



# Islamabad POST

Friday, November 13, 2020

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

Pakistan moving towards prosperity and peace, says PM

COAS, Afghan envoy discuss security issues



Pak, Kyrgyzstan mull cooperation against pandemic



## Briefs

### Political imposters exposing themselves

**SHUJAAT HAMZA**  
ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Syed Shibli Faraz has said that political imposters pretending to be champions of democracy are exposing themselves in front of the nation. Responding to Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Maryam Nawaz's interview, he said that we have been saying since day one that neither does she have any thinking nor an ideology, she only cares about her personal interest. People who change their position on a daily basis are not worthy of leading the masses, he added.

### Case against Pervez Elahi halted

**DNA**  
ISLAMABAD: The Executive Board meeting chaired by Chairman NAB has approved to close the investigation of corruption case against Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) leader Chaudhry Parvez Elahi. The statement said that the NAB Executive Board has approved the filing of seven corruption references. The meeting approved to close the investigation of corruption case against PML-Q leader Chaudhry Parvez Elahi. The meeting approved the reference against former project directors Sher Zaman Khan, Muhammad Naem Baloch and Abdul Hameed Mengal among others.

### No political deadlock, says Asad

**ABID RAZA**  
ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development, Reforms and Special Initiatives Asad Umar has said that there was no political deadlock in the country as the government was denying to grant NRO to the Opposition whereas the Opposition had denied to accept it. He said that there was no threat to the government as making of such speculations based on miscalculations has remained an old fashion.

## COAS, Afghan envoy discuss security issues

The army chief welcomed the Afghan ambassador and expressed the hope that his services will help optimize Pakistan-Afghan bilateral relations

NAVEED MIRAJ / DNA

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Thursday met the Afghan ambassador Najibullah Alikhil to discuss defence and security cooperation, among other issues. "The army chief welcomed the Afghan ambassador and expressed the hope that his services will help optimize Pakistan-Afghan bilateral relations," said a statement by the ISPR. "Regional security situation, the ongoing Afghan Peace Process, border management and defence and security cooperation were discussed [during the meeting as well],"

read the ISPR statement. Separately, the army chief and Azad Kashmir Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider also met to discuss the situation along the Line of Control (LoC) and in the Indian occupied Kashmir. It may be mentioned here that the Afghan ambassador has recently arrived in Pakistan. He presented his credentials last week. The previous Afghan ambassador Atif Mashal had left Pakistan few months ago after completing his term. During his term he tried to promote bilateral ties. However due to COVID situation he could not do more. The new ambassador is likely to pick of threads from where his predecessor left.



RAWALPINDI: Najibullah Alikhil, Afghanistan's ambassador to Pakistan called on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff. - DNA

## Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan mull cooperation

Ambassador Erik Beishembiev informed the Pakistani side of the current epidemiological situation in Kyrgyzstan

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Erik Beishembiev, Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan met with Chaudhry Fawad Hussain, Federal Minister of Science and Technology of Pakistan. The sides discussed issues of enhancing cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan in the field of science and medicine. Erik Beishembiev informed the Pakistani side of the current epidemiological situation in Kyrgyzstan, and expressed a request to the Pakistani



side to provide possible assistance in supplying the country with the necessary protective equipment and medicines in the fight against Covid-19 infection. Following the meeting, the sides reached an agreement on the exchange of experience on medical issues, as well as the intensification of scientific and technical cooperation between the two countries.

### Highest single-day death toll

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan recorded its highest single-day coronavirus death toll in four months when the infection claimed 34 lives on November 11, according to the data issued by the National Command and Operations (NCO) on Thursday. The last time the country reported over 30 deaths was on July 24 when 35 people lost their lives. A total of 7,055 people have succumbed to the coronavirus in the nine months since the pandemic reached Pakistan. The NCO reported 1,808 new cases across the country in the past 24 hours, bringing the total number of infections to 349,992. A total of 784 people recovered from the virus, bringing the tally of recovered cases to 320,849. The NCO also shared that 22,088 people are currently being treated for the coronavirus.

### Saudi Arabia has close ties with Pak: envoy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Royal Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan Admiral (retd) Nawaf Bin Said Al-Maliki has said that the Kingdom has had close relations with Pakistan since its inception. Saudi Arabia has stood by Pakistan through thick and thin. Addressing a food and aid distribution ceremony for flood victims of Sindh by the Saudi Relief Center in Islamabad, the Ambassador said that Pakistan is of great importance to the Saudi government and its people. He said that they pray for the security and stability of Pakistan and the Muslim ummah. Muhammad Idrees, a member of the NDMA, said the Saudi government has stepped in to help after every natural disaster, helping the deserving and needy people.

## Pak moving towards development: PM

Imran Khan said that the rupee is strengthening today without spending a dollar

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has said that economic indicators in Pakistan are positive. Pakistan is moving towards development after difficult time. Addressing the New Pakistan Certificate Launching Ceremony, the Prime Minister said that overseas Pakistanis are the biggest asset of the country. Overseas Pa-

kistanis are the most loving citizens of the homeland. He said that depreciation of the currency increased inflation. Today, the rising value of the rupee indicates a better state of the country's economy. Imran Khan said that the rupee is strengthening today without spending a dollar. There is a current account surplus after 17 years due to effective economic policies. A 24% increase in the country's exports is also a welcome sign. Thank God the country is stabilizing, he added. The Prime Minister said that they were carrying the burden of debts of the previous government and to pay the previous debts his government had to take loans. However, Pakistan's debt has not increased in the last four months. Imran Khan said that the entire textile industry has flourished in Faisalabad. (Picture on Back Page)

## Pak to support Egypt in legal battle: Qadri

The Minister said the Muslim Ummah should get united to check such despicable incidents in future

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Religious Affairs Noor-ul-Haq Qadri has said Pakistan supports Grand Imam of Egypt Sheikh Al Azhar's decision to move the International Court of Justice against publication



Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre has launched a food bag project worth 49.5 million rupees. Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Nawaf Al Malikiy inaugurated the event. - DNA

## Ready to talk with military if PM Imran is removed: Maryam

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: PML-N vice-president Maryam Nawaz has said that her party is open to dialogue with the military establishment "within the ambit of the Constitution" and provided that the incumbent PTI government is removed from office. "The army is my institution," Maryam said in an interview with BBC Urdu. "We will definitely talk but within the ambit of the Constitution," she added. The PML-N leader said she was not against state institutions but stressed that there would be no dialogue in secret. The "incumbent government will have to go if we are to move forward",

she added. Maryam claimed that the "establishment had reached out to her close aides" but had not "contacted her directly". She also said the idea of dialogue through the platform of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) can be deliberated upon.

### No intention to talk to Maryam: Fawad

SAIFULLAH / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Science and Technology Chaudhry Fawad Hussain Thursday said the government would not be intended to negotiate with Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz vice-president Maryam Nawaz. Talking to private news channel, he termed Maryam Nawaz a certified liar as she always told a lie regarding her assets and properties. The minister said former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif should come back to the country to face the corruption cases registered against him, adding Nawaz Sharif and her daughter were criticizing and attacking the national institutions for personal interests.

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## Briefs

PHA  
decorates  
canal road

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: The Parks and Horticulture Authority has decorated half a kilometer of canal area on Canal Road with attractive design and lighting plants. Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali, Chairman Latif Nazir and Director General Asma Ijaz Cheema visited the site and inaugurated the beautification of Canal. Deputy Commissioner appreciated the initiative taken by PHA to decorate a section of Canal Road with dazzling lighting in limited resources and said that thanks to it the citizens get an untouched impression. He said that PHA and district administration are committed to beautify the entire canal so that the citizens get to see a good environment. He said that under the Clean and Green program there is special focus on beautification of the city. He said that along with the canal, beauty would be highlighted at other points of the city as well. Chairman PHA said that PHA strives to make the city truly clean and green and beautiful. In this regard, practical steps have been initiated on Canal road under the Master Beautification Plan. DG said that the design highlights the culture of the city and pays homage to the eminent personalities of Faisalabad city. She said that the PHA has also planted 40,000 trees in the city to ensure their survival and security. Reiterating her commitment, She said that steps would be taken to make the city beautiful and in line with public expectations.

Postal ballot  
papers to be  
verified by  
NADRA

DNA

GILGIT: Chief Election Commissioner Gilgit Baltistan Raja Shehbaz Khan said that due to violation of code of conduct so far 330 notices has been issued to different party and independent candidates contesting for the upcoming election scheduled to be held on 15th November this week. Addressing a press conference here in Gilgit, Chief Election Commissioner said that election campaign would be banned after night of 13th November and violation of code of conduct would be dealt with strict legal proceedings. He informed that regarding postal ballot papers election act has law and regulations adding that soon after the unofficial results of election from different constituencies, postal ballot papers would be open in front of candidates. He said that postal ballot papers would be verified by NADRA and fake postal ballot be separated from original once. Chief election Commissioner said that all political parties had showed up confidence upon the preparations and managements done by Election Commission GB. He said election Commission GB had tried his best to act up on the reservations of different candidates of political parties.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of state and chairman, board of investment Atif R. Bokhari meeting with Bela Fazekas, ambassador of Hungary at his office. – DNA

COMSTECH confers  
awards on OIC scientists

COMSTECH decided in 1996 to institute science awards to recognize outstanding research work carried out by the scientists who are citizens of, and working in, OIC member states. Each award carries a certificate, shield of honor and a cash prize

DNA

ISLAMABAD: COMSTECH conferred awards in the categories of basic sciences and excellence in science and technology to the award laureates from Algeria, Egypt, Iran, and Turkey in a ceremony held yesterday evening at COMSTECH. The award shields and certificates were presented to the Ambassadors of the respective countries by the Coordinator General, COMSTECH Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary.

