struggling families' living conditions and left parents with few or no resources to cover their children's basic needs. According to UNICEF, the pandemic could plunge an additional 117 million children into poverty globally, bringing the total number of children living in poor households to 700 million.

Poverty causes multifaceted and long-term harm to children. In 2019, the US National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine published a comprehensive study on the effects of child poverty on the American economy. Its cost estimates ranged from \$800 billion to \$1 trillion annually as a result of lost employment productivity in adulthood, the increased costs of crimes, and health expenditures. Additionally, the study found that there is a significant correlation between poverty and adverse child outcomes, such as poor educational attainment, impaired physical health, altered brain development, malnutrition, abuse, and mental health issues.

Poverty also places children at greater risk of going on to develop chronic health conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes, and lung disease, as well as ensuring a shorter life expectancy. Furthermore, children living in poor housing conditions and impoverished neighborhoods are more likely to develop physical and mental health problems, get injured, and witness violence or crime. On the other hand, research by the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University highlights the importance of curating positive early childhood experiences and their lasting

impacts. Science reveals that early experiences impact brain architecture, which in turn affects future learning, behaviors, and health outcomes. These neural connections thrive when a child is exposed to a variety of positive interactions, activities, and environments. It is also important to safeguard children's emotional well-being and social skills, shielding them from chronic and toxic stress that could damage their developing brains and cause long-term learning and behavioral problems, in addition to affecting physical and mental health.

Article 27 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that every child has the "right to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development." And many governments around the world recognize the importance of tackling child poverty before it is too late. When it comes to supporting parents, it is important to create more jobs, raise the minimum wage, provide paid leave to care for children, and allow flexible working hours or part-time work. Secondly, it is important to provide financial assistance to families to cover their essential needs, such as adequate housing in safe and vibrant neighborhoods, subsidies for early childhood care and schooling, and physical and mental health services. Thirdly, governments can encourage social cohesion and reduce loneliness among children via the provision of cultural centers, sports activities, art clubs, and green spaces.

New Zealand has made great strides in safeguarding and promoting children's well-being. Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, who also assumes the role of minister for child poverty reduction, is leading efforts to make the country the best possible place for children and young people to live. New Zealand's Child and Youth Well-being Strategy, published last year, aims to deliver a range

of policies, legislations, and programs to improve well-being, such as increasing employment support for parents, increasing the minimum wage to NZ\$20 (\$13) per hour by 2021, extending paid parental leave to 26 weeks, improving access to and the quality of early learning education, improving maternity and early years support services, and improving housing affordability, quality and security. The government of Norway has a dedicated Ministry of Children and Family Affairs. Five years ago, it published a strategy to address child poverty, with interventions covering a variety of areas, such as family counseling services, housing grants, free core time in kindergarten, mentor programs for young people, and free sports and leisure activities.

One successful program is the Family Nurse Partnership, which targets first-time parents who have limited support networks, are victims of abuse, have mental health problems or addictions, or live in poverty. The program consists of 64 home visits by trained health visitors to provide support and guidance. Countries with similar programs have seen improvements in the health of mothers and children, in addition to reduced behavioral problems and delinquency among children, increased workforce participation by mothers, and less dependence on state social support. Another great example is the Holidays for All program, organized by the Norwegian Red Cross, which arranges free holidays for children and their families. Children can only experience a happy, healthy and unforgettable childhood once in their lives. It is imperative that we ensure all the factors that contribute to childhood's preciousness are safeguarded and provided. After all, we expect them to grow up and reach their full potential, making the world a better place for us all.

Courtesy: Arab News

Briefs

Senior Hockey C'ship from Nov 3

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The 66th Edition of the National Senior Hockey Championship would be played at Mari Petroleum Hockey Stadium, Ayub Park, Rawalpindi from November 3 to 15.

According to the ranking of the 65th National Hockey Championship the qualified teams for this edition includes National Bank of Pakistan, Sui Southern Gas Company, Pakistan Wapda, Pakistan Army, PIAC, Pakistan Navy, Port Qasim and Police, said a press release issued here. The Championship would be played according to Tournament Regulations issued by the International Hockey Federation (FIH) enforced by the Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF). The two top teams of the Tray Championship would be eligible to participate in the 66th edition of the National Senior Hockey Championship.

Pak, EU agree to boost cooperation

From Page 01

EU's bilateral relations with Pakistan. Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani said that Pakistan is keen to enhance mutual cooperation with European Union and strengthen institutional collaboration through enhanced linkages at parliamentary level. "We place our bilateral relationship with EU Parliament at a high esteem", Chairman Senate remarked. Chairman Senate said that the pandemic has created huge problems. He also expressed his condolences on the loss of human lives due to the pandemic.

EU Ambassador agreed with the views of the Chairman Senate and emphasized for more cooperation and institutional linkages.

