



Islamabad POST

Tuesday, December 08, 2020

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

PM Imran vows to save youth from drug addiction

Detailed News On Page-08

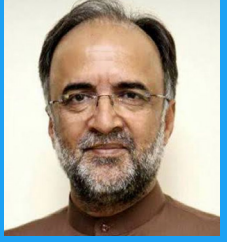
Japanese envoy pays tribute to polio workers

Detailed News On Page-01



Lahore rally will be held at all costs: Kaira

Detailed News On Page-01



Briefs

Shibli urges Opp to show patience

RANA FARRUKH

ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Shibli Faraz has urged the opposition parties to demonstrate patience over their political destiny for the next three years. In his tweet today (Monday), he said the alliance of opposition parties cannot negate the public decision of 2018. The Minister said the fate of those beating the bush is not power but prison. Shibli Faraz said putting pressure on the elected representatives for resignation on the part of un-elected people is not democracy.

Govt days numbered: Maryam

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: PML-N vice president Maryam Nawaz on Monday lashed out at Prime Minister Imran Khan, as she held rally in Lahore days before the Pakistan Democratic Movement's (PDM) power show at Minar-e-Pakistan on Sunday. The PML-N leader was addressing a charged-up crowd at a venue in Lahore's NA-128 constituency. The PML-N is mustering support ahead of the PDM's December 13 rally in the city. Maryam mocked the prime minister's statement that he will not stop the PDM from holding its power show. "He [Prime Minister Imran Khan] says he won't stop the government but says will not allow chairs," she said.

World will come out of virus: Noam

NEWS DESK

KARACHI: Today's generation faces questions that have never been raised before in the human history, world-renowned intellectual and social critic, Noam Chomsky, said Monday. "These questions are a burden and a challenge," said Chomsky, a speaker at a virtual lecture organised by a private university in Karachi, who last visited Pakistan nearly 20 years ago. Speaking of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, he said the world would come out of it "at a very costly and inevitable price".

President Ghani terms PM Imran visit productive

Ghani terms PM Imran Khan's visit an importance milestone in strengthening bilateral ties and enhancing prospectus for regional cooperation and integration



NEWS DESK / DNA

KABUL: President of Afghanistan Mohammad Ashraf Ghani while delivering his special message especially appreciated the Prime Minister Imran Khan's recent visit to Kabul. He termed the PM Imran Khan's visit an importance milestone in strengthening bilateral ties and enhancing prospectus for regional cooperation and integration. CAREC Program is a partnership of 11 countries and 6 development partners working together to promote development through cooperation, leading to accelerated economic growth and poverty reduction. It is guided by the overarching vision of "Good Neighbors, Good Partners, and Good Prospects." The ministers & senior repre-

sentatives of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, China, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan also addressed to the conference. Senior representatives of ADB, IMF, WB, AIIB, IDB, EBRD, EIB, OFID, USAID, UN Agencies, WTO and JICA also attended the Conference. The Minister, in his remarks, highlighted the significance of regional cooperation such as CAREC for Pakistan in achieving shared goals of sustainable development and economic growth. Mr. Bakhtyar reiterated the importance of regional connectivity not only through road network but also rail, aviation and ports for unleashing trade and tourism potential in the region. While endorsing the Framework, he emphasized that setting specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) targets along with active monitoring & annual reporting, we can effectively monitor the progress leading to implementation of CAREC's Vision 2030. The Minister highlighted that tourism is part of national development policy of the Government of Pakistan and this sector contains immense untapped potential. He suggested the development of regional tourism corridor, establishment of CAREC Business Council and increased involvement of the private sector in promoting tourism.

Japanese envoy pays tribute to polio workers

He paid tribute to the effort of around 285,000 polio workers who were engaged in the house-to-house vaccine campaign amid the growing anxiety about the second wave of COVID-19 in Pakistan

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: MATSUDA Kuninori, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, is pleased to hear of the report that due to the successful implementation of the nation-wide polio immunization campaign last week, over 39 million have been vaccinated, which is equivalent to 98% of its target. He paid tribute to the effort of around 285,000



polio workers who were engaged in the house-to-house vaccine campaign amid the growing anxiety about the second wave of

COVID-19 in Pakistan. Since 1996, Japan has been supporting Pakistan in its effort to eradicate polio from the nation, with a cumulative amount of \$229 million. Ambassador MATSUDA added, "the Government of Japan will continue to help Pakistan in cooperation with international partners to reduce the immunity gap and protect its children from the highly infectious disease."

Virus ratio rises to 10 per cent countrywide

KHAYAM ABBASI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's coronavirus cases rose by 3,795 in the past 24 hours, raising the tally to 420,294 as the country struggles to contain the second wave of infections with the positivity rate nearing 10%, data issued by the National Command and Operations Centre (NCO) showed on Monday. For the first time in five months, the country's case positivity rate climbed to 9.7% with SARS-CoV-2 being detected in 3,795 samples out of the total 39,076 PCR tests conducted throughout Pakistan.

Continued on Page 06

Another doctor in Sindh dies

ATHAR SUFI / DNA

KARACHI: Another doctor in Sindh on Monday has succumbed to coronavirus as death toll across the country has been recorded as 8,398. The deceased, identified as Dr Waris, was working as ear, nose and throat (ENT) specialist at Sindh Government Hospital in New Karachi. It is to be mentioned here that as many as 40 doctors have lost their lives due to COVID-19 in Sindh so far.

Saudi oil exports to US fall

Saudi Arabia has 16 percent of the world's proved oil reserves and is the largest exporter of total petroleum liquids

MENTORING REPORT

JEDDAH: Daily exports of Saudi crude oil to the US recently fell to their lowest level in three decades, with industry experts putting the drop down to increased demand from Asia and a change in the energy dynamic between the two countries. Data from the US Energy Information Administration (EIA) showed that two weeks ago 73,000 barrels per day (bpd) were shipped from the Kingdom to Amer-

ican refineries. The figure represents the lowest daily amount on record since June 2010. However, going by monthly figures, it would also be the least since 1985 when Saudi imports fell to zero for several months as part of a price war. Saudi Arabia has 16 percent of the world's proved oil reserves and is the largest exporter of total petroleum liquids in the world. According to the EIA, in 2012 the Kingdom became the second-largest petroleum exporter to the US, surpassing Mexico, but still behind Canada. EIA data showed that May 2003 was when Saudi exports to the US hit the highest level, with 2,244,000 bpd, followed by May 1991 (2,053,000 bpd), April 2003 (2,024,000 bpd), August 1991 (1,964,000 bpd), and June 2003 (1,921,000 bpd). Dr. Bassam Fattouh, director of the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, told it would be too simple to assume that the recent slump in oil exports was to do with US President Donald Trump losing the recent



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Belarus Andrei Ermolovich paid a farewell call on President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi. Ambassador Ermolovich is leaving Pakistan after completing his term. - DNA

CPEC has created many jobs: FS



NAVEED MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: "CPEC is a transformational project. There is a complete national consensus on CPEC's indispensability for our national development efforts. Pakistan and China are firmly committed to the timely completion of CPEC projects and making it a High-Quality Demonstration Project of BRT", this was underscored by Foreign Secretary Sohai Mahmood in a meeting with Chairman CPEC Authority, General (R) Asim Salim Bajwa. Reviewing the progress of CPEC projects, Foreign Secretary maintained that CPEC energy and infrastructure projects had created thousands of jobs and had boosted industrial growth and productivity. It testified to the fact that

Continued on Page 06

Pak welcomes peace efforts in Gulf

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Monday welcomed the reported progress towards resolution of the rift in the Gulf region. The spokesman said, "We particularly appreciate Kuwait's sincere efforts for helping to bridge differences and promoting reconciliation among the countries in the dispute". Pakistan hopes that enhanced confidence and understanding among these countries will foster durable peace and prosperity in the region.

Pakistan values ties with Belarus

Outgoing Belarus ambassador meets President Alvi; thanks him for support; expresses hope that he would continue to promote Pakistan-Belarus relations

NAVEED MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has said that Pakistan highly values its ties with Belarus and wants to further enhance bilateral relations with Belarus in all fields of mutual interest, including trade and investment, science and technology, culture and defense. He stated this while talking to the outgoing Ambassador

of the Republic of Belarus, Mr Andrei Ermolovich, who paid a farewell call on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. Talking to the Ambassador, the President said that Pakistan was keen to promote trade and cultural cooperation with Belarus. He highlighted that Pakistan offered promising opportunities for joint ventures and investment and would welcome Belarusian investment in Pakistan.

The President remarked that both countries had great potential for cooperation in the areas of culture, tourism and pharmaceuticals and emphasized the need for increasing cooperation in these areas for the mutual benefit of the two countries. The President expressed the hope that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), signed by the two

Continued on Page 06

'Lahore rally will be held at all costs'

LAHORE: Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) leaders, while terming the incumbent government as a fascist regime, have on Monday affirmed that Lahore rally will be held at all costs. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Rana Sanaullah held a news conference in Lahore along with Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP) Qamar Zaman Kaira. Rana Sanaullah said, "PDM's Multan rally was held despite government's efforts to stop it and same thing will happen in Lahore. - DNA

Woman who tortured maid sent to prison

ASHEAQ MUGHAL / DNA

FAISALABAD: A judicial magistrate on Monday rejected the bail plea of a woman suspected of beating up a minor, sending her on a 14-day judicial remand to prison. The woman and another man were arrested after a video of them brutally beating a maid went viral on social media. The main suspect in the case, however, was released on bail after submitting bail bonds worth Rs100,000 a day earlier.

NOW IN PAKISTAN

Invisible Braces
Dental Implants

Dr. Abrar & Associates
DENTAL SURGEONS

House # 6-A, Ismail Zabeeh Road, (Service Road Parallel to Faisal Avenue) F-8/3, Islamabad.
e-mail: abrar_associates@yahoo.com | www.drabrarassociates.com
Ph: +92 51 228 7691 / +92 51 228 7692 | Fax: +92 51 228 7693

Continued on Page 06

Inside...

- Ashrafi lauds Muslim world's efforts against extremism - Page 02
- RCCI thanks IESCO chief to support businessmen - Page 03
- ICCI delegation visits FIDMC to explore investment opportunities - Page 04
- Real Spirits of Uzbekistan's Constitution - Page 05
- 'Turkey won't allow imperialist expansionism on E.Med' - Page 06
- French arms sales to Egypt won't be conditional: Macron - Page 07
- PM Imran vows to save youth from drug addiction - Page 08

Briefs

SC directs PESCO to provide electricity meters

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) has directed the Peshawar Electric Supply Company (Pesco) to provide electricity meters to the houses in the Afghan refugee camp and asked the foreign nationals to submit their applications to get the power connections. A two-member bench of the top court led by Justice Maqbool Baqar heard a case related to the provision of electricity meters to the houses in Afghan refugee camp in Peshawar.

During the hearing, the petitioner's lawyer told the SC bench that Afghan refugees are being provided electricity in accordance with the power tariff approved in 1971. He said that the power tariff had been increased after the issuance of a notification in 2012. Justice Qazi Muhammad Amin Ahmed remarked that each foreign citizen who is residing in Pakistan will comply with the regulations of the country. The foreign citizens have the right to avail all facilities while residing in Pakistan in accordance with the law. He further remarked that the children of Afghan refugees are getting the education and the foreign nationals should be given electricity connection. The apex court wrapped up the case after ordering the power supply company to provide electricity meters immediately after receiving the applications from Afghan refugees.

Pattoki father 'misses' children after throwing

DNA

PATTOKI: The man who threw his five children into BS Link canal in Pattoki on Monday said he is 'missing' them. In his statement, Muhammad Ibrahim, a rickshaw driver, said he lost his mind after a domestic dispute with his wife, and the taunting of his in-laws compelled him to throw his children into a canal. Regretting and admitting his cruel act, Ibrahim said he loved his children the most and now he is badly missing them. Recalling the incident, he said that he might not throw children into the canal if they had shouted at the time when he was pushing them. According to the police, Muhammad Ibrahim has a criminal record and three first information reports (FIRs) are registered against him at different Kasur police stations. The cases related to robbery and possession of illicit arms. Meanwhile, an operation to find the bodies of three of the five drowned children continued. The bodies of two siblings were fished out on Saturday. The police said Ibrahim, a rickshaw driver, was arrested from the place of the incident. He would often quarrel with his wife Razia Bibi due to which the latter had gone to stay with her parents at Manga.

AJK President rubbishes Indian propaganda

MUZAFFARABAD: The AJK President Sardar Masood Khan while spurning India's negative propaganda against Turkey has said that Turkey's forthright supports to the right to self-determination of the Kashmiri people had left the Indian rulers perturbed and frustrated. Commenting on the Indian media reports that Turkey preparing to send Jihaddists fighters to Kashmir, Sardar Masood Khan said that the freedom struggle in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir is indigenous and Turkish or any other country of the world has nothing to do with it. "India's propaganda is rubbish and a crude attempt to undercut Turkey's political and diplomatic support for Kashmiris struggling against Indian oppression and tyranny. It won't happen," said the President. He maintained that the Indian media reports that the Turkish fighters fighting in eastern Syria were now preparing to fight the Indian Army in occupied Kashmir, is not only unfounded and baseless but also a deep-rooted conspiracy to malign the indigenous liberation movement of the Kashmiri people. — DNA



Chairman CPEC Authority Lt Gen (R) Asim Saleem Bajwa called on Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Syed Ali Haider Zaidi at his office

Ashrafi lauds Muslim world's efforts against extremism

Talking to National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser, he said "Pakistan welcomes role and efforts of Muslim countries for elimination of the menace of extremism, terrorism and sectarian violence"

ISLAMABAD: Special Aide to Prime Minister on Inter Religious Harmony, Pakistan Ulama Council Chairman Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi Monday lauded the efforts of Muslim Ummah for eradication of extremism, terrorism and sectarian violence.