H. E. Mr. Ibrahim Said, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Egypt, received the awards on behalf of Egyptian award winners. H.E. Mr. Amrane Foudil, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Algeria received the award on behalf of Algerian award winner, and H. E. Mrs. Esra Sen, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Turkey, received the award on behalf of Turkish award winner. COMSTECH decided in 1996 to institute science awards to recognize outstanding research work carried out by the

scientists who are citizens of, and working in, OIC member states. Each award carries a certificate, shield of honor and a cash prize. These awards are conferred upon the recipients by H.E. President of Pakistan (Chairman COMSTECH). In the category of basic sciences COMSTECH awards in four basic fields; Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Physics. Each award carries a cash prize of US\$ 5000. Dr. Rany Karam Aziz Henein of Egypt won the basic sciences award in biology and

Dr. Engin Umut Akkaya of Turkey, in Chemistry. Best Young Researcher Award, Best Scientific Book Award, Award for Patent, and Best Research Paper Award are conferred under the category of excellence in science and technology. Each award carries a cash prize along with a shield of honor and a certificate of recognition. Dr. Mehmet Atilla Tasdelen of Turkey and Dr. Farrokh Aminifard of Iran won the young researcher award. The Best Scientific Book award won by Dr. Salah Sabry Ahmed Obayya,

Patent Award won Dr. Ibrahim El-Sherbiny, Best Research Paper in Biology award won by Dr. Maha Nasr Sayed Aly, and the Best Research Paper in Chemistry award won by Dr. Mohamed H. Alkordi, of Egypt. The Best Research Paper in Physics award won by Dr. Abdelaali Boudjemaa of Algeria. Since the inception, 41 scientists from Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Malaysia, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Turkey and Uzbekistan, have won these prestigious COMSTECH international science awards.

UBG core committee  
meeting conveyed

Iftikhar Malik said that 27 senior trade leaders drawn across the country will sit together

DNA

LAHORE: The United Business Forum (UBG) has convened its high level core committee meeting here on Nov 14 Saturday to kick off second phase of the campaign for the annual election of the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Talking to a select representatives of trade associations affiliated with FPCCI here Thursday Chairman UBG Iftikhar Ali Malik said that 27 senior trade leaders drawn across the country will sit together at core committee meeting to work out next strategy to sweep election with thumping majority. He informed the participants that during first phase of campaign, the major chunk of chambers and trade associations of KPA and Punjab including Islamabad had unanimously assured to fully support the UBG candidates in the forthcoming

federation election. He said in second phase, UBG leaders along with candidates will visit Sindh and Balochistan provinces including Karachi to muster support of the chambers and trade associations. He said that UBG patron in chief SM Muneer is already actively engaged in election campaign. However UBG leadership will join him to make the campaign a real success. Iftikhar Malik hoped the business community would repose confidence on UBG candidates in the larger interests of the economy of the country. He said UBG would continue to serve the business community and would urge government to form business friendly policies. Group Chairman said that we firmly believe in rule of law, promotion of democratic system and strengthening of national economy by safeguarding the interests of traders.

Naval chief visits naval  
installations at coastal areas

Speaking on the occasions, the Admiral highlighted the importance of maritime security of entire Coast which has increased manifold in context of the ongoing CPEC project

KARACHI: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Ajjad Khan Niazi visited Pakistan Navy Units at Coastal Areas of Turbat, Gwadar and Ormara to review operational preparedness and combat readiness. Upon arrival at PNS SIDDIQUE, the Naval Air Station at Turbat, the Chief of the Naval Staff was received by Commander Pakistan Fleet Rear Admiral Naveed Ashraf. The Naval Chief was briefed on the operations of Naval Air Arm followed by interaction with the troops. Later, Chief of the Naval Staff departed for Gwadar, where he was apprised about ongoing operations of Maritime Security Task Force-88, Coastal Security and Harbour Defence Force, which have been established by Pakistan Navy to ensure maritime security of Gwadar Port and China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects.



The Naval Chief also visited Jinnah Naval Base and PN Cadet College Ormara where he was received by Commander Coast Vice Admiral Zahid Ilyas. Speaking on the occasions, the Admiral highlighted the importance of maritime security of entire Coast which has

increased manifold in context of the ongoing CPEC project. The Naval Chief highlighted the dividends of CPEC related projects which are intrinsically linked with the security of maritime domain. He stressed that responsibilities of Pakistan Navy would continue to grow in coming years. Chief

of the Naval Staff reaffirmed Pakistan Navy's resolve to safeguard the maritime boundaries and maritime interests of the nation at all cost and also appreciated the morale, selfless devotion and commitment of the deployed troops to defend the maritime frontiers of the country. – DNA

Govt should  
prioritise  
agriculture  
sector

DNA

KARACHI: Former Chairman Standing Committee on Agriculture of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Ahmad Jawad on Thursday asked the government to prioritise agriculture sector in its economic planning to avert shortages of essential goods. We have been experimenting with different ideas like rapid industrialization and private sector investments in the services sector in an attempt to give the economy a boost, and for it to function beyond the sphere of agricultural influence, however, the situation remained economically precarious. "We have to understand that it is only a preponderate agriculture sector that would guarantee a prosperous future for country". Food security and to increase yields have been the top priorities for all developed countries. They have been exploring new avenues to achieve their targets of food self-sufficiency. Whereas we are still banking upon the primitive and antiquated ways of research at NARC and PARC. The budget allocation for the agriculture sector had been slashed by 48 per cent in the current fiscal.

Farman takes  
notice of  
harassment  
cases

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Shah Farman has taken notice of alleged harassment cases in Islamia College University following protests and ordered the governor inspection team to conduct inquiry into the matter and submit a report within three days. In a statement issued here on Wednesday, the governor said that harassment cases in education institutions would not be tolerated at any cost and the people involved in such cases would be brought to justice. He said that girl students would be provided full protection against harassment and added that no compromise would be made on dignity and honor of females. – APP

Early  
detection can  
cure cancer:  
Samina Alvi

DNA

KARACHI: Begum Samina Arif Alvi was the Chief guest at an event in Kiran Foundation School, Karachi on 12-11-2020. Begum Alvi's visit was in continuation to her series of visits to raise public awareness regarding breast cancer across the country. The First Lady was welcomed by Ms. Sabina Khatri, the chairperson Kiran Foundation. During her speech at the event, Begum Samina Alvi highlighted the importance of early diagnosis of the disease, "If you detect breast cancer early, it can be treated and one can live a normal life," Begum Alvi said. Ignoring the symptoms of the disease can have dire consequences, she added.

Govt urged to take  
action on health levy bill

This amount can take care of over one third of the total health burden being borne by Pakistan

FIAZ CH

ISLAMABAD: In the wake of current Covid 19 pandemic, poverty is on the rise in low and middle income countries, especially Pakistan. The current financial crunch has dented the economic prosperity in these countries. Azhar Saleem, CEO Human Development Foundation (HDF) stated that effective strategy for generating revenues from multiple sources can be a win for the government. One of these sources is the Health Levy Bill on cigarettes and sugary drinks. If the government implements this bill, it can open up a new avenue for revenues generation. The Health Levy Bill was approved by the Cabinet of Pakistan in 2019 and forwarded to Federal Board of Revenue and relevant departments for further processing. In this bill, a surcharge of Rs. 10 was proposed on a pack of 20 cigarettes and Rs 1 per 250 ml of sugary drinks. As a result, up to Rs. 50 to 55 billion could be generated. This amount can take care of over one third of the total health burden being borne by Pakistan. A representative of Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, Malik Imran, stated that last

year the federal cabinet had approved the health levy on cigarettes and sugary beverages. "However, it could not be included in the finance bills of last year and the current year. As per our calculations, the exchequer has faced a loss of at least Rs40 billion from July 2019 to June 2020, he said. Mr. Imran said that one of the partners had contacted the federal ombudsman for the implementation of the decision of the federal cabinet but during a hearing held on Oct 27 the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) claimed that it had no objection over the health levy and cited the cause for no implementation a delay on part of the Ministry of National Health Services (NHS) in providing the draft bill. The Ministry of Health will be presenting its explanation at a next hearing with Federal Ombudsman. Anti-tobacco activists urged the government to take serious notice of the delay in implementation of health levy bill. This revenue can be channelized for mitigating the overall health burden as well as the wellbeing of youth and nutrition of undernourished children. This way the economic burden can be reduced and a healthy society, free of tobacco addiction, be ensured.

NOVEMBER 2020

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11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza,  
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Ph: 051-2261960, 051-2266165

## Briefs

### Lok Virsa to hold "KPK Musical Night"

ISLAMABAD: Lok Virsa would hold "KPK Musical Night" at its complex here on Saturday in connection with its annual Lok Mela celebrations.

The night will feature traditional Pakhtun dance of swords and Frontier Constabulary (FC) dance group by KPK cultural pavilion.

A contingent of over 80 people would be participating in the Musical night to present Khattak dance group. Famous folk singers will enthrall the audience with their melodious performances, an official said on Thursday.

He said a 'Hujra' had been created wherein musicians presented folk Pushto music 'Tank Takor' whilst playing traditional musical instruments like 'Rubab', Tabla and Harmonium. He said that master artisans in specialized craft fields such as embroidery, metal work, wax printing, Shawl weaving, Khes weaving and wood works and a number of folk artists have also exhibited their work.

He said that The KPK pavilion offer varieties of traditional food like 'Chappal Kabab' and 'Lamb Karahi' all washed down with a cup of 'Qehwa' (green tea) at Qehwa Khana. - APP

### CDA continues roads repair work

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Repairing and carpeting work of Capital Development Authority (CDA) on 7th avenue is underway. In the second phase of work lights will be installed on the avenue whereas the work of its beautification will be done in the third phase.

According to detail, CDA is taking great interest in cleanliness, beautification, developmental works, and restoration of infrastructure in the city.

The authority started the work of repairing and restoration at 7th avenue which would be completed today (Friday). The machinery of MPO department is being used for the work on 7th avenue.