ICT police extend new vigilance, patrolling units

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police have extended the 'street watcher system' and patrol as well as air patrol units to Saddar and Industrial area Zones which would help to enhance cooperation between police and public and curb crime. A ceremony was held here at the F9 park to inaugurate this system to two other zones which is already in place in City Zone. PTI Senator Seemee Ezdi, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Muhammad Aamir Zulfikar Khan, DIG (Operations) Waqar Uddin Syed, SSP (CTD) Syed Mustafa Tanveer, SP (Industrial Area) Zubair Ahmed Sheikh, SP (Saddar) Sarfaraz Ahmed Virk, senior police officials, representatives of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and members of civil society were present on the occasion. PTI Senator Seemee Ezdi appreciated the efforts of Islamabad police in taking initiatives for vigilance in the city. She said coordination of police with public was key to effective policing and hoped that Islamabad police would get more successes under supervision of IGP Islamabad Muhammad Aamir Zulfikar Khan and Operational Head DIG Waqar Uddin Syed. The IGP Islamabad said the streets watchers would be deputed at streets and sub-sectors which would assist police in its efforts to curb crime. They would inform police in case of any suspicious activity in their respective area and keep a vigilant eye on security guards and domestic servants. Police and street watchers would remain in contact with each other through the clock through a mobile app. Moreover, street patrol units/contingents have been constituted comprising motorcyclists which would conduct patrolling and checking in various sectors and markets in peak timings. Each unit or contingent would comprise four policemen patrolling on two bikes to curb street crime. The IGP said that Air Petrol Unit has been also set up having eight drone cameras to be used during rescue operation, ensure protection to the tourists at walking trails and guide those forgetting their ways. All these units would work under the supervision of SP of respective zones.



Amsterdam: Liverpool FC defender Fabinho clearing the ball during a UCL game against AFC Ajax. – DNA

Thailand revokes emergency decree, PM resignation demanded

The emergency rules failed to quell massive anti-government protests that have rocked Thailand for months. Protesters say revoking the measure doesn't go far enough. They're giving the prime minister three days to quit

DNA

BANGKOK: Thailand's government on Thursday scrapped an emergency decree it imposed last week in Bangkok in an attempt to end months of student-led demonstrations. The emergency rules included a ban on public gatherings of more than four people, allowed media censorship and gave police special powers to detain protesters. But rather than quell the unrest,

the measures brought tens of thousands of people onto the streets of the Thai capital. Protesters are demanding the resignation of former army chief turned Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, a new constitution, and reforms to the powerful monarchy. They have given Prayuth a three-day deadline to step down. Prayuth dismisses 'mob demands' in a taped speech that was broadcast on national television, the embattled prime minister appealed to Thais to resolve their differ-

ences through the parliamentary system. He also called an extraordinary session of parliament next week to discuss the crisis. "While I can listen to and acknowledge the demands of protesters, I cannot run the country based on protester or mob demands," Prayuth said. "The only way to a lasting solution for all sides that is fair for those on the streets as well as for the many millions who choose not to go on the streets is to discuss and resolve these differences through

the parliamentary process." The government's decision to cancel the state of emergency came as Bangkok Civil Court was preparing to rule on motions to revoke the decree on the basis that it illegally abridged freedom of assembly. The country's pro-democracy movement, which has held daily rallies over the past week despite the emergency measures, said Prayuth's revocation of the decree made no difference. "He's still seeking to stay in power

while ignoring all the people's demands. The emergency decree shouldn't have been issued in the first place," Sirawith "Ja New" Sertiwat, one of the protest leaders, said. The protesters accuse Prayuth, who toppled an elected government in a 2014 coup, of rigging last year's general elections to ensure the military held on to power — a charge he denies. Back in 2014, he had promised swift elections, ultimately delivering them five years later.

Germany reports record 11,287 COVID-19 cases

BERLIN: New COVID-19 infections in Germany reached a new record and increased by 11,287 within one day to a total of 392,049, the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) announced on Thursday. During the first COVID-19 wave in spring, the highest number of daily infections in Germany had been recorded at the end of March with 6,294 new infections, according to the RKI, the federal government agency for disease control and prevention. "The situation overall has become very serious," said RKI President Lothar Wieler during a press con-

ference on Thursday. "At present, we still have a chance to slow down the further spread of the virus." Wieler emphasized that a large number of people would catch the COVID-19 infection in their private life through "interaction with each other," such as talking and laughing. The number of coronavirus infections in private households was increasing significantly. An "uncontrolled spread" of COVID-19 was also possible in some regions in Germany, stressed Wieler, urging the German citizens to "keep to hygiene rules and watch out for symptoms." – APP

Kenya to use space technology to boost disaster response

NAIROBI: Kenya plans to harness space technology in order to boost disaster response to emergencies through early warning systems, a senior government official said on Wednesday.

Monica Juma, cabinet secretary, Ministry of Defense told journalists in Nairobi that the use of space technology has been traditionally limited to defense and intelligence purposes. "We want to develop more applications for space technology to provide communication redundancy in case of disasters," Juma said during the launch of the Kenya

Space Agency strategic plan 2020-2025. She added that the strategic plan provides a clear roadmap and firmly anchors space science and related applications as key drivers of national development goals. Juma said that Kenya will harness its geographic advantage with space science to bring socio-economic benefits to its citizens. She observed that Kenya has identified four strategic areas in the space sector that will enable the country to enhance the utilization of space technology for socio-economic development. – APP

Saad Hariri named new Lebanon Prime Minister

BEIRUT: Three-time Lebanese prime minister Saad Hariri was named to the post for a fourth time Thursday and immediately promised a government of technocrats committed to a French-backed reform plan. Hariri said he would "form a cabinet of non politically aligned experts with the mission of economic, financial and administrative

reforms contained in the French initiative roadmap". "I will work on forming a government quickly because time is running out and this is the only and last chance facing our country," he added. President Michel Aoun named Hariri to form a new cabinet to lift the country out of crisis after most parliamentary blocs backed his nomination.