Talking to National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser, he said "Pakistan welcomes role and efforts of Muslim countries for elimination of the menace of extremism, terrorism and sectar-

ian violence. Pakistan expects support of Muslim Ummah to resolve the issues of Kashmir and Palestine." Ashrafi thanked the speaker for assuring his support and cooperation to Ulema and Mashaykh. He said Saudi foreign minister in his recent meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) supported Pakistan's stance and a unanimous resolution on Kashmir is a great success of Prime Minister Imran Khan's vision and foreign policy of Pakistan. He also an-

nounced to resolve the issues of minorities in Pakistan, saying he is in constant coordination with leadership of all religious organizations and it is priority of the government to address issues of all the communities. He maintained that minorities will not be left at the mercy of any cruelty. The government will ensure all rights and privileges of minorities as enshrined in the Constitution, he added. Speaking on the occasion, the speaker National Assembly said

efforts and cooperation is being made at every available level to strengthen Pakistan's ties with Muslim countries and for unity and stability of Islamic world. Pakistan owns very explicit stance on the issues of Kashmir and Palestine and the government lauds efforts of Ulema and Mashaykh for interreligious harmony in the country. Asad Qaiser said efforts are being made to ensure legislation at the United Nations forum against blasphemy

and desecration of heavenly religions and scriptures. Every Muslim is defender of Nameos-e-Risalat and belief in the finality of Prophethood. He lauded efforts of Ulema and Mashaykh for intersect harmony in the country during the days of Muharram and afterwards. With effective corporation and efforts of Ulema and Mashaykh, conspiracies of sectarian violence in the country are foiled successfully. — APP

Ramzan Sugar Mills case adjourned

LAHORE: An accountability court on Monday adjourned hearing of Ramzan Sugar Mills case against Opposition leader in National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif and his son, Hamza Shehbaz, till December 17. Accountability Court Judge Amjad Nazir Chaudhry conducted the case proceedings, wherein jail authorities produced Hamza Shehbaz amid strict security. At the start of proceedings, the additional home secretary told the court that the authorities had completed an inquiry into the incident of not producing Hamza Shehbaz before the court on October 30 and two inspectors were held responsible. At this, the court questioned the secretary what special operating procedures (SOPs) had been prepared for producing the prisoners before the courts. To which, the secretary sought time for preparation of the SOPs. Subsequently, the court withdrew the show cause notices issued to SP headquarters and other officials besides warning them. — APP

Waqar rubbishes fake news about cryptocurrency

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Waqar Zaka has rubbished all the rumours regarding cryptocurrency in the country. Waqar Zaka, who is a showbiz artist by profession and is currently meeting provincial and federal ministers of Pakistan in his efforts to legalize digital currency in Pakistan, has somewhat succeeded in this purpose because the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly has recently adopted a resolution, and has also been submitted to the Center to legalize the crypto currency. However, the website of a major media house reported that the State Bank of Pakistan had declared the virtual currency transaction illegal, while Waqar Zaka claims that the SBP does not have the authority to do so. Reportedly the SBP lawyers have also denied the news.

Punjab's leaders sit together

DNA

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Usman Buzdar on Monday chaired a meeting of the apex committee, attended by civil and military leaders from the province, where it was decided to implement coordinated and effective measures to overcome rising COVID-19 cases. The meeting, attended by Corps Commander Lahore Lieutenant General Majid Ehsan and other civil and military leaders, expressed their concern over the non-implementation of the SOPs during the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic. The apex committee agreed to launch joint efforts for saving the lives of the public besides also having a consensus over implementing strict COVID-19 measures if the ongoing situation aggravates. It was agreed that hospitals would be equipped with facilities aimed at dealing with the COVID-19 situation, further ensuring strict implementation of wearing masks in offices and public places.

'Accountability process to reach to its end'

Replying to a question, the corrupt opposition was fighting for personal agenda and the PDM did not have any interest to address the problems of poor people



ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Chief Minister on Information Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan Monday expressed her confidence that her government under the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan would continue the accountability process and it will reach its logical conclusion.

Talking to a private news channel, she suggested the opposition parties choose a constitutional and legal way to topple the government by submitting a no-confidence motion in the national and provincial assemblies and not hold public meetings in the wake of the second wave of coronavirus. She criticized that PTI government was not afraid of any movement by the opposition and selfish opposition parties were trying to top-

ple the elected state government but all their attempts would not succeed. She said Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf led government would complete its constitutional tenure and it would win the next general elections of 2023 with thumping majority on basis of its five years performance. Replying to a question, the corrupt opposition was fighting for personal agenda and the PDM did not have any interest to address the problems of poor people. To another query, Awan further criticized that Pakistan Muslim League-N was just using all negative tactics to make their dark future into bright but their all lies were already exposed before the public. She said some political parties were using their workers as 'cannon fodder' to hide their misdeeds, adding, the only way forward for the PML-N party was to give up corruption and stay in politics of the people. She said Prime Minister Imran Khan had moved the country on the path of development and he (PM) had played a leading role to improve the national economy.

FPCCI appreciates PM for removing 5% duty

DNA

KARACHI: Mian Anjum Nisar, President "The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry" (FPCCI) said the decision of the withdrawal of 5% regulatory duty on the import of cotton yarn will greatly support the textile sector of Pakistan and will contribute to the economic stability of the country. He stated that FPCCI has observed since long that

country has not been able to achieve its full export potential in the textile sector and product diversification owing to limited access to raw-material and to this effect the regulatory duty on cotton yarn should be terminated so that exporters could be able to achieve price competitiveness and product diversification. Local production of cotton is not sufficient to meet the demand of the textile industry while Pakistan is receiving huge orders, Cotton was not available at

competitive prices due to the regulatory duty and hectic procedures, and the COVID-19 outbreak and the lockdown in recent past have also worsened the situation. The second wave of COVID19 is also a serious threat to textile productivity. The cotton crop was severely damaged due to torrential rainfalls last year. It is estimated that the cotton production was in the range of 6 to 8 million bales against the local textile sector's requirement of 15 to 16 million bales. According to

the data up to 1st December 2020, reported by Pakistan Cotton Ginners' Association 4.6 million bales of cotton arrived in the industry while the figures of last year was 7.4 million, in the same manner, the unsold stock of this year is 0.9 million bales while last year it was 1.4 million. The data shows that cotton crop yield has declined by almost 13 percent, which is the major cash crop that could contribute significantly to the development and economic prosperity of the country.



LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) vice president Maryam Nawaz addressing a public gathering in Lahore. — DNA

Together For Peace

MUHAMMAD AZAM KHAN

The present day world seem to have come full circle since the events of 9/11. Traditional threats now eclipse the previous dominant concern over non-traditional threats. The rise of China has become the most momentous event of the twenty first century. A rapid surge in China's economic and military prowess is spawning an era of new world order. Never since the end of cold war did the United States find itself so challenged as it is today. With China and Russia forging a formidable strategic partnership as embodied in Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the two expanding their worldwide influence, the competition appears to be expanding from "Eurasian heartland" to "Eurasian Rim" namely, South Asia, Middle East, and South East Asia. By far the greatest shift in the regional nay global order in recent times has been China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). CPEC

is the flagship project of BRI. The port of Gwadar on the western fringes of Pakistan's Makran coast constitutes what could be conveniently called the "bedrock" of CPEC. It is from this port that China will connect to Africa, Middle East, and other parts of the world. It will also serve as the "gateway" for transit trade to and from Central Asia. The security of Gwadar port along with associated maritime infrastructure and seaward approaches is mandated to Pakistan Navy. A specially configured contingent comprising of professionally trained, fully geared and agile manpower stand guard to secure smooth functioning of the port. To add on, surveillance and monitoring facilities along the coast and well-established, "Joint Maritime Information and Coordination Centre" (JIMCC) of Pakistan Navy meanwhile ensures early warning of any developing threat.

As new threats surfaced in the aftermath of 9/11, safely and security of major maritime highways became a

paramount global concern. With some of the vital international sea-arteries traversing close to Pakistan's Makran coast, country's navy quickly occupied strategic maritime space in the western Indian Ocean as part of effort in GWOT. Pakistan Navy then assumed the mantle of providing security and assurance of safe passage to legitimate commerce in the said sea expanse. A sustained participation in US led Combined Task Force 150, aimed at combating maritime terrorism, human and narco trafficking and other crimes at sea besides engagement in anti-piracy coalition (Task Force 151) has been a valuable contribution by Pakistan Navy. "Pakistan Navy on its part is maintaining a robust security posture along the Pakistani coast and in the regional seas to deter the nefarious elements from illicit activities in the maritime domain". The institution of "Regional Maritime Security Patrols" (RMSP) in the Indian Ocean region in line with UN Convention on Law of the Sea is

meant to "pursue the country's national interest with strategic autonomy". The participation in Coalition operations in Combined Task Force 150 and Combined Task Force 151 proved well for the larger good of the international community and regional maritime security. This continued for well over decade and a half. The period was punctuated with Pakistan Navy assuming command role of these combined coalition forces on several occasions. The navy also seized contraband cargo shipment at high seas and provided humanitarian assistance to regional countries on several occasions. That was not all. Apart from enduring participation in various international coalitions, Pakistan Navy instituted a large-scale multinational exercise "Aman" or "Peace" in 2007. The mega event directed at building bridges, increasing interoperability as well as ocean governance. This meant presenting a collective response to maritime threats and challenges that had uni-

versal implications. Today "Aman" is more than "Peace". It would not be wrong to title it as "aman-o-amaan" "peace and security", as the literal meaning in Urdu suggests. Since the first in the series held in 2007, Aman has been scheduled on biennial basis. A widely participated international maritime conference, IMC that precedes the drills at sea, cobbles renowned maritime scholars from across continents. The papers read in the IMC by erudite intellectuals dissect ocean related problems to propose innovative solutions, a necessity in contemporary era as security of littorals and regional prosperity is closely tied to blue economy. Aman has enlarged in scope and extent. In 2019, the exercise saw participation by more than 40 countries while the exercise this year (Aman-21) involves an unprecedented list of countries. Symbolizing maritime security and stability in a volatile region, Amanis and shall remain a harbinger of peace and pride for Pakistan.

Briefs

PIMS employees protest continues

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The medical and non-medical staff of Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) on Monday continued their protest in favour of their demands. Addressing the protesters, speakers said that if their demands are not approved by the competent authorities then there will be complete strike in the hospital. They also asked to review the decision about the Medical Teaching Institute (MTI) ordinance for better functioning of the hospital matters. The protest was attended by doctors, nurses, and paramedical staff. Meanwhile due to protest of doctors a large number of patients had to face hurdles in their treatment while many of them requested the hospital staff to avoid giving strike call as many patients will suffer from this decision.

BARI making efforts to enhance olive cultivation

RAWALPINDI: Barani Agriculture Research Institute (BARI) is making all out efforts to enhance olive cultivation considerably in Potohar region for which the institute has provided over 1.2 million olive saplings to the farmers in the region which was declared an 'Olive Valley'. According to Director BARI, Muhammad Rafique Doggar, the olive saplings were provided free of cost to the eligible farmers of the region including Rawalpindi, Chakwal, Jhelum, Attock and Khurshab districts. The programme was launched for promoting local production of olive and curtailing import bill of edible oil sector, he said adding that the growers are offered subsidy in accordance with the set rules and procedure and they are bound to fully comply with the recommendations of the Provincial Agriculture Department. He said for the purpose the Punjab Agriculture Department had imported high quality saplings from best recognized countries for the production of olive. The eligibility criteria for the grant of free olive saplings extend to those farmers belonging to the region, who possess sufficient irrigation resources for the maintenance of an olive orchard, or who aspire to avail the 70 per cent subsidy available, to manage irrigation resources. If the grower opts to establish a drip irrigation system, then the applicant shall be eligible to avail a 60 per cent subsidy. - APP

Dance classes from Dec 11

ISLAMABAD: Ajoka Theatre Pakistan will start a course titled "Dance first Think Later" for those interested in traditional and classical dance from December 11. Students will be trained in body conditioning, basic technique and expressions of traditional Bhangra, contemporary hip-hop, classical kathak and Zumba. According to an official, renowned dance artist Luke Kelvin, a performer par excellence who has performed all over the world and is well versed in Dance styles, will be teaching in dance classes. He said that it would be a three-months long course and classes will be held on every Saturday and Sunday. He said that "whether your goal is to become Pakistan's next great dancer, achieve that beach body you have always dreamed off or to simply pull of the best wedding performance of the season". He said that Dance is not only an intimate means of self-expression, but scientifically has now been established as one of the most effective means of attaining a healthy body and mind. Strict SOPs will be followed with participants bound by rules to practice social distancing, use face masks and hand sanitizers, he stated. - APP

RCCI thanks IESCO chief to support businessmen

This has been a long awaited demand of RCCI for the provision of extra feeder and grid Station at Industrial Estate. With the installation of grid, industrialisation will increase eventually leading to employment

KHAYAM ABBASI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: IESCO Chief Executive Mr. Shahid Iqbal Chaudhry along with his team visited RCCI. The meeting was attended by President Mohammad Nasir Mirza, Group Leaders Mr. Sohail Altaf, Mr. SM Naseem, former President and Chairman RCCI Industrial Estate, Rawat Mr. Najam Rehman, executive members, and IESCO officials. RCCI is thankful to CEO IESCO Mr. Shahid Iqbal for providing maximum support and cooperation for establishing planned grid station at RCCI Industrial Estate. Today RCCI officially handed over land transfer documents of land measuring 32 Kanals to IESCO for the grid Station. This has been a long awaited demand of RCCI for the provision of extra feeder and grid Station at Industrial Estate. With the installation of grid, industrialisation will increase eventually leading to employment.