The speedy work is underway on the said avenue. The officials and workers are working in two shifts.

All the lights at the avenue will be restored soon. The work on beautification of the avenue will also be started just after the completion of the repairing work.

### IHC seeks reply from NCOC

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday sought comments from National Command Operation Center (NCOC) in a petition challenging ban on indoor marriage functions in wake of COVID-19. Chief Justice Athar Minalah, asked as to why the authority had dual standard regarding marraquees.

The bench observed that on one side the government had imposed ban on gatherings but on the other hand it was organizing political processions.

The petitioner's lawyer Sardar Taimoor Aslam pleaded that National Command Operation Center imposed ban on indoor marriage events from November 20 without hearing the owners of marriage halls.

He said, political processions of opposition and government parties were continue in various cities. The concerned authority should make the policy but it shouldn't unemployed the ten thousands people associated with marriage hall business.

The lawyer said that they would welcome if a marquee was closed on violation of SOPs regarding coronavirus. The court seeking comments from the respondents adjourned hearing till November 18.



ISLAMABAD: Delegation of RCCI led by President Mohammad Nasir Mirza visited Mustafa Yurdakul ambassador of Turkey to Pakistan at the embassy. Discussion on different opportunities in enhancement of Bilateral trade were discussed and both parties agreed to cooperate with each other. - DNA

## President for collective efforts to curb drug use

He emphasised the role of media in creating awareness about the consequences of drug usage. He said that law enforcement agencies are playing an active role in dealing with the issue, yet there is a need for direct engagement with the youth

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi has stressed the need for collective efforts to root out the growing menace of drug addiction in university campuses, and to extend all-out facilitation to differently-abled students. He was addressing on Thursday an online meeting with the Vice Chancellors of all public and private sector universities on issues regarding differently-abled students as well as drug addiction. The meeting was also attended by Federal Minister for Education Shafiqat Mahmood, Federal Minister for Narcotics Control Mr. Muhammad Azam Khan Swati, Federal Minister for Human Rights Dr. Shireen M. Mazari, Chairman HEC Tariq Banuri, and Director General Anti-Narcotics Force Major General Muhammad Arif Malik. During the first session on proliferation of drug use on campuses, the meeting deliberated on measures to curtail drug use through student counselling services, creation of a hotline, formation of a whistle-blower mechanism, penalization of elements involved in use and supply of drugs, constitution of parent-teacher coordination bodies, student counselling, creation of a hotline, and coordination with rehabilitation facilities. Steps necessary for supply reduction, demand reduction, progress review,



and de-stigmatization of institutions were also brought under consideration.

Mr. Azam Swati briefed the meeting about various initiatives for drug control taken by his Ministry, and the Ministry's desire to work in close coordination with the universities to curb this increasing menace. He suggested a number of steps to be taken and implemented by the universities.

It was decided that all the relevant stakeholders will coordinate and come up with a concrete policy on curtailing use of drugs on campuses, latest by March. The President directed HEC to develop appropriate policy guidelines, in consultation with all the stakeholders, to support universities

address this issue in an effective manner. Dr. Alvi stressed that universities must take every step necessary to make their campuses safe from drugs. "This is not only a moral imperative. Universities have a legal responsibility to implement all relevant national laws." He noted that environment of many universities around the world is threatened today by the proliferation of drugs.

He emphasised the role of media in creating awareness about the consequences of drug usage. He said that law enforcement agencies are playing an active role in dealing with the issue, yet there is a need for direct engagement with the youth. He informed that the Ministry of Health has been tasked

to develop a broader helpline to deal with health-related issues, particularly illicit use of drugs. He said that the academia must utilize the services of psychologists and psychiatrists, social workers, and non-government organizations in issues pertaining to drug usage. Vice Chancellors of Punjab University, Peshawar University, Haripur University, BUITEMS Quetta and SZABIST Karachi along with others shared how they are dealing with this challenge at present and gave suggestions to strengthen these efforts with coordination of all the stakeholders.

During the second session on differently-abled students, the participants pondered upon measures to bring such students to mainstream and facilitate them in every possible manner. Different suggestions by participants included age relaxation for differently-abled students, wheelchair friendly buildings, scholarship and fee waivers, and special transport facility within campuses. Minister Dr. Mazari informed the gathering that ICT Rights of Persons with Disability Act 2020 has already been passed. She said it extends to the whole of ICT territory and so is also binding on universities in this area. She added that other provinces may adopt this Act through passage of resolution from the respective constituent assemblies. She asked HEC to review its existing policy for differently-abled students in light of this Act.



ISLAMABAD: Sardar Yasir Ilyas, President ICCI is presenting memento to Vanessa Audi Rhys O'Brien, British-American climber during her visit to ICCI. Fatima Aziz SVP, Abdul Rehman Khan VP ICCI and others are also present. - DNA

### Vanessa O'Brien stresses for strong Pak-US trade ties

KHAYAM ABBASI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) hosted Ms. Vanessa Audi Rhys O'Brien, British-American Mountaineer and Pakistan's Goodwill Ambassador to pay tribute to her great achievements.

Addressing the ceremony, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry congratulated Ms. Vanessa O'Brien for becoming the first woman to reach the world's highest point of Mount Everest and also touching the lowest points of Challenger Deep this year carrying Pakistani flag and making her mark in the Guinness World Record, which was great achievement for a woman. He also thanked her for promoting Pakistan as a goodwill ambassador and projecting its positives.

He briefed her about the business and investment potential of Pakistan and said that the newly elected Administration of the US should focus on promoting trade relations with Pakistan which would benefit both countries.

He said that the newly elected US President should also visit Pakistan which would enhance both the countries on a long-term business partnership. Speaking at the occasion, Ms. Vanessa Audi Rhys O'Brien said that Pakistan was an emerging economy with great potential for tourism and business opportunities.

She appreciated Pakistan for keeping its businesses running despite the challenges of Covid-19 due to which its exports improved during the coronavirus.

## Special teams to be constituted for wanted criminals

Superintendent of Police (Saddar) Sarfaraz Ahmad Virk gave these directions while chairing a meeting held to review the crime situation in the area and performance of police officials

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Saddar Zone Police on Thursday were directed to constitute special teams for arrest of the wanted criminals, court absconders and ensure crackdown against those involved in anti-social activities.

Superintendent of Police (Saddar) Sarfaraz Ahmad Virk gave these directions while chairing a meeting held to review the crime situation in the area and performance of police officials. The meeting

held following directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Muhammad Aamir Zulfiqar Khan and Deputy Inspector General of Police (Operations) Waqar Uddin Syed and was attended by Sub-Divisional Police Officers (SDPOs) and Station House Officers (SHOs) of police stations falling in Saddar Zone.

The SP Sarfaraz Ahmad Virk directed all police officials to launch crackdown against proclaimed offenders and constitute special teams for arrest of proclaimed offenders and court absconders

as well. It was directed to ensure proper security arrangements at religious or worship places and to review the prevailing security arrangements there for further improvement. The police officials were directed to complete investigation of all pending cases registered before June 30, 2020. For enhanced security measures in the Saddar Zone, police officials were asked to revise patrolling plan in order to prevent street crime. It was directed to deploy policemen at markets and other business areas to avoid snatching incidents.

The checking at police pickets in the area should be improved while drug peddling activities to be curbed, he maintained. The SP (Saddar) said cops performing duties at police pickets should be briefed about effective security measures and bullet proof jackets and masks to be provided to them. He said that special pickets should be erected in those areas where crime rate is being reported high and special vigilance to be maintained for protection to the lives and property of the citizens. He also asked for taking effective

steps to check bike and car theft cases and keep vigilance eye on suspected vehicles and persons. As per vision of IGP Islamabad Muhammad Aamir Zulfiqar Khan, he said that decent attitude and policy of 'Phele Salam - Phir Kalam' should be adopted during interaction with citizens. The SP (Saddar) reviewed the performance of all police officials related to tasks assigned to them in previous meeting. He said that such review would remain continue in future and those involved in dereliction of duties would have to face disciplinary action.

### ICC discusses civic problems with Ali Nawaz

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Islamabad Citizen Committee (ICC) led by its President Syed M Siddiq Hasan called on Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Capital Development Authority (CDA) Ali Nawaz Awan.

The delegation informed the SAPM about issues being faced by the federal capital residents, said a news release.

The PM's Special Assistant was very receptive and it was agreed that ICC would give comprehensive proposals for improvement of services being provided to the residents federal capital.

A request letter with regard to the management of Citizens Club located in Fatima Jinnah Park was also handed over to him.

### PNCA, Foundation Art Divvy to screen short films

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Foundation Art Divvy, an art gallery will hold sixth evening of "Divvy Film Festival" tomorrow (Friday) to screen short films at Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA).

In collaboration with PNCA, they will be showing two exceptional films including Khamosh Pani by Sabiha Sumar and Jinnah by Jamil Dehlavi.

This festival will celebrate the breadth and depth of independent films being made by dedicated and talented filmmakers, an official said on Wednesday.

She said that the themes of the films would vary between human stories of love and heartbreak, the resilience of heroic individuals and the trauma of loss, as well as the joy of ordinary and unexpected moments.

She said that festival will focus on independent Pakistani films, and includes feature films, short films, documentaries and animated films and screening would be held on every Friday for 6 weeks.

Each evening will be curated carefully to create a thoughtful and immersive experience for the viewer, ending with a discussion with the film directors.

There will also be an evening of panel discussions with film historians and directors, she said.

### ICT admin to implement labour laws

ISLAMABAD: The ICT administration has stepped up its efforts to ensure implementation of labour laws within the territorial jurisdiction of Islamabad. During the last month, ICT Labour Department had inspected 314 private entities in Islamabad and issued challans to 190 establishments for violating the relevant laws, said the ICT spokesman on Thursday. Talking to APP, he said 30 cases were registered against the violators for non-payment of minimum wages to the workers.

