



# Islamabad POST

Thursday, December 31, 2020

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Detailed News On Page-01

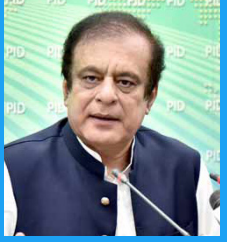
**'Selected' PM Imran to be rejected: Maryam**

Detailed News On Page-01



**Past rulers used state institutions**

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## Briefs

### Mufti Muneeb removed

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: The government on Wednesday removed Mufti Muneeb-ur-Rahman and appointed Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad as the new Ruet-e-Hilal Committee chairman. The federal government has issued a notification in this regard. The newly constituted committee will consist of 19 members, including the chairman. Meanwhile, Dr Raghbir Hussain Naemi, Allama Muhammad Hussain Akbar, Maulana Fazlur Rahim, Dr Yaseen Zafar, Mufti Muhammad Iqbal Chishti, Dr Mufti Ali Asghar, Mufti Faisal Ahmed, Syed Ali Qarar Naqvi, Mufti Yousaf Kashmiri have been appointed as the committee's members.

### Will file treason case against Imran

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Senior PML-N leader Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday vowed that if his party came to power, it would file a treason case against Imran Khan Niazi for bargaining away Kashmir. Addressing a gathering of party workers at Kashmir House Islamabad on the occasion of the PML-N Kashmir's founding day, Iqbal said after the formation of Pakistan, India had "occupied the land of our Kashmiri brothers and sisters" but the United Nations had designated it as a disputed territory.

### PDM is moving forward

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Democratic Movement chairman Maulana Fazlur Rehman has said that PDM session will be held in Lahore on Jan 1. He said that we will discuss the future plan of PDM. Responding to a query about PPP CEC meeting, the PDM chief said that PPP has shown positive response about CEC meeting and we will further discuss it in our next meeting. He said that PDM is moving forward regardless of all attempts to create rifts.

## Pak authorises one million vaccines: Asad

DRAP (Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan) will approve a vaccine; frontline health workers to get first doses

A.M.BHATTI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: The chief of the National Command and Operations Centre (NCO) — the body leading Pakistan's fight against coronavirus — on Wednesday said that he has authorised the procurement of more than one million vaccines. Asad Umar, in his statement on Twitter, said that the number "will cover all frontline health workers". He said what remains now is for DRAP (Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan) to approve a vaccine. Umar said that the government aims to deploy the vaccines within the first quarter of 2021. According to a statement by NCO, Pakistan is in close contact with vaccine manufacturers to obtain a vaccine soon. It may be noted here that Pakistan signed up for the United Nation's COVAX Facility, a global initiative aimed at equitable access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines worldwide. Moreover, a National Immunisation Management System has been prepared with the joint efforts of the Ministry of Health, the National Database & Registration Authority (NADRA), and National Information Technology Board (NTB).

### Virus deaths cross 10,000-mark

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: The coronavirus death toll in Pakistan crossed the 10,000-mark on Wednesday with 55 new fatalities, according to the latest data shared by the National Command and Operation Center for the last 24 hours. The NCO data reads that 2,155 people tested COVID-19 positive during the last 24 hours after tests of 36,390 people. During the last 24 hours most of the deaths had occurred in Punjab followed by Sindh as out of total 55 deaths, 26 patients died on ventilators. Some 36,390 tests were conducted across the country on Tuesday, including 13,092 in Sindh, 14,112 in Punjab, 4,022 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), 4,175 in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), 384 in Balochistan, 325 in GB, and 280 in AJK. Around 430,113 people have recovered from the disease so far across Pakistan making it a significant count.

## 'Selected' PM Imran to be rejected: Maryam Nawaz

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) vice president Maryam Nawaz has said that the prime minister was selected, now he will also be rejected. Rulers are feeling embarrassed after leveling baseless allegations. Why unprepared people in the government allowed to play with the people's lives.

Addressing the founding day of PML-N Azad Kashmir, Maryam Nawaz said that Nawaz Sharif was called Modi's friend, who has lost the Kashmir case to Modi. Kashmir is lost to Modi due to Imran Khan

## AC approves transit remand of Kh Asif

ISLAMABAD: An accountability court in Islamabad has approved one-day transit remand of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) lawmaker Khawaja Muhammad Asif in assets beyond income case. The officials of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) have produced PML-N's central leader Khawaja Asif before the accountability court. Judge Muhammad Bashir conducted the hearing. The anti-corruption watchdog sought transit remand of the politician which was approved by the court besides directing to produce him before the concerned court tomorrow. — DNA

ular vain is attacked. Maryam Nawaz has said that Imran Khan was so scared of my statement that he arrested me. We belong to PML-N, the creator party of Pakistan.

## China hands over 14 dual-seat JF-17 to PAF

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Air Force (PAF) has been handed over 14 dual-seat JF-17 aircraft by China which would also be used for pilots' training.

A major development is made for increasing the potential for national defence as Pakistan Air Force begins preparations for the Block 3 of JF-17 multirole



fighter aircraft. The Chinese-designed dual-seat fighter jet produced jointly by Pakistan will be inducted into PAF's fleet during a ceremony today. China will

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Nisar Ahmed Faizi Ghoryani Minister for Industry and Commerce of Afghanistan in a meeting with Prime Minister Imran Khan. — DNA

## Pak slams Aden airport attack

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan strongly condemns Wednesday's terrorist attack at Aden airport in Yemen, targeting the cabinet members of the newly formed government in the country. A statement issued by foreign office stated that we extend our sincere condolences on the loss of precious lives and wish speedy recovery for the injured. It added "We believe this attack was not just condemnable as an act of senseless violence and terrorism, it was also reprehensible as an attempt to undermine the recent efforts by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and its positive results, that aimed at fostering enhanced peace and security in Yemen". Pakistan urges the international community to ensure respect for territorial integrity of Yemen and to support efforts aimed at promoting peace and security in the country.

## DANIEL PEARL CASE

## US 'stands ready' to try Omar Shiekh

DNA

WASHINGTON: The US Attorney General said on Tuesday the United States "stands ready" to try the prime accused in the murder of Daniel Pearl, a Wall Street Journal reporter who was kidnapped and killed in Karachi.

The statement from Acting Attorney General Jeffrey A Rosen came after the Sindh High Court (SHC) ruling to free the accused and declared their detention illegal. The SHC order overturning the murder conviction and death sentence of Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, and acquitted three other men connected to the case had sparked outrage.

## 'Engage Africa' policy to foster closer ties

The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with President National Assembly of Republic of Djibouti, Mohamed Ali Houmed

NAVEED MIRAJ

## PM Imran slams Indian media's propaganda

A.M.BHATTI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan Wednesday reaffirmed 'Engage Africa' policy which was aimed at forging closer ties with the continent by expanding Pakistan's diplomatic footprint and deepening economic engagement.

The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with President National Assembly of Republic of Djibouti, Mohamed Ali Houmed, who accompanied by a parliamentary delegation called on him, PM Office media wing in a press release said. The prime minister warmly welcomed the visiting delegation and noted that the bonds of common faith and values as well as convergence of views on regional and international matters bind the two brotherly nations. He underlined the salience of Pakistan's "Engage Africa" policy and said

that Pakistan would soon be establishing its resident diplomatic mission in Djibouti. Both sides affirmed the shared desire to broaden bilateral cooperation in diverse fields. Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani was also present during the meeting. The prime minister and the visiting delegation also exchanged views on the importance of peace and security in neighboring regional context of both Pakistan and Djibouti. President National Assembly of Djibouti appreciated Pakistan's historical support and expressed the hope that visit of Parliamentary delegation would help in further consolidating Djibouti-Pakistan relations.

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NZ seal 101-run victory over Pakistan in first test — Page 06

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Azerbaijan gives 100 wheelchairs to differently-abled persons — Page 08

## PM will not resign on Jan 31

FM Qureshi clarified that NAB should not be linked with PTI government as it is an independent and sovereign body

NAVEED MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, responding to threats of resignations and long march by the opposition coalition PDM, has assured that Prime Minister Imran Khan will not resign on January 31 under any circumstances.

The Foreign Minister, addressing a press conference with other party leaders in Islamabad, said that neither is the government guilty of political revenge nor can it back down from pursuing accountability. "No one is above the law," he said. Opposition leaders are failing to justify their wealth, which is why there is so much hue and cry.

## Past rulers used institutions: Shibli

RANA FARRUKH / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz said on Wednesday the past rulers had used the national institutions for their personal interests, and with their help and facilitation looted the national wealth.

Addressing a press conference here, flanked by Minister for Foreign Affairs Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Adviser to the PM on Parliamentary Affairs Dr Babar Awan, he said the former rulers' only objective was to mint money and in the process they made the common people poorer. He said the opposition parties had requisitioned the Senate session with a six-point agenda. They were in fact trying to misuse the the Upper House of Parliament to escape from accountability for their misdeeds but they would not succeed. They would be questioned by the treasury benches about the corruption committed by their leadership.

Khawaja Asif should prove his innocence instead of playing politics. He was given the opportunity to answer NAB's queries multiple times, but seemingly, he failed to satisfy them by providing a money trail, Qureshi added. Shah Mahmood Qureshi clarified that NAB should not be linked with PTI government as it is an independent and sovereign body, headed by a Chairman appointed by previous government and operating under a law also prepared by previous governments. The foreign minister said following the arrest of Khawaja Asif, the facts were becoming clearer as to why the opposition had been linking its support to FATF legislation with the abolition of 34 or 38 clauses in NAB law.

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## Briefs

## Court issues arrest warrants for Raisani

DNA

QUETTA: An accountability court in Quetta has on Wednesday issued bailable arrest warrants for former Balochistan Chief Minister Muhammad Aslam Khan Raisani. The arrest warrants have been issued over Aslam Raisani's non-appearance in the case pertaining to alleged embezzlement in funds to restore the Mehrghar heritage. Arrest warrants for Abdul Nabi Raisani – Aslam Raisani's relative – have also been issued. Arrest orders for the former minister's close aide, Abdul Nabi Raisani, were issued as well. The court, on the other hand, accepted pleas regarding exemption from attending the hearing filed by his brother Nawab Lashkari Raisani and former finance secretary Dostain Jamaludini.

## 'No security step in Gwadar against people's desire'

ISLAMABAD: Rubishing the opposition's politicking on steps proposed under "security apparatus" for Gwadar city, Balochistan Chief Minister Jam Kamal Khan Wednesday assured that no strategy would be enforced there without consultation and against people's desire. The chief minister, in a video statement, said that outside Gwadar City, there were some areas which could not be humanely checked or controlled owing to their inaccessibility, so a "temporary fencing mechanism" was proposed under Gwadar Smart City project. He said as fencing of the mountainous area was a mega project, it was considered to secure some areas in Gwadar after consultation with all the stakeholders. "And it is not any fencing. These were the steps under security apparatus we have to take," the chief minister said.



## Afghanistan to serve as gateway to Central Asia: Asad Qaiser

While talking to the Afghan Minister, the Speaker Asad Qaiser observed that Pakistan and Afghanistan are strategically significant trading partners however, trade between the two countries gradually declined due to trade barriers and lack of trade facilitations from either side

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser said that promotion of trade and economic links between Pakistan and Afghanistan would usher into new era of socio-economic development and fighting the scourges of poverty and instability. The Speaker said that early conclusion of Trade Agreements between Pakistan and Afghanistan would further boost economic activity on both sides. The Speaker said this while talking to Mr. Nisar Ahmad Ghoryani, Afghan Minister for Commerce and Industries, who called on Speaker in Parliament House, today.

While talking to the Afghan Minister, the Speaker Asad Qaiser observed that Pakistan and Afghanistan are strategically significant trading partners however, trade between the two countries gradually declined due to trade barriers and lack of trade facilitations from either side. He said that after eliminating trade barriers along with facilitating traders had not only enhanced the trade volume between Pakistan and Afghanistan but was also greatly contributing to poverty eradication and social uplift. He said that such initiatives will also increase employment opportunities for our people and decreasing Non-tariff barriers on both sides of the border will enhance mutual trade. He informed that encouraging people to people contacts and trade facilitation through Pakistan-Afghanistan Parliamentary Friendship Group was a manifestation of our commitment to improving bilateral economic engagement with Afghanistan. The Speaker said that early conclusion of negotiation of Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA) and Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) would open new avenues of cooperation between both brotherly countries. He stressed the need to inbuilt the elements in the trade

agreements which are facilitative of Trade. He said that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), was a game changer not only for Pakistan but the entire region. He offered Afghan investors to take part in CPEC economic activity besides investment in Rasakai Special Economic Zone to start its functions soon. The Speaker remarked that economic cooperation between Pakistan and Afghanistan and improved trade and transit facilities would help to connect Central Asia and beyond. He proposed establishment of Border entry point for Trade at WaKhan Border which would open gates to Central Asia. He also asked the Afghan Minister

to take note for removal of unnecessary check points inside Afghanistan and extortion of money from traders by Afghan officials. Speaking about the fraternal relations, the Speaker said that same thread weaves our two nations into a historic tapestry of social, cultural, linguistic, economic, religious and fraternal ties. He said that Pakistan's reiterates its support for Afghan peace process and Intra-Afghan negotiations for an enduring peace in Afghanistan and the region. He said that Pakistan always desires of harmonious relations with its neighbors, however, our eastern neighbor had always attempted to destabilize Pakistan.