Hariri, who has previously led three governments in Lebanon, stepped down almost a year ago under pressure from unprecedented protests against the political class. "The president summoned... Saad al-Deen al-Hariri to task him with forming a government," a spokesman for the presidency said. Hariri was backed by a majority of 65 lawmakers,

while 53 abstained. Lebanon is grappling with its worst economic crisis in decades and still reeling from a devastating port blast that killed more than 200 people and ravaged large parts of Beirut in August. Aoun warned Wednesday that the new prime minister, the third in a year, would have to spearhead reforms and battle corruption. – APP

Wales skipper Jones to equal Test record

LONDON: Wales captain Alun Wyn Jones is set to equal the Test appearance world record after being named on Thursday to skipper his side away to France this weekend. The lock will make his 148th international appearance (including nine for the British and Irish Lions) in Paris on Saturday to draw level with New Zealand's Richie McCaw. This match will serve as a warm-up for both sides' delayed Six Nations fixtures, with Wales welcoming Scotland to Llanelli next weekend and France facing Ireland in fixtures postponed by several months due to the coronavirus pandemic. Leigh Halfpenny; George North, Jonathan Davies, Nick Tompkins, Josh Adams; Dan Biggar, Rhys Webb; Taulupe Faletau, Justin Tipuric, Aaron Wainwright; Alun Wyn Jones (capt), Cory Hill; Samson Lee, Ryan Elias, Rhys Carre. – DNA

Pak folk medley to be aired on arts festival in China

According to China's Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the 13th China International Youth Art Festival is held both offline and online due to the COVID-19 pandemic

DNA

BEIJING: Main Hoon, a Pakistani folk medley of national integrity, will be aired on the 13th China International Youth Art Festival to showcase the beauty of Pakistani culture to the world. Sponsored by Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA), the folk medley will be voiced by 12 Pakistani singers including Nabeel Shaukat Ali, Bano Rehmat, Sanam Marvi in 12 regional languages, including Gojri, Sindhi, Brahui and so on, according to China Economic Net (CEN) on Thursday. Main Hoon shows the

Pakistani people's yearning for peace, harmony and stability, their love for Pakistan's nature and landscape, and the unity and friendship among all ethnic groups. According to China's Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the 13th China International Youth Art Festival is held both offline and online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 50 art trouts or artists from 26 countries and regions including Pakistan were invited to perform for the International Performing Art E-Showcase, with art forms covering music, dance, drama, acrobatics, folk customs and others.

Launched in 2008, China International Youth Arts Festival is the first international youth-oriented cultural exchange activity led by the Chinese government, and has been held successfully ten times since its debut in 2008. Over the years, the high-profile and enriching festival has attracted tens of thousands of youths from different nations, allowing them to meet old and new friends and enjoy spectacular art performances of various genres. Being a major platform for cultural exchanges between Chinese and foreign youths, it has achieved a high reputation in China and across the world.

WB lauds Pakistan's reforms agenda

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance Dr. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh held a virtual meeting with Mr. Axel Van Trotsenburg, Managing Director, World Bank and Mr. Hartwing Schafer, Vice President SAR, World Bank as part of virtual annual meetings of the IMF and World Bank 2020. The meeting was also attended by Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Mr. Khuro Bakhtiar and SAPM on Petroleum, Mr. Nadeem Babar. Governor State Bank, Dr. Reza Baqar also participated in the meeting through video link.

Adviser Finance appreciated the role of the World Bank in extending assistance to Pakistan to provide much-needed fiscal space to fight COVID-19 pandemic effectively. World Bank is our long-running development partner, he added.

In his remarks, Adviser Finance gave an overview of the current economic situation and highlighted reforms for sustainable economic growth. The Government of Pakistan has followed an aggressive policy for curtailing Govt expenditure and focused on raising revenues by mobilizing internal resources. Tax collection increased by 17% before COVID-19 crisis. The primary deficit was in surplus in March 2020 which was a great achievement. Unfortunately, the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis has reversed the economic gains, he stated.

Adviser Finance underlined that Govt of Pakistan devised a mechanism for cash transfer to support 16 million deserving families during testing times. The Ehsaas Program was acknowledged due to its transparency and in-time facilitation during the pandemic. Likewise, Government took numbers of steps to keep small businesses afloat by sharing the load through subsidies on pay rolls etc.

At least 17 killed in Ghana church collapse

ACCRA: At least 17 worshippers were killed in eastern Ghana when a three-storey church building collapsed, local officials said Thursday, with more people feared trapped in the rubble. One survivor told local media that some 60 people were inside the building belonging to the Church of Prosperity when it collapsed Tuesday in the town of Akyem Batabi. Rescue workers pulled eight people out alive and 17 corpses, National Disaster Management Organisation official Gyan Willington told AFP.

"We're bringing more excavators to clear the rubble," he said. "We fear there are more people trapped down there." Eastern Region Minister Eric Darfour said the rescue had been sent to hospital. "We do not have an idea of the number of people still trapped but the rescue mission is ongoing," Darfour said. The causes of the accident were still unknown but the church's founder, Prophet Isaac Ofori, popularly known as Akoa Isaac, was assisting police with its investigation. Survivor Mavis Antwi told local media that worshippers inside the church "heard portions of the building coming down". – APP

India conspiring to weaken neighbours'

SWABI: The Azad Jammu and Kashmir President Sardar Masood Khan has once again warned India to stop dreaming of military occupation of Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan as the people of both regions had sacrificed their lives for the cause of freedom and they know how to protect their land and liberty.

