



Islamabad POST

Thursday, January 07, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

PM Imran Khan assures support to Hazara community

Detailed News On Page-01

Saudi ambassador lauds Pakistan's corona measures

Detailed News On Page-08



Pak supported Cuba on the diplomatic level

Detailed News On Page-01



Briefs

PDM wants to attain power: Siraj

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Jamaat-e-Islami Emir Senator Sirajul Haq has ridiculed the PDM for holding protest rallies only with the objective to attain power instead of making serious efforts in strengthening democratic process and raising voice for genuine public issues. He, however, clarified that holding peaceful protest was a constitutional right to every political party and individual. He has said that the establishment has no need to make direct interference in the political affairs when the government is displaying full obedience and complying with all of its directions.

Govt to stamp out terrorism

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Special Representative on Religious Harmony Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi has reiterated government's commitment to stamp out terrorism from the Pakistan. Talking to media in Islamabad, he said we are fully aware of Indian subversive designs to destabilize Pakistan. He expressed grief and sorrow over the tragic terrorist incident in Machh. Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi said foes of Pakistan will not succeed in creating a sectarian hatred amongst the people.

Maryam urges Hazaras to bury miners

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz has appealed to the Hazara community protesting at the Western Bypass in Balochistan to bury the coal miners that were slain in a shocking attack by armed terrorists on Sunday. Talking to Twitter, Maryam said the murder of the coal miners was not a small tragedy. Asking the mourners to not wait for an "insensitive and heartless" man, Maryam appealed for the slain coal miners to be buried. "May Allah (SWT) elevate their ranks in the hereafter and grant you patience."

PM assures support to Hazaras

"We are taking steps to prevent such attacks in the future and know our neighbour is instigating this sectarian terrorism," said the premier

A.M.BHATTI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday told the members of the Hazara community that he stands with them in their time of suffering and assured them he would visit "very soon" but asked them to bury their loved ones. The prime minister took to Twitter to assure the Hazara families that lost their loved ones in Machh that he was cognizant of their "suffering and demands". "We are taking steps to prevent such attacks in the future and know our neighbour is instigating this sectarian terrorism," said PM Imran. He told the Hazara families that he shares their pain and reminded them that he had come to them earlier as well and stood by them during their "time of suffering". The prime minister assured them

Continued on Page 06

CM visits protesters

BUREAU REPORT

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Jam Kamal on Wednesday visited the protest camp of the Hazara families and urged them to bury the slain coal miners appealing them to let go of the condition that they will only do so if Prime Minister Imran Khan visits them. The visit came after talks between the government and members of the Hazara community to end the latter's sit-in following the brutal killing of coal miners in Machh ended inconclusively on Tuesday night, with the protesters persistent in saying they would not bury the dead till Prime Minister Imran Khan arrives to their camp.

Pakistan-UAE agree to cooperate in energy sector

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Energy Omar Ayub Khan says the government is focusing on energy projects under new renewable energy policy to harness local resources for power generation. Talking to Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmed Al-Malki in Islamabad



Continued on Page 06

Machh tragedy proof of unrest in Pakistan: PDM

In his speech, Fazal ur Rehman accused the govt of having "ruined" peace and the country's economy

POST REPORT

BANNU: Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) president Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Wednesday said recent incidents of terrorism in the country showed that the government's claims of having established peace were "wrong". He was addressing what is the latest in a series of anti-government rallies planned by the PDM. Hosted by JUI-F, the rally in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Bannu district is being attended by leaders of PDM constituent parties, but neither PML-N Vice President

Continued on Page 06

Any conflagration in Kashmir bound to affect world: Tarar

DNA

OTTAWA: High Commissioner For Pakistan To Canada Mr. Raza Bashir Tarar Has said that India's revocation of the status of Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and a consistent denial of Kashmiris' Right to Self-determination are manifestation of an Indian gameplan that dovetails into a larger Hindu supremacist ideology being actively espoused by the Modi government. "It is a worrisome aspect because if one looks at the population of the region and the perilous situation that obtains in Kashmir, any conflagration in the Kashmir region is bound to disturb the global peace," he said during a detailed interview with a Canadian TV channel and radio on the occasion of Kashmiris' Right to Self Determination Day marked all over the world on 5th January 2021. To a question, Raza Bashir Tarar said that the unilateral action of the Indian government of revoking the special status granted under Article 370 of the Indian Constitution to the Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir was reflective of a method in madness because the Indian

calculous was to suppress the Kashmiris' resistance with a high degree of state brazenness and tyranny and then give an impression to the outside world that Kashmir struggle was nothing but an internal matter of the Indian government. He pointed out that the special status granted to the Kashmir region had, at a certain level, a symbolic value, a reference point and a ray of hope for the hap-



less and defenceless Kashmiris that they had a separate status from other Indian states in the Union of India, but the annulment of special status of Kashmir had dropped any pretence of civility and fig leaf of constitutionality India had always tried to wrap around Kashmir. He said that the night of tyranny and an unending nightmare that had followed in the wake of Indian action had made it clear to the world community that India did not care about anyone, neither the UN resolutions nor the position of Pakistan or the aspirations of Kashmiris and it could get away with anything through its economic and military might. To a question, the High Commissioner said the people of Canada were uniquely placed to understand the plight and tragedy of the Kashmiris and the excesses being committed against them. He described Canada as a country with an influential voice and an independent foreign policy. He said Canada had always enjoyed the status of a beacon in terms of the protection of human rights and advocacy of human rights, and it was natural for Canada to support the Right of Self Determination of the Kashmiris who had very high hopes from Canada.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Cuba Gabriel Tiel Capote in a meeting with Federal Information Minister Shibli Faraz. - DNA

Shibli for close Pak-Cuba ties

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Senator Shibli Faraz during a meeting with Cuban Ambassador, Gabriel Tiel Capote on Wednesday emphasized cooperation in the field of culture, saying that Pakistan has a rich and diverse cultural heritage that needs to be shared with the Cuban people. Collaboration in the areas of culture and media would help promote bilateral relations, he added. Gabriel Tiel Capote paid a farewell call on the Minister here. The minister said that Pakistan and Cuba enjoy cordial relations, specially thanking the ambassador for the scholarships offered in the medical field to the students of areas badly affected in the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan. He said a large number of Pakistani students had benefitted from the scheme. He said that Cuba is a resilient nation which has made remarkable contribution in the spheres of sports, music and medicine.

FC soldier martyred in cross-border attack

RAWALPINDI: An FC soldier has embraced Shahadat in a cross border attack from Afghanistan in Mohammad district. According to a statement from ISPR, terrorists from inside Afghanistan fired across international border on a military post in Mohammad District. Own troops responded promptly. During exchange of fire FC soldier Sepoy Fazal Wahid, age 25 years, resident of Shangla, Swat received bullet injury and embraced shahadat. - DNA

Corruption reference against ex. diplomat

NAB Rawalpindi conducted the inquiry on the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's accountability bureau has filed a corruption reference against a former ambassador for using embassy funds for personal expenses. Babar Hashmi has been accused of working with former accountant Tufail Qazi and embezzling Rs19 million from 2016 to 2018. The government released the funds for its embassy in Sofia, Bulgaria. NAB Rawalpindi conducted the inquiry on the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The two men have been accused of embezzling \$96,052 (Rs15 million) and 45,758 Bulgarian lev (Rs4 million) for paying bills of expensive hotels and "throwing parties". "The embezzlement continued for two years and surfaced when a new accountant took charge of the embassy," the bureau said in the reference. "During the investigation, it was established that both men being official signatories withdrew funds from official accounts of the embassy maintained at Bulbank Sofia, Bulgaria and used them for personal benefit/gain." Hashmi and Qazi failed to submit a bank reconciliation statement to the chief accounts officer of the foreign ministry, which is a violation of rules, the bureau said. Qazi has been arrested in the case. The court will take up the case after the scrutiny by the Registrar's Office. - DNA

Trump calls on Pence to subvert election

WASHINGTON: Pledging that he would "fight like hell" to remain in the White House, a desperate US President Donald Trump called on his vice-president Mike Pence to "come through" to illegally award him a second term, even as his supporters began descending on the capital on Tuesday for rallies authorities fear will be provocative and violent. In a rally in Georgia on Monday, a shrill Trump

Contending that "there are people intent on coming to our city armed," authorities in Washington DC, a Democratic-run city, mobilized the National Guard as Trump supporters, many from white supremacist and racist groups, arrived in the city for the so-called "stop the steal" rallies outside the White House on Tuesday and Wednesday.

raised the pitch, asking vice-president Pence, who is tasked at a joint session of Congress on Thursday with formally recognizing Joe Biden as the winner of the Presidential election that has been certified by the states, to defy states' verdict and declare him winner. "I hope Mike Pence comes through for us.

Continued on Page 06

NEW METRO CITY
HOUSING SCHEME
KHARIAN - SARAI - ALAMGIR

GT ROAD'S MOST MODERN & LUXURIOUS HOUSING PROJECT

RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL PLOTS ON EASY INSTALLMENT PLAN

LOCATION MAP

LATEST DEVELOPMENT WORK & AMENITIES

FOR MORE INFORMATION FOLLOW US ON
[f /NEWMETROCTY](#) [t /NEWMETROCTYPK](#) [w /NEWMETROCTYPK](#)
TOLL FREE : 0800 00101
 HEAD OFFICE & SITE ADDRESS:
 NEW METRO CITY SITE MAIN GT ROAD, KHARIAN, SARAI ALAMGIR

A PROJECT OF **BSM DEVELOPERS PVT LTD**

Inside...

- CDA's asphalt plant yields excellent results - Page 02
- Dr Sania convenes meeting of Waseela-e-Taleem Digital - Page 03
- Experts highlight importance of facilitation for renewable energy - Page 04
- Reeling Indian juggernaut in the Himalayas - Page 05
- NZ sweep Test series after thrashing Pakistan - Page 06
- Democrats near Senate control after Warnock wins Georgia race - Page 07
- President for accelerating development of Gwadar Port - Page 08

Briefs

'PPP govt makes new records of corruption'

DNA

KARACHI: Corruption in Sindh province is now being unearthed not in millions but trillions, as the PPP government of this province has made new records in commission, kickbacks and bribery culture, said Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf (PTI) Vice President and parliamentary party leader in Sindh Assembly Haleem Adil Sheikh on Wednesday. Talking to media at the Sindh Assembly, he said previous day he was in Islamabad where he knew that a 'mega project' was inaugurated in Karachi. He said when he visited that place in morning he was amazed to know that Rs1billion were spent in the name of renovating one Chowrangi.