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## 'Elimination of corruption imperative for country's progress'

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar said on Wednesday that those who looted national exchequer would have to be answerable as elimination of corruption, loot and plunder was imperative for country's progress. In a statement, the Chief Minister wondered that corrupt elements who robbed national kitty in their regimes were now talking about the masses. The country would have not indebted,

had there been no corruption in the past, remarked the CM and regretted the country was left behind due to the menace of corruption. He said the opposition had no agenda other than the protection of looted money, however, he added that such elements would not be allowed to create hurdles in the journey of development in the country. Past rulers did nothing for the people in their tenures and now they were gathered to protect their personal agenda only, the CM added.

## President for strengthening Pak-Djibouti bilateral ties

SHUJAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Djibouti have reiterated their desire to strengthen bilateral cooperation in the areas of commerce, culture and defense. This was discussed at a meeting between President Dr Arif Alvi and the visiting Djibouti parliamentary delegation, led by President of National Parliament of Djibouti and acting-Chairman of African Union Parliament, Mr. Mohamed Ali Houmed, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. While welcoming the delegation, the President said that Pakistan and Djibouti enjoyed excellent relations, and Pakistan wanted to further improve defense and economic ties with Djibouti

for the mutual benefit of the two brotherly countries. He appreciated the visit of Parliamentary delegation and expressed the hope it would further strengthen the existing foundation of strong bilateral relations between the two countries. He informed that Pakistan highly valued its ties with Djibouti and had decided to open its embassy there and resident diplomatic missions in other African countries. The President sought the support of the Government of Djibouti to expeditiously process and clear Pakistani goods at Djibouti port meant for Ethiopia and other destinations in the Horn of Africa. The President also highlighted the atrocities and human rights violations being committed by India against the Muslim pop-

ulation in the Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK). He emphasized the need for a unified call from international community to put pressure on India to stop human rights violations and grant Kashmiris their right to self-determination as promised under the UN Security Council resolutions. President of National Parliament of Djibouti underscored the need for expanding bilateral cooperation in every sphere, including culture, trade and defense. He said that Gwadar and Djibouti ports would help boost trade between the two brotherly countries. Both sides emphasized the need for parliamentary, cultural and defense exchanges which would help in bringing the two countries further closer.

## Welfare of citizens, top priority of govt

DNA

NAROWAL: Leading political leader Chaudhry Munir Hussain Chahal, who heads the complaints cell of Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Bazzdar in Narowal, has said that welfare of common man and solution of problems is the top priority of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government and vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan. According to him, the doors of the grievance center are open to all to solve the long standing problems of the people of Narowal district. He said this while talking to public delegations at the grievance center. Chaudhry Munir Hussain Chahal said that Prime Minister Imran Khan feels the pain of the poor people and the government and the focus of their government's policies is to create more and more facilities for the common man. That is why a grievance cell has been set up in Narowal where citizens can seek redressal of their grievances. He said with the help of all concerned agencies, immediate relief is being provided to the citizens

## OHCHR informed about Andrabi's victimisation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Altaf Hussain Wani, Chairman of Kashmiri Institute of International Relations (KIIR) in a letter to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, drew her attention towards political victimisation of Kashmiri woman leader, Aasiya Andrabi, by Indian government and its judiciary. Altaf Wani in a letter sent to Michelle Bachelet on behalf of KIIR said that the charges against Aasiya Andrabi are based on a frivolous report prepared by the Indian secret agencies with malafide intentions. "Implicating Ms Andrabi and her two associates in fake and fabricated cases is the worst example of political vendetta and an attempt to suppress and silence her," the letter said. It said, the KIIR remains seriously concerned over the illegal and continuous detention of Ms Andrabi and other under-trial political prisoners who are being punished for speaking truth to power and raising the voice for the voiceless in Kashmir. Altaf Wani said that Aasiya Andrabi is the Chairperson of Dukhtarane-Millat (DeM) seeking a peaceful settlement of Kashmir dispute. She is also one of the prominent and frontline Kashmiri women activists who has been a vociferous critic of Indian government's hardliner Kashmir policy. He said that Ms Andrabi, 60, an under-trial prisoner has been languishing in New Delhi's notorious Tihar Jail over the past two years despite suffering from multiple acute ailments. Her health in the prison had deteriorated to alarming levels.

## UBG hails kicking out fake trade bodies

LAHORE: United Business Group (UBG) on Wednesday hailed the election Commission of Federation of Pakistan

Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) for barring nine trade bodies of Baluchistan to cast vote in the today's (December 30) FPCCI election in compliance with Baluchistan High Court verdict. Talking to the media here, the UBG Chairman Iftikhar Ali Malik said that Mrs Sonia and Mrs Mehreen Akhtar nominees of Quetta Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry were also barred to cast votes. He elaborated that trade bodies, which were not allowed to the FPCCI annual election included Pakistan Transport Association, Ghee Exporters Association of Pakistan, Pakistan Scrap Association, Scrap Importers Pakistan, Ghee Heaters Importers Association of Pakistan, All Pakistan Copper Association Pakistan, All Pakistan Land Customs Agent Association, All Pakistan Glass Manufacturers, Importers and Exporters Association of Pakistan, Oil Importers Association and Quetta Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry. He was of the view that it would ensure free, fair and transparent election of an apex Chamber of the country. – APP

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Sealed tenders are invited on percentage basis for the following work from the contractors having valid registration in Pakistan Engineering Council in appropriate category and having the codes mentioned against the work.

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1	Providing / Installation of Road Lights at ATTA TURK AVENUE (WEST), Islamabad	Rs. 15,693,362 /-	Rs. 471,000/-	20-01-2021 at 11:30AM	20-01-2021 at 12:00 Noon	Rs. 2000/-	EE-04 EE-06

- The tenders form complete can be download from CDA website; however, contractor is responsible for followings:
  - Contractor must pay tender fee of Rs: 2000/- before opening of tender in shape of deposit at call non-refundable or cash payment in office of Dy. Director Mechanical Division-I, CDA.
  - Contractor must sign and seal all pages of tender documents at lower right corner of each page.
  - Tender name should clearly be mentioned on the envelope with the information that the documents inside are downloaded or purchased directly from the office of DD Mech-I, CDA
  - Before opening of tender contractor must provide the valid attested copy of enlistment in PEC in the above mentioned codes.
  - Tender pages must be properly stapled in sequence.
- Tender forms can also be purchased on cash payment (non-refundable) for above mentioned work from the office Dy. Director Mechanical Division-I, CDA located at Room No. 48 Old Naval Head Quarter, G-6 Markaz, Islamabad during working hours. No tender will be sold on the date of opening of tender.
- Application for issuance of tender documents shall accompany name, address(s), signature of contractor, and valid enlistment of Firm in PEC in the above referred code.
- Tender will be issued those firms who have valid PEC registered certificate having appropriate category /EE-04, EE-06 and valid Electrical License issued by Electrical Inspector Islamabad region renewed for the current financial year 2020-2021 for execution of E&M works at Rawalpindi/Islamabad.
- In case of the total bid amount is less than 10% of NIT cost, the bidder shall submit call deposit as measure of security equal to the difference between NIT cost and total quoted amount less 10% of NIT cost. The performance security of the successful bidder shall be released after completion of project, otherwise the tender will be rejected at the time of opening.
- Earnest money in the shape of deposit at call as mentioned against the work and in terms/condition of NIT in favor of Dy. Director, Mechanical Division-I, CDA from local schedule bank of Islamabad must accompany with the application, without call deposit no application for issuance of tender will be entertained. Cash/cheque will not be accepted
- If any contractor wants to participate in tender opening process through its representative, then he should issue authority letter on the letter head of the firm depicting complete valid address & contact number along with attested copy of CNIC.
- Tender for the work mentioned above will be received and opened in the office of Director E&M Development, CDA located at Room No. 49, Ground Floor Old Naval Head Quarter Building, G-6 Markaz, Islamabad on same date and time in presence of the contractor or their authorized representatives.
- CDA may reject all bids or proposals at any time prior to acceptance of a bid or proposal. The CDA shall upon at request communicate to any supplier or contractor who submitted a bid or proposal, the ground for its rejection of all bids or proposals, but shall not be bound to justify those grounds.
- Advertisement can also be seen at CDA website [www.cda.gov.pk](http://www.cda.gov.pk) and PPRA website [www.ppra.org.pk](http://www.ppra.org.pk)
- The contractor will provide following additional documents while submitting the tender, otherwise the tender will be liable to rejection.
 

a. Power of attorney	b. Partnership deed	c. Programme of Work
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HYDERABAD: Folk artist performing on the stage on the last day of 6th Ayaz Mela at Khanabadosh Sindh Museum. – DNA/ Photo by Jan Ali Laghari

## Navy conducts firing of surface to air missiles

During Live Weapon Firing, the launched missiles successfully engaged the intended targets. The successful firings have re-affirming Pakistan Navy's war fighting capability and combat potential

DNA

KARACHI: In an impressive display of firepower, Pakistan Navy Air Defence Units demonstrated their combat readiness through live weapon firing of Surface to Air Missiles (SAMs). Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi graced the occasion as Chief Guest. During Live Weapon Firing, the launched missiles successfully engaged the intended targets. The successful firings have re-affirming Pakistan Navy's war fighting capability and combat potential. Chief of the Naval Staff expressed his complete satisfaction on the operational readiness of Pakistan Navy and its preparedness to defend the national maritime interest. On the occasion, Naval Chief commended the officers and men for



their commitment and professionalism. He emphasized on continued vigilance to thwart any aggression against the sea frontier and provide a befitting response to any misadventure by the adversary.



## Briefs

### CDA plants 22,000 saplings

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) under its plantation drive have planted almost 22,000 saplings at various sites of the federal capital, the spokesman said on Wednesday. He said the sites were included F-9 Park, Lake View Park, Rose and Jasmine Garden, Play Land, Ankara Park, Punjab House, G-6, G-5, and other parks, public places and green belts. He said the CDA administration was taking remarkable steps to revive the green chapter of the federal capital and enhance its beauty. Saplings were being planted across the city side by side ensuring their safety, he added. — APP

### 2020: exceptional year for water, hydel power

ISLAMABAD: The year 2020 proved to be an exceptional year for water and hydropower sectors in the country, as the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) succeeded in achieving the historic milestones in the two sectors during this year. Besides generating highest-ever low-cost hydel electricity, WAPDA also initiated construction work on the long-delayed mega multi-purpose Diamer Basha Dam Project in 2020. As per the details, WAPDA hydel generation continued to surge during 2020 too. As many as 22 hydel power stations owned and operated by WAPDA across the country generated 38.3 billion units, which is the highest-ever generation in a year. This record generation includes 12.08 billion units from Tarbela, 4.98 billion units from Tarbela 4th Extension, 6.48 billion units from Ghazi Barotha, 5.76 billion units from Mangla, 4.93 billion units from Neelum Jhelum and 4.07 billion units from rest of the hydel power stations. WAPDA hydel generation in 2020 stands 3.8 billion units more, if compared with that of 2019, benefiting the country with about Rs.53.2 billion, as the national exchequer had to bear the brunt of Rs.53.2 billion if this additional electricity would have been generated through thermal source. Removing obstacles in the way to implementing the project, WAPDA started in July this year construction of Diamer Basha Dam a vital project for water, food and energy security of the country with gross water storage of 8.1 million acre feet (MAF), live water storage of 6.4 MAF and power generation of 4500 megawatt (MW). Despite Corona Virus Pandemic, construction work continued satisfactorily on Mohmand Dam during 2020. — APP

### Quaid sculpture attracting people

RAWALPINDI: A sculpture of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah installed at Punjab Council of the Arts has become the source of attraction for the people. This statue has been gifted to the Arts Council by renowned sculptor Aftab Ahmad Changezi on the birth anniversary of Quaid-i-Azam. His creations include Pakistan Monument Museum, Folk Heritage Museum, Army Museum, National Book Foundation and Senate Museum. Aftab Ahmad Changezi is considered an expert in making a statue of Quaid-i-Azam. His services as a sculptor are recognized not only in Pakistan but also internationally. Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmad presented a shield to him for gifting the sculpture to Arts Council. He said Aftab Ahmad Changezi is the capital of our country and has international fame. It is an honour for the council to install the statue. — APP