Addressing a seminar organized by Women's University Swabi in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Thursday, he said that the Kashmiri people are thankful for the help the tribes they had extended to them in the Kashmir liberation war of 1947 under the spirit of fraternity and brotherhood. The AJK President expressed the confidence that if India committed a folly of any kind of adventurism against AJK or GB, the people of not only Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province but every part of Pakistan would extend forthright support to the Kashmiri brethren. – DNA

Leveraging full potentials of Diaspora in UK: HC

Highlighting the lingering Kashmir dispute with India, he said people of illegally occupied Indian Jammu and Kashmir were undergoing worst kind of atrocities and human rights violations at the hands of Indian occupation forces

LONDON: Pakistan High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Moazzam Ahmad Khan has said that further strengthening the existing friendly relations between Pakistan and the United Kingdom, facilitating and leveraging the potentials of our diaspora and highlighting the Kashmir issue at international levels for its peaceful resolution would be his top priorities. He stated this while briefing a small group of UK based Pakistani media here at the High Commission, in his maiden interaction with them the otherday. Moazzam Ahmad Khan said that he had served many countries including India and also worked at Pakistan's foreign office at various capacities



and has vast experience in the field of diplomacy which he wanted to utilize for the benefit of Pakistan and welfare of Pakistani community living in the

UK. Highlighting the lingering Kashmir dispute with India, he said people of illegally occupied Indian Jammu and Kashmir were undergoing worst kind of atrocities and human rights violations at the hands of Indian occupation forces for the past seven decades. The High Commissioner said that Kashmir issue was not only a bilateral and international dispute but also an issue of humanitarian crisis, created due to India's illegal occupation of the held state. He said that he would play his vital role in highlighting the Pakistani principled stand on Kashmir issue and struggle of Kashmiri people to achieve their birth right to self determination and freedom

from Indian subjugation at various forums in the UK. In this regard, he said he would also involve the British Pakistani parliamentarians and notables to highlight the issue through Webinars, for its peaceful solution, in order to achieve a sustainable peace and development in the region. He also urged the UK based Pakistani media to play their vital role in highlighting the issue and expose egregious gross violations of human right and atrocities by Indian occupation forces being perpetrated on the innocent people of Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir to deny them of their birth right to self determination. – APP

Briefs

British Airways parent flies into 1.3 bn euro loss

LONDON: IAG, the owner of British Airways and Spanish carrier Iberia, dived into a loss totalling 1.3 billion euros (\$1.52 billion) in the third quarter on coronavirus fallout, it announced Thursday. The operating loss before exceptional items compared with profit of 1.4 billion euros one year earlier, IAG said in statement ahead of a full earnings release due next week. Revenue slumped 83 percent to 1.2 billion euros in the reporting period, it added. IAG said it expects capacity in the current fourth quarter to be no more than 30 percent compared with a year earlier. "As a result, the group no longer expects to reach breakeven in terms of net cash flows from operating activities during" the final three months of the year, IAG said. IAG said bookings had not recovered as expected owing "to additional measures implemented by many European governments in response to a second wave of Covid-19 infections".

It pointed to an increase in local lockdowns, an extension of quarantine requirements for travellers and a lack of pre-departure testing. New British Airways chief executive Sean Doyle on Monday urged the UK government to end the quarantining of passengers arriving from abroad. — APP

China's investment increases in B&R countries

BEIJING: China's outbound investment was generally stable during the first three quarters of the year, although the raging COVID-19 pandemic and other factors dampened cross-border investment globally, the Ministry of Commerce said Thursday. Chinese companies' hiked investment in countries along the Belt and Road during the period, with non-financial direct investment surging 29.7 percent year on year to reach 13.02 billion U.S. dollars, Gao Feng, spokesperson for the ministry, told a press briefing. — APP

Textile imports reduced by 25.09%

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Textile machinery imports during first three months of current fiscal year reduced by 25.09 per cent as compared to the corresponding period of the last year. According to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), the textile machinery imports came down from US \$125,924 in FY 2019-20 of last financial year to US \$94,328 of the same period of current financial year. During the period from July-Sep 20 this year, imports of Construction and mining machinery reduced by 6.87%, worth \$31,295 thousand as compared to the imports valuing \$33,605 thousand of same period of last year, it added. Meanwhile, Electrical machinery and apparatus imports decreased by 35.94%, worth \$324,172 as compared to the imports of valuing \$506,031 of the corresponding period of last year. During the period under review, Other machinery imports also came down by 4.46%, valuing \$526,586 imported as compared to the imports worth \$551,168 of same period of last year.

Vegetables export grew 11.58%

ISLAMABAD: The exports of vegetable from the country during first quarter of current financial year witnessed about 11.58% growth as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of last year. During the period from July-September, 2020, about 106,819 metric tons of vegetables worth \$41.986 million exported as compared to the exports of the same period of last year. However, exports of rice during the period under review witnessed about 23.47% decrease as compared to the exports of same period of last year, according to the data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. — APP

Kazakhstan to hold Majilis elections on January 10

Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev signs decree; Majilis is the lower chamber of the Kazakh Parliament consisting of 107 deputies, who are elected for a five-year term



DNA

NUR SULTAN: Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev signed a decree scheduling Majilis elections for Jan. 10, 2021, reported Akorda press service. Majilis is the lower chamber of the Kazakh Parliament consisting of 107 deputies, who are elected for a five-year term. The previous elections were held in March 2016. Six political parties participated in the elections and three of them including Nur Otan (82.2 percent), Ak Zhol Democratic Party of Kazakhstan (7.18 percent), the Communist People's Party of Kazakhstan (7.14

percent), received more than 7 percent of the votes and won the right to delegate their deputies to the chamber. Currently, the Nur Otan party has a majority of 84 deputies in the Majilis, the Ak Zhol and the Communist People's party have 7 deputies each. Nine deputies are elected from the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, an advisory body under the President of Kazakhstan whose members are drawn from organizations representing major ethnic communities living in Kazakhstan. "All political parties had time to prepare for the upcoming election campaign, develop an election platform, and enhance party infrastructure. The