He said poor people are living in gutters just 50 feet away from this Chowrangi and the rulers should have spent Rs1billion to bring some betterment in their lives. He said had Bilawal adopted the speed of a tortoise, Karachi today should have witnessed some betterment. Haleem Adil said the rulers of Sindh are now making corruption in the name of even Chowrangis. He said Saleem Bajari, who is front man of Sindh chief minister, used to run a donkey cart and today he has expensive properties in Dubai. He said Sindh finance department has transferred trillions of rupees to Be-nami accounts.

He said the rulers of Sindh gave the gift of AIDS to Larkana. He said previous day they used foul language and called Imran Khan a rotten egg. He said they are now using these dirty tactics because their corruption is being unearthed.

'Pak challenges Indian 'hegemony' in S.Asia'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former Senator Javed Jabbar has said that Pakistan is the only country in the South Asian region which challenges and deters the Indian hegemony. He was speaking in a webinar organized by Muslim Youth University (MYU), International Relations department titled "Revitalization of Two Nation Theory from perspective of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir." Jabbar said that many people believe that the two-nation theory ended with the creation of Bangladesh, something he could not agree with. Bangladeshis rejected the state of Pakistan, not the concept of a Muslim nation. They are still proud and committed Muslims, he said. He further added that the Two-Nation theory becomes the two Nation three-state. We still have two nations in the subcontinent if religion is considered to be one of the criteria for defining a nation. "Pakistan should aim to become the Israel of South Asia, in the best, not the worst sense," the former senator said. He said the Pakistani nation is ethnically diverse and that was its strength. History and civilization bound together with the people of Pakistan regardless of their caste, colour, ethnicity and religion.

'Next chairman Senate will be from PTI'

DNA

LAHORE: Governor Punjab Chaudhry Sarwar on Wednesday said that next Chairman Senate will also be from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and opposition is trying to find a safe passage after repeated failures. Governor Punjab, in meetings with party delegations, said that opposition will not resign from assemblies by January 31 and announcement regarding long march will also be delayed. He also said that Prime Minister's politics are of principles and all allies of the government, including PML-Q, stand with PTI. Chaudhry Sarwar, while stressing on unity for tackling issues related to security issues, said that enemies of the country are trying to destabilize Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker national assembly, Asad Qaiser calls on Prime Minister Imran Khan in Islamabad. – DNA

CDA's asphalt plant yields excellent results

According to detail, CDA's department of MPO completed work of 65 kilometer roads and streets during the year 2020. Construction material for these roads was prepared by CDA's own asphalt plant

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Performance of Asphalt Plant of Capital Development Authority (CDA) remained remarkable during the year 2020. The authority has completed work of repairing and carpeting of roads of 65 Kilometers on 2.5 million square feet with the help of its asphalt plant. These roads include various sectors, parks, main roads, link roads, streets, and avenues. According to detail, CDA's department of MPO completed work of 65 kilometer roads and streets during the year 2020.



Construction material for these roads was prepared by CDA's own asphalt plant due to which cut in budget of the said projects witnessed. These projects include, carpeting of two cycle tracks in E-7; 02 cycle tracks of F-8; streets of sector F-10; G-9; roads of sector I-8; Service roads; main roads and service roads of I-10; and main roads and service roads of F-11. The work on lane marking and kerb stoning is also underway side by side the repairing of roads. Ramps will also be constructed to facilitate the disabled. The work on repairing and restoration of the roads is underway in three shifts.

'Participation of women a key to naya Pakistan'

DNA / FAISAL MUNIR

ATTOCK: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Attock chapter organized a function on Wednesday for oath-taking of newly-elected office bearers of PTI women wing.

Punjab Minister for Social Welfare and Bait Ul Mall Syed Yawar Abbass Bokhari presided over the ceremony as the chief guest while President PTI women wing North Punjab President Shabana Fayyaz, General Secretary Nargis Jabeen, PTI women wing district Attock chapter president Sadaf Naqvi and newly elected female office bearers at the district, tehsil and union council levels attended the event in large numbers. In his address, Syed Yawar Abbass Bokhari said that district governing body deserved congratulations on holding the ceremony. Dream of Naya Pakistan could be materialized with equal and vigorous participation of women, he said and added present government was striving for

the prosperity and development of the society especially womenfolk. He said that the re-organization of PTI has started a new chapter in the politics of the country as we have laid the foundation for the eradication of heredity from politics. He said that persistent economic hardship, inflation, unemployment and poverty facing Pakistan were the result of looting and money laundering by the two major opposition parties during their long tenure in government. However, he noted the government, led by Prime Minister Imran Khan, would be able to meet the daunting challenges. In her address, President PTI women wing North Punjab President Shabana Fayyaz said that Prime Minister Imran Khan wants to take country ahead in line with the vision of the Founder of Pakistan Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah and believes in equal participation of women in all fields of life to make Pakistan a peaceful, progressive and prosperous state.

ATC judge accuses Osama murder case IO of collusion

The court ordered to make everything a part of the record. "Did the bullet enter through the roof and go inside the seat?" the judge questioned asking if they were shot at by Satti

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Anti-terrorism court (ATC) judge Raja Jawad Abbas accused on Wednesday the investigation officer (IO) in the murder case of 22-year-old Osama Satti of colluding with the suspects. The ATC granted a week-long physical remand of the five police officers arrested for the youth's murder in Islamabad. The accused include Muhammad Iqbal, Shakeel Ahmed, Muhammad Mustafa, Saeed Ahmed and Iftikhar Ahmed. The cops were booked in the case on the request of the slain 22-year-old's father. The judge's remarks came about when the investigating officer failed to present photographs of the victim's vehicle from the front, that would ascertain where the shots were taken from. "Where is the picture of the seat on which the bullet hit him?" the judge inquired. The officer responded to the question saying he did not have that photograph. "You have brought the picture that shows he was shot at from behind, but not the one that shows he was shot at from the front," the judge stated.

"It seems that you are all working together," the judge said, further questioning the reason for shooting at the victim. The court also inquired about the number of shots fired during the incident. To which, the investigative officer responded that five shots were fired at the vehicle from the rear. The plaintiff accused the investigative officer of tempering with the evidence. The court ordered to make everything a part of the record. "Did the bullet enter through the roof and go inside the seat?" the judge questioned asking if they were shot at by Satti. "Was he [Satti] operating a rocket launcher? What was the purpose of the shooting? Every time a car doesn't stop will you start shooting?" the ATC judge added. "How big of a terrorist was the boy to have been shot and killed in such a manner," Judge Abbas asked, further stating that there were thousands of proclaimed offenders roaming around in Islamabad. On Jan 2, at around 2am, Osama had gone to drop his friend in Sector H-11. When he was returning, the police officials intercepted his vehicle in Sector G-10 and fired at him from all sides. The

CTD cops killed Osama with proper planning which was a terrorist act, the FIR further stated. However, all the personnel refuted charges of engaging in a fight with the victim any time before the incident. A day ago, the Joint Investigation Committee (JIT) probing Satti's murder recovered four weapons from the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) personnel who shot dead the 22-year old youth. The suspects nominated in the FIR filed by the deceased's father, were presented before the JIT for recording their testimonies, officials of the Islamabad police told media, a day earlier. The JIT has seized the pistol from the ASI and three sub-machine guns from the four arrested constables. In his testimony before the JIT, ASI Hafiz Iftikhar Ahmed, who was heading the CTD squad that chased, surrounded and sprayed Satti's car with bullets, and the other four constables refuted the charges that it was a premeditated murder. The victim's father stated in the report filed at the Ramna police station that his son Osama had a quarrel with officials of the capital police a day earlier who had threatened him with dire consequences.

'CPEC to boost agriculture sector in Pakistan'

Dr. Muhammad Azeem Khan identified the Joint Working Groups, agricultural commodities in different Agro-ecologies along CPEC routes and Modern Pakistan Cotton Farm Project by CMEC China. He further added solutions for cotton crises through improved agricultural technologies

RANA FARRUKH

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Committee on CPEC headed by Mr. Sher Ali Arbab (MNA)/Chairman Committee visited National Agriculture Research Centre (NARC) this Wednesday. Secretary MNPS&R, Mr. Ghufuran Memon, Chairman PARC Dr. Muhammad Azeem Khan along with DG NARC Engr. Shamimul Sibtain Shah welcomed the members of the Committee. The purpose of this meeting was to make agriculture sector an important part of CPEC and find possible Pak-China agricultural cooperation and technical assistance through PARC interventions. PARC National Agriculture Research Centre is the largest research center of PARC. The delegation was briefed about various agri. research & development activities carried out by the institutes working under NARC. A display exhibition of PARC research prod-

ucts and technologies was also arranged for the said delegation. Chairman Committee on CPEC Mr. Sher Ali Arbab (MNA) chaired the meeting while Dr. Azeem Khan presented a comprehensive

report about PARC and other projects related to agriculture sector. On the occasion, Dr. Muhammad Azeem Khan identified the Joint Working Groups, agricultural commodities in different Agro-ecolo-

gies along CPEC routes and Modern Pakistan Cotton Farm Project by CMEC China. He further added solutions for cotton crises through improved agricultural technologies which is possible by the de-

velopment of water saving cotton farms and expanding its planting area. While sharing 10 years development targets under CPEC Chairman PARC told our aim is to change Pakistan from cotton import country to cotton export country and save foreign exchange of 1.5 billion USD. Besides renovation of existing orchards, introduction of new varieties, reduce post-harvest losses, improve value chain and development of rural industries are our major proposed interventions. Mr. Sher Ali Arbab, Chairman, Parliamentary Committee on CPEC, after the briefing, emphasized that we must first address the existing agricultural infrastructure in Pakistan and its shortcomings so that in the light of modern agricultural knowledge and experience comprehensive and sustainable strategies can be formulated and solutions to the shortcomings in agriculture can be found on a modern scientific basis.