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi speaking to the Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), at Aiwan-e-Sadr. — DNA

## COMSTECH to organize Viral Diseases Diagnostics workshop

The capacity building of the healthcare professionals and promoting development of diagnostic facilities in the member states of the OIC are the main focus of this three-day workshop

ISLAMABAD: COMSTECH has planned to organise an international workshop on the "Fundamental Techniques in Viral Diagnostics" in the month of January for building the capacity of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member states in this field. According to an official of COMSTECH, this workshop, scheduled to be held from January 25-28, will be a hybrid event (Physical and virtual). The capacity building of the healthcare professionals and promoting development

of diagnostic facilities in the member states of the OIC are the main focus of this three-day workshop. The official said that the workshop would comprise over a three-day technical workshop followed by sightseeing on the fourth day. The workshop will be conducted at COMSTECH headquarters in Islamabad. The objective of this International Workshop on "Fundamental Techniques in Viral Diseases Diagnostics" is to provide a platform for the researchers and healthcare professionals to share their

views, experiences and research methodologies. This workshop aims at providing a common forum for capacity building measures against the present and future viral pandemics in the Islamic World. The challenges faced by OIC (Organization of Islamic Cooperation) member states in their healthcare systems and lack of diagnostic facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic have given rise to a dire need for awareness in this neglected area, the officials conveyed. The workshop will cover

topics including viral diseases, their origin, history and transmission, novel diagnosis and detection strategies for viral infections, development of vaccination and application of existing drugs for treatment and prevention, development of novel therapeutic agents against viral diseases, state of the art diagnostic laboratory setup and preventive measures against the spread of viral diseases in healthcare professionals. Among the workshop organizing committee member, Chairman Prime Minister

Task Force on Information Technology, Professor Dr. Atta-ur-Rahman will be the Patron, Coordinator General COMSTECH, Professor Dr. Iqbal Chaudhary will be chairing the workshop. Programme Manager COMSTECH, Khazima Muazim and Dr. Sumbal Sheikh from Institute of Medical Virology and Epidemiology of Viral Diseases, Germany will be the coordinators. Prof. Anders Vahlne from Sweden will be the resource person and the speaker while the other speakers include Prof. Dr.

Bertram Flehmig and Prof. Dr. Thomas Iftner from Germany, the official said. Healthcare professionals, students, researchers and policymakers from the OIC countries can apply for registration in the workshop till January 01, 2021. COMSTECH will arrange complete local hospitality, internal transportation and sightseeing visits for all registered participants. Travel support will be provided to the speakers only. Participants are expected to get their ticket funding from their parent organizations. — APP

## Rung school to start music classes from Jan 3

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Rung School of Music And Arts has planned to start music instrument learning classes from January 3 for music aspirants to polish their artistic skills. According to an official source, the classes would be conducted by an excellent artist to unlock the music inside you. He said that the aim of the classes is to continue the cultural activities that have been stifled by the Corona epidemic. It will provide artists an opportunity to express their talents, as well as to

promote mutual unity and harmony, he added. He said that the duration of class would be 3, 6 and 12 months adding that classes will be held 4 days a week. He said that music is great source of pleasure and ambience in times like these, it gives us hope and challenges us to do better. Don't let your inner artist be locked in, this is the time to polish those skills and continue your progress, he stated. There would be different courses including guitar, sitar, flute, piano, violin, keyboard, rubab, harmonium and rhythmic instruments, he added.

## HEC, Oxfam join hands against sexual harassment

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan and Oxfam in Pakistan have agreed to collaborate for successful implementation of HEC's Policy on 'Protection against Sexual Harassment in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)' and address the incidents of sexual harassment in the Pakistani universities. In this connection, a Letter of Intent (LoI) was signed by Adviser (Administration and Coordination) HEC, Mr. Awaish Ahmed and Country Director Oxfam, Syed Shah Nawaz Ali during a ceremony held at a local hotel

in Islamabad on Wednesday. The ceremony was also attended by Director General (HRD) HEC Ms. Aaysha Ikram, Consultant Policy and Legal Affairs HEC Dr. Daud Munir, Director University Advancement HEC Ms. Dur-e-Shahwar, Programme Manager (Gender Justice) Oxfam, Ms. Seher Afshin and Gender Specialist Oxfam, Mr. Sartaj Abbasi. The purpose of this collaboration is to work jointly and provide technical support to universities for establishment of an effective Complaint Response Mechanism to address incidents of sexual harassment and abuse. The two sides will oversee the initiatives and capacity

building of the staff of Inquiry Committees involved in handling complaints of sexual harassment. In his remarks, Mr. Awaish Ahmed shed light on the importance of HEC's Policy on Protection against Sexual Harassment and stressed that HEC is committed to ensuring that the university environment is equally conducive for men and women. He hoped that HEC-Oxfam collaboration will prove helpful for HEIs to effectively execute this policy. Mr. Shah Nawaz Ali appreciated HEC's efforts to address abuse and harassment at the academic institutions. He asserted that it is responsibility of the State to ensure quali-

ty and safe education for vulnerable segment of the society. "Access to education equals access to professional settings and financial independence, which will ensure greater female participation in all segments of life," he observed. As per the LoI, HEC will provide technical guidance and input to Oxfam in development of the Complaint Response Mechanism framework and the training and communication materials. It will advise universities to extend necessary cooperation to Oxfam teams for establishment and strengthening of Inquiry Committees and capacity building of the relevant staff.



ISLAMABAD: Dr. Rubina Mushtaq, VC Urdu university Islamabad campus inaugurating building phase-2. — DNA

## CDA completes maintenance work at 50 capital parks

Tenders have been floated for initiating work in all other parks of the city while a few tenders have already been opened and work initiated in those parks

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has completed work on repairing, restoration and decoration of more than 50 parks in different sectors of the metropolitan. Portable washrooms have been installed in the parks and tenders have been issued for the uplifting of Srinagar High-

way and Landscape of Golra Interchange. Fountains across the city will be restored soon, said a press release issued here on Wednesday. CDA's work for repairing, restoration and beautification of all small and big parks of the city were underway. In the first phase work in all big 50 parks including F-9 Park, I-8, I-9, I-10, G-9, G-10, G-11, and others have been completed. Tenders have been floated

for initiating work in all other parks of the city while a few tenders have already been opened and work initiated in those parks. The work includes repairing swings, maintenance of walking tracks and green belts, plantation, cutting of dried wood and shrubs, anti-dengue and anti-coronavirus spray and etc. It said the CDA department of environment would complete the work on restoration of fountains soon.

## NUML holds online lecture

ISLAMABAD: National University of Modern Languages (NUML) Islamabad, under the aegis of its intellectual, literary and cultural forum "Mehfil", organized an online lecture of the renowned scholar Prof. Fateh Muhammad Malik on the topic, "Quaid-i-Azam, Pakistan and Youth". Rector NUML, Major General (Retd) Muhammad Jaffar presided over the session and the chief guest Prof. Fateh Muhammad Malik spoke at length about the historic and constitutional role of Quaid in the making and Pakistan. In his lecture, the Dr Fateh threw light on the Pakistan Movement in detail and said that young generation has scant knowledge of history as subjects like political science and history are not adequately taught in Pakistan. Fateh Malik urged the Rector NUML to start political science and history as subjects in NUML to educate our youth about the true picture of the Pakistan Movement. He also responded to the questions of the audience. A large number of audience attended the session online whereas Director General / Pro-Rector Brig Muhammad Badar Malik along with some senior faculty members and officials were also present in person to hear the prominent scholar.

## Rupee weakens 11 paise against US dollar

ISLAMABAD: The exchange rate of Pakistani rupee depreciated by 11 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading on Wednesday and closed at Rs160.28 as compared to the previous day's closing of 160.39. Meanwhile, according to Forex Association of Pakistan, the buying and selling rates of dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs160.25 and Rs160.6 respectively. In interbank trading, the price of euro depreciated by 10 paises and closed at Rs196.47 against the last day's trading of Rs 196.57. State Bank of Pakistan reported. The Japanese Yen gained one paise to close at Rs1.55 against Rs1.54 paise whereas an increase of 10 paises was witnessed in the exchange rate of British Pound which was traded at Rs216.97 as compared to its last closing of Rs 216.87. The exchange rates of Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal decreased by 03 paise each to close at Rs 43.63 and Rs 42.71 respectively. — APP

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## Briefs

## SBP's initiatives to boost construction lauded

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group of FPCCI, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Wednesday lauded the initiatives of the central bank to boost construction activity. Revival of construction activity will improve almost seventy allied sectors and provide jobs to the millions of daily wagers, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that apart from the steps taken by the central bank, the issues of steel, cement and construction sector should also be resolved to get maximum benefit. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that weak laws have always blocked revival of construction sector and provision of affordable houses to poor and middle income group as banks were not ready to invest in this sector due to high risk. However, now situation is changing as the SBP has directed commercial banks to lend Rs330 to this sector warning them of action in case of failure and offering incentives if to those banks that met the target. The government has also given an option to the banks to cover 40 percent of the defaults which will boost house financing in the country which is less than one percent of the GDP. The success of these steps will ensure implementation of the vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan to provide five million houses to the poor. He noted that increasing prices of steel bars, cement and other construction material has panicked the investors which should be noticed and steps should be taken to resolve the issues.

## Pakistan's earns US \$595m from IT export

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan earned US \$595.080 million by providing different information technology (IT) services in various countries during the first four months of financial year 2020-21. This shows growth of 35.91 percent when compared to US \$437.860 million earned through provision of services during the corresponding period of fiscal year 2019-20, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. During the period under review, the computer services grew by 39.35 percent as it surged from US \$334.980 million last year to US \$466.810 million during July-October (2020-21). Among the computer services, the exports of software consultancy services witnessed increase of 20.12 percent, from US \$129.950 million to US \$156.101 million while the export and import of computer software related services also rose by 15.87 percent, from US \$99.322 million to US \$115.080 million.

## Tender for LNG terminals' private capacity soon

ISLAMABAD: The government has planned to float tender for utilizing 100-150 Million Cubic Feet per Day (MMCFD) private capacity of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminals within next few days under its ease-of-doing-business strategy to encourage private companies in the energy sector. "The government permission in that regard is already in place. Accordingly, construction on a private sector, LNG terminal is also going to start at the end of the next month, while physical work on another merchant terminal to commence in second half of the year 2021," a senior official privy to the petroleum sector developments told APP. During the last one-and-a-half-years, he said the federal government had been requesting the Sindh government to grant 'Right of Way' to the Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) for construction of a 17-Kilometer pipeline to transport additional LNG from the Port Qasim. He said the federal government was already utilizing full capacity of the existing transmission line of 1,200 MMCFD gas. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Acting president Islamabad chamber of commerce and industry, Fatma Azim presenting souvenir to Mukarram Jah Ansari, additional secretary BOI at the occasion of online introductory session of BOI at ICCI. - DNA

## Govt to setup Pak Business Portal to reduce compliance cost

The Prime Minister underlined Pakistan's resolve to forge closer ties with Central Asia, covering trade, investments, energy, and people-to-people contacts

FIAZ CHAUDHRY

ISLAMABAD: The government was working aggressively to develop a Pakistan Business Portal which would be a virtual one-stop-shop platform and would reduce lot of compliance requirements for businesses and facilitate better growth of business activities. All the business related public sector organizations would be integrated with Pakistan Business Portal so that instead of going to various organizations, businesses could get registrations and licenses at one-stop shop. This was said by Mukarram Jah Ansari, Additional Secretary, Board of Investment while giving a

presentation on reforms measures being undertaken by the BOI to improve Ease of Doing Business and Pakistan Regulatory Modernization Initiative (PMRI) to facilitate investment and business activities in the country. Sialkot, Lahore, Faisalabad, Karachi and other Chambers of Commerce & Industry also joined the presentation through video link. Mukarram Jah Ansari said that with the implementation of new reforms, Pakistan would hopefully be included in the top 90 economies of the world in ease of doing business ranking 2021. He acknowledged that businesses in Pakistan were facing high burden of regulatory requirements and the aim of PMRI was to reduce compliance burden

and cost on businesses by eliminating unnecessary procedures and processes. He said that mapping of 550 business regulations has been done for analysis, simplification, elimination of unnecessary laws and said that all systems and procedures would be automated for the facilitation of the business community. He said that soon, there would be a Single Window facility for registration of businesses that would be communicated to all relevant departments and organizations through an integrated system. He said that changing the mind-set and behaviour of people took time, therefore, the government was focusing on changing the procedures and processes to address problems and facilitate the

businesses. He said that reforms under PMRI would be completed by 2023 in consultation with the private sector and the purpose of holding this online session with other chambers of commerce from ICCI was a part of getting their input to further improve the reforms process. Speaking at the occasion, Fatma Azim, Acting President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry appreciated the Pakistan Regulatory Modernization Initiative of BOI and said that this process should be completed on fast track so that the private sector could start reaping the fruits of these reforms. She said that the business community was the

backbone of the economy and the government should provide them maximum facilitation to make Pakistan a hub of business and investment activities. Abdul Rehman Khan, Vice President ICCI appreciated the initiative of BOI for holding an awareness session on PMRI at ICCI and said more such sessions should be held at ICCI by taking all major chambers of commerce on board. He also thanked the participating chambers and hoped that this session would be quite beneficial for them. The representatives of various chambers also asked various questions and shared their suggestions with BOI for further improving the reform measures.