Central Election Commission and the Prosecutor General's Office will continuously monitor the legality, transparency, and fairness of elections," said Tokayev in his address. He emphasized the reforms he has undertaken since he stepped into the presidential office in June 2019, including the introduction of a parliamentary opposition institute. "One chair and two secretaries of the Majilis standing committees will now be elected from the members of the parliamentary opposition. In addition, the parliamentary opposition will have the right to initiate parliamentary hearings at least once during one session and to set the agenda for the government hour

at least twice during one session," said the Kazakh president. In 2019, Tokayev signed the decree that introduced a mandatory 30 percent quota for women and young people in party lists in an effort to increase their voice in the decision-making process. The next elections to maslikhats (representative local authority bodies) will for the first time be held based on party lists, which according to Tokayev will "enable parties to strengthen their position in the country's political system." In August, seventeen Senate deputies from the nation's 14 regions and cities of Nur-Sultan, Almaty and Shymkent were elected to the Senate, the upper

chamber of the Kazakh parliament. The renewed composition of the Kazakh parliament, noted Tokayev, will focus on "quality legislative support for social and economic reforms in the country." "The serious economic crisis stemming from the coronavirus pandemic has affected many countries and adversely impacted the entire global economy. At these challenging times, Kazakhstan has to take effective anti-crisis measures, ensuring sustainable economic development, social wellbeing of our citizens, and improving the well-being of the people," said Tokayev encouraging all citizens to take part in the upcoming elections.

Contract signed for power station with Chinese firms

Hu Yeming thanked Nimir Group and pointed out that, as an outstanding international engineering company, Sinoma EC has excellent EPC project execution experiences. The signing of this project is a good opportunity for the cooperation between Sinoma EC and Nimir Group

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Nimir Chemical Plant, a subsidiary of Nimir Group, officially signed a 20MW coal-fired blended biomass power generation project with Sinoma Energy Conservation Co., LTD. (Sinoma EC). According to Gwadar Pro, CEO of Nimir Chemical Corporation Zafar and Technical Director Umar, Sinoma President Hu Yeming and Vice President Ge Liwu were present at the project signing ceremony online. Zafar declared that through a

comprehensive evaluation, Sinoma EC in numerous bidders emerged as the general contractor of this project. "We hope Sinoma EC will take advantage of professional technology and rich experiences in engineering sector, make the project a landmark project in Pakistan, further strengthen influence in chemical industry in Pakistani self-owned power station," said Zafar. Hu Yeming thanked Nimir Group and pointed out that, as an outstanding international engineering company, Sinoma EC has excellent EPC project execution

experiences. The signing of this project is a good opportunity for the cooperation between Sinoma EC and Nimir Group. "We look forward to opening a good situation of win-win cooperation and common development through this cooperation," said Hu. COVID-19 worldwide outbreak has brought difficulties and challenges to the implementation of the project. Under such a circumstance, Sinoma EC guaranteed that they will overcome numerous obstacles, fully promote the progress of the

project and ensure the smooth completion of the project. Sinoma EC is a holding subsidiary of China National Building Material Group Co., Ltd. (CNBM). The Company specializes in energy-saving and emission-reduction professional technical services. The Company has strong R&D and technical service capabilities, and has dozens of core technologies for waste heat power generation and related fields, and a sophisticated high-end talent team integrating R&D, project management, and operation management.

African Union 'strongly condemns' violence in Nigeria

ADDIS ABABA: The African Union Commission chairman on Thursday strongly condemned deadly violence in Nigeria's biggest city Lagos and called on all parties to "privilege dialogue". Moussa Faki Mahamat "strongly condemns the violence that erupted on 20 October 2020 during protests in Lagos, Nigeria that has resulted in multiple deaths and injuries", his office said in a statement distributed Thursday morning. "The Chairperson appeals to all political and social actors to reject the use of violence and respect human rights and the rule of law," the statement said. Amnesty International said at least 12 people were killed by the Ni-

gerian army and police in two locations in Lagos on Tuesday in a deadly crackdown on demonstrations spurred by police brutality and deep-rooted social grievances. At least 56 people have died across the country since the protests began on October 8, with about 38 killed nationwide on Tuesday alone, according to Amnesty. Human Rights Watch also corroborated reports that the Nigerian army had opened fire on protesters Tuesday in "a shooting spree". The use of lethal force by security forces drew international condemnation, with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachete saying reports suggested it could have been premeditated. — APP

Turkey hits out after rivals unite in gas row

They denounced Turkey's "unilateral provocations" over energy exploration in disputed waters of the eastern Mediterranean and its role in war-torn Libya and Syria

ISTANBUL: Turkey on Thursday rejected as "groundless" claims made by Greece, Cyprus and Egypt denouncing Ankara's "unilateral provocations" over energy exploration in the eastern Mediterranean. Greece's Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis accused Turkey of "imperialist fantasies" during a meeting on Wednesday with the leaders of Cyprus and Egypt. The three countries hold regular summits as part of their closer energy cooperation as they seek to create a regional energy hub, along with Israel, supplying gas to Europe. They denounced Turkey's