Punjab sees highest deaths in 24 hours

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) on Wednesday reported that the most coronavirus related deaths in the last 24 hours occurred in Punjab. The number of active coronavirus cases in Pakistan reached 37,740, NCOC stated as Pakistan recorded 2,118 cases in the past day.

As many as 52 more fatalities were also recorded, taking the country's death toll to 10,461. According to the NCOC, about 38,917 tests were conducted across the country in the last 24 hours, of which 2,118 came out positive, taking the country's tally for cases so far reported to 492,594. Out of the total, 3,634 deaths have occurred in Sindh, 4,184 in Punjab, 1,695 in KP, 432 in Islamabad, 186 in Balochistan, 229 in AJK and 101 in G-B.

The NCOC stated that of the 52 fatalities reported on January 5, 11 were reported in Sindh, 24 in Punjab, four in Islamabad and one in Balochistan. According to NCOC, the total number of recoveries recorded in the country was 448,393.

Pakistan has so far conducted about 6,923,857 Covid-19 tests. There are about 626 hospitals with Covid-19 facilities and around 2,759 patients admitted across the country.

China, Pak sign MoU on translation, publication of classics

DNA

BEIJING: China and Pakistan signed a memorandum on translation and publication of classics on Tuesday, in an effort to give fresh impetus to cultural and people-to-people exchanges between the two countries. Zhang Jianchun, deputy secretary of the Communist Party's propaganda department and Mrs. Nausheen Amjad, Secretary National Heritage and Culture Department, on behalf of both parties, signed on the memorandum, according to Chinese media on Wednesday. The two sides agreed to publish 50 classics, deemed to be the most classic, important and top-rated in the two countries in the next five years, with the joint efforts of experts in culture and publication from both sides. It is also part of the activities to mark the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and Pakistan. This is the second memorandum of such kind China signed with an Asian country, following the one signed with Singapore on December 8, 2020.

Red Bull Homerun snowboards into Pakistan

LAHORE: Red Bull is all set to bring the largest winter sports event - Red Bull Homerun - in Pakistan. The inaugural event will be Red Bull's first event of the year 2021 and is to be held on February 13 at Malam Jabba Ski Resort in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK). The event is being held in collaboration with KPK Culture and Tourism Authority and Malam Jabba Ski Resort to promote winter sports in Pakistan. Pakistan, for the first time, will join 14 countries that will be doing Homerun in 2021. The event's registrations will be open from January 5, 2021, and will remain open till the event date on February 13, 2021. The concept of Red Bull Homerun, a unique ski and snowboard event, is simple. From the top of a snowy mountain, participants sprint for their skins and snowboards, clip in, and then race down a marked course to the finish line. Red Bull Homerun's inaugural event at Malam Jabba Aki Resort will be open for all. Not matter you are a local skiing lover, a professional ski and snowboard athlete, or a tourist winter sports fan, all you have to do is get yourself registered and arrive at the venue. The participants will get a chance to win five different titles in ski and snowboard events. The Fastest Women on Board, Fastest Men on Board, Fastest Women on Ski, Fastest Men on Ski, and a unique prize to watch out for will be the 'Best Costume'. - APP

Briefs

Team IUI clinches prestigious R&D grant

RAJA PERVAIZ

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Imran Murtaza, Prof. Dr. Ahmed Shuja and Centre for Advanced Electronics & Photovoltaic Engineering (CAEPE) have brought an honor to the International Islamic University by winning yet another international R&D grant from HEC and British Council.

The project is aimed to engineer the Energy harvesters and develop the Self-charging power packs with the potential to revolutionize wearable technology and electric cars. This new technology is well-aligned with the energy priority area of both Pakistan and the UK, and will enable to enhance and improve the performance of current technology such as health, environment and food quality monitoring, smart cities and buildings, transportation, sport activities, space expeditions and military devices.

Only 6 projects were finally awarded in Pak UK Gateway ICRG funding call, out of over 263 projects jointly submitted from Pakistan and UK, with an international peer review spanning over a year in three different stages. The overall tune of the funds in this project is almost Rs. 100 Million (UK £ 500,000) with half of it for the IUI team.

Islamabad records 136 virus cases

ISLAMABAD: COVID-19 cases continued to surge in the federal capital as 136 new Corona cases were reported from the city during the last 24 hours, National Command and Operation Center (NCO) said on Wednesday. According to an official of NCO, as many as 132 cases were reported on Tuesday while 117 cases were reported on Monday. He said so far 38,531 cases were reported from the federal capital while 432 deaths were reported from Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). He added 35,609 patients had been recovered completely.

Meanwhile, on the direction of Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination on Wednesday continued its awareness campaign against unnecessary and unsafe injection practices in Pakistan. The drive was launched with an objective to reduce injection overuse, curtail reuse of syringes, institute proper waste disposal and promote oral medication with the support of Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), in line with its Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). The initiative is an evidence-based policy response to the problem of

Dr Sania convenes meeting of Waseela-e-Taleem Digital

The steering committee reviewed the programme performance, discussed the way forward and explored options to enhance the outcomes of the programme capitalizing on conditionalities introduced in the programme

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: A maiden meeting of the Ehsaas steering committee for Waseela-e-Taleem Digital, an education conditional cash transfer programme was convened under the chair of SAPM Dr. Sania Nishat. The steering committee members were briefed on the massively reformed Waseela-e-Taleem Digital, that has massively been reformed and scaled up through end-to-end digitization, cost effective changes in institutional infrastructure, new stipend policy, and nationwide expansion across all districts. The Rs. 80 billion programme will bring 5 million deserving primary school children into its fold from across all 154 districts of Pakistan over a 4-year duration. The steering committee reviewed the programme performance,

discussed the way forward and explored options to enhance the outcomes of the programme capitalizing on conditionalities introduced in the programme. Terms of reference of the steering committee were also principally crystallized in consultation with committee members.

"The purpose of the deep-rooted digital reform in Waseela-e-Taleem under Ehsaas was to promote integrity, transparency, accountability and to improve targeting. And, the programme has been scaled up nationwide to address the problem of out of school children", said SAPM Dr. Sania Nishat. Adding further, she said, "As per Ehsaas payment policy, all payments are biometrically verified in real time; girls get Rs. 2000 and boys get Rs. 1500 per quarter, when 70% school attendance is ensured." The meeting brought together



members of the steering committee from Ministry of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Education and Professional Training, Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and Ed-

ucation Departments from provinces including AJK and GB who were joined by Waseela-e-Taleem Digital operations team. The committee richly lauded quantum changes in the Waseela-e-Taleem Digital programme specifically comprehensive and deep-rooted reforms that have been designed and deployed over the last year and a half under Ehsaas, as a result of which far reaching results would be achieved in the outcomes of programme.

In her concluding remarks, SAPM Dr. Sania thanked the steering committee experts and members for their time and valuable inputs and reiterated that this steering committee forum will open doors to collaborate and bring rich expertise from provincial education departments, key stakeholders, and development partners. During the course of the meeting,

it was also discussed that Ehsaas plans to roll out nationwide drive for school enrolment soon in collaboration with provinces and key development stakeholders to enhance primary school enrolments and minimize dropouts. "The programme targeting will also be aligned in keeping with results of Ehsaas National Socio-economic Registry survey that is currently 61% complete in the field and is expected to be concluded before June 2021 nationwide", stated SAPM Dr. Sania.

It was agreed that a sub-committee will be constituted with experts from the steering committee stakeholders and provinces for a deep dive into the deep-rooted reforms and integrations in the education conditional cash transfer programme. The steering committee will meet biannually to review the progress and strategic direction of programme.

Creative Talent Contest from Jan 11

ISLAMABAD: A week-long 'Creative Talent Contest-2021' will begin from January 11 in the Federal Capital, providing an opportunity to youth to participate in literary activities while staying at home during the second wave of coronavirus pandemic.

The initiative was being taken by the capital administration under its 'Islamabad Reads Campaign', launched by the Chief Commissioner Office recently to promote literary activities in the city. Giving details about the contest, Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration Director General Syeda Shafaq Hashmi said the participants of contest would be encouraged to send articles, essays and poems in two languages (Urdu or English).

She said there was another category under which the youth would be encouraged to submit their art work (painting and sketching), depicting 'Hope and Serenity' during the times of coronavirus pandemic.

Adding further, she said essays' topics should be based on socio-economic issues of the country, while theme of poems was 'stay at home'. Talking to APP, she said department of libraries would receive entries till January 11 at the Chief Commissioner Office for all of three categories. She urged the capital denizens to take part in the contest and get recognition for your skills and creativity. - APP

IESCO issues power suspension schedule

ISLAMABAD: According to Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO)'s spokesperson, System Maintenance is in process. Therefore power supply of below mentioned feeders/areas will be temporary suspended as per given schedule:

From 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M, Kahuta City 1,2, Hanif Shaheed, Tufail Shaheed, Ghauri Garden, Sohtran Road, Scheme-1, Burma, Waheedabad, Khanna-II, Al Noor Colony, Isolation Hospital, Azad Shaheed, Tramri, Rahza, Khanna East, I-10/2, NDC-1, Dr. AQ Khan, New Exchange, G-10/4, G-10/2, G-10/1, G-9/1, CWO, Fazal Ghee Mill, SES, Kidney Center, Police Line, Khayaban-e-Iqbal, Tamasa-mabad, Dhok Hakmadad, Muslim Town, Khanabad, Munirabad, Lalarkh, Purmiana, Industrial Estate, Hussainabad, Col. Sher Khan, Industrial Estate, Lalazar, Garhi Afghana, Burhan, Shafi Chauhan, Fateh Jang Rural, Fateh Jang City, Gul Muhammad Shaheed, Tanaza Dam, Haro, Gohri, Bohi Ghar, Salar Gah, Dautallah, Adi, Dafar, Dhok Awan, Zaraj, Chata, Melody, Tufail Shaheed, Khanna Dak Scheme-1, Bani Gala and surrounding areas will be remain without power. - APP

Environmental regulator's role vital: Zartaj Gul

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Climate Change Zartaj Gul on Wednesday said role of Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) was imperative for sustainable industrial growth to prevent least damage to the ecology. Addressing a two-day training workshop on EIA organised by Pak-EPA for public and private corporate sector representatives, she said the environmental regulators had the core responsibility to make the industrial and corporate sector comply with its duties pledged under EIA for preventing pollution at all levels. She said, "Pakistan's 33 percent forest cover has been reduced to 4 percent since partition due to unbridled tree cutting by timber mafia. The forest department and other authorities could have prevented this huge damage to the environment that increased the country's vulnerability to climate change at drastic level." She added that the industrial and corporate sectors should realise its role under CSR for preserving their business premises around their business premises. "DG Khan largest industrial unit in Dera Ghazi Khan (DG Khan) has merely contributed 350 plants for plantation which is as philanthropic as a corporate citizen," she said.