## Faisal Javed offers talk to opposition



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Information and Broadcasting Faisal Javed on Wednesday said the government was ready to talk to the opposition on all public-interest issues except corruption cases.

"The government is ready to talk to opposition on public interest issues such as electoral reforms and Covid-19, but not on the

corruption cases against opposition leaders," he said while talking to media at Parliament House. He reiterated that Prime Minister Imran Khan would not give NRO to the opposition leaders facing corruption cases at any cost. Presenting before the media draft of the opposition for amendments in the NAB law, Senator Faisal Javed said the opposition has proposed amendments in 34 of the 38 provisions of the NAB Act. He said the opposition wanted that all the corruption cases before 1999 should be closed and corruption below Rs 1 billion should not be taken up by the NAB. - APP

## '2020 was hard for masses, economy'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former President ICCI Shahid Rasheed Butt on Wednesday said the outgoing year 2020 was very hard for masses and tough for almost all the sectors of the economy. Masses faced unprecedented inflation, the industrial sector slowed down while the agriculture sector crumbled while the situation may not improve during the incoming year if the situation remained the same, he said. Shahid Rasheed Butt said

that the agriculture sector faced locust attacks, pandemic, climate change, untimely rains, onslaught of mafia and questionable policies which hit millions of farmers and stoked the food crisis. He said that the promise of providing millions of jobs and other necessities remained unfulfilled while millions lost their jobs and businesses. New records of inflation, food insecurity and high energy prices were made and masses were burdened by taxes while the elite enjoyed tax exemptions worth billions of rupees.

## NUST students win at Huawei ICT competition

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani students have emerged as the champions of the Huawei ICT Competition Middle East 2020, winning the top two coveted spots. The team of three Pakistani students, Kalim Ullah (MS IT SEECS-NUST), Maria Aftab (MS IT, SEECS-NUST) and Asadullah (Mehran University of Engineering and Technology, Jamshoro), won first place in the competition in the

Middle East category of the tech contest and qualified for the final global competition. More than 15,000 students and 440 universities from all over the world participated in the event held virtually this year. The final leg included 13 teams from 27 universities in which Pakistan's team emerged victorious, winning prizes that include US\$20,000 prize money, Huawei MateBook laptops, smartphones and also a chance to join Huawei Pakistan. The winning students

are from National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) and Mehran University of Engineering and Technology Jamshoro. The win has enthused the team to secure a position in the global final as well. The member of the winning team, Kalim Ullah, said it was an exciting and "incredibly proud" moment for Pakistan. "It is a huge honour to represent Pakistan in the esteemed competition and to bring glory to our country" said Kalim, a Master's degree student at NUST Islamabad

majoring in Networks, Cloud Computing and Artificial Intelligence. The students were glad that the Chinese tech giant offered them an immersive learning opportunity during the coronavirus period that affected the global education system. "It was a unique experience as we witnessed the power of distance learning in its fullest form during the pandemic." For Maria too, learning was the most important aspect of the contest that came along with "generous monetary benefits."



RAWALPINDI: President RCCI Mohammad Nasir Mirza and SVP Osman Ashraf visited RDA and met with Chairman Tariq Mahmood. Both the organisations exchanged views on Ring road project and ensured full cooperation. - DNA

## Ehsaas to identify digital vulnerabilities

Ehsaas will be the first public sector entity to implement a Vulnerability Disclosure Policy (VDP) that is intended to give ethical hackers clear guidelines for submitting potentially unknown and harmful security vulnerabilities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: SAPM Dr. Sania Nishtarchaired the joint meeting of Risk Assurance and Management, and Audit Committees of BISP board today, where a number of agenda items were discussed. Since Ehsaas' operations are largely digital, it is critical to ensure that IT safety measures are in place; more than 100 steps have been taken to secure the IT system in that regard over the last 2 years, since she took over, Dr. Sania informed the committee members. "We will be organizing a hackers competition inviting ethical hackers to outline our vulnerabilities", she said. Ehsaas will be the first public sector entity to implement a Vulnerability Disclosure Policy (VDP) that is intended to give ethical hackers clear guidelines

for submitting potentially unknown and harmful security vulnerabilities.

The discussion of the Risk Committee mainly centered on internal and external audits, Ehsaas Risk Registry, Error Fraud and Corruption Framework, im-

plementation of security safeguards within the organization and setting up of the Cyber Control Wing. Also, under observation were Ehsaas Governance and Integrity Policy and Observatory and how the organization was faring against 23 indicators

of the policy and observatory to gauge the performance of BISP. Dr. Sania gave directions to internal audit division to present quarterly reports to board meetings and instructed the finance division to submit quarterly reports on accrual accounting to

the board meetings as well. She also instructed the management to complete the departmental audit committees' process in time. She also advised to make changes to the risk register and map the key actions emanating from the risk register into departmental workplans and to use the parameters for performance assessment.

The Director General IT gave presentation on the progress underway to set up Cyber Control Wing. He explained that extensive consultations had happened which led to the definition of the scope of work of the cyber control wing and terms of reference of individuals who are to be hired. An expression of interest in this regard has already been floated to solicit applications. The next meeting of the Risk Committee will be held in the fourth week of January 2021.



## 30 suspects held during search operation

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Police conducted search operation in the jurisdiction of Lohibher police station and arrested 30 suspects, besides recovering arm ammunition and wine, a police spokesman said.

During the operation around 553 persons and 150 vehicles were checked by screening 20 Plazas. 30 suspects and 45 motorbikes and one car were shifted to police station for interrogation. DIG (Operations) has said that the purpose of these search operations was to heighten the security of Federal capital and to curb the crime. He further directed all police officials for high vigilance and monitoring against those involved in anti-social activities.

The DIG emphasized that it is collective responsibility of every person of the society to remain alert against those involved in criminal activities in their surroundings and inform police for action against them. "Safety of life and property of the citizens is our prime responsibility and no stone would be left unturned in this regard" the DIG added.

## SC orders to retrieve land from encroachers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan Wednesday directed the provincial authorities to remove encroachments from all state land across the province.

An apex court bench, headed by Chief Justice Gulzar Ahmed, directed the Board of Revenue's (BOR) senior member to place on record a report showing details of government land under encroachment and that retrieved from land-grabbers. The court further instructed the revenue department to restore its parks and playgrounds to their original condition and clear greenbelts of all illegal occupations. The bench called for the BOR to take steps for protecting its land. Besides, the SC ordered removal of encroachments from the forest and agriculture departments' land and summoned reports from all deputy commissioners and Mukhtarkars of the province in this regard.

"Several parallel systems are running in your office. Your [department's] Mukhtarkar does some work at his office and some at home. 10-storeyed buildings are being built everywhere," the chief justice pointed out, addressing the senior member of the BOR. Justice Sajjad Ali Shah, a member of the bench, remarked Thatta's land record has been tampered with. "There are encroachments everywhere along the Superhighway. All your [govt] land has been encroached upon. Cites are being built along the Superhighway," CJP Gulzar remarked. The BOR official said that the department retrieved 4,000 acres of state land in Malir alone.

## COVID positivity reaches 5.92 %

ISLAMABAD: The National COVID Positivity Ratio on Wednesday was recorded 5.92 percent where 2,219 Coronavirus patients were in critical condition across the country with the number of critical patients rising at a fast pace.

The positivity ratio was determined on the basis of positive cases appearing in 100 samples of COVID patients. The highest positivity ratio was observed in Karachi which was 13.84 percent followed by Hyderabad with 8.79 percent and Swat 7.89 percent, according to the latest update issued by the National Command and Operation Center (NCO). The positivity ratio in various federating units was as in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) was 2.14 percent, Balochistan 4.95 percent, Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) 3.98 percent, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) 5.87 percent, Punjab 4.44 percent and Sindh had 8.40 percent positivity ratio. It also mentioned the Province wise COVID Positivity Ratio breakdown that indicated in Punjab, Lahore had 6.12 percent, Rawalpindi had maximum of 4.90 percent, Faisalabad 4.21 percent and Multan 4.85 percent positivity ratio. - APP



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Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

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Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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

## IT exports

According to Syed Amin-ul-Haque, the Minister for IT and Telecommunications, the IT industry's exports are expected to reach \$5 billion by the end of 2023's fiscal year—especially in light of the rapid digitisation of the world during the pandemic. If the government is able to harness all this potential, the future of Pakistan's IT sector will be quite promising.

Already, Pakistan has generated a total of \$649 million through computer services and call centre remittances within the current fiscal year, and this 38 percent growth is only likely to increase. Furthermore, the government has been aiding the sector through the provision of additional incentives like eliminating income tax on IT exports, tax breaks for IT start-ups, 100 percent ownership and repatriation of profits for companies and investors. Not only have these steps strengthened the industry but they have enabled Pakistan to export IT services to over 100 countries across the world. Having one of the largest freelance worker forces, local experts provide assistance wherever it's needed across the border. There is no denying that if such progress prevails in the next few years as well, the IT sector will be one of the most prominent assets of the economy. Given that the Pakistan Software Export Board is being restructured for the purpose of incurring more development and market organisation, our ability to create indigenous software, increase human capital and generate a heightened demand for our services will improve—a valuable objective to focus all efforts towards. We must rectify any shortcomings and ensure that such an industry is facilitated going into a future in which the necessity of technological advancement is unquestionable.



## Reforming police

The report of a one-member judicial commission being formed to investigate a case of police brutality in Peshawar this June finds officers responsible for dishonouring the dignity and manhandling of Radiullah. Acting following the report's findings, Peshawar Police has suspended the cops involved in the incident. However, dismissing one or two officers from the job is not enough to make police officials learn about the concepts of individuals' fundamental rights and dignity. Torture in police custody remains a problem. The police brutality that ordinary folks experience quite frequently has widened the gap between police and the masses. They fear law enforcement officials; ordinary folks do not think of cops as their protector. The higher-ups in the department need to inculcate professionalism in the cops. It is high time for the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government to focus on reforming the police in KP and Punjab. The previous rhetoric of improving KP Police has lost its charm. What is problematic is the fact that even the top cops also lack professionalism. Take the words of the Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Umar Sheikh, for instance. His comments on the courts discouraging the police by releasing suspects are inherently problematic. What else can the courts do if the charge sheet against a suspect is weak? Investigating thoroughly and offering up concrete evidence against a suspect is the police's job. The courts cannot act according to the wishes of the police. However, before anything else, the state needs to introduce domestic laws that criminalise torture. Though Pakistan's Constitution does prohibit the use of torture, however, lack of accountability allows the police to rely on torture for investigating and extracting evidence. It is sad to mention that many members of the police in Pakistan have gotten desensitised. We now require that the police be educated on fundamental rights that the Constitution of Pakistan grants to the people.

# Modi's Islamophobia driven policies

Iqbal Khan

Indian Supreme Court allowed the construction of Hindu Temple at the site of the Babri Masjid. The flawed judgment in November 2019 not only reflected the preponderance of faith over justice but also the growing majoritarianism in today's India, where minorities, particularly Muslims and their places of worship, are increasingly under attack.

In his address to the 75th session of the General Assembly, Prime Minister Imran Khan had highlighted the incidents of Islamophobia and other provocations. He had also called upon the UN to declare an "International Day to Combat Islamophobia". Recently, at the 47th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) held at Niamey, the OIC called upon the Indian government to take immediate steps to implement its commitment to reconstruct the Babri Mosque on its original site. It also urged India to punish those responsible for the mosque's demolition, to prevent the construction of a temple on its site, take immediate steps to ensure the protection of the other 3,000 historic mosques, and ensure the safety and protection of the Muslims and their holy sites throughout India. Pakistan has urged the world community, the United Nations and other organizations to play their role

in preserving Islamic heritage sites in India from the extremist 'Hindutva' government of the BJP and to ensure protection of minorities in the neighbouring country.