"unilateral provocations" over energy exploration in disputed waters of the eastern Mediterranean and its role in war-torn Libya and Syria. The Turkish foreign ministry said there would be no solution to problems in the region unless the countries involved changed their "maximalist and hostile policies". "We reject the statement which contains groundless accusations and allegations against our country as a whole," the foreign ministry said in a statement. In defiance of warnings from Western countries, Turkey extended a gas exploration mission by its Oruc Reis

research vessel in the eastern Mediterranean until October 27. The Oruc Reis escorted by military navy ships has become the symbol of Ankara's appetite for natural gas in the eastern Mediterranean, where recent discoveries have triggered a rush for the resource. Athens says Ankara is breaking international law by prospecting in Greek waters, including near the Greek island of Kastellorizo. Turkey insists that it is within its rights in the energy-rich Mediterranean region, saying that the tiny island of Kastellorizo should not count for imposing Greek sovereignty. — APP



GANJA: Officials of Azerbaijan visiting Ganga areas destroyed by Armenian forces shelling. — DNA

Armenian PM's statement suggests they will continue with aggressive policies

This statement, which undermined the efforts of the mediating countries to observe the humanitarian ceasefire, the consultations held with the foreign ministers in Moscow, as well as diplomatic efforts in the run-up to the forthcoming meetings in Washington is another clear example in a long line of destructive stance by aggressor Armenia

DNA

BAKU: -Stating that there is no diplomatic solution to the conflict, Armenian Prime Minister N. Pashinyan openly acknowledged that Armenia continues its aggressive policy and the current leadership of this country is not interested in resolving the conflict through negotiations. The real intention of Armenia, which has been repeatedly entreating for a ceasefire as a result of counter-offensive measures of Azerbaijan in response to the new Armenian attack and the liberation of the territories by the Azerbaijani Armed

Forces, and grossly violating the truce after the humanitarian ceasefire agreements were declared twice, as it is clearly seen from the mentioned statement of the Prime Minister, is not to achieve peace, but rather to resort to a new occupation. This statement, which undermined the efforts of the mediating countries to observe the humanitarian ceasefire, the consultations held with the foreign ministers in Moscow, as well as diplomatic efforts in the run-up to the forthcoming meetings in Washington is another clear example in a long line of destructive stance by aggressor Armenia. Demonstrating goodwill and

'NATO has nothing to do with Nagorno Karabakh conflict'

DNA

BRUSSELS: NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg reminded President of Armenia, Armen Sarkissian that NATO is not part of Nagorno Karabakh conflict. Trend reports citing NATO. On Oct. 21, Armenian President constructiveness, the Azerbaijani side, in its turn, agreed to humanitarian ceasefire twice and stated its support for a negotiated settlement of the conflict on

Armen Sarkissian appealed to NATO to help resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Stoltenberg made the statement during a joint press conference with President of Armenia, Armen Sarkissian. "I reminded the President that NATO is not part of this conflict. NATO is deeply concerned by ongoing violations of the basis of UN Security Council resolutions. As such, we call on countries that show the same approach to Armenia, the aggressor state, which is not in

the ceasefire, which has caused tragic loss of life. It is important for NATO and international security that hostilities end; the suffering stops; and a peaceful solution is found. Any targeting of civilians is unacceptable and must stop. All must now work towards a sustainable political solution," Stoltenberg said. interested in the diplomatic solution of the conflict and Azerbaijan whose territories have been under occupation for almost 30 years and supports the political

solution of the conflict within the framework of international law and UN resolutions, to draw the appropriate conclusions. The Armenian leadership, which does not feel any pressure by the international community and has not been subject to liability for its various crimes as part of its policy of aggression against Azerbaijan, is dragging its people into the abyss with its irresponsible statements and actions. The only way to achieve a sustainable solution to the conflict and de-escalate the tension in the region is through ensuring the rule of international law, the inviolability of internationally recognized borders and respect for them.

Briefs

Written order on Shehbaz's plea issued

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: An accountability court on Thursday directed the jail authorities to provide home food and other facilities to Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif. The court on Thursday issued a three-page written order on a plea seeking facilities of home food, special bed and provision of medicines to the PML-N leader. The Jail Superintendent should ensure provision of home food, special bed, chair, medicines and other necessary facilities, the court said in its order. The court directed the Superintendent Kot Lakhpat Jail to submit compliance report over the order on October 27. "Shehbaz Sharif is an aged accused and the jail manual permits prisoners to buy food from private sources," court order said. Superintendent Jail could allow the prisoners to buy dress, bed and other necessary items, according to the written order. Superintendent Jail, however, could not permit unhygienic, unnecessary and inappropriate things. The jail administration could suspend food supply to prisoners from outside on the recommendation of the jails medical officer, according to the court order. PML-N Lahore had filed a petition in the accountability court seeking facilities to Shehbaz Sharif in jail according to the law. "Shehbaz Sharif has been the Leader of Opposition in the National Assembly, he should be provided facilities including home food as per the law," the petition said. Accountability court had sent Shehbaz Sharif to jail on 14-day judicial remand on Tuesday in money laundering reference.

'Current account in surplus after 17 years'

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology Fawad Chaudhry on Thursday said that Pakistan's current account is in surplus after 17 years. Fawad Chaudhry, in a tweet, said that Pakistan's exports and remittances were higher than imports. He said that government has also slashed spending as reducing expenditures and increasing income can help in achieving economic self-reliance. Earlier, Prime Minister Imran Khan has on Wednesday said that Pakistan is headed in right direction finally as the current account was in surplus of \$73 million in September. The premier took to Twitter and said the surplus for first quarter was brought to \$792 million as compared to the deficit of \$1,492 during the same time last year. PM Imran Khan further said that exports grew by 29 percent and remittances grew by nine percent over previous month. He termed the development as great news for Pakistan.