RCB issues notices to non license holders

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) issued 3850 notices to the shopkeepers running their businesses without trade licenses in RCB areas during 2020. According to details, RCB, Trade License Branch was taking action in accordance with the law against non trade license holders. The branch in this respect held operations and served warning notices to over 3850 bakeries, general stores, dairy shops, medical stores, chicken shops Colony, Dhoke Mustakeem Road, Saham Road, Tench Bhatta, Masrial Road, Hafizabad and other areas. The branch also received a large number of applications and issued new licenses to 7300 shopkeepers who had met all requirements. Meanwhile, the Food Branch of RCB checked over 2300 food outlets during 2020 and issued notices to 1950 for unhygienic and poor cleanliness conditions. He informed that the RCB teams conducted raids in different areas and collected thousands of food samples which were sent to the lab for quality test while over Rs 3.6 million fines were imposed on the rules violators. The cases of substandard food items were also sent to the court of the cantonment magistrate which imposed fines on the rules violators. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Zafar Bakhtawri former president ICCI and renowned businessman is presenting his newly published book "Jahan Dost" to barrister Khalid Khurshid, chief minister Gilgit Baltistan, Alim Adil sh and Haleem Adil sh are also present. - DNA

Awareness drive against unsafe injections continues

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination on Wednesday continued its awareness campaign against unnecessary and unsafe injection practices in Pakistan. The drive was launched with an objective to reduce injection overuse, curtail reuse of syringes, institute proper waste disposal and promote oral medication with the support of Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), in line with its Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). The initiative is an evidence-based policy response to the problem of

blood borne infections and unnecessary, and unsafe injections in the country. Recent studies and documentations have established the association between unsafe therapeutic injections and transmission of dangerous diseases like Hepatitis and HIV/AIDS. It is also known that patients who receive higher number of injections are at a higher risk of contracting these illnesses primarily due to syringe reuse. It has been found that 94% of injections in Pakistan are unnecessary and can be avoided by preferring oral medication. The problem is widespread

and has been documented from different corners of the county. A study published in 2019 about private health care providers in Sindh and Punjab had revealed a very high percentage of syringe reuse and specific factors associated with it. The major reason was demand by patients to which providers complied. Patients were generally unaware of the harms of injections and syringe reuse or that reuse happens. Such studies highlighted the importance of appropriate health behaviors- avoiding unnecessary injections and insisting on unused syringe, in this case. - APP

Huge cache of liquor recovered

ISLAMABAD: The National Highways and Motorways Police (NHMP) on Wednesday recovered 700 bottles of liquor and arrested the accused. According to details, the Anti-Crime Squad of the Motorway Police stopped a car on Lahore-Islamabad Motorway (M-2) near Pindi Bhattian on suspicion of not having a number plate. During the search 700 bottles of alcohol were recovered in the trunk of the vehicle. Two accused in the vehicle Yasir Irfan and Adeel Zafar were arrested. The accused were trying to smuggle liquor from Lahore to Chakwal. - DNA

THE NEW BUSINESS CAPITAL OF THE CAPITAL Lifestyle Mall

Grand Auction OF COMMERCIAL SHOPS

January 11,12,13,14, 2021 - Aura Grande Event Complex, E-11, Islamabad

POSSESSION WITHIN 1 YEAR



COMMERCIAL SHOPS OF ALL SIZES

MOST SUITABLE FOR ALL BRANDS

- One year quarterly payment plan
- 10% discount on full payment in advance
- First instalment of 25% within 30 days of the bid acceptance letter
- A dedicated team for your assistance

PID(I)3529/20

Auction Brochures are available on our website & at FGEHA Headquarter



Federal Government Employees Housing Authority

EHF PRO

Best for investment... even better for your own business

For more details: ● ehfpro.org ● fgeha.gov.pk

Briefs

10 tourist facilitation camps set up

ISLAMABAD: The Galyat Development Authority (GDA) has set up as many as ten camps to facilitate tourists coming to witness breathtaking beauty of various valleys amid spasmodic snowfall, blanketing the mountains of the region during winter. "The camps are set up all along the Galyat route, starting from Harno and culminating at Barian," GDA Spokesman Ahsan Hameed told APP on Wednesday. He said the initiative was aimed at providing help to the tourists, who get stuck in the snow deposits on their way to the various gais (valleys). Elaborating the facilities made available at the camps, he said two staffers were deputed at every camp, which had been equipped with first aid box, walkie-talkie, chains and other necessary equipment. The staff was available for 24 hours for tourists' help and guidance, he added. To a query, the spokesman said all the available resources were being utilized to facilitate the tourists, coming to visit the scenic valleys of Galyat from various parts of the country. He said the GDA had issued a travel advisory to inform the tourists and locals for traveling on slippery roads. He urged the tourists to travel in daylight and use chains to tread on snow. — APP

DEO issues show cause notices to 49 Teachers

DNA

ATTOCK: District education Officer (DEO) (Elementary Education Male Wing) Attock issued show cause notices to 49 teachers working in different schools for not performing their duties as invigilators in Metric exams. All the teachers concerned have been asked to submit their replies within seven days. Those teachers issued show cause notices include 2 teachers from Tehsil Attock, 12 from Tehsil Jand, 12 from Tehsil Pind Gheb, 11 from Tehsil Hazro, 6 from Tehsil Hassan abdal and 6 teachers.

ICT admin bans installation of HID lights

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration on Wednesday banned sale, purchase and installation of High Intensity Discharge (HID) lights in vehicles within the revenue limits of Islamabad. The ban will come into force with immediate effect under section 144 for the period of two months, said a notification issued by additional district magistrate (ADM), ICT, Rana Muhammad Waqas. "It brought to the notice of ADM that HID lights are installed in headlamps of commuting vehicles. These light cause trouble for the traffic coming from the opposite direction and are reason for many fatal accidents. Moreover, most HID's are cheap quality and are often responsible for short circuit which often causes eruption of fire in the vehicle," the notification read. — APP

15 outlaws including 4 POs held

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Police on Wednesday arrested 15 outlaws including four proclaimed offenders from various areas of the city and recovered hashish, heroin, alcohol and weapons from their possession, a police spokesman said. According to details, Golra police arrested Jamal Khan and recovered one 30 bore pistol along with ammunition from him. Tarnol police arrested an accused Farooq and recovered one 30 bore pistol from him. Noon Police apprehended two accused Tariq and Sardar Khan allegedly involved in selling petroleum products illegally in the area. Shams Colony police arrested Abbas and recovered 150 gram hashish from him. Khanna police arrested two accused Adnan and Pupoo and recovered two 30 bore pistol from their possession while Nilor police arrested accused Mehtab and recovered 210 gram heroin from him. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Republic of China to Pakistan, Nong Rong called on federal minister for communications, Murad Saeed in Islamabad. — DNA

Experts highlight importance of facilitation for renewable energy

"The processes for private sector investment in Green Energy also need to be streamlined." Mirza added while highlighting the role of private initiatives in the sector

DNA

ISLAMABAD: It is high time for Pakistan to shift towards Green Energy. Therefore, government needs to come up with policies to facilitate stakeholders to explore more options for sustainable renewable energy. The energy and environmental sectors experts said this while sharing their views with the participants at the inception meeting of the Network for Renewable Energy Research and Advocacy titled 'Clean Energy Transition in Pakistan', organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here on Wednesday.

Managing Director Pakistan Power & Infrastructure Board, Mr Shah Jahan Mirza, while covering various aspects of the clean energy landscape in Pakistan, said that power and energy sectors in Pakistan are not in desirable shape for various factors. Our natural resources, especially gas is fast depleting and thus, we need to act now keeping the projection of our future needs of energy in view. "The processes for private sector investment in Green Energy also need to be streamlined." Mirza added while highlighting the role of private initiatives in the sector. Mr Christoph Nedopil, Founding Director of Green

Belt Road Initiative Center, was of view that it is high time for Pakistan to move to renewable energy. He said that policy should be evolved to facilitate green investment in the sector. While highlighting the possible role of China in Pakistan's renewable energy sector, he said that secure investment would remain a key concern for the private sector initiatives. Dr Hina Aslam, Research Fellow Energy, SDPI, earlier shared the findings of SDPI's research report on the energy sector of Pakistan. She said that public and private investments, integrated water resource management, tapping renewable energy resources,

gender-based equality and women empowerment related initiatives and environmental sustainability are some of the critical issues that have been covered in the report. She added further that the report has also highlighted the importance of integrated energy plans, stakeholders' involvement, and renewable energy resources and thus, provided critical insight for policy initiatives. Dr Fatima Khushnood, representing Engro Energy limited, highlighted the importance of the measures to ensure environmental sustainability. Explaining the role of private sector in energy resources development, she said

that this role could be further strengthened through the right policy initiatives and facilitation. Syeda Hadika Jamshaid from Ministry of Climate Change (MoCC) informed the participants that Pak-INDC (Pakistan's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution), Pakistan is pursuing the goal of reducing carbon emissions and thus, renewable energy has important role to play to achieve this objective. Mr. Mushtaq Gaadi, noted academician and Dr Najeem Ullah, from University of Peshawar, also shared their views on the topic and said that we need a paradigm shift to move to green energy and ensure environmental sustainability.