## Briefs

## Punjabi poet 'Ahmed Rahi' remembered

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Nation paid glowing tributes to legendary Punjabi poet and writer, Ahmed Rahi on his 97th birth anniversary on Thursday. Born in Amritsar on November 12, 1923, Ahmad Rahi was one of the best film script writers who wrote about the Partition of India along with many songs for films. His first book, Tarinjan, was published in 1952 which was a poetry book about the Partition of India. Another aspect of Rahi's poetry is the influence of Punjabi folk tales and folk music. The folk heroines Heer, Sahiban, Sohni all are present as living characters. Most of the leading actors of 60's and 70's had wanted to perform on the songs written by him, private news channels reported. He wrote over 1900 songs for Urdu and Punjabi films and received the Pride of Performance award on his great literary work and services for the Pakistani film industry. He died on September 2, 2002, leaving behind a glowing trail of over 1,900 unforgettable melodies and around 260 film scripts.

## Police to take strict action against route violators

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) has decided to take strict action against those transporters involved in non-completion of routes, misbehavior with passengers and overloading. "Strict action will be taken against those transporters violating traffic routes. The purpose is to provide better commuting facilities to the citizen," said Senior Superintendent of Police (Traffic) Farrukh Rasheed on Thursday while reviewing performance of ITP against those involved in violation of routes. Following directions of IGP Islamabad Muhammad Aamir Zulfikar, efforts are underway to ensure safe road environment in the city and take strict action against those violating traffic rules. As per his directions, ITP is utilizing all resources to facilitate the general public and not only issuing traffic violation tickets to the PSVs for over charging, misbehavior of driver/conductor and non-completion of route but also canceling the route permits of PSVs over repeated involvement of its drivers in same violation. The SSP (Traffic) said that special squads have already been constituted to check the route violation while Traffic Help Line - 1915 is assisting to resolve the public grievance well in time where every citizen can complain on the help line round the clock. He said that fitness certificates of the vehicles are being checked and every possible effort is being made to ensure safe road environment in the city. The SSP (Traffic) said that citizens can lodge their complaint regarding non-completion of routes, misbehavior with passengers or other traffic related issues at ITP helpline 1915 or 051-92619293. — APP

## Huawei ICT register students for competition

ISLAMABAD: Over 10,000 registered students of Pakistani universities will sit for the next stage during this week for Huawei ICT Competition 2020 hoping to qualify for international competitive and communication-based platform. These students hoping to increase their ICT knowledge, improve practice and application skills, as well as spread innovation awareness during the 5th installment of the Huawei ICT Competition 2020 being held in Pakistan in partnership with the Higher Education Commission (HEC), a press release said on Thursday. The competition is underway with roadshows having just been concluded all over the country. Due to the restrictions placed by Covid-19, what were once traditional roadshows were substituted with virtual roadshows and awareness sessions. Virtual roadshows and awareness sessions were conducted at over 30 universities all around Pakistan by Huawei's Talent Ecosystem Development team and its authorized learning partners like AKICS and Corvit. — APP



ISLAMABAD: RCCI delegation led by President Nasir Mirza meeting with Charge d Affaires of Uzbekistan Col Saadullah. — DNA

## 'Waseela taleem program being expanded to entire country'

Ehsaas Nashonuma program is being introduced in Kharan and Khuzdar. Total 6,625 beneficiaries will be registered under Nashonuma in these two districts and will get specialized nutritious food to prevent stunting in children along with cash stipend

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister during his visit to Balochistan tomorrow will be briefed about the nationwide rollout of Ehsaas' Taleemi-wazaef for primary school going children under Waseela-e-Taleem program. The PM will join the children and their parents to witness new enrolments of deserving children in Waseela-e-Taleem. Following a briefing on the recent deep-rooted reforms introduced in Waseela e Taleem under the umbrella of Ehsaas, Prime Minister will oversee details of a girl child being entered in the end-to-end digital system. At the site, he will also witness the payment being made to the child's mother. Pakistan has been running an Education Conditional Cash Transfer for primary school going children called Waseela-e-Taleem since 2012 in selected districts. Now, this program is being expanded nationwide, representing a major quantum change.

In the past, the program encountered a number of challenges namely high administrative cost, weak compliance monitoring system, low stipend amount and high error and fraud due to a paper-based approach. Over the last year and a half, a comprehensive and deep-rooted reform was designed and deployed as a result of which far reaching changes have been made in the program. There are four key pillars of reform: First, end-to-end digitization of a number of processes, which were previously managed manually. Apps have been developed which are used by staff to register children and monitor compliance. Secondly, cost-effective changes institutional infrastructure was developed to expand this program nationwide and reliance on NGOs was eliminated. Because of this, operational cost has been reduced from 8% to 3%. Third, the stipend given to children has been modified as per Ehsaas' new Stipend policy. Children of poorest families will now be provided condi-



tional cash grants of Rs. 1,500 for boy child and Rs. 2,000 per quarter for girl child on attainment of 70% attendance in school. Finally, and most importantly, the program is being expanded to all districts of the country. Education Conditional Cash Transfers are an important pillar of Ehsaas and are included in the Ehsaas framework as Policy #73 'Education Conditional Cash Transfers'. Education Conditional Cash Transfers serve the dual purpose of socially assisting vulnerable households and at the same time reduce the number of out of school children, which is an important outcome for Pakistan

given that there are 19.1 million out-of-school children in the country. Overall budget this year is 8 billion. Overall, in the Ehsaas umbrella, there are many enhancements for South Balochistan districts of Washuk, Kharan, Chagai, Mastung, Khuzdar, Lasbela, Awaran, Panjgur, Turbat, Gwadar. Two new Panagahs will be opened in two districts, one in Lasbela Industrial Zone and the other in Gwadar Economic Zone by January 31, 2021. Two new orphanages will be set up in Kharan and Turbat by December 31, 2020. In Ehsaas Amdan, two new districts of South Balochistan, Lasbela and Gwadar are being added. Under Ehsaas interest free loans program, 4 new districts, Gwadar, Panjgur, Awaran and Kech are being added. In Ehsaas Kafaalat, the number of beneficiaries in South Balochistan are projected to increase from currently 38,604 to 62,152 beneficiaries over the next 4 months. Ehsaas Nashonuma program is being introduced in Kharan and Khuzdar. Total 6,625 beneficiaries

will be registered under Nashonuma in these two districts and will get specialized nutritious food to prevent stunting in children along with cash stipend (Rs. 2000 for girl child and Rs. 1,500 for boy child per quarter). Under Ehsaas Undergrad Scholarship program, around 3,000 scholarships have been awarded to deserving and talented students of Balochistan in the year 2019-20. In Turbat district, 654 undergraduate scholarships have been awarded. Other than Washuk, Mastung and Kalat, the Ehsaas Survey has been completed. Ehsaas Registration desks are being set up in every tehsil after the survey to ensure that missed households can come forward and register themselves. Desks are operational in every tehsil of Turbat and are being set up in the other districts over the next three months. During the COVID-19 situation, Ehsaas Emergency Cash worth Rs. 2.824 billion was disbursed in 10 districts of South Balochistan among 233,254 beneficiaries.

## AIOU to offer new academic programs

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A joint session of Allama Iqbal Open University's Academic Council, Academic Planning and Development, and Research and Educational Technology Committee (APD/RET) was held here the other day. Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum, Vice Chancellor, AIOU, presided over the joint session. The participants of Academic Council included Deans of various faculties at AIOU, HODs of academic departments as well as external members of some other universities and organizations. Within the backdrop of COVID-19, majority of the members participated through online mode in the session. After extensive deliberations and discussion, the members of the joint session took some important decisions with particular reference to offering new educational programs in foreign countries,

bringing improvements in examinations system, provision of latest educational/instructional material to the students as well as designing new course books and periodic revision of existing syllabi. Moreover, the session also took some fundamental decisions related to the automation process of the university to bring transparency, quality and efficiency in basic university operations. During the session, Controller of Examinations, Registrar, Director Regional Services and the HODs of other academic and servicing departments presented agendas related to their respective departments. During his address to the members of the joint session, Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum said that AIOU is planning to offer new educational programs in collaboration with educational institutions, in both public and private sectors, of USA, Canada and other foreign countries.



ISLAMABAD: Switzerland ambassador to Pakistan and Afghanistan Bénédicte de Cerjat met with Indrika Ratwatte, UNHCR Director for Asia &amp; the Pacific to discuss developments for Afghan refugees. German ambassador to Pakistan Bernhard Schlagheck was also present at the occasion. — DNA

## Steps to ensure safe trade stressed

Speaking on the occasion, PITAD Director-General Raheela Tajwar said after the first wave of COVID-19, appropriate biosecurity arrangements in trade has become imperative and good hygiene practice now needs to be evolved by all involved in the logistics

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: The experts at a workshop stressed the need for taking practical measures to ensure trade and food safety amid COVID-19 so that the pandemic might not impact the lives of common man. The online workshop titled: 'Safe Trade and Food Safety amid COVID-19' was organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in collaboration with Pakistan Institute of Trade and Development (PITAD), said a press release issued here Thursday. The experts mainly discussed as to how the improved federal provincial coordination on food safety can increase the likelihood of Pakistan's food exports being

preferred abroad. They were of the view that coordination is required between product standard authorities and Ministry of National Food Security and Research to avert delays due to approvals and permits that harm the timeliness

of Pakistan's trade consignments. They called upon the government to conduct a regulatory impact assessment to see how such costs which hurt the competitiveness of exporters can be reduced. In this regard, they said, the authorities

concerned may also look towards the progressive practices adopted by peer economies in the Asia-Pacific region. Speaking on the occasion, PITAD Director-General Raheela Tajwar said after the first wave of COVID-19, appropriate

biosecurity arrangements in trade has become imperative and good hygiene practice now needs to be evolved by all involved in the logistics. Dr Ali Abbas Qazilbash, an expert in trade sector, said that the COVID-19 has seen an increase in non-tariff barriers, and it is impacting the global supply chain in agriculture as well. He said the world needs to achieve food safety compliance. Freight forwarders and transporters need to implement the controls and human contact needs to be minimized by ensuring electronic certification, he said, adding that many organizations are now dealing with Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures, whereas a single authority as a focal point should be made available on SPS agreement.