Adoption of resolution is part of Pakistan's concerted efforts calling for universal prohibition on wilful provocation and incitement to violence. It is part of Pakistan's diplomatic campaign to raise awareness about rising Islamophobia, anti-Muslim hatred, as well as defamation of sacred religious personalities and symbols. India is one of the epicentres of such negativities. Zafaryab Jilani, convenor of Babri Masjid Action Committee (BMAC) and All India Muslim Personal Law Board executive member, has called the proposed mosque to be built at the government allotted land in Dhannur of Ayodhya as "against Shariat". According to Times of India, Jilani said that as per the Waqf Act, mosques and land for the mosques could not be bartered, making the proposed mosque against the Act. Government of Uttar Pradesh had allotted the 5-acre land for the proposed relocation of Babri masjid approximately 25 KM away from actual site of mosque.

Indian Supreme Court allowed the construction of Hindu Temple at the site of the Babri Masjid. The flawed judgment in November 2019 not only reflected the preponderance of faith over justice but also the growing majoritarianism in today's India, where minorities, particularly Muslims and their places of worship, are increasingly under attack. Later, the Supreme Court conducted an in-chamber hearing of a bunch of review petitions filed against the ruling, court rejected them all in December 2019 after finding no merits. India has a poor track record with regard to safety and security of religious symbols of its minority communities—especially Muslims. On December 6, 1992, Hindu attackers had demolished and burnt the core structure of the 16th century Babri Masjid. Thousands of Hindu zealots, supported by duty police personnel had razed to the ground the historic mosquean abominable act of anti-Muslim frenzy and blatant violation of religious and international norms. Thousands were killed in rioting that followed the mosque's destruction. The recently a trial court acquitted all prominent BJP leaders from the case and ruled that demolition of the mosque was not pre-planned. There is compelling evidence with hundreds of

eyewitness accounts that proves beyond doubt that the mosque demolition was pre-planned. The shameful acquittal of the criminals represented another egregious travesty of justice.

The painful scenes of the demolition of the mosque still remain fresh in the minds of not only Muslims but all conscientious people in the world. The new illegitimate structure, which the Hindutva-driven BJP has campaigned for and is bent upon constructing as part of its agenda of converting India into a 'Hindu Rashtra', is a scar on the face of so-called 'largest democracy' in the world. Twenty eight years down the timeline, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted a Pakistan-Philippines sponsored resolution calling for respecting sacred religious symbols. Indeed too little, too late! It's a non-binding resolution. And the countries which either sponsor such events or look the other way during such happenings have abstained. However, the silver lining is that there wasn't even a single negative vote. The resolution appreciates the recent "Call for Mutual Respect" issued by the High Representative of the UN Alliance of Civilizations which stresses that insulting religions and sacred religious symbols provokes hatred and violent extremism leading to polarisation and fragmentation of society. While reaffirming that violence can and should never be justifiable or acceptable response to acts of intolerance, the resolution underscores "that such violence should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilisation or ethnic group. Put to head count on December 02, the resolution received a majority of 90 votes, none against, with 52 abstentions. Despite vehement opposition from the European Union and other Western nations as well as India, the UNGA adopted the resolution aimed at promoting inter-religious and intercultural dialogue that for the first time acknowledges the significance and respect for religious symbols.

The only notable exception from the developing world was India that joined the western countries in abstaining on the resolution. India also tried to unsuccessfully mobilise support for the deletion of reference to opening of the Kartarpur Corridor by Pakistan. Resolution welcomes Pakistan's initiative. Opening ceremony of the corridor on November 9, 2018 before a huge gathering of pilgrims from across

the world, marking the 550th birth anniversary of Sikhism founder, Guru Nanak Dev.

Such resolution is passed every year, however, this year, the sponsors amended the resolution to reflect new trends, such as the challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic, the rise in religious intolerance, xenophobia, hate speech and the upsurge in denigration of religious symbols. Throughout the negotiations, the EU and other western countries opposed the inclusion of any language on the significance and respect for religious symbols. The EU also tried to block insertions of the clearly established and internationally recognised limitations on the exercise of freedom of expression. Such a stance from the Europe was against the very concept of freedom of expressions, who would know it better than self-acclaimed civilized Europe that exercise of the right to freedom of expression carries with it special duties and responsibilities, and must therefore be subjected to legitimate restrictions.

Facing strong opposition from the powerful Western bloc mainly based on pretext of freedom of expression, the Pakistan Mission at the UN went an extra mile to rally the OIC and other developing countries to garner support for inclusion of new elements in the resolution. The UN resolution reaffirmed the solemn commitment of all states to fulfil their obligations to promote universal respect for and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, in accordance with the United Nations Charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The resolution condemned any advocacy of religious hatred that constitutes incitement to violence or discrimination; and underlines the importance of inter-religious and intercultural dialogue as a valuable tool for promoting social cohesion, peace and development in the world. Extreme haste in starting construction of a temple at the mosque site – amidst the ravaging Covid-19 pandemic, anti-Muslim Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), the looming National Register of Citizens (NRC) to disenfranchise Muslims, the targeted killings of Muslims in Delhi with state complicity in February 2020, and other anti-Muslim measures shows how Muslims in India are being systematically demonized, dispossessed, marginalized and subjected to targeted violence.

– *Writer is a freelance contributor; email: Iqbal.khan9999@yahoo.com*

## Nepotism in Pakistani politics

Shujaat Hamza



Moulana Fazlur Rehman, who is considered a university in politics himself, finally learned a thing or two about dictatorship and nepotism in politics from his rivals-cum-allies PPP and PML-N, as he has successfully brought into the limelight his son, Maulana Asad Mehmood, who is the potential party chief after, or if, Moulana Fazl steps down

In sub-continent, where many things are the same in society and culture, there is a similar trend in politics, too. Whether it is Pakistan or India, or Bangladesh, the major political parties are somehow run through family heritage. It is a strange coincidence that the descendants of Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation in India, and our Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah are not in politics. Similarly, daughters proved to be the political heirs of popular Indian politician and former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Pakistani politician and former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. In India, Indira Gandhi and in Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto dominated politics and made their way into power, and sadly, both fell victim to terrorism. In Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's daughter Haseena Wajid has taken over his party and politics, and is currently enjoying her second tenure as Bangladesh's prime minister. Her rival politician Khalida Zia, is also the wife of a former military president.

If we talk particularly about Pakistan, then every faction of Pakistan Muslim League, Pakistan People's Party, Awami National Party, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam and Balochistan National Party, and almost every other national, regional and religious party has proved to be an example of nepotism. There is no democracy in any political party. The distribution of posts is led by the party leadership. Although party elections are held to meet election commission's criteria, and there are working groups, but no member or party official is allowed to disagree with the party leadership. If anyone disagrees or gives advice, he is declared a rebel and expelled from the party. Maulana Fazlur Rehman has demonstrated this dictatorial tradition most recently, by expelling some of the long serving party leaders just because they criticized Moulana's policies and dictatorship publicly. We had earlier seen this trend in Pakistan Muslim League (N), Pakistan Peoples Party. Although there had been groupings in the JUI in the past, we had seen parallel petition

groups of the Mufti Mahmood, and the Moulana Samiul Haq. But the current situation is different and dissenting leaders have been expelled from the party. It now seems that Moulana Fazlur Rehman, who is considered a university in politics himself, finally learned a thing or two about dictatorship and nepotism in politics from his rivals-cum-allies PPP and PML-N, as he has successfully brought into the limelight his son, Maulana Asad Mehmood, who is the potential party chief after, or if, Moulana Fazl steps down. It has long been a part of our political history that the people remain attached to political parties because of personalities rather than watching and evaluating the party manifesto, ideology and performance of the government and this devotion grows from generation to generation. If the offspring of a politician comes to the throne, then the offspring of the workers also follow in the footsteps of the fathers and remain loyal to the same political family. The same party "workers" tolerate inflation and unemployment in the government of their favorite politicians. Even if their leaders' wrongdoings become crystal clear, the "workers" do not seem to be affected and their loyalty and blind love remain steadfast as ever. They even defend their beloved "leaders". When the same rulers are caught on corruption charges, the "workers" march and protest, get beaten, while the beloved leaders manage to keep themselves active in politics and remain in headlines.

If we look at Pakistan, Jamaat-e-Islami is the only political party in which the leadership changes democratically. Workers are trained, and start from the very beginner level. But to date, Jamaat-e-Islami has not gained the popularity it deserves, even though it allied with the Muslim League in late 80's and contested elections from IJI platform, then in 2002, under the banner of MMA (Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal) and gained power. The party's ministers and MPs have not been accused of corruption, but

unfortunately, they did not get much success. The PTI is also not accused of family inheritance, and Imran Khan did not give tickets to any of his relatives, nor are his sons expected to join Pakistani politics, but the PTI also revolves around Imran Khan's charismatic personality. Without him, the PTI would not even have existed, let alone coming into power. Many capable and big personalities left the PTI, they threw allegations against Khan but failed. Neither Imran Khan's popularity dimmed, nor those who left him witnessed any success.

It is safe to say that whenever one of the "big two" political lot came to power, historically they had been "establishment-favourite", be it Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who remained foreign minister in Ayub Khan cabinet, or PML N supreme Nawaz Sharif, who was a close aide to General Zia ul Haq and remained Punjab's chief minister during the latter's regime. They even encouraged the army to intervene in politics, but when they came out of power, they started rantings about the alleged political role of the army. It was these politicians who, through amendments in 1985 and again in 2003, elected the army chief as president and gave him additional powers along with the power to dissolve the assembly. In the two and a half years after the 2018 elections, the 'democratic' political parties have all come together against the army and the establishment. They are continuously maligning our national institutions for the sake of their personal gains. Their belligerence has reached the level where they are publicly calling out the heads of state institutions, which is beneficial only for anti-state elements. They claim to be democratic, when their own leaders' only qualification to lead a party, is being fortunate enough to be the son or daughter of long serving party chief. How democratic is that! The world has changed, but the politics in our country have not. Far right have always been using religion as their tool, and leftists have been watering the seeds of nepotism, for no less than forty years. And sadly, we, the people have always been buying their narratives whatsoever.



## Briefs

## Bismah pulls out from upcoming SA tour

LAHORE: Bismah Maroof urges Pakistan fans to support women's cricket

Karachi: Pakistan national women's cricket team captain Bismah Maroof has withdrawn from next month's tour to South Africa due to family reasons.

Bismah had participated in the training camp in Karachi since 20 December, before returning to Lahore on Wednesday to rejoin her family in Lahore.

The head of the women's wing and chief selector, Urooj Mumtaz said that Bismah approached them to be exempted which was accepted by the, "Bismah approached us with a request to be exempted from next month's tour to South Africa for family reasons, which we have accepted. She was obviously disappointed to miss the series, but the family always has to come first," Urooj said. "When we'll announce the 17-player squad on Thursday, we'll name the stand-in captain as well for the South Africa tour, which comprises three ODIs and three T20Is," she added. It must be noted that the training camp for the South Africa tour is underway at Hanif Mohammad National High-Performance Center, National Stadium in Karachi. The squad for the series will be announced on December 31 while the side will train till January 11. The Girls in Green will play three ODIs and as many T20Is from January 20 to February 3 in Durban and Pietermaritzburg. — APP

## 'Situation in Karabakh tends to normalize'

DNA

MOSCOW: The situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone has a tendency for normalization, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said in an interview.