Hearing of corruption cases every day

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court ordered on Thursday all courts to hear corruption cases every day. The witnesses should record their statements as quickly as possible and the hearings should be completed on time, the court said. The NAB chairperson has been directed to implement the court orders. The directives have been issued in a verdict in the Lakhara power plant corruption case, which is being heard by a Karachi accountability court. The accountability court has been instructed to record the statements of witnesses by November 2 and asked for a report on the implementation of its orders. The court was informed that the federal cabinet is expected to make a decision on establishing 120 new accountability courts in the country soon.

No other alternative to Skhirate accord: Bourita

The Minister stressed that this agreement grants legitimacy to institutions and to all the components of the dialogue and must remain a reference in the context of all the developments in this issue and the resolutions of the UN Security Council

DNA

RABAT: There is no other alternative to the Skhirate political agreement to settle the Libyan crisis, Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccans Abroad, Nasser Bourita, said Wednesday in Rabat, stressing that this agreement represents the reference document. The Skhirate agreement is a basis which cannot be excluded in the search for any solution to the Libyan crisis, Mr. Bourita told reporters following talks with Chairman of the Libyan High Council of State, Khaled Al Mechri. The Minister stressed that this agreement grants legitimacy to institutions and to all the components of the dialogue and must remain a reference in the context of all the developments in this issue and the resolutions of the UN Security Council. However, he noted that this agreement can be developed or adapted to reality, recalling Morocco's support for all efforts aimed at settling the Libyan crisis and its willingness



to continue its positive neutrality for the search for a solution, away from any foreign interference. His Majesty King Mohammed VI, May God Assist Him, supports all the efforts

and initiatives of the Libyans to reach a solution that preserves Libya's national unity and sovereignty and makes it possible to avoid foreign interference, Mr. Bourita said, reiterating Morocco's

position in support for the role of the High Council of State and the House of Representatives as important and necessary bodies for the success of any settlement of the Libyan crisis.

These two bodies represent the essential nucleus for reaching a solution since they represent legitimacy and are two foundations of the political agreement as well as they are represented

throughout the Libyan territory and among the Libyan people, he pointed out. They constitute the essential basis on which any agreement to end the crisis must be based, he continued, adding that Morocco has always encouraged this dialogue and interacts permanently with these two bodies. The Minister also congratulated the two delegations which took part in the Libyan Dialogue held in Bouznika for the spirit of responsibility and consensus which marked the debates on article 15, while making prevail the interest of Libya. He called for the continuation of the positive dynamic created by the Libyan Dialogue in Bouznika with the same spirit and principles and within the framework of the same approach adopted by Morocco which aims to allow Libyans to conduct the dialogue with mutual respect, deeming the Bouznika consensus as important. Mr. Bourita also hailed the positive spirit, the support as well as the efforts of accompaniment of Khaled Al Mechri to the Libyan Dialogue in Bouznika.

Estate Office vacates 1345 houses

ISLAMABAD: The Estate Office has vacated around 1345 houses from illegal/unauthorized occupants in the federal capital with the help of local administration. Sharing the ministry's endeavours for streamlining the allotment process, official sources in the Estate Office said that as many as 2245 houses were allotted to the government employees on merit basis. They said the Ministry of Housing and Works had completed the data entry process for all allotments of government accommodations (category wise) and make it available at the Estate Office website to ensure transparency in the allotment process. The allottees can check the allotment status in the category of their respective department on the website, they added. The sources said the personal data including Computerized National Identity Cards (CNIC) and date of birth have been excluded from the data entered on the website in order to ensure security of personal data. They said the deployment of Management Information System (MIS) to automate the overall procedures of the organization would enhance the efficiency as well as affectivity for better service delivery. Scanning and archiving of all files of allottees to mitigate the risks/catastrophe and readily availability of the valuable information of allottees, they added. — APP

736 new corona cases reported; 10 deaths

Ten corona patients, who were under treatment in hospital died on Wednesday, according to the latest update issued by the National Command and Operation Center (NCOC)

FIAZ CH.

ISLAMABAD: The total active COVID-19 cases in Pakistan on Thursday were recorded 9,642 as 736 more people tested positive for the deadly virus during the last 24 hours. Ten corona patients, who were under treatment in hospital died on Wednesday, according to the latest update issued by the National Command and Operation Center (NCOC). No COVID affected person

was on ventilator in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Balochistan, while 91 ventilators elsewhere in Pakistan, out of 1,884 allocated for COVID-19 patients, were occupied. Some 28,534 tests were conducted across the country on Wednesday, including 7,843 in Sindh, 9,639 in Punjab, 4,459 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), 4,406 in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), 1,072 in Balochistan, 409 in Gilgit Baltistan (GB), and 706 in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK).

Around 309,136 people have recovered from the disease so far across Pakistan making it a significant count with over 90 percent recovery ratio of the affected patients. Since the pandemic outbreak, a total of 325,480 cases were detected so far, including AJK 3,639, Balochistan 15,738, GB 4,107, ICT 18,438, KP 38,810, Punjab 102,107 and Sindh 142,641. About 6,702 deaths were recorded in country since the eruption of the contagion, including 2,590 Sindh

among three of them died in hospital on Wednesday, 2,323 in Punjab among four of them in hospital on Wednesday, 1,266 in KP one of them in hospital on Wednesday, 201 in ICT two of them died in hospital on Wednesday, 148 in Balochistan, 90 in GB and 84 in AJK. A total of 4,177,270 corona tests have been conducted so far, while 735 hospitals are equipped with COVID facilities. Some 856 corona patients were admitted in hospitals across the country.