Students demand holding of exams

ISLAMABAD: Students of the last batch of BA/B.Sc and B.Com have demanded of the Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU) administration to hold exams of their remaining papers as they have already wasted. The university commenced BA/B.Sc and B.Com examinations of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) colleges from September 16, 2020 after immediately opening of educational institutions but soon after conducting few papers, suspended the exams due to the exposure of some covid-19 cases in few colleges. The exams resumed two times after break and again suspended. Now there were only two or three papers of some of the students which have been left. The students have urged the Education Minister to intervene in the matter and instruct QAU to conduct exams at the earliest for those who are not in the final year. They said their batch is the last one as traditional BA/B.Sc/B.Com programs have

been abolished all over the country. "We are suffering a lot as our examinations have been suspended many times due to the COVID-19 outbreak", they added. Maisam Abbas, a candidate of BA program said, "We are suffering from a turbulent end to our current stage of education and need support as we have to move on to the university level for higher studies". "Our future seems bleak as our exams are not being conducted. My two papers are remaining. The exam of remaining papers should be conducted immediately", he demanded while talking to APP on Monday. Hamza Malik, another student of BA told that he was going to end his education and had applied for a job due to financial weak position of his parents but he had to submit the mark sheet to confirm the result and job training etc. If the exam is conducted late, he would not get the result well in time to get a job. He called on QAU to

conduct the exam immediately, he said. The students of ICT colleges demanded QAU to shift to online mode to conduct the exam of remaining papers. Hafiz Usman a candidate of B.Sc Degree said, "Online exams will be useful as results can be declared quickly addressing our concerns. The evaluation on our subject knowledge will be more obvious through online exams rather than written test." "QAU can give us an assignment, test practical knowledge online. This will save time as well as a lot of students", the student said. Ammara, another candidate of B.Sc said, "Since exams have been cancelled, we don't know what our future is? We are facing many issues owing to awaiting examination, we cannot apply for job and internships or in university in Pakistan or abroad for higher education as we are yet to finish our BA/B.Sc degree". - DNA

Islamabad Metrobus ticketing halted

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Employees of Inbox, a private company that handles ticketing at stations of the metrobus service in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, staged a protest on Monday because they haven't been paid. They complain that their salaries for the last three months have been withheld. They protested at metrobus stations for three days last week as well after which a few of them were given a month's salary with deductions, some employees told. Protestors claim the company had deducted their salaries during the coronavirus lockdown too and promised to pay them the deducted amount later, but it hasn't been paid yet. The service remains suspended for people who require tickets. Those who have credit on their metro cards can travel without hassle.

PUCAR observed death anniversary of Aziz Mian Qawwal

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Death Anniversary of world Famous Aziz Mian Qawal Observed at Punjab Council of the Arts. Vice Chairman Parks and Horticulture Authority, Rawalpindi, Malik Abid Hussain was the chief guest of the evening along with Member Punjab Assembly Simabia Tahir and Momina Waheed. Ex resident director Naheed Manzoor was the guest of honor for the evening. While addressing the ceremony, Malik Abid Hussain said, Sufis chose music from the colors of local art to light the candle of Islam in the Indian subcontinent. They used subtle phrases like Qawwali to attract non-Muslims and convey the message of Islam to them and make them Muslims. Writing, speech and eloquence did not do what Qawwali did and the efforts required to keep this art alive are being fulfilled by the Punjab Council of the Arts.

AIOU signs MoU with Hazara varsity for cooperation

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is exclusively focusing on raising the quality standards in both academic and research fields through collaborating with national and international universities as well as expanding its network across the distant geographical regions of the country. This was stated by Prof Dr Zia Ul Qayyum, Vice Chancellor, AIOU while addressing MOU signing ceremony between AIOU and Hazara University. According to the MoU, both the universities will collaborate in teachers and students exchange program, joint academic and research projects as well other programs of mutual interest. Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum, further, said that within the limited time period of two years, AIOU has raised the standards of quality education by incorporating the use of latest ICT and provided educational facilities to the distant regions of the country and specially to underprivileged segments of the society by expanding its regional network system. He extended support to Hazara university by providing access to utilize AIOU regional centers' facilities. While addressing the ceremony, Prof Dr Jamil Ahmad, Vice Chancellor, AIOU said that his university is primarily focusing on collaborating with different universities to enhance quality of education by providing latest facilities to its students. He, further, said that it is a matter of great pride for Hazara university to sign MoU with AIOU which is a prestigious national institute of international recognition and fame specially in mass education. This cooperation would be fruitful to the students of Hazara university in all respects. Dr Latif Gondal, Director, ORIC described the aims and objectives of the MoU.

Man held for killing his wife

ISLAMABAD: The Homicide Unit of Islamabad Police (Margalla Circle) has arrested a person allegedly involved in killing his wife, a police spokesman said. He said that Ramana police lodged First Information Report (FIR) following complaint of Muhammad Aslam regarding murder of his sister, Fatima Bibi (33) and alleged her husband Arshad Abbass involved in killing. Police registered the case and started interrogation into the matter. In the light of DIG (Operations) orders, SP (Saddar) Muhammad Sarfraz Ahmed Virk constituted special team under the supervision of DSP Abid Ikram including Homicide Unit's Inspector Azam, SHO Ramana Police Station Sub-inspector Turab-Ul-hassan, Sub-Inspector Asif Khan Head Constable Khayasta Khan, Constable Noor Nabi and others from Homicide Unit. This team collected the evidences about the incident and managed to arrest Arshad Abbas involved in killing his wife. Further investigation is underway from the nabbed accused. DIG (Operations) has appreciated this performance and directed all police officials for high vigilance and monitoring against those involved in anti-social activities. - DNA

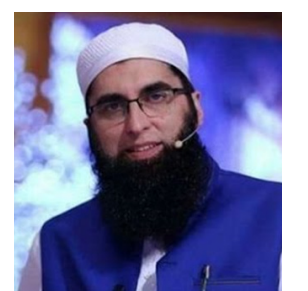
APCNGA seeks extension in filing TR

ISLAMABAD: All Pakistan Compressed Natural Gas Association (APCNGA) Monday sought one-month extension in last date of filing tax returns, which was December 8. "We have submitted an application with the FBR [Federal Board of Revenue] to extend the period of filing online tax returns for one month," APCNGA Central Leader Ghiyas Abdullah Paracha said in a press statement. He said the CNG sector remained unable to file their tax returns due to some problems with the FBR's online system of income tax calculation. Paracha said the association was in constant contact with the FBR in that regard. He said the CNG sector was one of the highest direct tax-paying sectors of the country, and had paid GST [General Sales Tax] at every unit of the sale through its gas supplier companies, Sui Southern Gas Company and Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited, bills and income tax through gas & electricity bills and supplies. The association in the application, dated December 7, stated: "This year, the CNG station owners have been facing several issues in filing their income tax returns due to miscalculation and difference by IRIS on paid tax. It's a very serious problem and we have in communication with the FBR for its solution." - APP

Banni police arrest two dacoits

RAWALPINDI: Banni police on Monday claimed to have arrested two suspected dacoits during an encounter. According to police spokesman, Banni police during snap checking of vehicles intercepted two suspected motorcycles near Sheikh Rashid Pulli, but the suspected dacoits opened fire on the police party. As a result, in cross firing, two suspected dacoits received bullet injuries and netted. Police party shifted the injured dacoits to hospital for medical treatment while two others managed to escape from the scene. Police recovered weapons, a snatched motorcycle and other items from their possession. The spokesman said that the suspected dacoits had remained jail birds and chattered in different cases. They were allegedly involved in dacoities, street crimes and bike lifting cases. Superintendent Police (SP) Rawal Mazhar Iqbal said the suspected dacoits who managed to escape would also be sent behind the bars. City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Muhammad Ahsan Younas appreciated immediate reaction of police party and appreciated performance of SP Rawal and Banni police. - APP

Junaid Jamshed remembered



ISLAMABAD: The fourth death anniversary of Pakistani singer-turned-religious scholar Junaid Jamshed is being observed on Monday as the nation remembers the immensely popular celebrity. Junaid Jamshed died at the age of 52 on December 7, 2016 along with his wife and 45 others in a plane crash of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flight PK-661 near Havelian Abbottabad. Junaid Jamshed was born on September 3, 1964 in Karachi. His father Jamshed Akber Khan was a retired Group Captain in Pakistan Air Force. After graduating from local boarding high school in Lahore, Jamshed proceeded to join the PAF, initially focusing to become professional F-16 fighter pilot. But due to weak eyesight during the tough physical examination, his nomination papers were rejected by the PAF selection board. Private channels reported. - APP

ECP making improvements in election operation

Sikandar Sultan Raja said that the commission had completed all arrangements for holding of local govt elections in time however it had stopped the election process by January 31, 2021 in the light of directions of NCOC keeping in view the Corona situation

ISLAMABAD: Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja on Monday said that the commission had started working on making major improvements in election operation under strategic plan 2019-23. Addressing a function held here at ECP Secretariat on National Voters Day, the CEC said that under the plan, new eligible voters were being registered while steps were being taken to introduce new technology in election process. He said that the commission had also

started a pilot project in 21 districts to know the reasons behind gender gap in voters' lists. He added the project was in final stages. He said that the commission had also introduced online complaint management system to receive complaints from citizens and immediately give relief to complainer. Sikandar Sultan Raja said that the commission had completed all arrangements for holding of local government elections in time however it had stopped the election process by January 31, 2021 in

the light of directions of National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) keeping in view the Corona situation. He added the commission was in touch with the NCOC in that regard. He said that the objective behind observing this day was to raise awareness about the importance of vote. He added all eligible citizens should register them with ECP as voter. He said that the commission had made sincere efforts for registration of those eligible voters in various areas of the country who

were not registered with the ECP earlier. He added due to ECP's such measures taken to register all eligible voters, the number of registered voters reached now at 115 million from 112 million in the country. He said that the ECP's mandate was to hold free, fair and transparent election in the country. He added the commission arranges various activities on election day every year to inform the public about their democratic right and national responsibility. He appealed all citizens eligible

for registration as voters to apply for national identity card for ensuring their registration as voter. He added citizens could play their role in strengthening the democratic process while exercising their democratic right of casting vote to elect their favorite representatives. He said that any citizen could get all required details from ECP about their vote while sending SMS to 8300. On the occasion, the CEC also inaugurated ECP helpline 051-8848888 at ECP Secretariat to help the general public. - APP

Briefs

RCB issues 32 notices to food outlets

RAWALPINDI: The Food Branch of Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) has issued 32 notices to food outlets for unhygienic and poor cleanliness conditions. According to RCB Food Branch, a total 24 food samples were collected which were sent to the lab for quality test while over Rs 71,000 fines were imposed on the rules violators. The cases of sub-standard food items were also sent to the court of the cantonment magistrate which imposed fines on the rules violators. Food Inspectors on the directive of the Cantonment Executive Officer conducted surprise visits of different markets including Saddar, Peshawar Road, Qasim Market, Chor, Allahabad, Masrial, Tench Bhatta, Peoples Colony, Chungi Number 22, Bakra Mandi and other areas and inspected cleanliness condition with quality of food items at food outlets. He said, the teams also imposed fines on the stall holders and vendors for unhygienic food and poor cleanliness condition. The raids would continue, he said adding that the teams were directed to also check the health of the workers serving at the food outlets. — APP

402 new corona cases reported in capital

ISLAMABAD: National Command and Operation Center (NOC) on Coronavirus Monday said that 402 new COVID-19 cases were reported from the federal capital during last 24 hours. According to an official of NOCC, as many as 422 cases were reported on Sunday while 353 cases were reported on Saturday. He said so far 32,816 cases were reported from the federal capital while 341 deaths were reported from Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). He added 26,396 patients had been recovered completely. Meanwhile, on the direction of Ministry of National Health Services, the district administration of Islamabad had continued smart lockdown in different streets of the capital to reduce transmission of the infection in the selected streets and other sectors. They also started taking actions on violation of standard operating procedures (SOPs) related with the corona while visiting marriage halls, markets and petrol pumps by its inspection teams. The administration also sealed schools, shops, workshop and restaurants on violation of SOPs. The inspection teams also issued notices to marriage halls besides imposing fines on owners of different shops. Commenting on the situation, an official of Ministry of National Health Services said that several local level administrative decisions were made to control the disease. He advised the citizens to continue following the social distancing, use of mask and other precautionary measures to stop increasing local transmission of COVID-19 in the city. — APP

ITP campaign to stop use of unauthorized number plates

ISLAMABAD: The campaign of Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) to check display of unauthorized or non-pattern number plates at vehicles or bikes is in full swing and police teams are imposing heavy fines over this particular violation. This campaign has been launched following directions of Inspector General of Police Islamabad Muhammad Aamir Zulfikar and Senior Superintendent of Police (Traffic) Farrukh Rasheed is himself supervising it. The purpose of this campaign is to ensure high alert security, maintain law and order situation, ensure protection to the lives as well as property of citizens and avert any untoward incident. The SSP (Traffic) urged the motorists and motorcyclists to display the number plates issued by Excise and Taxation Office and also keep with them their driving licenses and vehicles' documents showing possession on their names or even authority letters. — APP

ICCI delegation visits FIDMC to explore investment opportunities

Chairman FIDMC MianKashifAshfaq arranged the visit of ICCI delegation to SEZs being constructed under CPEC including Allama Iqbal Industrial City and M3 Industrial City. AamirSaleemi, Chief Executive Officer, FIEDMC and other officers were also present



RANA FARRUKH/DNA

ISLAMABAD: SardarYasirIlyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry leading a 45-member business delegation visited the SEZs of Faisalabad Industrial Estate Development and Management Company (FIEDMC) to explore industrial cooperation and investment opportunities. Vice President ICCI Abdul Rehman Khan, Founder Group Chairman MianAkramFarid, Khalid Javed, Tariq Sadiq, Nasir Qureshi, Muhammad EjazAbbas, Nasir Khan, Shaban Khalid, Zafar Bakhtawari, Chaudhry Waheedud Din, Karim Aziz Malik, Iftikhar Anwar Sethi, Mahmood Warrach, ShakeelMunir, M. Javed Iqbal, Umar Hussain, Mehboob Ahmad Khan, Muhammad Shakir, Usman Khalid, Naeem Siddiqui, MianArif Hussain, Tahir Ayub and others were in the

delegation.