## HEC wins 15 medals in weightlifting c'chip

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has secured 2nd position in the Inter-Departmental Weightlifting Championship (Junior Category) in addition to grabbing 15 medals, including four gold, six silver, and five bronze medals. The national senior and junior Inter-Departmental Weightlifting Championship was held at Railway Stadium, Garhi Shahu, Lahore under the auspices of Pakistan Weightlifting Federation. The Championship was held under different senior and junior categories, 55-kg, 61-kg, 67-kg, 73-kg, 81-kg, 89-kg, 96-kg, 102-kg, 109-kg and over 109-kg. HEC team won six medals in senior category while nine medals in junior category. For this national competition, HEC had conducted open selection trials for all the Pakistani higher education institutions at University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Lahore. Among other national institutions, teams of Pakistan Army, Pakistan Railways, Water and Power Development Authority, and police also took part in the Championship. It is pertinent to mention here that HEC will also award prize money and one year scholarship to all of its medalist players.

## ICC takes up civic problems with SAPM for CDA

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Islamabad Citizen Committee (ICC) led by its President Syed M. Siddiq Hasan called on Ali Nawaz Awan, Special Assistant to Prime Minister for CDA. Matters relating to the problems being faced by the citizens of Islamabad with regard to CDA were discussed. According to a press release issued by Ch. Tahira Mahmood, Information Secy (ICC) here on Thursday, the PM's Special Assistant was very receptive and it was agreed that ICC would give comprehensive proposals for bringing about betterment for citizens of the capital city. A request letter with regard to the management of Citizens Club located in Fatima Jinnah Park was also handed over to him.

## Vawda granted time to file comments

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday granted more time to Federal Minister for Water Resources Muhammad Faisal Vawda for submission of comments in a case challenging his eligibility as member Parliament. Justice Amer Farooq of IHC conducted hearing on a petition moved by Barrister Jahangir Jadoon against federal minister. During the course of proceedings, new counsel Haroon Duggal submitted power of attorney for Faisal Vawda and prayed the court to grant some time for submission of comments. Justice Farooq said that initial arguments in this case had been completed, adding that the petitioner's case was that 'the federal minister was American citizen at the time of submission of his nomination papers to Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP)'. The court asked the lawyer to study this case as this was only related to dates, adding that it had sought record from ECP. The lawyer requested the court to direct ECP to share these documents with the defense to this the court remarked that nomination papers and affidavit was submitted by his client himself. The petitioner's lawyer pleaded that this court had already given maximum time to the defense for filing comments, adding that delaying tactics were being used to waste the court time. The defense lawyer said that he had to travel from Lahore to appear in this case to this the bench said that it was only a distance of 3:30 hours. The lawyer said that he had to conduct a meeting with his client who was living in Karachi. The court remarked that it was a case of quo-warranto seeking to de-seat someone. — APP

## Who is minding CPEC?

IN August last year, Prime Minister Imran Khan announced that his government was forming a 'China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Authority' (CPECA) to ensure timely completion of the Corridor's projects. Two months later the Authority was created through a Presidential Ordinance. In November retired Lt Gen Asim Saleem Bajwa was appointed chairman of the CPECA for a period of four years. Last month, when General Bajwa stepped down as SAPM on Information and Broadcasting, he made it clear that he would continue to work as chairman of CPECA. Reassuring statements throughout this year from Mr Khan down to the KP CM had led one to believe that as far as the CPEC was concerned, everything was proceeding according to schedule. In July Mr Khan said the Corridor would be completed at all costs. In September, addressing a ceremony to inaugurate Rashakai Economic Zone, he maintained that the project had now entered the industrialization phase. The same month, speaking to departing Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing, Mr Khan assured him that CPEC would play a key role in regional economic growth and prosperity. Earlier this year, the KP CM had told media that the Rashakai industrial zone, which is a CPEC project, would provide jobs to 250,000 people. The Ordinance that led to the establishment of the CPEC Authority lapsed six months back but the government didn't bother to bring a law before Parliament immediately, which reflects on its commitment to the project. Finally on Wednesday, when a bill was sent to the related National Assembly Standing Committee for discussion prior to its presentation before the whole House, members questioned the legal status and functioning of the CPEC Authority after the expiry of its ordinance to which the government had no satisfactory answer. When asked who was chairing the CPEC Authority, the answer was "no one." There was no convincing answer to the question about the law under which the incumbent was working. The Planning and Development Secretary, representing the government, assured the committee of briefing it in the next meeting on the issues raised. Compared to the fast completion of the CPEC projects under the previous government, these move at a snail's pace under a defunct CPEC Authority, showing either lack of enthusiasm or lack of capacity, or both.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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

ABC CERTIFIED

Vol: 01 Issue: 197

Email: [dailyisbpost@gmail.com](mailto:dailyisbpost@gmail.com)

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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



## Sindh IG report

THE army chief has delivered on his promise to issue a report on the alleged abduction of the Sindh IG. This in itself is a welcome step. The report has ordered the removal from their current assignments of the ISI and Pakistan Rangers officials said to be involved in the 'Karachi incident'; they are to be sent for further departmental proceedings and disposal at the GHQ. The ISPR report has termed the officers' 'overzealous' action a result of 'increasing public pressure'. So the report is out and, as expected, the reactions to it are in as well. While Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, who had sought the report in the first place, has welcomed it and its contents, Nawaz Sharif has said that the report is 'rejected' (in a throwback to another infamous 'rejection'), and that the real culprits in the matter should be detected. Beyond this there is also the question of how this affects the government. Prime Minister Imran Khan had declared the whole matter a comedy. The ISPR report has made it obvious it does not consider the matter to be comical, and is ready to take action against those it has held responsible. While it does sound odd that junior officers would act on their own in such an 'overzealous' fashion, that an inquiry was indeed conducted and a report written is somewhat of a positive. In a strange twist, the federal government has asked the Sindh government to look into the issue of why so many police officials asked to go on leave after the Karachi issue, putting the matter of security in jeopardy. This is odd more so since the police personnel had cited low morale as a result of the 'Karachi incident'. Of more importance, though, is the ability of the civilian structure to handle things without intervention. There is, after all, a functional policing and administrative system in place, which should be able to run cases and arrive at the truth. The case against Capt Safdar has in itself become farcical given that the main witness was later found by the police to never have been at the Quaid's mausoleum. Beyond the immediate is the larger picture of how relations stand between our key institutions and how the political structure can remedy itself so that there's less conflict between political parties, greater willingness to stick to the truth and to follow the rules, so that ridiculous situations of the kind we have seen do not develop.

# The Charter of Democracy is a joke of democracy!

Attiya Munawer



Opposition parties are once again talking about a new Charter of Democracy. The PDM has decided that a new Charter is needed to bring true democracy to the country. One Charter of Democracy was also reached in London and now another Charter is being announced in Islamabad. In Pakistan, the Charter of Democracy can only be called a deal at most, because here all political and governmental matters are decided through a deal.

POLITICAL parties all over the world strive to bring democracy in the country by bringing democracy within themselves, but all our major political parties continue to sing the tune of democracy without having democracy within them. The situation of the two major political parties in the country, the PML-N and the PPP, is that the PPP is the fiefdom of the Bhutto family and the Nawaz league Sharif family. The PPP and the Nawaz League have never had internal elections since their inception, yet the tune of democracy is unleashed. Democracy is not just about elections and the acquisition of power, but our political parties are just about gaining power. They use names, take turns in the name of the Charter of Democracy and promise to protect each other, this open political hypocrisy is harming democracy instead of benefiting it, but those who undermine democracy are not shying away from singing the hymns of democracy, but the people have rejected them. Opposition parties are once again talking about a new Charter of Democracy. The PDM has decided that a new Charter is needed to bring true democracy to the country. One Charter of Democracy was also reached in London and now another Charter is being announced in Islamabad. In Pakistan, the Charter of Democracy can only be called a deal at most, because here all political and governmental matters are decided through a deal. Democracy in Pakistan is the same as the Charter of Democracy, it is nothing but protection of each other, the Charter of Democracy is being mocked here. What could be more abusive in a democracy than accusing each other of trying to derail the car of democracy, while everyone is playing politics in the same car and what a successful politics it is? Even after derailment, the

vehicle of democracy is moving. Dictatorship in the country is not a threat to democracy, but democracy is a threat to the political leadership, because the so-called political contractors of democracy have been inviting dictatorship. At the moment, the new charter of democracy by the opposition parties is not for the sake of democratic stability and the people, but is a political ploy to keep the opposition political parties in the PDM and to end the differences. If the opposition is really in the throes of democracy, then agree on a new Charter of Democracy that aims not only to save the politics and heritage of a few families, rather it should have a clear roadmap for strengthening democracy in the country along with civilian supremacy, so that not only the interference of undemocratic forces in the political process is eliminated on a permanent basis, but also this democracy has benefited millions of people of the country. The axis of this new charter of Democracy should be the oppressed creatures of the country which is commonly called the people, but it may not be so, because the people have never been a priority for the opposition and the government. The two main opposition parties have taken power three times. One party is still ruling in Sindh province. The leadership of both the parties has looted the national treasury instead of solving the problems of the people. People are only used to voted and chant slogans in rallies. More than 60 million people in the country are still living in poverty. The new wave of Coronavirus is further increasing the number of patients; about 25 million children are deprived of education and more than 40% of children are malnourished, 80% of the population does not have access to safe drinking water, people are forced to sell their blood, kidneys, even their children due to poverty, even after reaching such modali-

ty, the people want to see what Bilawal Bhutto, Maryam Nawaz and other public welfare claimants do in the new Charter of Democracy. So, fulfill your passion, they will not be able to do anything. People are rejecting the charters of the opposition parties which are an obstacle in the accountability process of those who looted national resources. The abundance of information has told the people that their hard-earned money is being looted and taken abroad by corrupt politicians. Under the guise of investment, the national economy is toyed with and its commission is squandered. The people are disgusted with the tried and tested hereditary political leadership because the internal structure of political parties itself is deprived of democratic values. On the contrary, political parties will never be able to play their democratic role as long as nominations continue on the basis of likes and dislikes instead of party elections. Pakistan's political history shows that whether it is a matter of forming a political alliance or an agreement like the Charter of Democracy, the ruling classes have been looking for a way to fulfill their aspirations by forgetting the aspirations of the people. The people of Pakistan are democrats. They prefer a peaceful and civilized way of transferring power, but do not like the fact that political parties try to overthrow the elected government in the name of the Charter of Democracy. The people will never tolerate the mockery of democracy in the name of the Charter of Democracy. If democracy is really to be strengthened in the country, then the Charter of Democracy must be brought in line with the will of the people, which political parties will never bring.