PM Imran behind Safdar's arrest: Shahid Khaqan

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Thursday said Sindh Inspector General of Police (IGP) was abducted and pressurized to lodge case against PML-N leaders and party workers. The erstwhile premier talked to media and blamed that Prime Minister Imran Khan is responsible for the entire matter. Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa can interrogate his subordinate officers under the Army Act, he said. "The federation attacked the province. Both departments involved in siege of the IGP's home are under the federal government and were given directions by PM Imran Khan. "What will happen to the country when its prime minister starts violating law? From where will Maryam Nawaz, Sindh IGP and public get justice? One former PM was ousted only for possessing a visa. A senate committee should be formed over the matter. The constitution is being violated in the country." PML-N leader Ahsan Iqbal said PM Imran Khan gave 'super NRO' to Indian spy Kulbhusan Jadhav by granting him the right to appeal. The PM is working on agenda of revenge, Ahsan Iqbal said while adding that Imran Khan has been imposed to harm Pakistan. He termed inflation as the biggest problem. — DNA

Afghan delegation to arrive today

ISLAMABAD: On invitation of the Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser a Seventeen Members Afghan Parliamentary delegation led by Speaker of the Wolsey Jirga (Afghan Parliament) Mir Rahman Rahmani would arrive in Islamabad today on a six-day official visit. During its stay in Islamabad the delegation besides meeting with the Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser, would also call on President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi, Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan, Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani and Foreign Minister of Pakistan Shah Mehmood Qureshi, said a press release. The delegation would also have an interactive meeting with the Members of Pakistan-Afghanistan Friendship group in National Assembly and senior government functionaries. Inter-Parliamentary contacts, bilateral relations on trade, regional security issues, and enhancing cooperation between two countries would be deliberated upon during the meetings of the Afghan delegation. On the second leg of its visit, the delegation would participate in two days seminar "Pakistan-Afghanistan Trade & Investment Forum 2020-Partnership For Mutual Benefit" which will commence from October 26 in Islamabad. — APP

ECP issues final electoral rolls

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: ECP has released the voters' figures of final electoral lists. The country have overall 115,748,753 voters, according to the figures released by the ECP. A spokesperson for the ECP says that the ratio of male and female voters in electoral rolls has been 55:45 percent respectively. Sindh have total 2,43,51,681 voters, while Karachi's District Central has been the largest district of the province with regard to the number of the registered voters, the ECP statement said. The District Central have 19,66,945 voters, while District West have 16,46,187 voters and the District East have 15,07,445 voters, according to the ECP electoral rolls. Moreover, Korangi District in Karachi have 13,67,106 and South District have 11,74,124 voters. Punjab have maximum voters in Pakistan's provinces, the number over overall voters in the province is 6,62,36,144 voters according to the final electoral rolls, the election commission said. Federal Capital Islamabad have 825,833 voters, KPK have 1,95,33,964 voters and Balochistan have 48,01,131 number of voters, the ECP said.

BOI offers coop to Japanese investors

ISLAMABAD: The Board of Investment (BOI) on Thursday offered complete cooperation and secure business environment for Japanese investors to bring investment in local potential sectors. The Secretary BOI Fareena Mazhar in her opening remarks welcomed the participants and thanked organizers 2nd Pakistan-Japan Investment webinar, which was held here, said a press release issued here. She apprised about Pakistan's Investment Policy that offered secure environment to invest with 100% equity or Joint Ventures (JV's) in various fields. Fareena said the new legislation of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and Acts-2 of Parliaments provided lucrative incentives and legal protection to the foreign investors. In addition introduction of tax reforms such as e-payment and activation of Sales Tax Real Time Invoice Verification System facilitated business operations, she said. — APP



CHAMB: Chief Of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa visited forward areas at Chamb sector along LOC. — DNA

Over 200 Pak medical professionals reach Kuwait

Speaking to the medical professionals on their arrival in Kuwait, the ambassador said the initiative would pave the way for opening other sectors for Pakistani workers in the friendly country

ISLAMABAD: Over 200 Pakistani medical professionals reached Kuwait on Thursday under a bilateral agreement, inked to meet health needs of the gulf country. The government of Kuwait had recently agreed to hire services of a number of healthcare professionals from Pakistan in the wake of coronavirus, a Spokesman of Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (OP&HRD) told APP. He said initially Kuwait demand-

ed services of 600 medical professionals, of which over 200 had already reached there while the remaining 400 would depart soon. The Spokesman said the first batch of healthcare professionals included 15 doctors, nurses 152 and 41 medical technicians. He said the medical professionals were received by Ambassador of Pakistan to Kuwait Syed Sajjad Haider on their arrival to the gulf state. Speaking to the medical professionals on their arrival in Kuwait,

the ambassador said the initiative would pave the way for opening other sectors for Pakistani workers in the friendly country. He said Pakistani medical professionals were being appreciated worldwide for their efforts to curb the coronavirus spread in their country. He urged them to work in Kuwait with dedication. Earlier, at a pre-departure briefing, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on OP&HRD Sayed Zulfikar Abbas Bukhari

exhorted the outgoing healthcare professionals to uphold the highest values and standards of professionalism as they would be the ambassadors of Pakistan in Kuwait. "It will be you, who will pave the way for other Pakistanis, aspiring to seek jobs in Kuwait," he remarked. He said Pakistan was fully committed to the development of Kuwait and would provide skilled workforce in multiple sectors, aligned with its Vision 2035.

Zulfikar Bukhari said the revival of workforce export to Kuwait was a historic moment for Pakistan as not a single worker had been sent to the Gulf country during the last 13 years. He said a high concentration of Pakistani workforce in Kuwait would help foster the bilateral ties between the two countries. "We want to expand our relations with Kuwait in every sector, especially those which are aligned with its vision 2035." — APP