Chairman FIDMC MianKashifAshfaq arranged the visit of ICCI delegation to SEZs being constructed under CPEC including Allama Iqbal Industrial City and M3 Industrial City. AamirSaleemi, Chief Executive Officer, FIEDMC and other officers were also present. The delegation also visited the Ittehad Steel owned by ICCI former President Khalid Javed and Honda Assembly plant in Faisalabad to see their production activities. Speaking at the occasion, SardarYasirIlyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that under the leadership of MianKashifAshfaq, Chairman FIEDMC, international standard infrastructure and services were being provided in SEZs which was commendable and added that these SEZs were providing an ideal environment for investment. He said that Pakistan needed an industrial revolution to get

rid of the debt burden and achieve sustainable economic development for which the establishment of more such modern SEZs across the country was very important. He hoped that FIEDMC SEZs would attract local and foreign investment and make a significant contribution towards the economic stability of the country. He said that ICCI was working with Federal and Punjab governments for a new industrial estate in Islamabad and hoped that FIEDMC would cooperate by sharing its expertise and experience in developing it on modern lines. He said that some members of ICCI delegation have shown interest to make investment in FIEDMC's SEZs. He assured that he would try to bring a delegation of foreign diplomats from Islamabad to FIEDMC to show them the investment potential in its SEZs so that they could encourage investors of their respective countries to invest here. He said ICCI

would also open a Facilitation Desk of FIDMC to brief the prospective investors and visiting foreign delegations about investment potential in SEZs of FIEDMC Founder Group Chairman MianAkramFarid and former President ICCI Khalid Javed also lauded the quality development in FIEDMC's SEZs and said that the government should construct similar types of SEZs in other parts of the country including Islamabad. Khalid Javed said that he has already set up an industrial unit in Allama Iqbal Industrial City and was fully satisfied with the facilities and services of FIEDMC. In his address, Chairman FIEDMC MianKashifAshfaq welcomed the ICCI delegation and said that FIEDMC was ready to provide a separate cluster of 200 to 300 acres in Allama Iqbal Industrial City to ICCI members for setting up industrial units. He said that in the cluster, all the required facilities will be provided

to investors as per their needs on priority basis. He further said that the development work in Allama Iqbal Industrial City was in full swing and five major industrial units have already started construction of their production plants. He said that investors of this economic zone would be provided cheaper electricity than the market rate from next year. He said that even at present 5 MW power was being supplied to Allama Iqbal Industrial City which will soon be increased by another 20 MW while NTDC and NEPRA have provided 500 MW of power directly to FIEDMC. He said that a utility services center was being set up in Allama Iqbal Industrial City for the convenience of investors where representatives of FESCO and SSGPL will be present to provide electricity and gas connections to the investors and they will not have to visit the head offices of these institutions.

UNDP, Unilever Pakistan to work together DNA

ISLAMABAD: UNDP Pakistan and Unilever Pakistan announced their partnership today to test solutions in an effort to minimize plastic waste in Rahim Yar Khan city. Through this partnership, Unilever and UNDP will work together to enable the plastic waste management ecosystem in Rahim Yar Khan. This initiative will test solutions to reduce plastic waste, and potentially turn waste into resource. The key goal is to create a circular economy system for plastics waste management in Pakistan—by testing new economic models, industrial, and consumer behavior, policy shift and, engaging private sector, and other non-traditional partners. A virtual event was held today to commemorate this partnership. Present at the event were Ms. Aliona Niculita, Resident Representative a.i., UNDP Pakistan; Mr. Amanullah Khan, Assistant Resident Representative, and Head of Environment and Climate Change Unit (ECCU), UNDP Pakistan; and Mr. Amir Paracha, CEO Unilever Pakistan Ltd, along with relevant representatives of UNDP Pakistan, Unilever Pakistan Ltd, and local government of Rahim Yar Khan City. Rahim Yar Khan city is home to Unilever's first and largest factory in Pakistan, and is of key strategic importance to the

company's national footprint. Unilever recently announced a multipronged ambition to reduce its plastic footprint and to play its role towards a circular economy. The company has pledged to collect more plastic than it sells as part of its environmental responsibility. This vision is also inline of UNDP's global commitment to work with governments worldwide on business solutions for waste management. UNDP Pakistan is part of the regional cohort of five Countries (Pakistan, Maldives, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, and Philippines) that are working on the challenge of plastic waste management with the Regional Innovation Center in Bangkok. UNDP is also a regional partner to Unilever, and has been actively engaging with the company on its plastics waste management agenda. "UNDP is committed to promote public private partnership through innovative solutions to tackle complex development challenges," stated Ms. Aliona Niculita, Resident Representative a.i., UNDP Pakistan. "UNDP's plastic waste management portfolio is building a movement towards creating a circular economy for plastics in Pakistan. Through our partnership with Unilever Pakistan, we are working on creating innovative business solutions to turn waste into resource."

Chairman expresses satisfaction over CDA work

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Aamir Ali Ahmed expressed his satisfaction over the work of CDA regarding street lights, road carpeting, lane marking, kerb stone, environment, and cleanliness here on Monday. According to a press release of CDA, the Chairman visited F-9 Park, Super Market, F-6, Jinnah Super Market, F-7, F-8, Golar Interchange, Kashmir Highway, F-10 and other plac-

es and inspected the work of CDA. He directed the concerned authorities to fasten the pace of the work. Director sanitation and heads of the departments including City Sewerage, Road Maintenance, Environment, Street Lights, and others were also present at the occasion. Speaking at the occasion, Chairman CDA directed the concerned authorities to improve the cleanliness work in the city. He said that street lights should be restored at all the main roads, link roads, and streets as soon as possible. 40% of streets lights have been restored, but

steps should continuously be taken for the restoration of all the other lights. The work of road carpeting, lane marking, and kerb stone should be expanded to all over the city, he added. He said that CDA is actively taking steps for improving the infrastructure of the city. Work on repairing of roads is continued in sectorial areas as well as in the rural areas. The work of repairing of roads of sector F-6, F-7, F-8, has been completed whereas the work is underway in G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8, G-9, G-10, and G-11, he further said.



ISLAMABAD: Federal minister for energy, Omar Ayub Khan welcomed the newly appointed Ambassador of China to Pakistan, Nong Rong at his office. Chairman CPEC Authority, LT. Gen. (R) Asim Saleem Bajwa is also present on the occasion. — DNA

NAB committed to root out corruption: Chairman

Chairing a high level meeting of National Accountability Bureau (NAB), Chairman said NAB has no affiliation with any political party, group or individual but with the state of Pakistan. The anti corruption strategy of bureau has started yielding positive results

ISLAMABAD: National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Chairman Justice Javed Iqbal Monday said optimum resources are being utilized for eradication of corruption, money laundering, abuse of authority and recovery of looted money from corrupt elements involved in mega corruption cases on priority basis. Chairing a high level meeting of National Accountability Bureau (NAB), Chairman said NAB has no affiliation with any political party, group or individual but with the state of Pakistan. The anti corruption strategy of bureau has started yielding positive

results. Over 59 percent people reposed confidence over NAB policies according to a report published by Gilani and Gallop survey. NAB is focal institution according to anti-corruption convention of United Nations. NAB is role model according to anti corruption institute of Saarc (The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) countries, which is honour for Pakistan. Chairman said the bureau has fixed 10 months period for concluding the complaint verification, inquiries and investigations of graft cases. Combined Investigation team com-

prising director general, additional directors and directors has been constituted to carry out through probe of a case. Executive and Regional Boards have been constituted for taking consensus decisions. Grading system has also been developed for improving the performance of NAB. Positive results of all these initiatives has already started pouring in. Chairman said the bureau gives importance to modern training of its investigations officers, prosecutors. NAB has already finalized training and refresher courses for its officers for capacity building. The main aim of training is to enhance the capabilities of investiga-

tion officers and prosecutors. The NAB officers consider eradication of corruption as their national duty. The increase in registration of complaints shows enhanced confidence over NAB. A modern forensic laboratory has been established at Rawalpindi bureau which has multiple facilities to facilitate investigation and prosecution officers. NAB has excellent conviction ratio of 68.88 percent which is exemplary among other such anti corruption institutions. Prestigious national and international institutions have expressed satisfaction over the performance of bureau, chairman said. Complaint verification, inquiries

and investigations are being completed by regional bureau in accordance with law, he said adding that the officers have already been directed to protect self respect of every suspect as NAB is a people friendly institution. The main purpose of NAB is to eradicate corruption, recover the looted money from the culprits and deposit into national exchequer. The motto of NAB is faith of NAB - corruption free Pakistan. The meeting was attended by deputy chairman NAB, Prosecutor General, Accountability, director general, (operations) and high ranking officials. — APP

Online winter camp for Science enthusiast kids

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The students can register for the "Online Family Winter Maker Camp Batch-II" being arranged by Pakistan Science Club (PSC) from December 18 offering multiple science related activities to engage the science enthusiasts. According to an official of PSC, the children aged between 6-12 years can register for participation in the camp which would offer hands-on-science training for young kids in various scientific phenomena from engineering to chemistry, biology and renewable energy. The students will make Solar water geyser, Air heater, Solar bug, Elastic coaster, Microscope, Bug catcher, Cool Chemistry and Conductive Bracelets. The adult supervision will be required for the children while attending the Winter camp scheduled to be held on Friday and Saturday. The details of the camp activity are available at the website of the club <https://paksc.org/>. Pakistan Science Club is a non-profit science society established in the year 2008 and continues to inspire a lifelong interest in science, math and technology by engaging diverse communities through interactive and innovative programs.

RDA Chief chairs a committee's meeting

RANA FARRUKH

RAWALPINDI: Chairman Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) Tariq Mehmood Murtaza Monday chaired a committee's meeting about the urban projects for city historic center, Raja Bazaar. The main plans are to highlight Rawalpindi's heritage, improve living conditions in Raja Bazaar, improve the traffic system and increase tourism, urban Regeneration in Sarafa and Bhabra Bazaar, conservation of Sultan Singh Haveli and Street improvement, Promoting Sustainable Urban Mobility in Historic Rawalpindi Bazaar, Resilience Strategy for Rawalpindi and Livelihood opportunities through job creation & entrepreneurship. All these projects were discussed with their scope and stakeholders were taken on board to comment on the timeline of projects. Tariq Mehmood said to improve the traffic system in Raja Bazar and water sewerage system were very important. He said WAPDA should submit an estimation of the project relating to the induction of electric wires in a pipeline.

HEC warns people about degree attestation

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has warned the general public to be aware from the fake agents, who were deceiving the applicants on the name of degree and transcripts attestation. According official sources on Monday, Director General Accreditation and Attestation Department of HEC, had drawn the attention of students and general public that some elements were introducing themselves as an agent of degree and transcripts attestation.

In few cases, these agents had pasted fake tickets and stamps of HEC on the original degrees and transcripts of the applicants, they said. The HEC alerted the people that such kind of degrees and transcripts will be confiscated in case of presented to HEC for attestation. HEC, therefore, has directed all the relevant persons to be careful from these fake agents. It also asked the applicants to choose the legal way for attestation of their testimonials rather than to play in the hands of such fraudsters. The sources said that a special message, in that regard, had been started on the HEC Social Media accounts to create awareness on the issue.