PPAF wins GDIB Awards 2021

The recognition signifies PPAF's relentless commitment towards endorsing diversity for creating an inclusive culture to bring an improvement in the overall quality of life

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) got recognized as a champion of best practices in Pakistan for winning the Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks (GDIB) Awards 2021 for the fifth consecutive year. The awards are won by PPAF in 10 out of 14 categories including Vision, Structure, Recruitment & Development, Benefits, Compensation, Learning, Communications, Sustainability, Social Responsibility and Products & Services. The recognition signifies PPAF's relentless commitment towards endorsing diversity for creating an inclusive culture to bring an improvement in the overall quality of life.

PPAF adheres to strong core values such as inclusion, participation, accountability, transparency and stewardship which formulate the foundation of the organization and ensure outreach to the most excluded parts

of the country. Recognizing demographic diversity, increasing community input, implementing a strong legal framework and ensuring responsible management of resources allow the organization to swiftly meet global standards. Lauding his team for this remarkable achievement, CEO PPAF, Qazi Azmat Isa said, "This award is reflective of the immense hardwork our team has put in to facilitate the poorest of the poor and bring a positive change in their lives. These efforts have allowed us to accelerate the pace of development in Pakistan." GDIB awards are a mechanism to recognize and encourage progressive organizations that use GDIB standards to align diversity and inclusion (D&I) with organizational policies and process for sustainable financial and social performance. Their mission is to serve as a resource for research and education for individuals and organizations in their quest to manage diversity and foster inclusion practices around the world.

NA speaker pays tribute to Qazi Hussain Ahmed

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly, Speaker Asad Qaiser on Wednesday paid tribute to the services of late Qazi Hussain, the Ameer of Jamat-e-Islami Pakistan for social justice and national integration of the country. The Speaker expressed these views while chairing a ceremony commemorating the 8th death anniversary of the late Ameer held here.

While sharing his experience with late Qazi Hussain Ahmed the Speaker said that he was committed to his cause and believed in devoting his life for the betterment of downtrodden. He said that Prime Minister Imran Khan had always been respectful to the immaculate personality of Qazi Hussain Ahmed. The Speaker said that Pakistan was facing diverse socio-economic issues which need unity across the political

parties. He said that struggle and commitment of late Qazi Hussain Ahmed should be followed in letter and spirit for the development of the country. He said that his selfless political attitude was remarkable, adding that being speaker of KPK and Speaker National Assembly he always strive hard to implement Islamic welfare concepts. Asif Luqman Qazi Son of Qazi Hussain Ahmed thanked the Speaker for participation in the ceremony. He said that

his father lead purposeful life and he always remained sincere and devoted to his goal of bringing Islamic revolution in the country. He said that dialogue was imperative for progress and development of the country. Member Azad Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Abdul Rasheed remembered the great services of Qazi Hussain Ahmed and remarked about his efforts to highlight Kashmir issue at every international forum.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker national assembly, Asad Qaiser addressing the participants of Qazi Hussain Ahmad memorial function on his death anniversary. — DNA

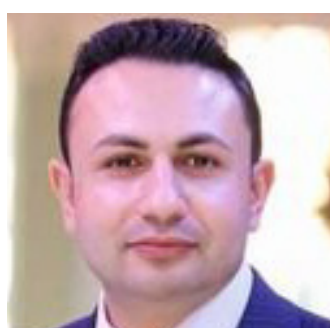
FBR urged to revise filing of taxpayers' profiles

Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan said that about 2.3 million tax returns were filed in Pakistan, and one of the main reasons for the filing of low returns was the FBR's tough laws for the taxpayers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has called upon the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to revise its policy for mandatory update of taxpayers' profiles as it has created additional difficulties the business community. They said that it was discouraging the potential taxpayers from coming into the tax net. President ICCI Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan said that about 2.3 million tax returns were filed in Pakistan, and one of the main reasons for the filing of low returns

was the FBR's tough laws for the taxpayers due to which many eligible taxpayers were preferring to stay away from coming into the tax net. He stressed that instead of simplifying the difficult tax laws, the Income Tax Ordinance was amended through Finance Act 2020 to make it mandatory for taxpayers to submit their profiles along with income tax returns, even though all personal data of taxpayers was provided in tax returns. Those who do not submit their profiles may be removed from the active taxpayers' list, as well as face fines and other penalties, which will increase their difficulties, he said.



He appealed to the Federal Minister for Finance Abdul Hafeez Sheikh and Chairman FBR Muhammad Javed Ghani to take personal interest in the matter and

revise the decision regarding mandatory filing of profiles of taxpayers to ease their problems. Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan further said that anti-money laundering laws have also been imposed on the buyers and sellers of property, which will not only create more difficulties to the business community, it will also reduce the attractiveness of PM's construction package and cause slowdown in construction activities. The ICCI President said that there were about 8 million commercial meters of electricity across Pakistan while more than 3 million industrial units were operating but

only 2.3 million total tax returns were filed which should be a cause of concerns for the policymakers. He said that the government has the record of all commercial meters, which could be regularized but it seemed that the FBR was bent upon milking the existing taxpayers instead of bringing new ones in the tax net, which was not a wise approach. He appealed to the government to focus on simplifying the tax laws to make them business friendly so that the people feel encouraged to come into the tax net that would improve the tax collection and help in strengthening the country's economy.

PIMS overcrowded with virus patients

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Eight wards at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences in Islamabad are crowded with coronavirus patients, the hospital's spokesperson said. Each ward has between 28 and 30 beds and all are occupied with patients throughout the week. According to the management, it's nearly impossible to admit new patients coming to the hospital. "Only two nurses are catering to all these patients," ICU registrar Dr Fazal Rabi said, adding that cheap medicine and treatment is available at the hospital. On the other hand, the recently inaugurated Isolation Hospital and Infectious Treatment Centre in the city has not begun operations yet despite being given Rs1.2 billion. Earlier in December, all wards at PIMS were closed except for the isolation and emergency wards. They were closed because of a protest by hospital employees against the Medical Teaching Institution Ordinance. The employees say the protest would continue till the government withdraws the ordinance.

Telenor collaborates with TPL

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In another effort to bring greater ease to its customers, Telenor Pakistan has partnered with TPL Trakker, Pakistan's leading IoT Company providing tracking, telematics, and location based services & solutions. Through this collaboration, Telenor Pakistan's customers will be able to use detailed, local maps for navigation via the MyTelenor App. The new app update has been specially mapped for Pakistan to chart out accurate local routes and help MyTelenor app users navigate through enriched and densely populated areas. The update also offers features like comprehensive search, location details, the option to add new locations as well as routing to a location, all within the app. "The future of accelerated digitalisation is based on strategic partnerships and our latest collaboration with TPL Trakker is a step forward to bring a precise navigation solution to MyTelenor App users" said Umair Mohsin, Chief Marketing Officer Telenor Pakistan at the signing ceremony. "We are enabling our customers through a very enriched and digitally cohesive experience on MyTelenor App and we aim to continue building on it" he added.

Police conducted search operation

RAWALPINDI: The police on Wednesday carried out search operations in the jurisdiction of Civil Line police station. According to the police spokesman, the search operations were conducted in the areas of Tall Mohri, Dheri Hassanabad and adjoining areas. The police, elite force and law enforcement agencies also participated in the operations. During the operation, the police searched 68 houses, 10 shops and interrogated 30 tenants. The search operations were being conducted in the city as per directives of City Police Officer (CPO) Muhammad Ahsan Younas with aimed to create a sense of security among the citizens and maintain law and order situation to make the city crime free, the spokesman added.

Pedestrian died in road accident

RAWALPINDI: A pedestrian on Wednesday crushed to death by a vehicle near Mandra, Rescue 1122 said. A pedestrian Muhammad Zaman (66) was hit by a van in front of LRBT, hospital when he attempted to cross the road. As a result, he died on the spot due to head injury. On information, Rescue teams rushed to the spot and shifted the body to hospital for legal formalities. — APP

Focus on price stability

REGARDLESS of whether it was a proactive move or one forced by circumstances, the decision of the finance minister to constitute a committee to form an action plan that will help reduce prices of sugar and edible oil is an important step in the right direction. It already says quite a lot that the decision was taken at the meeting of the National Price Monitoring Committee (NPMC) that meets every week to review prices of essential items like wheat and sugar. The government has clearly been forced onto the back foot in the matter of prices of some of the most important items of daily use by the public, and is now having to take steps that are meant to show people that it is taking the matter very seriously on top of actually controlling prices on the ground. Yet even as generally low growth in the wake of the pandemic has also led to lower inflation over the last quarter or so, for some reason relevant authorities have continuously struggled to keep a lid on prices of some very important items, especially wheat and sugar, even when market forces have not been responsible for such trends. First the government bought valuable time by blaming it all on hoarders and profiteers. But when it tried to use all the state's might to control things – at least that is what the prime minister said – and still there was no difference it was forced to take measures like forming committees that gave the impression that it was keeping a very close eye on things. However, what is it going to do when, or if, even such theatrics don't bear fruit? There are already in-built mechanisms, especially at the provincial level, to keep prices in check and common people from suffering too much. The fact that the government is having to run from pillar to post to show the people that it intends to take price control very seriously from now on only goes to show that it failed to ensure stability when it was supposed to. One can only hope that now it has its monitoring system properly worked out and any deviation from the normal demand-supply mechanism of the market will be promptly and effectively checked before any more burden is placed on the people.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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

ABC CERTIFIED

Vol: 01 Issue: 244

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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

A new beginning for Saudi-Qatar relations

MUHAMMAD OMAR IFTIKHAR

THE tussle in diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Qatar took a drastic turn in 2017 when Riyadh disengaged all diplomatic ties and transport connections with Qatar. The UAE was also a part of Riyadh's plan as the latter accused the government of Qatar to sponsor Islamist groups. Riyadh also viewed it as a matter of concern for Qatar edging closer with Iran. On January 4, 2021, Riyadh announced that it is resolving its dispute with Qatar and ordered to open all borders and air links with Qatar. In a televised address aired on Monday, January 4, 2021, Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Ahmad Nasser Al-Sabah said, "Based on [Kuwait's ruler Emir] Sheikh Nawaf's proposal, it was agreed to open the airspace and land and sea borders between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the State of Qatar, starting from this evening." Over the last three years or so, the government of Qatar was denying all allegations. It even said that there were no legitimacy to such blame that Riyadh and Abu Dhabi had imposed on Qatar. Now that the relations with Saudi Arabia and Qatar are moving towards normalcy, one must wonder about the future of their ties and their impact on the Middle East region. In this regard, the opinion of the US President will also come into play. President-elect Biden and his Vice President-elect, Kamala Harris, will create a strategy to create allies, counter conflicts, resolve issues, in various regions of the world following their oath-taking on January 20, 2021. In this regard, the regions of the Middle East, South Asia, Far East, Central Asia may be on top of their list. As far as Saudi Arabia is concerned, the Kingdom has had a fruitful tie with all previous US administrations. Time will tell what diplomatic strategies will the Biden administration have for Qatar. In the meantime, it is expected that the restoration of diplomatic ties between Saudi Arabia and Qatar will create regional harmony in the Middle East. The future, however, is still unknown.