The writer is a freelance columnist and blogger.  
[Attibutt121@gmail.com](mailto:Attibutt121@gmail.com)

# Cultural diplomacy is a key pillar in foreign policy

Sara Al-Mulla



Many governments have established dedicated agencies with the aim of exporting their local cultures and fostering international relations. The Japan Foundation, established in 1972, is responsible for disseminating Japanese culture to the world, in addition to offering Japanese language courses

IN 2011, I was among a group of culture enthusiasts from different parts of the world selected by the British Council to take part in a cultural leadership international program. The program promised activities aimed at nurturing individuals who could spearhead cultural policies, strengthen diplomatic relations, instigate effective economic and social change, and promote intercultural understanding. As a first step, we were invited to attend a week-long training workshop in Istanbul. It was October and the evenings were crisp, with autumn leaves covering the streets and this vibrant city enchanting us with its timeless atmosphere. On the opening night, the guest speaker was renowned British journalist Michael Binyon, who talked about the importance of international cultural relations, and culture's use as a tool for soft power and public diplomacy. Over the next four days, our training venue was the SALT Galata, a former headquarters of the central bank during the Ottoman empire and now a cultural center. International speakers shared valuable lessons on policies to promote the creative industries, the ways in which culture can address social or political issues, and the role of aesthetics in fostering mutual understanding between nations. Between sessions, we were taken on tours of museums, artisan workshops, mosques, cultural centers, the Old Town and the Grand Bazaar. The whole experience offered an understanding and appreciation of culture on both a local and global level. Today, many governments consider cultural diplomacy an important pillar in their foreign policies. The US political scientist and author

Milton Cummings Jr. defines cultural diplomacy as "the exchange of ideas, information, values, systems, traditions, beliefs, and other aspects of culture, with the intention of fostering mutual understanding." In an increasingly interdependent, technologically connected and globalized era, cultural diplomacy is becoming critical in spearheading a peaceful, respectful and informed dialogue between the world's citizens. With its soft power, such a tool can be used to construct a positive perception of other countries' cultures, values and policies, as well as preventing or mitigating conflicts, driving trade and tourism, and fostering greater cooperation on a number of platforms. Furthermore, the creative arts can help shape our identities. That is why we learn a foreign language, are so enamored with notions of freedom or wellbeing in certain countries, or travel as tourists to places with rich cultural offerings. Creative initiatives adopted in this arena include translating essential books and establishing libraries abroad with popular national works; hosting art exhibitions, film festivals, concerts and theater productions; organizing traveling museums showcasing national artefacts; broadcasting cultural programs or TV shows; and managing cultural exchange programs. The Fulbright Program, for example, was established in 1946 by the US to sponsor students, scholars, teachers, artists and scientists, enabling them to study, teach, research, share ideas and help formulate solutions to global challenges. Through this unique exchange program, Fulbright scholars are exposed to different cultures, allowing them to

foster a global network of leaders in different countries. Alumni have gone on to make great strides in their fields, and includes 60 Nobel prize-winners, 88 Pulitzer prize-winners, and 38 individuals who have served as heads of state or government. Many governments have established dedicated agencies with the aim of exporting their local cultures and fostering international relations. The Japan Foundation, established in 1972, is responsible for disseminating Japanese culture to the world, in addition to offering Japanese language courses, promoting collaborative projects to help solve global issues, and funding global research on Japanese studies. The foundation's Wochi Kuchi magazine – meaning "the future and the present" in Japanese – includes articles and feature stories celebrating Japanese culture locally and abroad. Similarly, Alliance Francaise, established 135 years ago and considered the first non-governmental cultural organization, promotes French culture and language abroad. Today, its 834 local centers in 133 countries promise "a multicultural experience in French," and foster core values of cultural openness, conviviality, togetherness and diversity. Signature programs include language study holidays, art exhibitions by French artists, screenings of French films, book clubs, and cultural experiences covering fashion, gastronomy, art, film, literature and history. It is becoming evident that cultural diplomacy can be a powerful tool in fostering multilateral partnerships, in addition to elevating our human experience and working together toward a common, universal good.

– Courtesy: Arab News



## Briefs

## 10 years jail for cutting Saudi trees

## FOREIGN DESK

RIYADH: Authorities in Saudi Arabia have announced stringent measures to combat environmental vandalism, with fines of up to 30 million riyals (nearly \$8m) and 10 years in jail, a report by The New Arab website said on Wednesday. "Cutting down trees, shrubs, herbs, or plans [and] uprooting, moving, stripping them of their bark, leaves or any part, or moving their soil" could land offenders with the maximum fine and jail time, the Saudi public prosecution said in a tweet this week. The announcement is a part of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 development plan to achieve environmental sustainability by the end of the decade, the report said. Environment Minister Abdulrahman al-Fadley last month announced the launch of "Let's Make it Green" – a plan that seeks to plant 10 million trees across the kingdom by April 2021. Economic and social reforms have gained momentum since de facto ruler, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, announced his ambitious plan in 2016 to reduce the country's heavy dependence on oil. "We will seek to safeguard our environment by increasing the efficiency of waste management, establishing comprehensive recycling projects, reducing all types of pollution and fighting desertification," reads Vision 2030's mission statement.

## Russia reports 21,608 new corona cases

MOSCOW: Russia confirmed 21,608 COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, with 439 deaths, the highest number of coronavirus deaths in one day since the start of the pandemic, the nation's COVID-19 response center said in a statement on Thursday. Moscow recorded the majority of the new coronavirus infections with a daily increase of 5,997, pushing the total number of cases in the capital to 491,542. It was reported that 1,388,168 patients have recovered so far, with 18,811 of those in the past 24 hours. Russia's total caseload is equal to 1,858,568, while the country's death toll currently stands at 32,032. Over 66.7 million COVID-19 tests have been conducted across the country as of Thursday.

On Tuesday, Moscow's Mayor Sergei Sobyanin introduced a new set of restrictions in the capital to control the spread of the virus. The mayor imposed a night-time curfew on food and entertainment facilities, and ordered university students to switch to distance learning. Large-scale public gatherings for cultural and entertainment events have also been banned. – APP

## India's capital sees surge in COVID-19

## WEB DESK

NEW DELHI: India's capital has seen a surge in COVID-19 infections as pollution levels have soared to dangerous levels at the onset of winter. The capital reported 8,593 new COVID-19 infections on Wednesday, its highest daily tally yet. The country of 1.3 billion people is second worst-hit behind the US. The average pollution reading was 299 on Thursday on a scale of 500, where any number above 300 is classified as very poor and can cause respiratory illnesses. Delhi resident Varun Kaushik's 92-year-old grandmother started coughing and her blood oxygen levels plummeted on Wednesday. He took her to two top private hospitals in New Delhi on Monday. Neither took her in, even after one of them found that she tested positive for COVID-19. Kaushik said several other hospitals told him and his family on the phone that they had beds available, but not in the intensive care unit (ICU) his grandmother needed. He finally admitted her to a non-ICU COVID bed in a government hospital, 10 hours after leaving home. Her condition was stable as of Thursday, according to Kaushik. The family's ordeal is a warning sign for a city where infections are surging even though they are dropping elsewhere in the country. Delhi's 20 million residents celebrate their biggest festival, Deepavali or Diwali, this weekend. Despite a ban, thousands of fireworks are likely to be set off, increasing already bad air pollution and raising the risk posed by COVID-19.