Constructive criticism

IT is impossible to have a democracy within which there is no criticism and no attempt to put right what is wrong. Any government and any authority under it would usually recognise this. On Friday, the Islamabad High Court took up the Pakistan Bar Council's petition against the TikTok ban, and in the process questioned the controversial new social media rules and asked the PTA to review them. The said rules have been rejected by rights activists as an excuse to further censor the internet. The rules encourage a blanket block of content that criticises the government or public servants, give the PTA the right to block the online system of any platform provided by ISPs, and encourage monitoring by ISPs and social media companies – among other bizarre demands. It is in this background that IHC Chief Justice Athar Minallah's observations are welcome indeed. The honourable CJ has said that criticism is not in any way an evil and is indeed essential to upholding the democratic rights of people. He has also noted that freedom of expression is a part of Article 19 and 19-A of the constitution of Pakistan. It seems rather glaringly clear that the current government is extremely eager to block criticism. It is also true that in a democracy the people have the right to point out what is wrong, so that these flaws can be corrected and errors put right. If this does not happen, there can be no movement towards a better democracy and a better state. What the government can't understand is that such social media rules are impossible to implement without essentially taking down entire sites on the internet. That is pure and simple censorship. The honourable IHC CJ Justice Athar Minallah's words should be taken seriously because what is the point of a democracy in which critique and dissenting opinion are not allowed? It is essential that criticism be made more acceptable in the country at all levels. Whether the excuse is 'morality' or the 'national interest', how many times must citizens give up their right to expression just because the state says so? For a government so invested in the pursuit of accountability, it would do well to heed the wisdom of the IHC CJ when he points at the obvious link between criticism and accountability. Pakistan cannot claim to be a democratic state if it insists on acting like a paranoid nanny for its citizens. Let us not forget: there is no glory or greatness in taking away people's right to make a choice on what they wish to access and say online – while remaining within the bounds of reasonable legal restrictions.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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

ABC CERTIFIED

Vol: 01 Issue: 218

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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



A Successful Drive

ACCORDING to the official claims, the latest drive of the government against poliovirus in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) has immunised 98 percent of the targeted children. The figures are impressive; it is an encouraging piece of news, provided the numbers are not inflated. This means that the state's community-based approach has succeeded in achieving its goal of making people realise the importance of vaccination against the crippling virus. Finally, some progress has been achieved on this front. But we will wait till next year to see if our newly adopted strategy has changed anything on the ground or not. It is a timely reminder and point of concern for all the stakeholders that in Pakistan, the spread of poliovirus has become a more serious issue today ever since 2016. 2019 exposed the loopholes in our eradication efforts specifically, as 147 cases were reported that year. The issue became more complicated with the detection of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVDPV2) for the first time since 2016. The 2019 figures have already prompted the government to launch aggressive immunisation drives to bring the virus under control. Unfortunately, the figures for the year 2020 are extremely disappointing. So far, the officials have registered 82 cases of wild poliovirus and 83 of cVDPV2. This means that there is still a mammoth task left before us. It is not just immunisation efforts that the government must focus on to eradicate the virus. The health officials also need to work on the poor condition of water and sanitation (WASH) and prevalent malnutrition. They also help in creating an environment for virus' pools. In a time when the COVID is attacking us, the government must avert the threat of poliovirus by re-strategising the programme. The National Emergency Action Plan (NEAP) for Polio Eradication 2020 must be further improved. We must prevent more outbursts of polio and work towards eliminating the disease as a whole by shifting to a more comprehensive eradication approach that relies on early and aggressive inoculation drives next year and onwards.

Real Spirits of Uzbekistan's Constitution

Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan



Amendments to the Basic Law were promulgated in accordance with the presidential decrees dated October 21, 2016 "On measures for further reforming the judicial-legal system, strengthening guarantees of protection of the rights and freedoms of citizens" and dated February 21, 2017 "On measures to radically improve the structure and efficiency of the judicial system of the Republic of Uzbekistan"

CONSTITUTION is the "Bible" of modern democratic political system. It regulates functions of the different organs of the "State". It upholds "checks & balances". It strengthens "separation of powers" It protects the basic right of the people. Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan is the ideal combination of all the golden principles of modern political system based on participatory democracy, accountability, respect for people's will, people's friendly and above all "custodian" of common people's socio-economic prosperity and political association. Constitution of Uzbekistan was promulgated in 1992 which reflected the collective political wisdom of its political parties and people alike. It stood for fair play, equal

rights, social justice and above all democratic principles. It guarantees basic civil rights, freedom of press and association and last but not least, rights of the minorities in the country. It provides "blue print" to a newly independent country, Uzbekistan to move forward to achieve the desired goals of socio-economic prosperity, reduction in poverty, high exports, empowerment of women through Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), and last but not least, political stability. The constitution of Uzbekistan now stands as a viable legal framework in providing spiritual, social and political progress, and most importantly, sustainable economic development and welfare of the people.

The rich historical path of development of the Uzbek statehood, modern ideas of constitutional development, universal democratic principles, as well as advanced constitutional experience of developed countries were taken into account in developing the Basic Law in the constitution. It is the basis for stable and sustained development of the country on the path of democratic development, the implementation of the principle 'From a Strong State to a Strong Civil Society'. Its preamble says the people of the Republic of Uzbekistan, solemnly declaring their commitment to human rights and the principles of state sovereignty, aware of their ultimate responsibility to the present and the future generations, relying on historical experience in the development of Uzbek statehood. It affirms their commitment to the ideals of democracy and social justice, recognizing priority of the generally accepted norms of the international law, aspiring to a worthy life for the citizens of the Republic. It sets forth the task of creating a humane and democratic rule of law, aiming to ensure civil peace and national accord, represented by their plenipotentiary deputies adopts the present Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan's constitution is forward looking and pragmatic. It has been played an important role in the overall socio-economic and geo-political transformation since its inception. It regulates the most important public relations among citizens, society and the state. It establishes the foundations of the constitutional system and the principles of organization of state power. It is the foundation upon which rests the legal and political system, the system of the protection of the rights, freedoms and lawful interests of individuals.

It has six parts and 26 chapters covering all aspects of politicization and democratization, protection of basic human rights, concept of citizenship, salient features of foreign policy, equitable division of different organs of the state, political, social and economic rights, decentralization of local bodies, defence and security etc. According to its constitution, Uzbekistan is a presidential democracy with a bicameral i.e. two elected houses of parliament (Oliy Majlis, and Senate). The Main Law has laid the foundation for human rights and freedoms, peace and harmony in the society, which allows the constructive work in political, economic and social spheres. The Constitution also defines the parameters of political and legal system, public authorities and development of civil society institutions. The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan H.E. Shavkat Mirziyoyev signed the Law "On introducing amendments and additions to the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan" on 6 April 2017. The document was adopted by the Legislative chamber on March 17 and approved by the Senate on March 28, 2017.

Amendments to the Basic Law were promulgated in accordance with the presidential decrees dated October 21, 2016 "On measures for further reforming the judicial-legal system, strengthening guarantees of protection of the rights

and freedoms of citizens" and dated February 21, 2017 "On measures to radically improve the structure and efficiency of the judicial system of the Republic of Uzbekistan".

The main purpose of the said amendment was to improve and increase the efficiency of the judicial system, further strengthening the judiciary and ensuring genuine independence of the judiciary in the Republic of Uzbekistan. It contained fundamental provisions on the implementation of the tasks defined in the Action strategy of five priority directions of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017-2021, where the extension of the guarantees of reliable protection of the rights and freedoms of citizens, increasing their access to justice, efficiency and quality of judicial processes, further improving the system of selection of candidates and appointment of judges have been secured as the key areas of reforms in judicial-legal sphere.

Right from the beginning it incorporated the fundamental provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other fundamental international instruments, the Constitution preserves the priority of human rights, interests and freedoms over state interests and defined by its main essence to create decent living conditions for the people and proclaimed the social justice principles. Its constitution is the continuation of its centuries-old traditions based on democracy, humanism, freedom, tranquility, equality and above all respect for minorities. It is ideal combination of east-west in terms of golden traditions of Uzbekistan and modernity of the west i.e. democratic principles.

Right from the beginning, radical reforms were promulgated and implemented to liberalize the legal system. The independence of the judiciary and specialization of courts were institutionalized, turning it into a truly independent institution reliably protecting human rights and freedoms. More than 16 codes and more than 600 laws have yet been adopted, and over 80 international human rights documents were ratified.

The Constitution has also cemented the principles of the national, multi-structured economy, set the priority of private property by establishing conditions for a decisive transition from unjustified, bankrupt, centralized, command-and-distribution system to a free market economy. President H.E. Shavkat Mirziyoyev introduced many meaningful reforms in the country which has actually revolutionized its macro-economy, further strengthened independence of judiciary, empowerment of parliament, further strengthening the spirits of accountability and the last but not the least, people's friendly policies.

Now, Uzbekistan is politically more strong and stable. It is economically more sustainable. It is societally more open and interactive. It is administratively more people's friendly. It has now more profitable propositions for regional as well as international investors to invest in the country most importantly small business and private entrepreneurship have turned into crucial sector of country's gross domestic product structure, covering the majority of the socially active population. SMEs share in GDP is now more than 55.8 percent and 75 percent of its population engages in SMEs sector.

High social development is the resultant of its constitution. Poverty has been reduced and marginalized. Now, it has enterprising "middle class" in the region which personal and private rights are protected. Immense social development has further strengthened the politicization and democratization process in the country. Currently, the GDP of Uzbekistan, compared with 2000 has increased by more than 3.5 times, per capita more than 3.0 times, the volume of

exports by 4.4 times, nominal wages in comparable prices by 22 times, the average pension 12.7 times, while real income per capita 8.4 times. Uzbekistan is among the few countries worldwide which managed to ensure for the last 5 years the GDP growth on average of 8.3 percent, and in this year it will be around 8.1 percent. Furthermore, recently "free-floating" of its national currency has achieved more financial and banking stability in the country.

New President Mirziyoyev issued decrees aiming at the improvement of the business climate in Uzbekistan. The creation of four new free economic zones was announced in November 2016. New tax reforms have been announced as well as decisions to invest in a modern IT infrastructure and a national "Silicon Valley."

The "Strategy for the further development of Uzbekistan in 2017-2021" has been announced in February 2017. It stressed the need to improve the efficiency of the state to enhance people's trust. Reforms of the law enforcement system particularly the police have been set up, and an anti-corruption program has been launched.

Constitutional amendments introduced a Supreme Judicial Council and expanded the powers of the Constitutional Court. The newly created "virtual receptions" of the president and other offices became very popular, serving as "public complaint boxes."

Uzbekistan has been taking leading role in introducing and implementing different legal reforms in the country in the CIS. Its constitution reflects the collective wisdom of its rulers and people alike. It promises the basic necessities of life. It assures free education, health and life. It is anti-discriminatory. It is people's friendly. It is business and investment friendly. It guides all the organs of the state and strengthens democratic transition in the country. It portrays inspirations of its people. It guarantees the fulfillment of all the dreams of its people.

The Economist (2019) named "UZBEKISTAN COUNTRY OF THE YEAR". Child labor has now been eradicated. Brain-drain has been reversed. It has no political prisoner. Contributory role in the socio-economic growth of Afghanistan has further strengthened its regional and extra regional diplomatic posturing.

Uzbekistan has become the world's number one exporter of gold and the recent increase in the metal's value owing to the Covid-related increase in global demand has led to a remarkable indicator of its economic health due to which Uzbekistan was the almost unique country not to record a recession during the Covid crisis. The government of Uzbekistan has now achieved optimal level of diversification of national economy i.e. metamorphose from exporting raw materials to manufacturing products and launching a hi-tech sector.

Constitution of Uzbekistan guarantees the FDIs and domestic funds. It encourages private sector participation, transparency, productivity and increased privatization of state industries. It has now joined the accepted indexes such as FTSE and MSCI.

Being prominent regional expert of Uzbekistan & CIS I uphold that the constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan has great significance in terms of political stability, creation of absolutely new national statehood, forming of political and economic system based on democratic principles and last but not least, legal framework to move forward after independence. Uzbekistan succeeded to maintain unmatched political stability in the CIS and South Caucasus and continuation of economic reforms because of the constitution and consistent implementation of laws adopted on its basis.

Balance of power through Pak-China defense cooperation!

Attiya Munawar



The agreement was reached at a time when India's border dispute with China was at its height, and with the help of this sensitive data, India will be able to accurately and precisely target missiles

PAKISTAN and China are bound in everlasting ties of love and friendship. The long lasting, deep and strong fraternal ties between the two countries are based on mutual trust, confidence and respect, so the changes that have taken place at the international level have never had an effect, but the relationship has improved over time. Pak-China relations are paramount in every field. In recent years, China has turned its attention to investing in Pakistan and also several Chinese companies are operating in different sectors in Pakistan. China has always strived to make Pakistan one of the developed nations and is always ready to work side by side in all areas including, economic, energy and defense. From cooperation in aviation from Pakistan to the exchange of delegations in trade and cultural fields, the two countries have not only grown closer, but these contacts have been very helpful in getting acquainted with each other's culture and civilization. And now on the occasion of the Chinese Defense Minister's visit to Pakistan, it has been agreed to increase defense cooperation. Due to India's aggressive demeanor, Pakistan is on the path of invincibility while maintaining its defense resources, and China is fully cooperating in making Pakistan's defense invincible. In the current objective situation, Pak-China relations are important. India is buying state-of-the-art military weapons from all over the world; its main target is Pakistan. Where India is invading Pakistani borders, it is also challenging China. In this context, Pakistan and China have come closer. Strategic ties between Pakistan and China are important for peace, stability and development in the region, so both sides reaffirm their commitment to further strengthen the everlasting Pak-China Strategic Cooperative Partnership to build a community with a common future in the new era.

In this regard, CPEC is a major transformational project in the region. Completion of CPEC projects will not only open new doors of development and prosperity for the people of Pakistan, but will also create more opportunities for expansion in China's economy. The civil and military leadership of Pakistan is hopeful for the success of CPEC, which will prove to be a milestone in Pak-China friendship and the completion of this project will bring immense economic benefits to both the countries.

There is no doubt that the CPEC project will pave the way for prosperity and development in the region, but India is working hard to sabotage such an important project. The United States is backing India in light of the changing situation in the region, while China and Pakistan have welcomed the signing of a peace agreement between the United States and the Taliban in Afghanistan, both hoping that the international community will now fully support Afghanistan's post-conflict reconstruction and economic development. The United States and India signed a defense agreement two months ago to provide sensitive satellite data in response to efforts by Pakistan and China to save the region from armed conflict.