Reeling Indian juggernaut in the Himalayas

Abdul Rashid Shakir



Politically India takes credit in being world's biggest democracy with a population of over 1.3 Billion. It is proud of inheriting British legacy of running democratic institutions. But unfortunately, it is oblivious of nurturing basic values needed for the democracy to flourish: higher literacy rate, economic self-sufficiency, and freedom of expression through independent media

INDIA'S hegemonic posture and expansionist designs in the South Asia can be well appreciated if we dissect its lethal miscalculations on economic and political fronts. Economically, Indian authorities boasted of their upsurge in the emerging market countries, and their joining multi-trillion dollar economies club with \$2.8 Trillion GDP and export revenue of around \$324 Billion in 2019. Its impressive IT industry, with around \$147 Billion exports, tempted it to aspire for a bigger-than-stature role in international power politics. But ostensibly, blindfolded by this illusion of self-aggrandizement, Indian policy makers ignored their dismal performance on major socio-economic indicators. Raging poverty, alarming law and order, miserable condition of human rights and minorities mock at Indian claims of economic turnaround. Seriously hit by COVID-19 pandemic in recent times, its progress on any of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is not enviable. Moody's recently published revised economic growth outlook for 2020 shows India growing at -8.9%. Its poor score of Gini Coefficient, a gauge of income distribution inequality among population, further augments this bleak picture of Indian social fabric. Politically India takes credit in being world's biggest democracy with a population of over 1.3 Billion. It is proud of inheriting British legacy of running democratic institutions. But unfortunately, it is oblivious of nurturing basic values needed for the democracy to flourish: higher literacy rate, economic self-sufficiency, and freedom of expression through independent media. Ground realities in India paint a gloomy picture. Firstly, India dropped 10 point to 51st position in Economist Intelligent Unit's 2019 Democracy Index that measures state

of democracy worldwide in 165 independent states and two territories. They have cited erosion of civil liberties as the main cause of this sharp dip in democratic outlook of the country. Secondly, distribution of wealth in India is so skewed in favor of rich that just 1% of its richest elite own 58.4%, and the richest 10% own 80.7% of country's total wealth. Thirdly, poor quality teaching and learning practices, especially for the children of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and religious minorities, coupled with a custom of early marriages result in early childrendrop-out from schools. Currently more than 6 million school-age kids are out of school in India. Fourthly, India's place in Reporters without Borders's Press Freedom Index has dropped from 136th in 2015 to 142nd in 2020 due to oppressive policies of the ruling BJP government, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. These fundamental flaws in assessing their economic and political worth led Indians to other fatal misconceptions about their diplomatic, tactical, and strategic prowess. Diplomatically, India being sweet heart of major world powers, behaves like a spoiled child at all international forums, be it United Nations (UN), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), or Financial Action Task Force (FATF). But it failed to understand that world powers are ignoring its whimsical wish list because of its bigger market, in order to secure their economic interests. Tactically, India tried to assume role of a policeman in South Asia, bullying all its neighbors to stamp its authority in the region. However, quite recently, Nepal's stubborn stance on Kalapani, Lipu Lekh and Limpiyadhura areas, located at a strategic three-way junction between Nepal, India and China, is a humiliating blow to

Indian hegemonic claims in the region. Strategically, India is projected as a counter weight to China in the region. But historic thrashing of its so-called brave troops by their Chinese counterparts in a non-conventional clash with sticks and clubs in Galway Valley, Ladakh in June 2020 is an eye-opener, not only for Indian authorities but also for their international aides, especially in Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD) or Quad: an informal strategic alliance of the United States, Japan, Australia and India to counter increasing Chinese military and economic power in theregion. In the back drop of more than six-months long standoff with Indian troops across the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh, China has strategically cemented its position in the region. It is a massive defeat of India and its sponsors, rather launchers, to encircle China and gain a position of influence in the region. All Indian tactics, like putting a ban on around 150 Chinese Apps, to control China economically would prove counterproductive at the best. Out of this deep sense of embarrassment, India is imploring China again and again to pull back its troops and maintain status quo in the area to give her an honorable exit from the crisis, but of no avail so far. Currently eighth round of border talks between the two countries has ended inconclusively. Keeping the aforesaid in view, one can painlessly point at how sham and ill-founded sense of grandeur Indian civil and military establishments harbor. Pragmatism demands that better sense should prevail. India should come out of deep slumber to confront bitter realities plaguing its socio-economic order. It must put its own house in order before aspiring for a global role.

— arshakir.pmo@gmail.com

Unending Indian brutalities in IIOJ&K

Iqbal Khan

India has been using the tools of oppression and ill-treatment to spread a sense of fear among the unarmed and innocent Muslim people of IIOJK for the past over seven decades. Thousands of Kashmiris including innocent youth, members of civil society, journalists and Kashmiri leaders remain incarcerated in Indian prisons, several of them at unrevealed locations and aloof from their families. The Indian forces still operate in the illegally occupied territory with complete impunity under draconian laws like PSA and AFSPA

IMPRISONMENT and torturing of Muslim Kashmiri leaders on the premise of their political ideology and struggle against illegal Indian occupation can be termed a true reflection of the extremist mind-set of the RSS-BJP regime that has no respect for the human rights, especially religious tolerance. India is committing war crimes in India Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) by violating Article-82 (2b, VIII) of the Rome Statute of International Criminal Court (ICC) and article 143 of Geneva Convention-IV. Several senior Muslim Kashmiri leaders, including Syed Ali Gilani and Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, are also under house detention, while other prominent leaders, such as Aasiya Andrabi, Muhammad Yasin Malik, Shabbir Ahmed Shah and Masarrat Aalam Mutt are in New Delhi's notorious Tihar Jail. Andrabi like other Kashmiri leaders has been illegally arrested over malicious, false and fabricated charges by the Indian government through invoking draconian laws promulgated in IIOJK. Dr. Asiya Andrabi, founder of Dukhtraan-e-Millat is facing inhuman treatment by the Indian government during imprisonment with deteriorating health conditions. Indian government is setting stage for judicial murder of Asiya Andrabi in coming weeks. Indian government is using all its force to suppress the voice of Kashmiris. Indian government arrested the Asiya Andrabi and her associates Famida Sufi and Nahida Nasreen in Oct 2016. Their sin was to raise voice for the rights of women and right of self-determination for the people of Kashmir. Indian government charged them with act of terrorism and other draconian laws under public safety act. Later, they were transferred to Tihar jail. Under Geneva Convention IV, Article 49, it is prohibited to transfer an individual or group of "protected persons from occupied territory to the occupying power, regardless of their motives". India had violated article 49 multiple times by transferring Kashmiri leaders including Asiya Andrabi, her husband Dr. Ashiq Hussain Faktoo and other leaders from Kashmiri prisons to notorious Tihar Jail. Dr. Faktoo is in Indian Prison serving life sentence for 27 years. India is also violating Article 76 of Geneva Convention IV, while not allowing the delegate of International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to visit the prison. This article also calls that women shall be confined in separate quarters and shall be under the direct supervision of women. According to Dr Shireen Mazari,

Minster for Huma Rights, it is the binding duty of India being the signatory of International Human Rights Law and Humanitarian Law of the United Nations World Summit in 2005. Against all norms, Indian Supreme Court defined the term "death imprisonment" as the imprisonment till death of the individual during a verdict in 2012. Presently, Indian government is using this verdict to penalize Asiya Andrabi to keep her behind bar till her death. It is just like a judicial murder of an individual. International human rights organizations need to come forward play their role to end this draconian law and save the life of a human rights and women rights defender of IIOJK. Designation of Pakistan as a "country of particular concern" by the US under its "International Religious Freedom Act of 1998" is completely against the realities on the ground and raises serious doubts about the credibility of the exercise. Pakistan and China were among several countries designated by the State Department as countries of "particular concerns" regarding religious freedom on the recommendation of the US International Commission on Religious Freedom (USICRF). However, the State Department rejected the proposal to place India in the list as well. The findings and recommendations of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom as well as the US Congressional hearings on the maltreatment of minorities in India and the violation of religious freedom all over the country including in the Muslim-majority IIOJK (Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir) were mischievously ignored by the US State Department. The glaring omission of India, where the RSS-BJP regime and their leaders openly disregard religious freedom and discriminate against minority communities in an institutionalized manner, is unfortunate and puts the credibility of the US report into question. Pakistan has aptly rejected the US State Department's "arbitrary and selective assessment" on religious freedom, terming it counterproductive to promote bilateral relations. Pakistan and the US have been constructively engaging on the subject at the bilateral level, a fact regrettably overlooked by the US. During the year 2020, Indian Army violated the Line of Control for more than 3,000 times. As a consequence, 30 innocent civilians were martyred and more than 180 others including over 90 women and 67 children, got injured or became disabled—all Muslims. It was the bloodiest year in terms of the Indian brutalities.