ISLAMABAD: MoS/Chairman Board of Investment Atif R. Bokhari meeting with Henrik Persson, Ambassador of Sweden at his office. – DNA

## 'More important than ever to deepen ties with Pakistan'

In his blog 'Why EU-Pakistan relations are so important', the EU Foreign Minister took a stock of the issues discussed during the Pak-EU Dialogue, mainly EU General Scheme of Preferences, Financial Action Task Force (FATF), Islamophobia, climate change and Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD: European Union Minister for Foreign Affairs Josep Borell has said that for EU, it has become more important than ever to deepen ties with Pakistan amid a situation of COVID-19 crisis, fight against terrorism and growing international and regional tensions. Josep Borell, who recently led his side at the fifth round of Pak-EU Strategic Dialogue along with Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, highlighted the importance of having close relations with Pakistan – a country with half of its 220 million population comprising youth and the second largest trade partner with EU. In his blog 'Why EU-Pakistan relations are so important', the EU Foreign Minister took a stock of the issues discussed during the Pak-EU Dialogue, mainly EU General Scheme

of Preferences, Financial Action Task Force (FATF), Islamophobia, climate change and Afghanistan. "Pakistan possesses nuclear weapons and plays a central role in a critical region involving China, India, Iran and Afghanistan. In the current circumstances, EU-Pakistan relations are a very important issue for us," Borell wrote. Josep Borell mentioned that 60 percent of the products benefiting from the EU General Scheme of Preferences come from Pakistan. The EU is also the country's second largest trading partner, with 35 percent of Pakistan's exports going to Europe. "Economic relations have also been an important part of our exchanges, even more so as the consequences of the COVID-19 crisis are heavily affecting the region,"



he said. He said EU spent 150 million in assistance to Pakistan in response to COVID-19 situation crisis. The GSP Plus removes import duties from products coming from vulnerable developing countries, to help them alleviate poverty and create jobs based on international values and principles. "We are exploring ways of making

full use of this regime to alleviate the effects of the COVID-19 crisis," he said. Borell said Pakistan should also fully benefit from the COVID-19 related Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) decided by the G20. At the last review of FATF, he said the EU had advocated for a positive tone of the statement on Pakistan as he asked his interlocutors for its early implementation and offered EU's technical assistance.

"We will hold in 2021 the first meeting of the EU-Pakistan Security Dialogue foreseen in our 2019 Joint Strategic Engagement Plan," he said. He mentioned that Foreign Minister Qureshi during the talks, expressed concerns over the "Islamophobic acts" in Europe that had deeply hurt Muslims around the world, and particularly

in Pakistan. He said EU was based on a model of a secular society. "This model is often difficult to understand for societies that have different values and societal and political systems," he said. "Exchanging on these difficult issues, we both agreed in condemning all violence and the killing of innocent people, and reaffirmed our joint determination to defend and strengthen human rights and fundamental freedoms and to promote tolerance and coexistence between different religious faiths," he added. Josep Borell expressed hope to develop EU's cooperation with Pakistan on energy and climate related issues and count on Pakistan to help enhance the commitments made by the different countries in the framework of Paris Agreement next year. – APP

## UN again warns of famine in Yemen

## WEB DESK

NEW YORK: The United Nations has once again warned of millions of men, women and children in war-torn Yemen are facing famine as it issued yet another appeal for more money to prevent it. "We are on a countdown right now to a catastrophe," UN World Food Programme (WFP) Executive Director David Beasley told the UN Security Council on Wednesday. "We have been here before ... We did almost the same dog-and-pony show. We sounded the alarm then," the head of the Nobel Peace Prize-winning UN body said. The UN describes Yemen as the world's largest humanitarian crisis, with

80 percent of the country's 30 million people in need of help.

"If we choose to look away, there's no doubt in my mind Yemen will be plunged into a devastating famine within a few short months," Beasley told the 15-member council. A Saudi Arabia-led military coalition intervened in Yemen in 2015, backing government forces fighting the Iran-allied Houthi group, which had captured the capital Sana'a a year earlier. Since then, more than 100,000 people – fighters and civilians – have been killed. UN officials are trying to revive peace talks to end the war as the country's suffering has also been worsened by an economic and currency collapse and the COVID-19 pandemic.



BAKU: Pakistan ambassador to Azerbaijan Bilal Hayee met with Dr. Khayala Mammadova and her team to discuss cultural cooperation between Pakistan and Azerbaijan. Dr. Mammadova heads Int'l Multicultural Network and works with several friendly countries including Pakistan. – DNA

## 'Armenia to pay price if violates cease-fire'

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) setting up a joint Turkish-Russian center to monitor the peace deal – which has ended weeks of armed conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia – was signed on Wednesday morning, according to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan

ANKARA: Armenia will "pay price" if it violates the latest peace deal and cease-fire agreement with Azerbaijan on the Upper Karabakh conflict, Turkey's top diplomat said Thursday. "They [Armenian forces] should either leave the territory voluntarily by abiding the agreement, or the heroic Azerbaijani army will take those lands back as it did so far. There is no other choice," Mevlut Cavusoglu said in a news conference in Baku, Azerbaijan's capital. Azerbaijan is not "keen to shed blood" and was very patient for solving the conflict in peace, he said, adding: "After that, the choice is on Armenia [to shed blood or solve it in peace]." "Whatever solution Azerbaijan prefers for the occupied territories and Karabakh issue, we will stand by Azerbaijan," he said.

"The conflict can be solved only by handing over all occupied lands to Azerbaijan," Cavusoglu said, adding that works on the status of Karabakh will continue in the upcoming period. He underlined that the "only goal" of the peace deal was the return of the occupied lands to Azerbaijan. "So far, the heroic Azerbaijani army has done what is required on the field, and now, through diplomacy, work is underway to return the occupied lands based on schedule." Cavusoglu also stressed that France – a co-chair along with Russia and the US of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group formed in 1992 to find a peaceful solution to the conflict – has no "objective and balanced" stance on the Upper Karabakh issue.



"The Minsk trio must take a lesson from this process, especially France. Biased statements are being made even after the cease-fire [agreement]," he said. Speaking on the establishment of the peacemaking center to oversee the cease-fire on the Upper Karabakh territory, Cavusoglu said Tur-

key's role will be exactly the same as Russia's on the joint monitoring. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) setting up a joint Turkish-Russian center to monitor the peace deal – which has ended weeks of armed conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia – was signed on Wednesday morning, according to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. "We respect the role Russia plays here. They [Russian side] made initiatives for both sides. The dialogue continued and this agreement was signed, with the consent of both sides. The important thing is the next steps to be taken," Cavusoglu said. He went on to say that in accordance with the fifth article of the deal, Turkey agreed with Russia to launch a joint observation and monitoring center, adding that the

details will be discussed with a delegation coming from Russia on Friday. "The control and surveillance center will be in the territory of Azerbaijan and in places Azerbaijan deems appropriate," he said. Cavusoglu said the center will perform "important functions", including detection of actions that violate the deal, monitoring of the area through detection and observation with unmanned aerial vehicles and other elements, examination of complaints and violations, and prevention of cease-fire violations. "The joint working group will determine the formation and working principles of this. But here, most importantly, the authority given by the host country [Azerbaijan], areas identified, and other details will be determined by the brotherly Azerbaijan," he said.

## FB extends ban on political ads

## WEB DESK

WASHINGTON: Facebook on Wednesday said its post-election ban on political advertisements would likely last another month, raising concerns from campaigns and groups eager to reach voters for key Georgia races in January that will decide control of the Senate. The ban, one of Facebook's measures to combat misinformation and other abuses on its site, was supposed to last about a week but could be extended. Alphabet Inc's Google also appeared to be sticking with its post-election political ad ban. Facebook confirmed the extension in a blog post: "The temporary pause for ads about politics and social issues in the US continues to be in place as part of our ongoing efforts to protect the election. Advertisers can expect this to last another month, though there may be an opportunity to resume these ads sooner." Baseless claims about the election reverberated around social media this week as President Donald Trump challenged the validity of the outcome, even as state officials reported no significant irregularities and legal experts cautioned he had little chance to overturn Democratic President-elect Joe Biden's victory. In one Facebook group created on Sunday, which rapidly grew to nearly 400,000 members by Wednesday, members calling for a nationwide recount swapped unfounded accusations about alleged election fraud and state vote counts every few seconds.

## Investigator appointed over alleged war crimes

## WEB DESK

SYDNEY: Australia will appoint a special investigator to determine whether to prosecute members of the country's military for alleged war crimes committed in Afghanistan, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said on Thursday, as the country prepared for the release of a four-year inquiry into the allegations. The inspector-general of the Australian Defence Forces began the inquiry into the conduct of its elite special forces in 2016 after local media reported on allegations that unarmed men and children had been killed between 2005 and 2016. While Morrison did not reveal details of the inquiry, which is set to be released next week, he said it would contain "difficult and hard news for Australians". "Given the likely allegations of serious and possibly criminal misconduct, the matters raised in the inquiry must be assessed, investigated and, where allegations are substantiated, prosecuted in court," Morrison told reporters in Canberra.

## New York issues new COVID-19 restrictions

## FOREIGN DESK

NEW YORK: New York Governor Andrew Cuomo on Wednesday imposed a new round of restrictions aimed at curbing the spread of the coronavirus as the infection rate climbed and hospital admissions soared in the state that was the epicentre of the outbreak in the United States its early stages. Cuomo ordered bars, restaurants and gyms in the state to shut at 10pm (03:00 GMT) nightly and capped the number of people who could attend private parties at 10. "We're seeing a national and global COVID surge, and New York is a ship on the COVID tide," the governor told reporters, adding that contact-tracing identified late-night gatherings at bars, restaurants and gyms as key virus spreaders in the state. The new measures, which take effect on Friday, came a day after California and several states across the Midwest tightened restrictions on residents to try to curb the rapid spread of the virus. "This is our LAST chance to stop a second wave," New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio tweeted on Wednesday, as he announced the city-wide seven-day average rate of coronavirus tests coming back positive had hit 2.52 percent.

## Briefs

### Indian diplomat summoned

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A senior Indian diplomat was summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs today to register Pakistan's strong protest over ceasefire violations by the Indian occupation forces along the Line of Control (LoC) on 11th November 2020, resulting in serious injuries to one innocent civilian. Due to indiscriminate and unprovoked firing by the Indian occupation forces in Rakhchikri Sector of the LoC, 26 year old Sagheer Ahmed s/o Rashed Ahmed, resident of Village Kirni, sustained serious injuries. The Indian occupation forces along the LoC and the Working Boundary (WB) have been continuously targeting civilian populated areas with artillery fire, heavy-caliber mortars and automatic weapons. This year, India has committed 2660 ceasefire violations to date, resulting in 20 shahadats and serious injuries to 203 innocent civilians. Condemning the deplorable targeting of innocent civilians by the Indian occupation forces, it was underscored that such senseless acts are in clear violation of the 2003 Ceasefire Understanding, and are also against all established humanitarian norms and professional military conduct. These egregious violations of international law reflect consistent Indian attempts to escalate the situation along the LoC and are a threat to regional peace and security. It was added that by raising tensions along the LoC and the WB, India cannot divert attention from the grave human rights situation in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK).