"We are satisfied to point out the set of Baku and Yerevan to fulfill their obligations, to work towards a general stabilization of the situation. I would like to note the high degree of cooperation shown by the parties in resolving issues that arise 'on the ground'," Lavrov also said. "Russia, in turn, continues to responsibly and effectively fulfill its function of the ceasefire's guarantor. There have been no provocative actions against the Russian peacekeepers yet." According to him, the issues on the agenda are preventing any violations of the ceasefire regime, as well as clearing the area of explosive objects, exchanging prisoners of war and bodies of the dead soldiers, ensuring the safety of the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, resolving urgent humanitarian issues, preserving historical monuments, regardless of their confessional affiliation, unblocking transport and economic ties. "There is a certain positive in all these areas, but there are also problems that are inevitable given the extraordinary situation," he added. "As for the discussion of still unresolved political issues, I can reaffirm our readiness both in our national capacity and through the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group to assist in organizing such meetings as soon as the parties are ready for this," summed up the minister.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) Secretary Olympian Asif Bajwa called on the Federal Minister for Railways Azam Khan Swati. — DNA

## NZ seal 101-run victory over Pakistan in first test

SPORTS DESK

MOUNT MAUNGANUI: New Zealand's bowlers produced a late final session surge to guide their side to a tense 101-run victory over Pakistan in the first test at Bay Oval on Wednesday and keep alive their hopes of reaching next year's World Test Championship final. Pakistan were dismissed for 271, chasing a victory target of 372, with 4.3 overs remaining in the test at Bay Oval. "It was a brilliant game," New Zealand captain Kane Williamson said. "Both teams put their best foot forward and Pakistan were incredibly resilient in that second innings, but the boys kept coming. "A huge effort by the bowlers to get us across the line." New Zealand had been hot favourites to win the game as the final day started with the tourists 71-3 but a 165-run partnership between Fawad Alam and Mohammad Rizwan gave the tourists a chance of a draw, if not an unlikely victory. Kyle Jamieson ended the partnership when he had Rizwan trapped in front, albeit after a review, for 60, and left Pakistan 242-6, still 131 runs away from their target with 25 overs remaining. He also had Yasir Shah caught in the gul-

## Aamir Sohail slams PCB

LAHORE: Former Pakistan captain Aamir Sohail slammed Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on its 'flawed' selection process of appointing coaches for the national cricket side on Wednesday. In his latest he said that coaches should be there to help fix player's problems, not to just say 'shabash' and clap. "When we bring former players into a coaching role for our national side, they are expected to bring their experience to bear when looking after players in the side. To identify weaknesses and strengths of players is what a coach is supposed to do," Sohail wrote. "If he cannot do that, then he needs to help the player hide those problems so that the opposition is not able to take advantage of that," he added. The former cricketer said that having coaches to just say 'shabash' and other words of encouragement defeats the purpose of specialized help. "You might as well drop the coaches and hire some people to stand around and clap to cheer-up the players — I am sure that will cost much less!" he said while taking a jibe at PCB. Sohail was also not satisfied with the management's decision to play Naseem Shah in the national side, criticizing the failure of the coaches to identify the problems in his bowling action. "Take the example of Naseem Shah who clearly has a problem in his action, but it seems that no one is able to fix it which is the kind of technical input one would have expected from our coaches," he wrote. "This aspect of their coaching knowledge should have been picked upon at the time of an interview for a position. There clearly was no probing of what technical inputs a potential candidate could bring to the table if selected as coach for Pakistan, and sadly that is now showing in the performances of the team," Sohail added. The Lahore born player, however, said that he doesn't blame the head coach, Misbah-ul-Haq, but the people who appointed him. He added that Misbah's appointment reflect the flaws of the selection procedures employed by PCB.

ly for a duck, while Neil Wagner, who has played the last three days with two broken toes, had Fawad caught by wicketkeeper BJ Watling for 102 and then Faheem Ashraf for 19 to expose the tail. Mitchell Santner then trapped Mohammad Abbas in front for one, before last pair Shaheen Afridi and Naseem Shah stoically resisted for almost eight overs. Naseem, however, got too far in front of a delivery from Santner and the left-arm spinner leapt high to take the caught and bowled dismissal and then raucously celebrate the win. "Not a huge disappointment (with the result)," Rizwan said. "That's test cricket. We lost this match, but we're still in the series." The second match in the two-test series is at Christchurch's Hagley Oval from Jan. 3 and New Zealand need to win that game as well to give them any chances of making the Test Championship final at Lord's.

## Afghan refugee camps Tall, Kohat win

DNA

PESHAWAR: The Afghan Refugee Camps of Tall Parachinar and Kohat clinched the titles of Football and Taekwondo part of the Afghan Refugees Games organized by Commissionerate of Afghan Referees Peshawar here at grounds of Islamia College Peshawar University on Wednesday. Senior Protection Officer UNHCR Miss Fuji, Dean Islamia College Peshawar University Professor Dr. Zareen Bacha, Director Sports Islamia College University Peshawar Ali Khan Hoti, Ehsanullah of Afghan Commissionerate, Ayesha Khan, officials, players and large number spectators were present. The Afghan Refugee Football Tournament played at Islamia College under the auspices of the Department of Education and Youth Affairs of the Afghan Refugee Commissionerate was won by Tall by defeating Kohat in the final by a solitary goal scored by Wahid Ullah while Kohat won the Taekwondo event after

defeating Dir Upper in the final. In the football final, although both the teams played an excellent and standard game, yet in the first half of the game, Abdul Wahid of Kohat scored a goal and laid a good foundation for the victory for his team. The players of Tall went to great lengths to equalize and this was quick to succeed thanks to Zeeshan's excellent goal. In the second half, too, the game was well watched by the spectators. However, Tall kept his grip on the match in a good manner and thanks to Irshad's excellent goal. In the final of the Afghan Refugee Taekwondo event, Kohat defeated the team of Dir Upper and won the gold medal in eight different weights categories. On behalf of Kohat, Bakhtawar defeated Ata-ur-Rehman of Dir Upper. In the graduates competitions, Irfan defeated Hameed Kosjad of Dir, Mubeen defeated Zaheer, Wasim, Sohail defeated Asif, Muhammad defeated Ayub, while Imran of Kohat defeated Fazal of Dir to win the gold medal for his team.

## Azeri FM, int'l agencies officials mull post-war restoration

The meeting was attended by UN Resident Coordinator in Azerbaijan Gulam Isakzai, UNDP Representative Alessandro Fracassetti, EU Representative Kestutis Jankauskas, and Acting Head of the World Bank's local office Saida Baghirli

FOREIGN DESK

BAKU: Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov and enoys of international organizations in Baku have discussed post-war restoration and support for demining on the country's liberated territories, the ministry reported on December 29.

The meeting was attended by UN Resident Coordinator in Azerbaijan Gulam

Isakzai, UNDP Representative Alessandro Fracassetti, EU Representative Kestutis Jankauskas, and Acting Head of the World Bank's local office Saida Baghirli. Officials from the UN, EU, UNDP and the World Bank expressed their readiness to conduct, an "assessment of restoration and peace-building" according to the existing methodology, hold a corresponding assessment of Azerbaijan's conflict-affected territories, draw up a report and share recommendations with

Azerbaijan, the ministry said. The parties held a detailed exchange of views on the abovementioned issues. The Armenian armed forces, which held under occupation Azerbaijan's Nagorno-Karabakh region along with seven adjacent districts for about three decades, razed to the ground many Azerbaijani villages, settlements, cities, historical and religious monuments, exploited gold deposits in Kalbajar and Zangilan regions.

## 'Relations with Armenia can be normalized'

ANKARA: The Karabakh issue became a historical one, and Azerbaijan restored justice, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on Dec.30. "We supported Azerbaijan not only because we are friendly countries, but also because Azerbaijan is a fair side. Turkey will continue to support Azerbaijan," Cavusoglu noted. "Yesterday we also discussed the issue with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. — DNA



LAHORE: Players in action during a polo match on Wednesday. — DNA/ Photo by Shahbaz Sindhu

## PHF calls on Azam Swati

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) Secretary Olympian Asif Bajwa called on the Federal Minister for Railways Azam Khan Swati on Wednesday.

The National team head coach Olympian Khawaja Junaid was also present on the occasion, said a press release issued here.

During the meeting, the minister said the ministry would play its full role in the development and promotion of the national game.

"Various sports fields are lying vacant across the country. Every possible practical step will be taken to increase the trend of sports among the children. Steps will be taken to bring back the playing field to the young generation," he said. He said the Railways hockey team players would be part of the national team in the future and will make the country proud.

Asif Bajwa said that the minister's positive and practical thinking for a better future of the national game was no less than a boom for the future of hockey. "We thank the minister for assuring full support to PHF," he said. Later, PHF Secretary also presented a souvenir to the Federal Minister. — APP

## China hands over 14 dual-seat JF-17 to PAF

From Page 01

hand over 14 dual-seat JF-17 aircraft to Pakistan Air Force (PAF) Wednesday.

Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan attended the grand ceremony as the chief guest for the induction of dual-seat JF-17 aircraft into PAF's fleet. The event was also attended by the Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong and Nigerian officials. Earlier, the Pakistan Aeronautical Complex (PAC) Kamra had achieved a remarkable milestone by rolling out the first batch of eight dual-seat JF-17 aircraft on December 27 last year.

A grand ceremony had been organised at the Aircraft Manufacturing Factory, Kamra where Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan was the chief guest while the then Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing and Executive Vice President of Aviation Industries of China (AVIC) Hao Zhaoqing had also attended the ceremony as the guests of honour.

The air chief had also inaugurated the JF-17 Dual-Seat Integration facility at Avionics Production Factory, Kamra. He had said that JF-17 Thunder is the backbone of PAF which has been battle-proven during operation Swift Retort.



Government of Pakistan

PAKISTAN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders on percentage rate basis for the work as mentioned below are hereby invited on from the Contractors having valid **PEC Certificate** for the current financial year i.e. 2020-21, which will be opened on the 18-01-2021 at 11:30 AM in the office of the undersigned in the presence of contractors or their authorized representatives, who wish to be present there. The tender can be purchased from the office of the undersigned till 15-01-2021 in the office hours.

No tender will be sold / received by post/telegraphically or on the date opening, each tender must be accompanied with Deposit at call of 2% of Bid amount and difference of bid price 2% at the time of submission of tender from any scheduled bank in the name of Executive Engineer, Central Civil Division -III, Pak PWD Islamabad and tender will be sold only on production of the requisite amount of C.D.R. issued from local schedule banks and relevant documents shall be produced at the time of purchase for tender, failing which tender shall not be issued. The other terms and conditions can be seen in the office of the undersigned during office hours at any working day.

The contractor will have to produce 2% of call deposit, valid PEC certificate and income Tax clearance certificate along-with application.

S.#	Name of Work	Estimated Cost Rs.	Earnest Money	Tender Cost(Rs.)	Completion Period
1	Construction of Boundary Wall along with Iron Grills With Security system Around The Minister Enclave At F-5/2 Islamabad (SH: Approach Road).	Rs.6,317,705/-	2% of Bid Price	Rs.2000/-	12 Months

(Mudassar Irshad Rana)  
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER  
CENTRAL CIVIL DIVISION.III,  
Pak. P.W.D, ISLAMABAD.

PID (I) No.3413/20



## Briefs

## Russia expands blacklist of UK citizens

## FOREIGN DESK

MOSCOW: Russia said on Wednesday it had summoned Britain's ambassador to tell her it was expanding the number of British citizens banned from entry in response to London sanctioning Russian officials over the poisoning of Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny. Navalny is convalescing in Germany after being poisoned in Russia with a Novichok nerve agent, an attack about which Britain and other Western countries have said Russia, which denies wrongdoing, has serious questions to answer. The Kremlin has said it has yet to see evidence that Navalny was poisoned and President Vladimir Putin has suggested the way the incident has been presented in the West is part of a U.S.-backed plot to try to discredit him. Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement on Wednesday it had been forced to respond to what it called unfriendly and unconstructive steps by Britain in October. It said it had handed Deborah Bronnert, Britain's ambassador to Russia, a note explaining its position. Britain and the European Union imposed sanctions on top Russian officials close to Putin in October in a response to Navalny's poisoning. Moscow on Wednesday called those sanctions unacceptable and unjustified. It did not publicly name the British officials, politicians and individuals it was banning from Russia, but said they were united by the fact that they had been complicit in whipping up what it called anti-Russian sanctions.

## Iran to compensate victims of Ukraine plane crash

## FOREIGN DESK

TEHRAN: Iran's cabinet on Wednesday allocated \$150,000 for the families of each of the 176 victims of a Ukrainian plane downed in Iranian airspace in January, the official IRNA news agency reported. "The cabinet approved the provision of \$150,000 or the equivalent in Euros as soon as possible to the families and survivors of each of the victims of the Ukrainian plane crash," IRNA quoted a government statement. Iran's Revolutionary Guards said they accidentally shot down the Ukraine International Airlines plane shortly after takeoff, mistaking it for a missile when tensions with the United States were high. Five days earlier, the U.S. had killed Revolutionary Guards commander Qassem Soleimani with a drone strike in Iraq.

## Russia launches 'fraud' probe against Navalny

## FOREIGN DESK

MOSCOW: The Russian Investigation Committee on Wednesday opened a criminal case against Russian opposition politician Alexey Navalny over alleged embezzlement of donations. In a statement, the committee said investigators have collected enough evidence to initiate an investigation on large-scale fraud. The committee said Navalny and his supporters gathered more than 588 million rubles (about \$8 million) for non-profit organizations and then allegedly stole 356 million rubles (\$4.8 million) of the amount and spent it for personal purposes. "He [Navalny] acquired property, material values, and paid for his vacation abroad [with this money], among other things. The funds collected from citizens for the needs of the non-profit organizations were stolen," it said. Navalny has been at odds with the country's authorities for many years. He accuses Russian officials of taking advantage of their position, using undue influence, and spending budget money for their own needs. He also claims the Russian Federal Security Service was behind his alleged poisoning this year.