Incident of killing of three innocent young Muslim labourers at the hands of Indian Army in Shopian district of occupied Kashmir and later placing weapons on their corpses to declare them militants and terrorists, as exposed by the Kashmir police after an in-depth investigation, should serve as an eye-opener for the United States. And the United Nations should constitute a commission of inquiry to visit IIOJK&K and look into human rights violations there. India has been using the tools of oppression and ill-treatment to spread a sense of fear among the unarmed and innocent Muslim people of IIOJK for the past over seven decades. Thousands of Kashmiris including innocent youth, members of civil society, journalists and Kashmiri leaders remain incarcerated in Indian prisons, several of them at unrevealed locations and aloof from their families. The Indian forces still operate in the illegally occupied territory with complete impunity under draconian laws like Public Safety Act (PSA) and Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA). Systematic demonization, dispossession, marginalisation and targeted violence against Muslims using the communal slur of "love jihad" in Hindutva-inspired India has become commonplace. It is no secret that attacks by cow vigilantes and mob lynching of Indian Muslims take place regularly, with complete impunity for the perpetrators. State complicity in organized violence against the Muslim minority in India is a matter of record. Recently, at the 47th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) held at Niamey, the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) has called upon the Indian government to take immediate steps "It also calls upon New Delhi to fulfil its responsibilities under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments including the recommendations of the OIC." Silence of the so-called human rights champion is rather intriguing after the Indian occupational army has itself confessed that it had killed the ordinary Muslim civilians in fake encounters in Indian illegally occupied Kashmir, and later declared them terrorists. Most of the encounters taking place in the occupied territory are fake. It is no longer a secret that the Indian Army is engaged in naked terrorism and ethnic cleansing of innocent Kashmiri Muslims in the occupied territory.

— The writer is a freelance columnist; email: Iqbal.khan9999@yahoo.com

Briefs

Machh tragedy proof of unrest

From Page 01

Maryam Nawaz nor PPP chairperson Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari were in attendance. In his speech, Rehman accused the government of having "ruined" peace and the country's economy, and claimed that there was no system in the tribal areas.

"Claims were made that we have defeated terrorism, that there is peace in the country now. 'I say if the armed forces have given sacrifices against terrorism, then we have too and so has the nation. And if terrorism is [still] present then your claims were wrong,' the JUI-F leader told the crowd. He questioned why the armed forces were 'still present' in the tribal areas. 'Is terrorism not being ended so there is a justification for the army to stay there?' he asked. Rehman alleged that the army was 'spread everywhere in Balochistan', saying this was cited as a security requirement.

"I want to say in clear words that until the army remains in Pakistan's civilian areas, peace cannot be established," he added.

Rehman said the PDM had shown the nation "the path of freedom and democracy". He added that when the alliance was deciding its basic manifesto and objectives, it first stressed the need to implement the Constitution's Islamic clauses and "introduce Pakistan as an Islamic state". Prior to Wednesday's rally, a luncheon was organised for PDM's central and provincial leadership at the residence of JUI-F leader Akram Khan Durrani. Besides Rehman, Mehmood Khan Achakzai, Ahsan Iqbal, Ameer Muqam and other leaders had lunch there before heading to the rally venue.

PM assures support to Hazaras

From Page 01

that he would visit them very soon to "offer prayers and console with all the families personally". "I will never betray my people's trust. Please bury your loved ones so their souls find peace," said PM Imran. The tweets by the premier came as the Hazara families continue their sit-in following the brutal killing of 11 coal miners in Machh. He also tweeted after a delegation headed by federal minister Ali Zaidi, sent by him, failed to convince families of the slain miners to bury their dead and not keep Prime Minister Imran Khan's visit a condition for their last rites. The talks were held a day after Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed's visit failed to end the protest.

Iran expects commitments to JCPOA from signatory sides

FOREIGN DESK

TEHRAN: Iran expects certain corrections to be made within the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), so that the signatory sides would effectively implement their commitments, said the Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh. Trend reports citing IRNA. He pointed out that Iran would like to see the other signatories to comply with their commitments. "If so, Iran would be ready to remain committed as well," Khatibzadeh said. "We hope the US would use the opportunity for preserving the JCPOA. The P5+1 was our negotiation side and with regards to the regional countries, there is a need to change of talks in the region and we hope leaders of these countries would consider it," he said. "We did not comply with some of our commitments while they (JCPOA signatories) have fulfilled none of their commitments," Khatibzadeh said. "Iran has commitments to the NPT and the JCPOA. All of our actions were due to the fact that the other side could not comply with its commitments," he said. "We do not negotiate about the JCPOA, the negotiations have been finished and signed, we want the US to effectively implement their commitments to the JCPOA," Khatibzadeh said, asking transaction to all, "he said referring to review of the FATF related bills at the Expediency Council. "It's unfortunate that we are blacklisted and despite difficulties foreign ministry would continue its efforts," he said.



CHRISTCHURCH: Kiwis players posing with trophy after sweeping Test series against Pakistan. - DNA

NZ sweep Test series after thrashing Pakistan

Pakistani batsmen continued to struggle as they stumbled to 186 all out in a pitch that witnessed its highest total scored by the opposing team in the same match

SPORTS DESK

CHRISTCHURCH: New Zealand completed clean-sweep against Pakistan in the two-match Test series after beating the visiting team by an innings and 176 runs in the second Test at Hagley Oval in Christchurch on Wednesday. Pakistani batsmen continued to struggle as they stumbled to 186 all out in a pitch that witnessed its highest total scored by the opposing team in the same match. Kyle Jamieson, the six feet eight inch tall Kiwi bowler, with his 11 wickets was the nightmare for the opponent team as he became the first bowler to take more than 10 wickets in a Test at Hagley Oval,

leading him to win the Player of the Match award. His figures of six for 38 in second innings backed with his five for 69 in the first helped New Zealand wrap up the match in four days. Despite playing just six Tests so far, Jamieson played a senior bowler role in a pace-attack headed by higher-ranked veterans Tim Southee and Trent Boult. Meanwhile, the Kiwi skipper Kane Williamson with Man of the Series performance led from the front taking his team to not only a series victory but also the number one ranked Test team in the world right now. The 30-year-old scored 388 runs in the two Tests at a whopping average of 129 including a double ton in the same match. When Paki-

NZ gains top Test rank, Pakistan remains at 7

KARACHI: New Zealand, after beating Pakistan 2-0 in the two-match Test series, have gained the number one position in ICC's updated Test Team rankings. The Kiwis have now 3198 points followed by Australia (3028) and India (3085) as second and third Test teams in the world. Meanwhile, at ICC Test Championship's points table, New Zealand have settled at the third position behind Australia - number one and India - number two. Pakistan are at number six with just two wins out of 10 matches. It must be noted here that Pakistan lost the second Test by an inning and 179 runs at the hands of New Zealand. The green caps will return to Pakistan on January 10 where they will prepare for home series against South Africa after some rest. South Africa are scheduled to play two Tests in Pakistan, one at Karachi's National Stadium while another in Rawalpindi. - DNA

stan resumed the day at one down for eight, and needing to bat for the better part of two days to salvage a draw, Boult took the first wicket when he had night-watchman Mohammad Abbas out for three in the fifth over. Since then it has been all about Jamieson, who removed Abid Ali for 26 to go with his dismissal of Shan Masood the previous evening and Pakistan were 69 for three at lunch. In a potent middle session, Jamieson had Haris Sohail and Azhar Ali caught behind, and bowled Pakistan captain Mohammad Rizwan to have the tourists at 98 for six. Sohail did not get his feet moving as he poked at a rising delivery on 15, the best score on what has been a disappointing tour for the left-hander.

China condemns US ban on transactions involving Chinese apps

FOREIGN DESK

BEIJING: A Foreign Ministry spokesman on Wednesday condemned the U.S. ban on transactions involving eight Chinese apps on the pretext of protecting U.S. citizens' privacy and data security. "This is another example of the U.S. side stretching the concept of national security and abusing state power to groundlessly suppress foreign companies," spokesperson Hua Chunying said at a daily news briefing. According to media report, the ban on Chinese apps including Alipay and WeChat Pay was ordered on Tuesday by U.S. President Donald Trump through an executive order. Hua called the U.S. actions "hypocritical and ridiculous."

Noting that the United States has always been the world's largest "hacking empire," Hua said the United States launches groundless accusations against other countries while at the same time it monitors and steals secrets from others indiscriminately. "It's like

a thief yelling that he wants to be protected from being stolen."

Hua said the U.S. actions will have some impact on Chinese enterprises but, more importantly, they will damage the interests of the United States and its consumers.

"The United States talks about a free market economy and fair competition, but how does it behave itself?" Hua said.

She stressed that the development of science and technology should serve the progress and well-being of all mankind, rather than be treated differently by ideology or become a tool of political manipulation. China urges the United States to earnestly respect market economy and fair competition principles, abide by international economic and trade rules, and provide an open, fair, just and non-discriminatory business environment for foreign companies investing and operating in the country, said Hua, adding that China will take necessary measures to safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese enterprises.

Health security to be Indonesia's diplomatic priority

FOREIGN DESK

JAKARTA: Indonesian Foreign Affairs Minister Retno Marsudi said here on Wednesday that national health security and independence will be her two diplomatic priorities for 2021. "Our focus is to realize the commitments on vaccines through bilateral and multilateral partnerships," the minister said as she virtually delivered the 2021 Annual Minister of Foreign Affairs Statement (PPTM). Besides securing vaccine supplies, Indonesia will prioritize strengthening research and transfer of technology in the public health sector, as well as increasing response



and preparedness to deal with future pandemics at the national, regional, and global levels, she added. Marsudi also highlighted the importance

of increasing international participation to support national health industries, which cover pharmaceutical raw materials, pharmacy, and health tools and facilities. The foreign minister, in her annual statement, also unveiled plans to turn Indonesia into one of the world's leading producers of personnel protective equipment (PPEs), which are critical to the fight against the coronavirus pandemic. Indonesia, Marsudi announced, has collected two international certificates, ISO16603 and ISO16604, on manufacturing PPEs. The Indonesian government last year signed multiple deals to secure vaccine supplies with China's bio-pharmaceutical companies and a UK-based vaccine producer.