### Experts for expanding CPEC activities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Academics and scholars suggested expanding CPEC-related activities in the region to Russia to bolster relations between Pakistan and Russia. They were expressing their views in a panel discussion on 'Pakistan and Russia: Challenges and Opportunities for a Comprehensive Relationship' organized by Center for Strategic Perspective (CSP) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) here on Thursday. The discussion began with introductory remarks by Director CSP and Editor at ISSI Mr. Najam Rafique. He mentioned two major developments in Pakistan-Russia relations which have taken place in November 2020: Russia's infrastructure assistance in North-South gas pipeline project, and Pak-Russia joint military exercises (DruzhbaV). After referring to a few more positive developments, he said that it was in this background that CSP is holding this panel discussion. Posing a question to Dr. Leonid Savin, Mr. Najam asked how Russia views its relations with Pakistan. Responding positively to this answer, Dr. Savin said that though there is still lack of knowledge about Pakistan in his country, Russia is nurturing its relations with the former.



ISLAMABAD: Delegation of RCCI led by President Mr. Mohammad Nasir Mirza visited Adam Mulawarman Tugio ambassador of Indonesia to Pakistan at the embassy. Discussion on different opportunities in enhancement of Bilateral trade were discussed and both parties agreed to cooperate with each other. – DNA

## Govt officials not satisfied with US embassy apology

In response to the apology, Mazari rejected the explanation and that too after long delay, adding that it is "unacceptable" that someone working at the embassy is "pushing a particular political party's agenda"

STAFF REPORT / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Human Rights Shireen Mazari said on Thursday that apology of the embassy of America was not enough. The US should do more. She said the US embassy Tweet was against diplomatic norms. It may be mentioned here that the Embassy of the United States of America in Islamabad came under intense after its social media team committed a diplomatic faux pas by retweeting a statement criticising the Pakistani government. The embassy later apologised and

said its Twitter account "was accessed [...] without authorisation." Several Twitter users took strong exception to the US Embassy's Twitter account retweeting a political statement made by the PML-N leader Ahsan Iqbal. Commenting on an article by the Washington Post titled 'Trump's defeat is a blow for the world's demagogues and dictators', Ahsan Iqbal had taken a swipe at Prime Minister Imran Khan and written on the micro-blogging website that "We have one (demagogue/dictator) in Pakistan too. He will be shown way out soon. Insha Allah!" Shortly after, the US Embassy's

Twitter account retweeted Ahsan Iqbal's statement, inviting a furious reaction and widespread condemnation from both Pakistani citizens as well as political figures. Even though the embassy later deleted the tweet, Twitterati were quick to capture screenshots. Soon after, hashtags like #ApologiseUSEmbassy started trending on the micro-blogging platform. Minister for Human Rights Shireen Mazari strongly condemned the incident. "US Embassy still working in Trumpian mode in support of convicted absconder & intervening brazenly in our internal politics!" she

wrote on Twitter. In response to the apology, Mazari rejected the explanation and that too after long delay, adding that it is "unacceptable" that someone working at the embassy is "pushing a particular political party's agenda." Sindh Governor Imran Ismail wrote that it was "utterly absurd" of the embassy to endorse derogatory remarks about PM Imran Khan, terming the move "against diplomatic protocols." While most people vehemently censured the US embassy on Twitter, others appealed to the Government of Pakistan to take action and demand

that the foreign mission to issue an official apology. Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Political Communication Shahbaz Gill also took strong exception to the retweeting of political message by the US Embassy. "Embarrassing. The US embassy tweeting derogatory comments about sitting US President Mr Donald Trump and Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr Imran Khan. First time ever seen an embassy insulting its own lawful elected president. We expect some heads must roll. This is unacceptable!" he tweeted.

### Chartered bodies visit Pakistan virtually

DNA

KARACHI: The UK Government has brought together eight leading UK Chartered Professional Bodies to participate in this trade mission, which runs from 9-20 November. It is being led by the Education Team within the Department for International Trade at the British Deputy High Commission in Karachi. Chartered bodies have UK Privy Council permission to confer Chartered status and they are a key component of the UK's global leadership in setting international technical, people and ethical standards that drive best practice. These Chartered bodies will explore opportunities for partnerships around their standards, accreditations, professional development support and communities. There are tried and tested models already in place and these bodies can help in very practical ways through partnerships by deploying resources from their local and regional offices, teams and member networks. HMG International Education Champion, Professor Sir Steve Smith spoke at the inaugural session of the mission. He said that: "It is wonderful that even during these unprecedented times we are able to continue to explore opportunities for developing partnerships with our important bilateral partners. This is part of our commitment to foster international partnerships. This is the third chartered trade mission run and the first ever virtual trade mission of leading UK chartered professional bodies." The British Deputy High Commissioner, Mike Nithavri-anakis, said: "I am delighted to welcome the UK's leading Chartered Professional Institutes to Pakistan. This visit is an indication of the growing trade relationship between UK and Pakistan even during the challenging times of a global pandemic."



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan speaking at the launching ceremony of Naya Pakistan Certificates. – APP

## Sino-Pak school-enterprise to provide talents for CPEC

DNA

BEIJING: Pakistani students of North China Electric Power University (NCEPU) communicated with members of China Huaneng Group Co., Ltd. (CHNG) International Talent Training class at the Training Base. This was aimed at initiating School-enterprise cooperation among Chinese and Pakistani students to provide talents for CPEC, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Thursday.

It was reported that university and the enterprise of the two children have jointly initiated a long-term cooperation to provide Pakistani talents for CPEC. On the occasion, CHNG staff presented the general situation of their development in the international market, analyzed several CPEC electrical engineering projects, and answered the students' questions. Mishkat Jan, PHD of Electric Power Engineering, a Pakistani student who took part in the activity, said that Pakistan has been facing an

acute shortage of electricity since 2006-07, which is considered as the worst power crisis. Recognizing the growing energy needs of Pakistan, and to overcome the existing deficits, CPEC has allocated a major proportion of its funds to energy generation and transmission. "Many power projects including wind, solar, hydroelectric and coal under CPEC, contribute significantly to the sustainable growth of industries and unhindered electric supply for domestic consumption in Pakistan," Mishkat added.

## Remittances remain above \$2b

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's inflows remained above \$2 billion for the fifth consecutive month in October 2020, the State Bank of Pakistan said on Thursday. In a statement, the central bank said workers' remittances amounted to \$2.3 billion during the last month - a 14.1% increase compared to October 2019. With \$9.4 billion, the remittances grew by 26.5% during the first quarter (July-Oct) of the current fiscal year, compared to the previous year. A large part of the year-on-year increase in October 2020 was sourced from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia at 30%.

## Knot art of Pakistani national flower displayed in Beijing

BEIJING: Knot art of Pakistani national flower displayed at the ongoing China Knot Art Exhibition in Beijing, Gwadar Pro reported on Thursday. At the exhibition, mainly knot arts of national flowers of BRI countries, weaved by Chinese traditional artists, are on display. Jasmine as Pakistani national flower is the main exhibit. Knot art originated from 4,000 years ago and has shined in Chinese traditional culture. "Weaving Pakistani national flower

with traditional Chinese handicraft is a union between the cultures of the two countries. Our traditional craftsmen pay tribute to the friendship between Pakistan and China in the form of art," said Zhang Lei, speaker of the exhibition organizer. Yang Feixue, the Curator of Datong Costume Culture and History Museum, introduced jasmine means affordability and elegance, "weaving it with knot art also expresses our recognition of the characters of Pakistani people." – DNA

## Pfizer's CEO cashed out 60% of his stock

DNA


WASHINGTON: Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla sold 62% of his stock on the same day the company announced its experimental COVID-19 vaccine succeeded in clinical trials. The vaccine announcement sent Pfizer's shares soaring almost 15% on the day. Bourla sold 132,508 shares in the company at an average price of \$41.94 a share, or \$5.6 million total, according to filings registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The 52-week high for Pfizer's stock is \$41.99, meaning Bourla sold his stock at almost its highest value in the past year. His stock sale was carried out through a routine Rule 10b5-1, a predetermined trading plan that allows company staff members to sell their stock in line with insider-trading laws. Bourla's sale was part of a plan adopted August 19, the

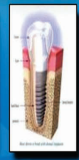
filing showed. He continues to own 81,812 Pfizer shares. Pfizer confirmed that Bourla's stock sales were part of a plan that allows major shareholders and insiders of exchange-listed corporations to trade a predetermined number of shares at an agreed time. "Through our stock plan administrator, Dr. Bourla authorized the sale of these shares on August 19, 2020, provided the stock was at




least at a certain price," a Pfizer spokesperson told Business Insider. Read more: Biotech execs hunting for COVID-19 vaccines and treatments have raked in more than \$1 billion by selling company stock this year. Here are the 27 leaders who've cashed in the most. On Monday, Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech said their COVID-19 vaccine was found to be over 90% effective in preventing illness, based on 94 observed cases in a trial with thousands of participants. The pharma firms are the first to report positive results from late-stage COVID-19 vaccine trials. Pfizer is already working on a work-around powder-form vaccine to address the current one's biggest limitation: having to be stored at extremely low temperatures. The vaccine, which involves two doses administered three weeks apart, won't be distributed immediately, as it still needs to be evaluated and approved by the US Food and Drug Administration.


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e-mail: abrar\_associates@yahoo.com | www.drabrarassociates.com  
Ph: +92 51 228 7691 / +92 51 228 7692 | Fax: +92 51 228 7693