ISLAMABAD: A Parliamentary delegation of Djibouti, led by the President of Djibouti National Parliament, Mohamed Ali Houmed, meeting President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. - DNA (Detailed news on page 2)

# 'CPEC enters a new stage of high-quality development'

On October 25, Orange Line Metro in Lahore was officially opened and put into operation, bringing Pakistan into the era of subway. Gwadar Port has handled two batches of fertilizer with a total of 26,000 tons transferred to Afghanistan

## DNA

BEIJING: The construction of CPEC has entered a new stage of high-quality development, which will continue to play an important role in pushing forward Pakistan's efforts to improve the socio-economic life of its people. This was stated by the Chinese scholar Prof. Cheng Xizhong, according to a report published by China Economic Net (CEN). A large number of projects have been completed, bringing about more than \$25 billion direct investment to Pakistan. Prof. Cheng stated, "China and Pakistan have jointly overcome challenges and promoted CPEC's construction and have not withdrawn engineers working on

CPEC projects nor laid off Pakistani workers since the outbreak of COVID-19 in Pakistan. Therefore, CPEC has made gratifying progress. China and Pakistan will complete the projects under construction in time, create more jobs for Pakistanis, vigorously improve people's livelihood, strengthen cooperation in industrial parks construction, human resource training, poverty alleviation, medical and health care, agriculture and other fields, and continuously release the great potential of CPEC and realize common development and progress. On December 16, the final Take-over Certificate (TOC) issuing ceremony of Peshawar-Karachi Motorway (PKM) Project (Sukkur-Multan section), the largest transportation infrastructure project of the CPEC

undertaken by China State Construction Engineering Corporation (CSCEC), was held in Multan, marking a formal opening to traffic and a perfect implementation of the project. At present, the completed projects have greatly improved Pakistan's transportation infrastructure and power supply, created more than 70,000 jobs for Pakistanis, contributed 1 to 2 percentage points to Pakistan's GDP growth every year, and significantly promoted Pakistan's economic and social development and people's well-being. The PKM highway project is the abbreviation of Peshawar-Karachi Expressway. The expressway starts from Karachi in the south, passes through Hyderabad, Sukkur, Multan, Lahore, Islamabad and other cities, and ends at Peshawar

in the north, with a total length of 1,152 km. PKM was originally planned to start from Karachi, Pakistan's largest city in the south, and reach Lahore, the second largest city in the north. Now it is planned to extend to Peshawar, an important city in the northwest border. GDP of the areas along the project accounts for more than 90% of the total amount of Pakistan, with a population of 138 million. After completion, it will become an economic artery connecting the northern and southern part of Pakistan. CSCEC has undertaken the PKM project (Sukkur-Multan section) in Engineering Procurement Construction (EPC) contract mode, and Export-Import Bank of China has provided financial support. The total length of the project is

392 km; the design speed is 120 km/h with two-way six lanes; the contract period is 36 months; the contract value is about \$2.889 billion. CPEC, the important pilot project of "Belt and Road" and a landmark project of China-Pakistan cooperation, has made significant progress for last 5 years. Recently, Metairie-Lahore transmission line, a key project of CPEC, was fully connected, further improving Pakistan's power supply system. On October 25, Orange Line Metro in Lahore was officially opened and put into operation, bringing Pakistan into the era of subway. Gwadar Port has handled two batches of fertilizer with a total of 26,000 tons transferred to Afghanistan."

## UK MPs, EU officials approve trade agreement

## FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: The United Kingdom's Parliament has voted in favour of the post-Brexit trade deal thrashed out between the country and the European Union, paving the way for the agreement to come into force on January 1. MPs in the lower chamber House of Commons voted 521 to 73 in favour of the EU (Future Relationship) Bill on Wednesday, a day before the UK severs ties with the bloc as the Brexit transition period comes to an end. The bill puts into law the deal on a new relationship agreed between the 27-nation EU and the UK last week. The UK Parliament's unelected upper chamber, the House of Lords, will now start its own debate on the agreement. The debate in the House of Lords is expected to last for several hours, which means the bill may not be turned into binding British law until late in the evening on Wednesday. The bill cannot be turned into law in the UK unless it is voted through by both houses of parliament and gets formal royal assent from Queen Elizabeth II. The vote in the UK came after the EU's top officials

formally signed the long fought-over post-Brexit trade deal with the UK earlier on Wednesday. European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President Charles Michel signed the pact during a brief ceremony in Brussels, Belgium. The documents were later flown across the English Channel to London in a Royal Air Force plane for British Prime Minister Boris Johnson to sign. "The agreement that we signed today is the result of months of intense negotiations in which the European Union has displayed an unprecedented level of unity," Michel said. "It is a fair and balanced agreement that fully protects the fundamental interests of the European Union and creates stability and predictability for citizens and companies". He added that on "major issues" the bloc stood ready to "work shoulder to shoulder" with the UK. "This will be the case on climate change, ahead of the COP 26 in Glasgow, and on the global response to pandemics, in particular with a possible treaty on pandemics," Michel said. "On foreign affairs, we will seek cooperation on specific issues based on shared values and interests."

## Deadly blast hits Yemen's Aden airport

## FOREIGN DESK

ADEN: A large explosion has struck the airport in Yemen's city of Aden moments after a plane landed carrying a newly formed Saudi-backed cabinet for government-held parts of Yemen. Security sources said at least 16 people were killed and 60 were wounded in the blast while medical sources gave the much higher death toll of 26. AP footage from the scene showed members of the government delegation disembarking as the blast shook the grounds. No one on the government plane was hurt but many ministers rushed back inside the plane or

ran down the stairs, seeking shelter. Officials at the scene said they have seen bodies lying on the tarmac elsewhere at the airport. The source of the blast was not immediately clear. Loud blasts and gunfire were heard at the airport shortly after the plane arrived, witnesses said. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to talk to the media. The cabinet members, including Prime Minister Maen Abdulmalik, as well as Saudi Ambassador to Yemen Mohammed Said al Jaber, were transferred safely to the city's presidential palace, the witnesses and Saudi media said. A separate explosion was then heard

near Maasheq palace, where the cabinet was taken after the airport attack. Heavy gunfire from armoured vehicles followed, with plumes of white and black smoke rising from the scene. Other video showed damage to the terminal's concrete walls and smashed glass. A local security source said three mortar shells landed on the airport's hall. Images shared on social media from the scene showed rubble and broken glass strewn about near the airport building and at least two lifeless bodies, one of them charred, lying on the ground. In another image, a man was trying to help another man whose clothes were torn to get up from the ground.



KARACHI: Member of Pakistani business community on the occasion of FPCCI elections. - DNA

## China, EU complete long talks over investment deal

Xi stressed during the video conference that the "balanced, high-level, and mutually beneficial" pact demonstrates China's determination and confidence to open up on a high-level, and it will provide broader market access, a better business environment

## FOREIGN DESK

BEIJING: China and the EU have completed negotiations over an epic bilateral investment agreement, signalling that the top agenda for bilateral economic and trade relations has run its planned course for the world's top developed economy and the largest developing economy. A comprehensive, balanced and high-level investment deal is expected to be reached soon. When Chinese President Xi

Jinping held a conference via video link on Wednesday night with leaders of Germany and France, President of the European Council Charles Michel and EU President Ursula von der Leyen, the two sides jointly announced that the negotiations on the China-EU bilateral investment agreement have been completed as scheduled. Xi stressed during the video conference that the "balanced, high-level, and mutually beneficial" pact demonstrates China's determination and confidence to open up on

a high-level, and it will provide broader market access, a better business environment, stronger institutional guarantees and brighter prospects for bilateral cooperation. The BIT will push the post-COVID-19 global economic recovery, promote global trade, investment liberalization and facilitation, enhance the international community's confidence in economic globalization and free trade so as to contribute to China and the EU's efforts to build an open global economy, Xi said. Xi vowed that Chi-

na and the EU - two of the world's major powers, civilizations and markets - will enhance mutual trust, properly manage differences and join hands together to kick off a new start in 2021. The pact shows to the world that even if China and EU have differences on some issues, both sides have the political willingness to enhance dialogue, deepen cooperation and share the benefits based on mutual respect, he said. The hard-won achievement has taken enormous efforts from both sides, especially during the year

2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic battered the whole world. Based on mutual respect, open and practical cooperative attitudes, the talks have been finalized by the end of the year, and follow-up works will be started immediately, including making the legal text of the agreement available for signing, accelerating internal approval processes, promoting the early inking and entry into force of the agreement which will benefit both people and businesses, experts said on Wednesday.

## Argentina begins vaccination with Sputnik V

## WEB DESK

Argentina began to vaccinate its citizens against the coronavirus on Tuesday, administering the first of 300,000 doses of the Russian Sputnik V vaccine delivered last week, the government said. Latin America's third-largest economy has been hard hit by COVID-19. Argentina, a country of 45 million people, has recorded nearly 1.6 million infections and almost 43,000 deaths, according to a Johns Hopkins University tally. Medical workers began receiving the vaccine and officials insisted it was safe. President Alberto Fernandez called it the largest vaccination campaign in the country's modern history. Teachers, those with complicating medical conditions and people over 60 were to be next in line in Argentina, which so far has received 300,000 doses, which also will be free and voluntary. Argentina became the third country to approve the Sputnik V vaccine, after Russia and Belarus. Russia has been widely criticised for giving the domestically developed Sputnik V regulatory approval in August after the vaccine only had been tested on a few dozen people. An advanced study started shortly after the vaccine received the Russian government's go-ahead. Russia says the criticism is unfounded and health officials claim the study has now covered more than 30,000 people, with data suggesting the virus was 91 percent effective. Russian President Vladimir Putin has referred to a single-component option as a "light-vaccine", which he said would provide less protection than the two components, but "will still reach 85 percent" effectiveness.

## U.S. detects first case of COVID-19 variant

## FOREIGN DESK

NEW YORK: The first known U.S. case of a highly infectious coronavirus variant discovered in Britain was detected in Colorado on Tuesday as President-elect Joe Biden warned it could take years for most Americans to be vaccinated against COVID-19 at current distribution rates. Biden's prediction of a grim winter appeared aimed at lowering public expectations that the pandemic would be over soon after he takes office on Jan. 20, while putting Congress on notice that he wants to significantly increase spending to expedite vaccine distribution, expand COVID testing and help reopen shuttered schools. Biden, a Democrat, said about 2 million people have received the initial dose of one of two newly approved two-dose vaccines, well short of the 20 million that outgoing Republican President Donald Trump had promised by year's end. "The effort to distribute and administer the vaccine is not progressing as it should," Biden said in Wilmington, Delaware.

## Turkey, US in talks to discuss sanctions

## FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: Turkey and the United States have started talks to form a joint working group to discuss sanctions that Washington imposed on its NATO ally over its purchase of an advanced Russian air defence system, according to Turkey's foreign minister. In a year-end news conference assessing Turkish foreign policy, Mevlut Cavusoglu also told journalists on Wednesday that Turkey wants "healthier" relations with the US under President-elect Joe Biden's administration. Ties between the two allies took a turn for the worse when in April 2017, Turkey signed a contract with Russia to acquire the state-of-art missile shield after its protracted efforts to buy an air defence system from the US proved futile. US officials have voiced opposition to the contract, claiming it would be incompatible with NATO systems and would expose F-35 jets to possible Russian subterfuge. Washington had previously kicked Ankara out of its F-35 stealth jet programme, saying their use alongside the Russian technology would jeopardise the safety of the fighter jets.



**Briefs**

**UK approves Oxford vaccine**

**DNA**  
LONDON: The Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine has been approved for use in the UK, with the first doses due to be given on Monday amid rising coronavirus cases. The UK has ordered 100 million doses - enough to vaccinate 50 million people. This will cover the entire population, when combined with the full order of the Pfizer-BioNTech jab, Health Secretary Matt Hancock said. It comes as millions more people in England are expected to be placed under the toughest tier four restrictions. On Tuesday, 53,135 new Covid cases were recorded in the UK - the highest single day rise since mass testing began - as well as 414 more deaths within 28 days of a positive test. Dr June Raine, head of the Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory products Agency (MHRA), said the vaccine would save tens of thousands of lives, adding "no corners have been cut" in assessing the safety and effectiveness of the jab. Prime Minister Boris Johnson called the vaccine development "a triumph" for British science, adding: "We will now move to vaccinate as many people as quickly as possible." And England's chief medical officer Chris Whitty praised the "considerable collective effort that has brought us to this point".

**NA Speaker hints at forensic audit of resignations**

**DNA**  
ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser on Wednesday hinted at conducting a forensic audit of the resignations of the PML-N lawmakers after the two declared them as fake. Speaking to media at the National Assembly, Asad Qaiser said that the two PML-N lawmakers met the secretary of the lower house of the Parliament and conveyed that the resignations were fake and not submitted by them. "I will give my opinion on the matter by tomorrow," he said. When asked if a forensic audit of the resignations would be conducted to ascertain if they were fake or not, Speaker Asad Qaiser said that he would mull over the legal aspects of the matter and would announce a decision on Thursday.