The agreement was reached at a time when India's border dispute with China was at its height, and with the help of this sensitive data, India will be able to accurately and precisely target missiles, drones and other targets. India has apparently done the deal for China in the US interest, but its real target is Pakistan, which is why the Indian Prime Minister has started openly threatening his neighbors. It is not possible for Pakistan in such a situation to watch the deteriorating defense balance hand in hand, Pakistan will have to meet the need for latest technology.

India is preparing to impose a regular war on Pakistan intoxicated with modern nuclear weapons obtained from

various countries including the United States, France, Germany and Britain. So, any major tragedy could happen tomorrow at his hands, but the international community is silent in the guise of its own interests. OIC, the representative body of the Muslim world, in its meeting focused on the ongoing Indian fanaticism in occupied Kashmir, urged India to restore the constitutional status of Kashmir and resolve the Kashmir issue on the basis of Security Council resolutions. The Indian leadership is on fire and is trying to escalate the atmosphere of provocation by making awkward statements against Pakistan. If its expansionist ambitions are not curtailed, the peace and security of the region will be at stake.

Undoubtedly, the world is not ready to stop India's fanatics, even though they are aware of their extremist ambitions, because their interests stand in the way.

In view of the emerging situation on the world stage, Pakistan will have to seriously consider its options and make decisions in the context of national interest. Pakistan has long been an ally of the United States. But now in the changing circumstances, the United States has made India the focus of its hopes in the region. Pakistan needs the CPEC project and Chinese investment to secure its economic future. While the CPEC project is a means of further strengthening friendship with China, it has also distanced itself from the United States. The growing conflict between China and the United States will definitely increase the diplomatic pressure on Pakistan. Pakistan has to do its best to avoid falling into the trap of competition between the two major powers. However, Pakistan and China need a new balance of power in the region. Pak-China bilateral defense relations can help maintain the balance of power.

Twitter: @AttiyaMunawar
Email: attiabutt121@gmail.com

Briefs

Bradman's debut cap to go up for auction

SPORTS DESK

CANBERRA: Former Australian cricket legend Don Bradman's 'baggy green' cap from his test debut against England in November 1928 has been put up for an auction this week.

The news was confirmed by an auction company, Pickles Auctions, in a statement released on Monday. The auction will begin on Thursday, December 10 and will go on for a week till December 17.

"In 1959, Sir Donald gifted the Baggy Green to his neighbour, Peter Dunham, whose house backed onto the Bradman's family home on the Parade in Kensington Gardens," the statement said.

"The Baggy Green has been on loan to the State Library of South Australia since 2003 and has been authenticated by Mr Barry Gibbs (former manager of the State Library of South Australia's Bradman collection)," it added.

According to Australian Associated Press (AAP), Bradman had given the cap to a family friend, Peter Dunham, an accountant, was in May this year jailed for eight years and two months for scamming \$1.3 million from investors.

Some of Dunham's victims sought access to Bradman's cap to help pay off the accountant's debts.

Bradman, famously known as 'The Don,' was one of Australia's greatest captains. Known for his exceptional consistency in the game, the batsman retired with a test average of 99.99, best ever in cricket's history.

In 2003, Bradman's last baggy green cap from his final tour of England in 1948 was sold for AUD 425,000 while his blazer from his first series as test captain sold for AUD 132,000 in 2015.

Virus ration rises to 10 per cent

From Page 01

With 37 new deaths, the COVID-19 death toll has climbed to 8,398. There are 55,354 active cases across the country - of which 2,539 are in critical care. Condition of 103 patients has deteriorated in the past 24 hours. With a seven-day average of over 3,000 cases, Pakistan has recorded 22,271 new infections in the past week. The mortality rate has fallen to 1.9% from 2.0% last week. The country has a recovery rate of over 84% as 356,542 patients have defeated the virus since the outbreak surfaced in February this year.

In the past 24 hours, the highest positivity rate has been observed in Karachi at 21.31% followed by Abbottabad at 17.86% and Peshawar 16.66%. Hyderabad recorded positivity rate of 14% while Rawalpindi reported 12.09% and Lahore 9.74%.

Pakistan values ties with Belarus

From Page 01

countries on cooperation in the field of education, would greatly help in strengthening cultural linkages. He congratulated Mr Andrei Ermolovich on the successful completion of his tenure as Ambassador and expressed the hope that he would continue to promote Pakistan-Belarus relations.

Saudi oil exports to US fall

From Page 01

running below their norms, crude demand in Asia has been strong and this has been reflected in the strong differentials especially for sour crudes destined to Asian refineries." Energy and oil marketing adviser Faisal Faeq, who previously worked for OPEC and oversaw the US market when he was employed by Saudi Aramco, said that the latest slump was unlikely to be long-term as American refineries were configured to process Saudi medium sour crude grades. Some observers have been quick to point that the US is becoming more energy independent by developing shale, but Faeq believed this was not the case.



KABUL: Ambassador Of Pakistan To Afghanistan Mansoor Ahmad Khan, called on the Former Vice President Of Afghanistan And Leader Of Unity Party , Karim Khalili to discuss ongoing Afghan Peace Process and strengthening bilateral ties. – DNA

'Turkey won't allow imperialist expansionism on E.Med'

"Turkey will not accept plans and maps that aim to confine country to its coasts off Antalya," Recep Tayyip Erdogan told the Workshop on Eastern Mediterranean at Akdeniz University via a video message

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: Turkey will not bow to threats and blackmailing over the Eastern Mediterranean, the Turkish president reiterated on Monday, stressing that the country will not allow any "imperialist expansionism" on the sea, either. "Turkey will not accept plans and maps that aim to confine country to its coasts off Antalya," Recep Tayyip Erdogan told the Workshop on Eastern Mediterranean at Akdeniz University via a video message. He also said that any plans and maps excluding Turkey from its rights on the Eastern Mediterranean

are "unacceptable". Recalling his offer to hold an international conference on the Eastern Mediterranean, Erdogan said that related issues will only be solved by bringing all the actors in the region together around the same table. "Our country has never sided with tension in the Eastern Mediterranean issue, but rather with peace, cooperation, fairness, and the establishment of justice," he said. Stressing diplomacy for a permanent solution, Erdogan said: "Diplomacy and negotiation are the shortest and most secure way that will bring us together on a common ground."



Noting that Turkey has kept its calmness despite all the spoiled acts of Greece and the Greek Cypriot administration since 2003, the leader vowed that Turkey will preserve its stance which it has adopted so far. "We are following the developments very closely for both to guarantee our interests and to

protect the rights of our brothers in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus [TRNC]," he said, adding the EU should not be unfair to Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots asserting union solidarity. "I believe that by acting with sincerity and common sense, we can find a win-win-based formula that protects everyone's rights," Erdogan concluded. Amid recent tensions in the region, Greece and the Greek Cypriot administration have increased their pressure on other EU members to impose sanctions on Turkey during the upcoming EU leaders summit. Turkey, which has the longest continental coastline in the East-

ern Mediterranean, has rejected maritime boundary claims of Greece and the Greek Cypriot administration, and stressed that these excessive claims violate the sovereign rights of both Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots. Ankara has sent several drill ships in the past weeks to explore for energy resources in the Eastern Mediterranean, asserting its own rights in the region, as well as those of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Turkish officials have repeatedly stressed that Ankara is in favor of resolving all outstanding problems in the region through international law, good neighborly relations, dialogue, and negotiation.

Babar's alleged abuse victim asks PM for help

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: Hamiza Mukhtar, the woman who recently alleged that cricketer Babar Azam abused her for year, says that she was targeted and fired at in Lahore and wants Prime Minister Imran Khan to provide her security amid threat to her life. The complainant, as per media, told police that armed men on a motorcycle opened fire at her vehicle near the Kahna Police Station in Lahore. "My life is in danger. I have been receiving death threats for days," she claimed and asked Prime Minister Imran Khan to provide protection.

Confirming the complaint, the police said the matter will be investigated. Hamiza had leveled allegations against Azam in a press conference last week, claiming she was Azam's neighbour and old school mate. She said the cricketers had "tricked her into love" and "tortured" her when she asked for marriage. She filed a petition in lower courts, stating that she financially supported Azam when he was a "struggling cricketer" and spent "millions of rupees on him". "When I called the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) to lodge a complaint, they said that it was a personal matter," she continued.



ISLAMABAD: Players in action during Pakistan International Squash Tournament for Men & Women organized by Pakistan Squash Federation (PSF) at Mushaf Squash Complex. – DNA

China, U.S. to work together: Chinese FM

"Nevertheless, significant differences remain on three critical issues: level playing field, governance and fisheries. Both sides underlined that no agreement is feasible if these issues are not resolved

MONITORING DESK

BEIJING: Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Monday urged joint efforts from China and the United States to ensure "a stable transition" of China-U.S. relations against disruptions of all kinds. They should be striving to resume dialogue, bring ties back on track, and rebuild mutual trust for the next stage of bilateral ties, Wang said in Beijing at a meeting with a delegation of the board of directors of the U.S.-China Business Council held via video link. Noting that China and the U.S. share broad common interests and room for cooperation, Wang said the countries, as the two biggest economies and permanent members of the United Nations Security Council,

should enhance dialogue and cooperation to contribute more to sustained peace and prosperity for humanity. Saying the future of China-U.S. relations hinges on the correct choices made by the U.S. and the joint efforts of the two sides, Wang put forward five proposals for promoting the sound and stable development of China-U.S. ties. First, Wang urged the U.S. to perceive China in a strategically correct way. He stressed that China is committed to a path of rejuvenation that pursues peaceful development and mutually beneficial cooperation with all countries to achieve win-win and all-win results. "We expect and believe the U.S.-China policy can and should return to an objective and rational track sooner or later," Wang said. Second, Wang called on the two countries to have communication and dialogue at all

levels. The two sides can work out lists of dialogue, cooperation, and dispute management to provide a clearer picture for the maintaining and developing of bilateral ties, Wang said. He also encouraged sectors of strategic studies and businesses to enhance dialogue to provide intellectual and social support for the sound and stable development of China-U.S. relations. Third, Wang said the two countries should expand mutually beneficial cooperation. He suggested cooperation in COVID-19 pandemic responses, economic recovery, including the resumption of macro-economic policy dialogue and coordination, and responses to climate change. He also proposed coordination in major global challenges and hotspot issues such as poverty reduction, anti-terrorism and

nonproliferation, and enhanced cooperation under multilateral frameworks. Fourth, Wang said the two sides should manage disputes and differences. He urged mutual respect toward each other's historical and cultural inheritance, core interests, and major concerns, as well as choices by the two countries' peoples concerning their respective national systems and development paths. "The two sides should manage disputes yet to be solved with a constructive attitude to avoid their escalation in order not to impact the general picture of China-U.S. relations," said Wang. Fifth, Wang proposed increasing public support for bilateral ties, urging the two sides to support enhanced exchanges in fields such as legislative bodies, businesses, media, and the youth.

He also called on people of insight in both countries to give more objective and rational information and introduce to the general public the real picture of China's development and China-U.S. cooperation. Calling China-U.S. economic and trade cooperation the "ballast stone" of bilateral ties, Wang expressed the hope the USCBC and the U.S. business sector can play their due role in bringing bilateral relations back on track and make active contributions in the process. For their part, the attending U.S. delegation members, including USCBC's Chairman Tom Lineberger and President Craig Allen, said the council attaches great importance to ties with China, hailing China's return to normalcy in economic development and the impetus injected into a global recovery.

Jahangir elected president of WSF

SPORTS DESK

KARACHI: Pakistan squash legend Jahangir Khan has been elected honorary president of the World Squash Federation for the sixth consecutive time. The world's greatest squash player and six-time former world champion will serve for the next two years. He has held this position for the past 12 years. Jahangir in his illustrious career won World Open six times and the British Open a record ten times. He retired as a player in 1993 and has served as President of the World Squash Federation from 2002 to 2008. Meanwhile, England's Zena Woodridge has been elected World Squash Federation President following the organization's Annual General Meeting (AGM). She defeated Jacques Fontaine and will now serve for four years. Woodridge is the 10th WSF President and the second woman to hold the post following New Zealand's Susie Simcock, who led the world governing body between 1996 and 2002.

Mayweather set to fight Logan Paul in February

SPORTS DESK

LONDON: Boxing megastar Floyd Mayweather is set to fight the Youtube celebrity Logan Paul in a special exhibition boxing match next year, the two announced on Sunday. Taking to their official social media pages, Mayweather and Paul shared multiple posters confirming the fixture. No details were released about the former boxing champion's latest exhibition, other than it would be held on February 20. Mayweather has not had a serious boxing match since fighting Andre Berto in 2015, the same year he battled Filipino champion Manny Pacquiao. In 2017, the 43-year-old stopped mixed martial arts fighter Conor McGregor, who had never boxed professionally before. The one-sided fight allowed the boxer an easy way to close his overall boxing record at 50-0. A year later, Mayweather staged another widely ridiculed exhibition against kickboxer Tenshin Nasukawa on New Year's Eve that reportedly netted him \$9 million. On the other hand, the 25-year-old Paul's lone boxing match was against his YouTube rival, KSI, back in November 2019.