**Indian analyst says can't defeat Pakistan**

**DNA**  
ISLAMABAD: A former officer of Indian police service (IPS) N.C. Asthana, in his book has admitted that India has no clarity about its military and strategic objectives against its stated adversaries, Pakistan and China and the reality is that India cannot defeat either country militarily. N.C. Asthana, in his latest book, National Security and Conventional Arms Race: Spectre of a Nuclear War, argues that instead of pouring vast sums of money into expensive weapons imports, India would be better served by finding solutions by strengthening itself internally and pursuing non-military solutions, including diplomacy. Asthana also focusses on what he calls the "politics of warmongering" which has consumed public discourse in India over the past six years. Under the delusion that India has somehow, magically become invincible, he notes how a large number of Indians seem to be itching for a war. This belief is both fueled and strengthened by relentless arms imports. Asthana puts the figure India has spent on arms import in the five years since 2014 at \$130 billion, and the undisclosed cost of the 36 Rafale jets purchased from Dassault Aviation is not included in this. But even this sum pales before the \$130 billion India is projected to spend on arms imports in the next decade, including on 100+ even-more-expensive fighter jets to make up for the shortfall caused by the Modi government's decision to scrap the earlier deal for 126 Rafales.

**Azerbaijan gives 100 wheelchairs to differently-abled persons**

President of Pakistan and First Lady attended Distribution Ceremony of wheelchairs to the Persons with Disabilities and Exhibition of their paintings & handicrafts organized by the support of Heydar Aliyev Foundation in Islamabad

**A.M.BHATTI / DNA**

ISLAMABAD: Distribution Ceremony of 100 customized wheelchairs to the differently-abled persons provided by the support of Heydar Aliyev Foundation, as well as an exhibition of their paintings & handicrafts were held at the President's House in Islamabad. The President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi and First Lady Samina Alvi, government officials, MPs, public and political figures, media representatives attended the event. Before the official part of the event, paintings and handicrafts of the special persons were viewed by the President and First Lady and the other participants of ceremony. Welcoming the special persons and participants of the ceremony on behalf of the President of Heydar Aliyev Foundation, first lady of Azerbaijan Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva, the Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada said that the rights and freedom, protection, decent living conditions of all persons with disabilities in the Republic of Azerbaijan are firstly guaranteed by the Constitution of Azerbaijan and as in Pakistan, their well-being is also under the constant attention of Azerbaijani government. Ambassador emphasized that a special role in the protection of persons with disabilities in Azerbaijan and beyond belongs also to Heydar Aliyev Foundation of Azerbaijan and by the initiative and support of the President of Foundation, Goodwill Ambassador



of UNESCO and ISESCO, Hilale-Pakistan, First Lady of Azerbaijan Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva Heydar Aliyev Foundation continues implementation of the different healthcare, education, development, social and humanitarian projects in Azerbaijan and beyond, including in brotherly Pakistan, with the aim to serve humanity and strengthen friendship between two fraternal nations. Ali Alizada extended his gratitude to Heydar Aliyev Foundation and its President Madam Aliyeva for support of welfare projects and for the special attention towards Azerbaijan-Pakistan relations. Ambassador noted that the full realization of the rights and well-being of disabled persons demand enormous time and collective efforts and along with the



distribution of customized wheelchairs, the holding an exhibition of the paintings and handicrafts of special persons has also the aim to bring their potential out, boost the self-confidence of disabled persons and showcase once again that disability is not inability, and by the support, love and protection special persons are able to make reality their abilities. Mentioning the various programs for the welfare of disabled persons running by the Government of Pakistan Ambassador Ali Alizada thanked Dr. Arif Alvi, President of Pakistan for hosting this valuable event at Aiwan-e-Sadr and for his continued personal attention to this noble cause. Noting the Heydar Aliyev Foundation numerous humanitarian projects in Pa-

kistan, as well as in many other countries around the world, The Chief Guest of the event, President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi stressed that the implementation of such programs is really commendable and expressed his deep gratitude to the President of Heydar Aliyev Foundation, first lady of Azerbaijan Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva. Expressing satisfaction with the high-level fraternal relations between Azerbaijan and Pakistan, the President reminded his visit to Azerbaijan for the Non-Aligned Movement Summit in 2019 and shared his impression by the special attention, care and hospitality shown to him in Azerbaijan. Speaking about the 44 days Patriotic War of Azerbaijan, the President congratulated Government and people of Azerbaijan over the liberation of its lands from occupation and victory on the aggressor country Armenia and asked to convey his special felicitations to President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev. Emphasizing the importance of paying special attention to the persons with disabilities, President Dr. Arif Alvi talked about the projects being implemented by the government of Pakistan for further improvement of the welfare of persons with disabilities, and stressed the necessity to take care of them not only by the state but also by all public representatives. At the end of the event 100 customized wheelchair-

**Saudi Arabia invites Qatar's emir to attend GCC summit**

**DNA**  
SAUDI ARABIA: The King of Saudi Arabia, Salman bin Abdulaziz has officially sent an invitation to the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani to attend the 41st Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Summit, Arab media reported Wednesday, citing the Saudi state news agency SPA. Per the report, the meeting is set to take place in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on January 5, 2021. The invitation was forwarded to Al Thani while he was attending a meeting with GCC's Secretary-Gener-

al Nayf Al-Hajraf, the report said. During a regular meeting of the Saudi Cabinet, King Salman stated that he hopes to make the summit successful in promoting "joint action, expanding cooperation, and integration among member states in all fields," the report added. The Saudi Council of Ministers has also reviewed the outcome of the first meeting of the Saudi-Bahraini Coordination Council which virtually took place on December 24, 2020. The meeting was chaired by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and the Crown Prince of Bahrain, Salman bin Hamad.

**COVID positivity reaches 5.92 %**

**DNA**  
ISLAMABAD: The National COVID Positivity Ratio on Wednesday was recorded 5.92 percent where 2,219 Coronavirus patients were in critical condition across the country with the number of critical patients rising at a fast pace. The positivity ratio was determined on the basis of positive cases appearing in 100 samples of COVID patients. The highest positivity ratio was observed in Karachi which was 13.84 percent followed by Hyder-

abad with 8.79 percent and Swat 7.89 percent, according to the latest update issued by the National Command and Operation Center (NCOC). The positivity ratio in various federating units was as in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) 2.14 percent, Balochistan 4.95 percent, Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) 3.98 percent, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) 5.87 percent, Punjab 4.44 percent and Sindh had 8.40 percent positivity ratio. - APP

**Govt prepares vaccine management system**

**DNA**  
ISLAMABAD: The federal government has prepared the National Immunisation Management System (NIMS) with the joint efforts of different ministries for the administration of COVID-19 vaccines across Pakistan. The National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) said that the federal government has finalised the National Immunisation Management System (NIMS) which was jointly prepared by the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination (NHSRC), Ministry of Interior and the National Information Technology Board (NITB). The NCOC detailed that the preparation of NIMS aims effective supplies of COVID-19 vaccines across the country after collecting accurate data prior to the administration of the vaccines to the nationals. The relevant authorities will start the registration process in phases for the coronavirus vaccination by using the newly-devel-

oped immunisation management system. Citizens will be sent SMS for registering themselves to the NIMS database through their computerised national identity card (CNIC) numbers, added NCOC. The statement added that Pakistan is in contact with the manufacturers of COVID-19 vaccines and it is among top priorities of the federal government to make the vaccines available at earliest in the country. Earlier on December 22, it emerged that the health ministry had commenced working on a specific mechanism for corona vaccination campaign across the country. A National Immunisation Management System had been under the hammer for the vaccination drive with the technical assistance from the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), sources said. The National Immunisation Management System will be a two-way communication system that will run in collaboration with the Interior and Information Technology ministries, whereas, the central database of the modern mechanism will be es-

tablished at NADRA. The citizens of various age groups will be registered in the database of NADRA and vaccination schedule of different age groups will be prepared in accordance with the database. The database authority will send SMS to a citizen according to his or her particulars and the citizen will respond to NADRA with a message with regard to confirmation of the message, according to sources. NADRA will inform the person about concerning health centre for his or her vaccination after getting confirmation. The details of a citizen will become part of the NADRA record after vaccination. According to sources, 'Sehat Tahaffuz Helpline' '1166' will be used during the vaccination drive, through which the general public will be informed about the vaccination drive. The health ministry had also sought the cooperation of the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) for corona vaccination drive in a letter to the Secretary Information Technology seeking a free SMS service for the corona vaccination drive.

**'Nawaz' passport will be cancelled on Feb 16'**

**DNA**  
ISLAMABAD: In a significant development, the federal government has decided to cancel former premier Nawaz Sharif's passport in a month-and-a-half. This was announced by Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed on Wednesday while talking to reporters in Islamabad. "We have decided to cancel Nawaz Sharif's passport on February 16." The government has already approached UK authorities to extradite Nawaz Sharif. Special



Assistant to PM Imran Khan on Accountability Shahzad Akbar had said that it is up to the British gov-

ernment to decide on the extradition of the former premier. The PML-N supremo was granted an eight-week bail on medical grounds in October 2019 and a month later he was allowed to travel abroad for treatment for four weeks. The government maintains that Nawaz was permitted on condition he would share details of treatment which he didn't do. It may be added here that the deposed premier has been declared proclaimed offender by Islamabad High Court and an accountability for failing to appear before the bench.

**Indian troops martyr three more Kashmiris**

**DNA**  
SRINAGAR: In India illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, Indian troops in their fresh act of state terrorism martyred three more Kashmiri youth in Srinagar Wednesday. The youth were martyred in Lawaypora area of the city. The martyred youth were identified as Zubair Ahmad, Aijaz Maqbool and Athar Mushtaq from Shopian and Pulwama districts. The troops destroyed several residential houses. The family members and relatives of the martyred youth staged protest demonstrations in Srinagar, Pulwama and Shopian. They said that the youth were students, who were killed in a fake encounter by the troops. Shouting anti-India and pro-freedom slogans, they demanded the dead bodies of the martyrs. The family members of martyr, Aijaz Maqbool, said that he had left home a day ago to appear in an examination at Kashmir University. However, they were stunned when they saw his picture on social media. Around dozen people were injured under Indian troops used brute force and fired pellets on protesters in Srinagar.

**China continues power transmission project**

The project, with a capacity of 4 megawatts and an annual capacity of about 35 billion kilowatt-hours, fills a technical gap in Pakistan's HVDC sector and creates 5,000 - 7,000 local jobs

**DNA**  
ISLAMABAD: China continued its support constructing power transmission line in Pakistan in spite of COVID-19, says a report published by Gwadar Pro on Wednesday. Affected by the pandemic this year, the domestic economy has been sluggish, and every industry has been attacked at varying degrees. In spite of this, the construction of domestic power transmission and transformation projects has made significant progress with the support of Chinese enterprises in 2020. According to the report, after two years of preparing and constructing, the Matiari to Lahore ±660kV HVDC Transmission Line Project was

completed in November. The project was expected to be completed in 2021, and its actual commissioning date is one year ahead of schedule. Matiari to Lahore ±660kV HVDC Transmission Line Project was signed on 2018 May 14th and started constructing on December 1st of the same year. The project, with a capacity of 4 megawatts and an annual capacity of about 35 billion kilowatt-hours, fills a technical gap in Pakistan's HVDC sector and creates 5,000 - 7,000 local jobs. Besides the mega-project under CPEC frame, several crucial power transmission projects also have made progress. In October this year, China XD Group signed the DHABEJI 220kV transmission line project contract with K-Electric Limited. Under the project, a new

overhead and buried cable line connecting the DHABEJI substations in Karachi will be built. The contract includes every step of construction such as design, survey, supply, civil engineering, construction, installation, and field testing. On December 24, China Energy Engineering Corporation Limited (Energy China) signed the EPC contract for ADB-401A 500 kV double circuit power transmission Line project with NTDC. The project is a 500 kV transmission line from SK Hydro-power Station to Neelanghelum, with a total length of about 75 km, using a double loop and four split mode. The power transmission project delivering electricity from SK hydro-power station will further alleviate Pakistan's power shortage

and boost local economic and social development. Apart from the lack of generating capacity, poor transmission systems are also reckoned as a major factor of domestic power shortage. Pakistan was hit by a massive power outage caused by a malfunction of electric transmission line on January 26, 2015, which is considered as one of the worst energy crises in Pakistan's history, affecting the capital Islamabad as well as a number of towns and villages in the provinces. As the construction of transmission system under CPEC, the domestic power shortage has been relieved in the past 5 years, and new signed projects will also support Pakistan to cope with the power shortage in the future, the report added.