CPEC has created many jobs: FS

From Page 01

CPEC's contribution to strengthen Pakistan's economic landscape has been real and substantial, he emphasized. The Foreign Secretary underlined that Pakistan's focus in the next Phase of CPEC was on industrialization and socio-economic development, areas that will create vast job and growth opportunities for the common people. Three out of the nine CPEC SEZs, namely Rashakai, Dhabeji and Allama Iqbal, have been prioritized and Pakistan will welcome foreign direct investment in those projects.

General (R) Asim Salim Bajwa underscored that the CPEC Authority was committed to ensuring that CPEC projects were completed on time. He hoped that the 10th JCC, likely to be held in the near future, will create more economic opportunities and contribute to further expansion of CPEC projects. He reaffirmed that Pakistan would welcome relocation of industry from China and in that regard will institute a regime that could encourage inflow of Chinese investments to Pakistan. The Foreign Secretary underlined that the Government was particularly focused on strengthening agricultural cooperation between Pakistan and China. In that regard, a Plan of Action, detailing the contours of this collaboration, was already being discussed between the two governments. The Foreign Secretary hoped that the Plan of Action will be expeditiously implemented. It was reaffirmed in the meeting that post-COVID-19, through collective efforts of China and Pakistan, CPEC would become the hub for the regional trade and connectivity and will deepen people-to-people exchanges at a wider level.

Briefs

Cultural relics from Pakistan go on display

BEIJING: Nearly 200 sets of cultural relics from seven Asian countries including Pakistan went on display at the Hebei Museum in North China's Hebei Province.

Be Together in the East: Special Exhibition on the Civilization of Ancient Asia displays a total of 190 relics from China, Pakistan, United Arab Emirates, Syrian Arab Republic, Cambodia, Lebanon and Japan, Global Times reported on Sunday.

One highlight among these cultural artifacts is an underglaze blue porcelain piece featuring Arabic writing. The blue-and-white porcelain is a Wudang bottomless vase, a type of vessel that was introduced from Persia to China and then later developed into one of the types of Chinese zun, a wine vessel used in ancient China. Dating to the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), the Wudang bottomless vase is cylindrical in shape. The item is very rare, and experts speculate that the artifact was a product customized to fit overseas aesthetic requirements such as those found in Islamic culture in West Asia. It exemplifies the cultural exchanges between China and other countries on the Maritime Silk Road during the Ming Dynasty, the exhibition's curator Zhang Yongqiang said. Other noteworthy items at the exhibition include a miniature blue glass amphora which is believed to have been a container for holding perfume during the Roman period and a black stone fragment from the National Museum of Damascus dating back to 8800BC-9200BC. Additionally, a cylindrical tablet with a cuneiform writing inscription is another item that shows the long cultural history of Asia. — APP

Biden picks California AG as health secretary

FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: United States President-elect Joe Biden has selected California Attorney General Xavier Becerra to be his health secretary, according to media reports, a choice that if confirmed would make the former congressman the first Latino to run the department as the coronavirus pandemic reaches new levels across the US. Separately, Biden picked an infectious disease expert, Dr Rochelle Walensky, to head the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The New York Times newspaper, citing people familiar with the president-elect's deliberations, on Sunday said the choice of Becerra was a "surprise" and came as Biden faced more pressure to add diversity to his cabinet appointments, after complaints from the Congressional Hispanic Caucus about the lack of Latinos.

Pope to make first-ever trip to Iraq: Vatican

WEB DESK

VATICAN: Pope Francis will become the first pope to visit Iraq next year, in a trip to five places, including Baghdad, Erbil and Mosul between March 5 and March 8, the Vatican said. "The programme of the journey will be made known in due course, and will take into consideration the evolution of the worldwide health emergency," spokesman Matteo Bruni said in a statement on Monday. The pope, who turns 84 next week, will also visit Qaraqosh in the Nineveh province, Bruni added. It will be Francis' first trip in more than a year. All overseas visits that had been planned for this year were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Iraq's government welcomed the Vatican's statement, saying the pontiff's visit will be a "historic event". "It symbolises a message of peace to Iraq and the whole region," the foreign ministry said in a statement. President Barham Saleh had officially invited Pope Francis to visit Iraq in July 2019, hoping it would help the country "heal" after years of strife.



BANGKOK: Pakistan at the 10th Celebration of Silk-Thai Silk Road to World. Prime Minister Gen. Prayut Chan-o-cha presided over the opening ceremony. Talented students from the vocational colleges from Thailand designed the elegant Thai Silk dresses for the Diplomats and Embassy representatives from 100 countries. — DNA

French arms sales to Egypt won't be conditional: Macron

Macron met with Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in Paris. "I will not condition matters of defense and economic cooperation on these disagreements [over human rights]," the French president said during a joint press conference

DNA

PARIS: President Emmanuel Macron said on Monday that France does not plan to make any agreements on arms sales with Egypt conditional on Cairo's human rights record, so as not to weaken its fight against terrorism in the region. Macron met with Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in Paris.

"I will not condition matters of defense and economic cooperation on these disagreements [over human rights]," the French president said during a joint press conference after talks in the Elysee Palace. "It is more effective to have a policy of demanding dialogue than a boycott which would only reduce the effectiveness of one our partners in the fight against terrorism." France views Egypt as a bulwark

against Islamist militants in the Sinai Peninsula and Libya, but Sisi's visit comes amid criticism from human rights groups over the crackdown on dissent. Macron said he had spoken frankly to Sisi and raised the issue of human rights during their talks on Monday, but he did not give details. Prior to Sisi's visit to France, 17 human rights groups issued a joint statement denouncing France's

selling arms and surveillance and crowd control tools to Egypt. "French diplomacy has, at the highest levels, long indulged President Sisi's brutal repression of any form of dissent," the joint statement said. "It is now or never for President Macron to stand up for his self-declared commitment to promote human rights in Egypt." Egyptian authorities recently released three workers from the

Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights who were detained in November. When Macron visited Cairo in 2019, he claimed that "things did not go in the right direction" in Egypt, as "bloggers, journalists and activists" were being detained in the country. However, Sisi has repeatedly claimed that tough measures are necessary to avoid situations similar to those in Syria, Yemen, and Libya

President Maduro claims victory in boycotted election

FOREIGN DESK

CARACAS: President Nicolas Maduro has seized total control of Venezuela's political institutions with a sweeping victory in legislative elections that were boycotted by the main opposition parties. Maduro and his left-wing allies won 67.7 percent of the vote with more than 80 percent of ballots counted, while the opposition bloc which broke the boycott had 18 percent, National Electoral Council president Indira Alfonso said late on Sunday. Turnout was low with 69 percent abstaining. Sunday's predictable triumph gives Maduro's ruling Socialist Party control of an expanded 227-seat National Assembly, the only official body held by the opposition.

"The win gives Maduro control of the last chief branch of government outside his grasp. "We have recovered the National Assembly with the majority vote of the Venezuelan people," Maduro said in a televised address. "It's a great victory without a doubt for democracy." The National Assembly had been led by the United States-backed politician Juan Guaido, who has pressed to overthrow Maduro for nearly two years. The US has been leading the pressure to remove Maduro with economic sanctions, including an oil embargo in force

since April 2019. Guaido's opposition movement is holding its own referendum over several days immediately after the election. It will ask Venezuelans whether they want to end Maduro's rule and hold new presidential elections. "Although I cannot promise a magic solution today, I can tell you with certainty and security: You are not alone. We will not give up," Guaido said in a video message. "We are going to give everything until we win." But an initial enthusiasm that greeted Guaido's push for power has waned, and critics see his plebiscite ploy as a desperate gamble. The election, contested by about 14,000 candidates from more than 100 parties, comes with the country in a deep political and economic crisis — suffocated by runaway inflation, paralysed in endless queues for petrol, lacking water and gas supplies and afflicted by sudden power cuts. Since November 2019, inflation has reached 4,000 percent. More than five million people have fled the country in recent years, the world's largest migration after that of war-torn Syria. The International Monetary Fund projects a 25-percent decline this year in Venezuela's gross domestic product or GDP, while hyperinflation diminishes the value of its currency, the bolivar, now worth less than a millionth of a dollar on the free market.

Nobel laureates receive prizes at home

STOCKHOLM: Adjusting to a world where travel is hampered by the pandemic, this year's Nobel laureates will receive their prizes at home this week following the cancellation of the traditional Stockholm and Oslo ceremonies. The awards in the six categories were announced in nearly typical fashion in October, albeit with fewer reporters in physical attendance. However, none of the winners will travel to Stockholm or Oslo to receive their diplomas and medals due

to the Covid-19 pandemic. The ceremonies are traditionally held on December 10, the anniversary of the 1896 death of the prize's founder, Swedish entrepreneur and inventor of dynamite Alfred Nobel. The lavish Stockholm ceremony hasn't been cancelled since World War II, and the last time the Oslo ceremony was scrapped was in 1976 when the peace prize was "reserved" until the following year owing to a lack of suitable nominations. First out to accept her Nobel

this year will be France's Emmanuelle Charpentier, the co-laureate in chemistry who will take part in a ceremony on Monday evening with the Swedish ambassador in Berlin. Her co-laureate Jennifer Doudna will receive the honours at a ceremony in Berkeley, California, on Tuesday. The west coast US state will also see economics winners Paul Milgrom and Robert Wilson get their awards in Palo Alto on Tuesday and physics laureate Andrea Ghez receive

her prize in Los Angeles on Wednesday. The two other physics winners, Roger Penrose and Reinhard Genzel, will accept their prizes in London and Munich on Tuesday. Medicine laureates Harvey Alter and Charles Rice will receive their prizes at Swedish diplomatic missions in Washington and New York. New York poet Louise Glück will accept her literature prize at her home, as will Briton Michael Houghton, who shared the medicine prize and lives in Canada.

Saudi prince strongly criticises Israel

FOREIGN DESK

MANAMA: A prominent Saudi prince harshly criticised Israel at a Bahrain security summit that was remotely attended by Israel's foreign minister, showing the challenges any further deals between Arab states and Israel face in the absence of an independent Palestinian state. The fiery remarks by Prince Turki bin Faisal Al Saud at the Manama Dialogue appeared to catch Israel's foreign minister off guard, particularly as Israelis receive warm welcomes from officials in Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates following agreements to normalise ties.

Standoff puts EU-UK trade deal on a knife edge

DNA

LONDON: The United Kingdom and European Union will make a last-ditch attempt to strike a post-Brexit trade deal this week, with just days left for negotiators to avert a chaotic divorce at the end of the year. Micheal Martin, the prime minister of Ireland, which would face more economic pain than any of the other 26 EU member states in the case of a "no-deal", cautioned against over-optimism, putting the chances of an agreement at only 50-50. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen spoke over the weekend to get their teams back to the negoti-

ating table after talks stalled on three thorny issues. The Guardian newspaper reported after talks resumed on Sunday that there had been "a major breakthrough" on the rights of European fleets to fish in UK waters, leaving only a tussle over how closely Britain should hew to EU environmental, social and labour standards over time to ensure a level playing field. While a British government source said there had been no breakthrough on fishing rights on Sunday, EU officials did not immediately comment on the report. Al Jazeera's Nadim Baba, reporting from London, said: "Firstly, there's fishing rights, in other words, what access EU fishing fleets

have to UK waters and how quickly any changes happen. "Then there's a more fundamental question of the level playing field, that's measures to ensure businesses on one side don't have an unfair advantage. Brussels wants the UK to stick closely to its rules on things like workers' rights, environmental regulations and especially state-aid to businesses. "Lastly there is governance, including how any agreement would be enforced and what role institutions such as the European Court of Justice would have." Johnson and von der Leyen are due to hold another call on Monday evening in the hope that, by then, the stubborn differences will have narrowed.

SBP defers Rs 657.8 bn under refinancing scheme

ISLAMABAD: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), under its refinancing scheme for protecting businesses from the impact of COVID-19, has so far deferred Rs 657.8 billion principal repayments of loans up to one year. The bank also allowed restructuring or rescheduling of around Rs 214.64 billion so far, according to the updated data of the central bank. The number of borrowers that would benefit from this rescheduling relief has risen to 1,605,149 with outstanding amount of Rs 2.518 billion, it said. Under its Rozgar scheme for protecting businesses and employees working with them from the impact of COVID-19, the central bank has so far approved Rs 238.2 billion for 2,958 businesses. Meanwhile, the bank under this refinancing scheme for hospitals to combat Covid-19, approved financing of Rs7.77 billion for 39 hospitals so far. As many as 45 hospitals had requested for the financing amounting to Rs13.23 billion. With respect to progress on refinance scheme for setting up new projects or expansion, the central bank approved 280 projects with an amount of Rs 217.5 billion for which it received requests for 466 projects with amount of Rs 437.15 billion. Furthermore, from March 20, 2020 to December 04, the Bank had issued fresh currency notes to the commercial banks worth of Rs 1.165 trillion. — APP

First export train to China passes through Ankara

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: The Silk Route train connecting Turkey to China passed through Ankara on Monday. This new connectivity project called Iron Silk Road or Central Corridor is delivering its first export cargo through railway from Turkey to China, which is a short, safe, economical, and climate-friendly corridor between the Asian and European continents.

The train with a total length of 754 meters, is on the track with 42 containers of white goods, carrying 1,400 coolers produced in Turkey. It is expected to reach China in approximately 12 days. The Silk Road train will cover 2,323 kilometers (1,443 miles) of track in Turkey on the evening of Dec. 8 and will continue on its way to China by tracking on the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway line. The international track will end in China's city Xi'an by crossing Georgia, Azerbaijan, Caspian Sea Crossing, and Kazakhstan. The train will cover a total of 8,693 km (5401 mi), traversing two continents, passing through two seas and five countries.

Indonesia receives over a million vaccine doses

JAKARTA: Indonesia has received 1.2 million doses of a Covid-19 vaccine made by China's Sinovac, officials said, as the world's fourth most populous nation struggles to get soaring case rates under control. The doses arrived in Jakarta late Sunday on a flight from Beijing, with another 1.8 million expected to be sent again next month. Although Chinese regulators have yet to clear any of country's vaccines for mass distribution, they have approved some advanced candidates for emergency use. On Monday, Indonesia's Covid-19 response team chief Airlangga Hartarto said the first batch of doses will be examined by the food and drug agency, with plans to distribute them to medical workers and other high-risk groups. The country's top Muslim clerical body, the Indonesia Ulema Council (MUI), will also check the first consignment, officials said — to ensure it meets halal requirements in the world's largest Muslim-majority nation. Late Sunday, President Joko Widodo welcomed the delivery. "We are grateful that the vaccine is now available and we can immediately prevent the spread of the Covid-19 outbreak," he said. — APP

Libya threatens to withdraw from ceasefire over Haftar

"We warn the UN and peace-supporting countries that if they don't curb war criminal Haftar and stop his recklessness, we may withdraw from the 5+5 military agreement," Namroush said in statements cited by the media office of the government's "Volcano of Rage" Operation

DNA

TRIPOLI: Libyan Defense Minister Salahaddin Namroush has threatened to withdraw from a ceasefire agreement in Libya over practices of warlord Khalifa Haftar. "We warn the UN and peace-supporting countries that if they don't curb war criminal Haftar and stop his recklessness, we may withdraw from the 5+5 military agreement," Namroush said in statements cited by the media office of the government's "Volcano of Rage" Operation. "We will consider the ceasefire in-

valid if Haftar launches any military action," he warned. On Sunday, Haftar's militia attacked a military camp in the southern town of Awbari, a move decried by Libya's High Council of State as a new violation of the ceasefire by the eastern warlord. "We question why the UN and international community remain silent on Haftar's actions and threats to the ceasefire in southern Libya," Namroush said. Awbari, 964 km south of Tripoli, has a strategic importance given its close location to the Sharara oilfield, the country's largest.

On Oct. 23, the UN announced a permanent ceasefire agreement between Libya's warring rivals during its facilitated 5+5



Libyan Joint Military Commission talks in Geneva. Libya has been torn by civil war since the ouster of late ruler Muammar Gaddafi in 2011. Based in the capital Tripoli and currently led by Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj, the Government of National Accord was founded in 2015 under a UN-led agreement, but efforts for a long-term political settlement have failed due to a military offensive by Haftar. Al-Sarraj's government has been battling Haftar's militias since April 2019 in a conflict that has claimed thousands of lives.

Briefs

Hafeez chairs high level meeting

RANA FARRUKH

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue, Dr. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh chaired a meeting of National Price Monitoring Committee (NPMC) today at the Finance Division to discuss the prices and supply position of essential food items. The meeting was attended by Minister Industries & Production, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Revenue, Provincial Chief Secretaries, Secretary NFS&R, Secretary Industries & Production, Chairman FBR, Chairperson CCP, Executive Director Commerce, Chairman TCP, Manager Coordination Utility Store Corporation (USC), Member PBS, Deputy Commissioner ICT Administration and senior officers of Finance Division.

The Finance Secretary while presenting the price trend of essential commodities informed that according to latest SPI released by PBS there is decline in the prices of 13 essential commodities for instance wheat flour, sugar, onions, tomatoes and potatoes, while the prices of 17 commodities have increased slightly. Price of 21 items remained stable. The Committee was also informed that profit margin between the prices of wholesale and retail consumers is also coming down.

No gas outages for industry this winter

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood tweeted on Monday that the export-oriented industry will be supplied uninterrupted gas this winter.

He said: "We are now heading into the winter & there may be gas shortages. The Government has decided that for Export-Oriented Industry, there will be no outages of gas supply." Razak asked industries to report any disruption in gas supply to the Ministry of Commerce so that it can be brought to the attention of the ministry concerned to take corrective action.

On November 21, Sindh energy minister Imtiaz Ahmed Shaikh had said domestic gas crisis in the province has intensified with the advent of winter while the federal government has done nothing about it. Since the winter has barely arrived, domestic consumers have begun experiencing gas shortage already while the province was being compelled to buy expensive gas notwithstanding the fact that it produces it locally, he said.

ECP observes National Voters Day

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Monday observed the National Voters Day across the country in a festive manner to create awareness about importance of registration as voters.

The main event in this regard was held here at Election Commission of Pakistan Secretariat. Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja addressed the ceremony.

Addressing the ceremony, Sikandar Sultan Raja says steps are being taken to make the electoral process transparent and impartial. The Chief Election Commissioner said the Election Commission of Pakistan is an independent institution and it provides equal opportunities of the right to vote to all citizens. Events in this regard were also arranged at the Provincial Offices of the Election Commission of Pakistan. COVID-19 SOPs were also observed at all the events organized by the ECP. Election Commissioner Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sharifullah has said the Election Commission is in closed liaison with NADRA for the registration of women voters in the province.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan offering fateha for shuhada during his visit to ANF headquarters, on Monday. – DNA

PM Imran vows to save youth from drug addiction

Drugs are silent killers. We have to collectively fight this problem

RANA FARRUKH

RAWALPINDI: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Monday said that drug addiction has become a curse for society, adding that the government has vowed to safe Pakistani youth from the problem. He was addressing an inauguration ceremony at the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) headquar-

ters in Rawalpindi. "Drugs are silent killers. We have to collectively fight this problem," he stressed. He said that whenever society embraces things which are forbidden in Islam, it is bound to be destructive. "Whatever has been instructed in the Qu'ran is only for the benefit of humankind," he said. "Back in the 1980s, many people earned

money by selling drugs but society accepted them. This was the biggest setback for our country." Citing statistics, PM Imran Khan said that more than 70 million young people in Pakistan have fallen prey to drug addiction, which is a dangerously high number. He recalled the recent incident in Kasur where a man, said to be a drug addict, threw his five children into the Jamber canal.

"Whenever a person becomes a drug addict, their entire family suffers. If there are 70 million drug addicts in the country, it means that 70 million families are struggling," he said. Showing his concern, he said that people do not realise the gravity of the situation, but drug addiction is spreading like cancer in society, adding that the problem has now penetra-

ted schools and colleges. "This synthetic drug called ice (crystal methamphetamine) has penetrated schools and colleges. Drugs destroy children's character and discipline. Their health, as well as their futures, are compromised," he said. The PM stressed that it is not only the ANF's job to fight against drugs but society must also resist the problem.



ISLAMABAD: Leader of the House in Senate Dr. Shahzad Waseem in a meeting with Ambassador of Somalia Ms Khadija Mohamed Al Makhzoumi. – DNA

Romania's president Klaus grapples with Socialist upset

BUCHAREST: Romania's left-wing opposition Social Democrats (PSD) came a surprise first in parliamentary elections, results showed Monday, turning attention to how President Klaus Iohannis will navigate the result. Iohannis, a longtime foe of the PSD, now has the tricky job of judging which party will be most likely to form a stable government. The president had campaigned for the governing liberal PNL party which came in second on 25.5 percent compared to the PSD's 30 percent, according to results based on 95 percent of the votes counted. The PSD has dominated Romanian politics since the collapse of communism but its last spell in government was overshadowed by street protests and clashes with the European Union and Iohannis over judicial reforms. The PNL had campaigned on a modernizing, pro-European platform and had been ahead in pre-election opinion polls. However, it seems to have paid the price for its controversial handling of the coronavirus pandemic and attendant economic crisis. The PNL will still have the best chance of finding allies among the smaller parties to build a majority in parliament. It is expected to work with the centre-right USR Plus alliance, which won 15.5 percent, as well as the UDMR party representing the Hungarian minority, which won six percent. Romania is one of the EU's poorest countries, and four million of its citizens have left in recent years to seek better lives elsewhere, in particular in western EU member states. While overall turnout was at a record low for a parliamentary election, many more expatriate Romanians turned out than in the last such election in 2016. Once their votes are counted on Monday, USR-Plus is expected to benefit. – DNA

India reports new cases

DNA

MUMBAI: India reported 32,981 new coronavirus cases in the last 24 hours, data from the federal health ministry showed on Monday. Cumulative cases now total 9.68 million, the second-highest tally in the world after the United States. But health officials are drawing some encouragement that daily readings have stayed below the 50,000 mark for a month, inspite of a busy festival season that saw crowded markets and busy streets. The number peaked in September when more than 97,000 cases were reported on a single day. Deaths rose by 391, with the total now 140,573, the health ministry said.

EU, NATO hold Taliban accountable for Attacks

FOREIGN DESK

KABUL: The EU delegation, NATO and diplomatic missions based in Kabul in a joint statement released on Monday "strongly condemn" the recent targeted attacks on representatives of the media and religious leaders. While the Afghan government – including international allies – put efforts together for peace and prosperity in the country, the Taliban seem to have doubled violence throughout Afghanistan that target journalists, religious scholars, human rights activist and students to name a few.

"We consider these not only as savage attacks against Afghan blood, but as an attack on the very peace process in Afghanistan," the statement read. "Recognizing the bravery of Afghanistan's people, we are confident that these attacks will fail in their intent to silence the diversity of opinions." Addressing efforts on peace process since early September, the EU delegation call for all-inclusive negotiations that will open the doors for Afghans in all walks of life to freely express and actively engage in building a peaceful country. "It has never mattered

more for the people of Afghanistan to feel able to express themselves freely and provide their opinions on the peace talks, as well as engage in the process, to achieve an inclusive and sustainable peace," the statement read. "Upholding the free flow of information and holding the perpetrators accountable will benefit everyone who wishes to live in a peaceful and democratic Afghanistan." Meanwhile, the delegations praised media practitioners in Afghanistan for advancing "freedom of expressing and freedom of press" despite ongoing threats to their lives. "We honor all

those in Afghanistan who work tirelessly to advance freedom of expression and freedom of the press," the statement said. "Our respective missions expect that all parties to the conflict will protect the freedom and the independence of the media and civil society in Afghanistan, which is indispensable to a vibrant, functioning, and economically viable democracy." EU delegation reaffirm commitment to champion the freedom of all the Afghan people, calling for immediate compliance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

Afghan judicial system failed: UNAMA

NEWS DESK

KABUL: United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) said the country's justice system failed women and girls with their access to justice, violence against women still remains tenuous. A new report by UNAMA and the UN Human rights office titled "In Search of Justice for Crimes of Violence Against Women and Girls" examined the judicial system's response and redress provided to survivors. Progress still remains "limited" as judicial system response progresses towards Violence against women and girls, UNAMA found half of the reported crimes reached the primary court, undertaking on 40% of perpetrators in all documents. "The stark reality is that too many women and girls still fail to see just for the violence they experience and impunity remains far too common" Deborah Lyons The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan said. The report indicates one in every five women in cases documented by UNAMA decided not to pursue their case through judicial channels by not filing a complaint, or has withdrawn the case later on.

IHC dismisses plea against SAPMs

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday dismissed a plea challenging appointments of its advisers and special assistants. A two-member bench of the IHC comprising Justice Amir Farooq and Justice Ghulam Azam Qambrani released the reserved verdict in the open court. The verdict was reserved on September 9, after the completion of arguments from both sides. Earlier, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) had released a written order that stated there was no restriction of appointing persons having dual nationality as special assistants to the prime minister (SAPMs). The order read, "It is pursuant to the said powers that the Federal Government has made the Rules of 1973 and has described the "Organizations of Divisions" in rule 4 ibid. Sub-rule 6 of rule 4 enables the Prime Minister to appoint Special Assistant or Special Assistants and to determine their status and functions."

Body formed for corona vaccine procurement

ISLAMABAD: A special cabinet committee, headed by Federal Minister Asad Umar, has been constituted for procurement of the COVID-19 vaccine. The five-member committee of the Federal Cabinet have Fawad Chaudhry, Hammad Azhar, Sania Nishtar and Dr. Faisal Sultan as other four members, according to sources. The special cabinet committee will function as an oversight body for procurement of the COVID-19 vaccine, sources said. According to sources, the committee's decision will be final and it won't require an endorsement from the federal cabinet. The objective of formation of a special committee is to ensure transparency in procurement of the vaccine, sources further said. Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Health Dr. Faisal Sultan Sunday said that the coronavirus vaccine is likely to be available in Pakistan in February or March next year. Talking to a private television channel, Faisal Sultan said that the vaccine to be administered to people in phases, adding that the COVID-19 vaccine, in the first phase, will be administered to health professionals. The federal cabinet had allocated funds for the vaccine, he said and added that they will finalize a suitable coronavirus vaccine within next few weeks. The government will import the COVID-19 vaccine and provide it free of cost to the people, said Faisal Sultan. – DNA

NEW METRO CITY
HOUSING SCHEME
KHARIAN - SARAI - ALAMGIR

GT ROAD'S MOST MODERN & LUXURIOUS HOUSING PROJECT

RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL PLOTS ON EASY INSTALLMENT PLAN

LATEST DEVELOPMENT WORK & AMENITIES

FOR MORE INFORMATION FOLLOW US ON
NEWMETROCITY NEWMETROCTYPK NEWMETROCTYK
TOLL FREE : 0800 00101
HEAD OFFICE & SITE ADDRESS
NEW METRO CITY SITE MAIN GT ROAD, KARIYALI SARAI ALAMGIR

A PROJECT OF BSM DEVELOPERS PVT LTD