China steps up COVID curbs near Beijing

FOREIGN DESK

BEIJING: Chinese authorities on Wednesday imposed travel restrictions and banned gatherings in the capital city of Hebei province, which surrounds Beijing, in the latest escalation of measures to stave off another coronavirus wave. The province, which entered a "wartime mode" on Tuesday, accounted for 20 of the 23 new locally transmitted COVID-19 cases reported in mainland China on Jan. 5, more than the total of 19

cases in the province in the three previous days. Hebei also accounted for 43 of 64 new asymptomatic cases - people infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus but not yet showing symptoms of COVID-19. Hebei's capital, Shijiazhuang, a city of 11 million that reported 19 confirmed and 41 asymptomatic cases, ramped up countermeasures. It will require all travellers to present a negative nucleic acid COVID-19 test within the past 72 hours before boarding a train or an airplane, the Shijiazhuang International

Airport said on Wednesday. The city has also launched a mass testing drive, shut its main long-range bus terminal, banned gatherings and ordered residential compounds to keep out non-residents. The head of China's National Health Commission led a team to the city on Tuesday, the official Xinhua news agency said on Tuesday. The total number of new mainland cases, including those originating from overseas, fell to 32 from 33 a day earlier - a small fraction of what China saw at the height of the outbreak that

emerged from the central city of Wuhan in late 2019. The country does not count asymptomatic patients as confirmed COVID-19 cases. China continues to take aggressive measures to prevent another wave of the disease that has killed 4,634 people in China and nearly 1.9 million globally. Authorities in Dalian, in Liaoning province where new local COVID-19 infections have been reported in recent days, also barred residents of areas designated medium or high-risk for the disease from leaving the city.

Top Armenian diplomat's visit to Karabakh 'illegal'

The spokesperson recalled that the declaration was signed by Armenian PM on November 10 and thereby the Armenian government had taken certain commitments under the agreement. "Violation of these commitments by official Yerevan is a provocation, and such actions do not serve the normalization

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Leyla Abdullayeva has condemned Armenian Foreign Minister Ara Ayyazian's illegal visit to Azerbaijan's Nagorno-Karabakh region, which runs counter to the peace agreement that Baku, Moscow and Yerevan signed on November 10, 2020. Abdullayeva made the remarks in reaction to Ayyazian's visit to Nagorno-Karabakh, where he met representatives of the self-styled entity in the region and signed some "documents". Abdullayeva's remarks were published on the Foreign Ministry website on Janu-

ary 5. "The illegal visit of Armenian Foreign Minister Ara Ayyazian to the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, where he met with representatives of the so-called structure and signed 'documents', contradicts the trilateral declaration on ceasefire and cessation of all hostilities in the Nagorno-Karabakh region signed on November 10, 2020, and completely does not correspond to the framework for establishing peace, security and cooperation in the region after the cessation of hostilities," Abdullayeva said. The spokesperson recalled that the declaration was signed by Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on November 10 and thereby the Armenian gov-

ernment had taken certain commitments under the agreement. "Violation of these commitments by official Yerevan is a provocation, and such actions calculated for a domestic audience do not serve the normalization of the situation in the region. Officials should not act based on unfounded illusions, but the new re-

ality that emerged in the region," Abdullayeva added. She stressed that peaceful and secure coexistence is possible through the fulfilment of the aforesaid peace agreement and steps based on new security format in the region. "Ensuring the implementation of the joint statement of November 10 and taking steps based on the new security format, as well as cooperation opportunities emerged in the region can contribute to peaceful and secure coexistence. The opposite is nothing else but an attempt to inflame the tension," Abdullayeva added. Azerbaijan entered a war with Armenia after the latter started firing at Azerbaijani civilians

and military positions starting September 27, 2020. The war ended on November 10 with the signing of a trilateral peace deal by the Azerbaijani, Russian and Armenian leaders. The peace agreement stipulated the return of Azerbaijan's Armenian-occupied Kalbajar, Aghdam and Lachin regions. Before the signing of the deal, the Azerbaijani army had liberated around 300 villages, settlements, city centers and historic Shusha city. The Azerbaijani army declared a victory against the Armenian troops. The signed agreement obliged Armenia to withdraw its troops from the Azerbaijani lands that it has occupied since early 1990s.



Trump calls on Pence to subvert election

From Page 01

He's a great guy. Of course if he doesn't come through I won't like him quite as much," Trump said at a rally aimed at canvassing support for two Republican senate candidates in Georgia. Losing both seats in the run-off elections on Tuesday will pass control of the Senate (current 50-48 in Republican hands) to Democrats. In another feverish gathering of mostly unmasked supporters that raised fears of being a Covid superspreader, Trump mocked a more restrained Biden rally in the state ("they had 14 people in three cars," he sneered) while warning that "America as you know it will be over," if Democrats gained control of the Senate. "And it will never, ever - I believe - be able to come back again. It will be too far gone. Your vote tomorrow could ... be your last chance to save the America that we love," told voters in a state that has long been home to many white supremacists who have suppressed black voter turnout to win elections.

Pak-UAE agree to cooperate

From Page 01

on Wednesday, he said revival of exploration and production activities in oil and gas sector would attract investment in the country. The Minister also apprised the envoy about the progress of various energy projects in lieu of investment-friendly policies introduced by current government in diverse fields for thriving economic development of Pakistan.

He said the diversified market of energy sector is one of the prime investment destination to boost the economic growth of the country.

The Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia stressed that the kingdom would continue to work with Pakistan for strengthening bilateral relations between the two brotherly countries. During the meeting, both sides deliberated upon joint ventures by Pakistan and the Kingdom in the petroleum and energy sector.

Minorities Enjoying Equal Rights, says Minister

DNA

ATTOCK: Provincial Minister for Human Rights and Minorities Ejaz Alam Masih said that minorities were enjoying equal rights and opportunities to get fool proof security during special religious festivals. He said this during his visit as a chief guest on the occasion of Birth Anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh the 10th Guru of Sikh religion. He was accompanied by DC Attock Ali Anan Qamar.

Provincial Minister Ejaz Alam said that the freedom which Sikhs and other minorities were enjoying here was matchless. He said, the sacred worship places of Sikhs and other religions were kept in better condition by the governments and funds were allocated regularly for their renovation. He condemned India for not giving rights to their minorities and interacted with the Sikhs who had come from different areas to celebrate the day.

Earlier Sikh leaders which include Kalyan Singh, Santok Singh, Beshan Singh, Naresh Singh and others gave a warm welcome to the chief guest and expressed their satisfaction over the arrangements made for them at the gurdwara. It is worth mentioning that Guru Gobind Singh was the 10th Sikh Guru, a spiritual master, warrior, poet and philosopher. After the death of his father Tegh Bahadur, Gobind Singh was formally installed as the leader of the Sikhs at the age of nine, becoming the tenth and final Sikh Guru.

Briefs

America virus cases surpass 21 m

MONITORING DESK

WASHINGTON: On a day the United States registered another record for Covid-19 patients in hospitals, the country passed 21 million cases of the coronavirus, according to Johns Hopkins University. The US, with 21,007,694 cases as of Tuesday evening, has almost as many as the next three nations - India, Brazil and Russia - have combined. The US has added 1 million cases in the past four days. That's as the record number of hospital patients Tuesday topped 131,200, according to the Covid Tracking Project. And some states are warning the worst may be ahead. Experts have said holiday travel and gatherings could help fuel another surge of Covid-19 infections. In California, officials say ICU units in at least two regions are filled to practical capacity. And because of resource limitations, Los Angeles County ambulance crews have been instructed not to transport any patient in blunt traumatic or nontraumatic cardiac arrest if they can't first be resuscitated in the field. Some EMTs have had to wait with patients outside hospitals for hours because the facilities don't immediately have space to take the patients in. "This is a humanitarian catastrophe now unfolding in Los Angeles, and I worry it won't stop in Los Angeles. We'll be looking at this in other metro areas as well," Dr. Peter Hotez, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine, told CNN on Tuesday. "We are heading into what we anticipate as a surge on top of a surge," Gov.

63rd Grammy Awards rescheduled to March

WEB DESK

WASHINGTON: The Grammy Awards, which had been scheduled to take place later this month, have been postponed to March due to the COVID-19 pandemic. "After thoughtful conversations with health experts, our host and artists scheduled to appear, we are rescheduling the 63rd Annual Grammy Awards to be broadcast Sunday, March 14, 2021," said the Recording Academy, its broadcast partner CBS, and the event's executive producer, Ben Winston, in a joint statement. "The deteriorating COVID situation in Los Angeles, with hospital services being overwhelmed, ICUs having reached capacity, and new guidance from state and local governments have all led us to conclude that postponing our show was the right thing to do," the statement said. California has nearly 2.5 million confirmed cases and an excess of 27,000 deaths from the disease, while Los Angeles has reported more than 10,000 deaths and 827,000 cases, according to Johns Hopkins University.

Indonesia imposes movement control on Jan 11-25

WEB DESK

JAKARTA: The government decided to impose restrictions on the movement of people on January 11-25, especially in Java and Bali, to counter an exponential rise in the number of new cases of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) infection.

"We decided that this limitation on the movement of people is in place on January 11-25, and we will continue to evaluate the measures taken," Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs Airlangga Hartarto stated here on Wednesday. Hartarto delivered the statement after participating in a limited governmental meeting on "Handling the COVID-19 Pandemic and Vaccination Implementation Plan" through videoconferencing led by President Joko Widodo at the State Palace in Jakarta, Wednesday. While restricting the movement of people, the government will closely monitor the implementation of three main public health protocols: wearing masks, maintaining distance, and washing hands.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan, Nawaf Bin Saeed Al-Maliki calls on Federal Minister For Energy, Omar Ayub Khan at his office. - DNA

Democrats near Senate control after Warnock wins Georgia race

The second runoff, between Democrat Jon Ossoff and Republican David Perdue, is still too close to call. If Democrats prevail in both races, the party will take control of the Senate, paving the way for Joe Biden to enact his agenda

FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: Democrat Raphael Warnock has defeated Republican Kelly Loeffler in one of Georgia's two US Senate runoff elections, according to a projection by The Associated Press news agency, putting Democrats one seat away from majority control of the Senate. In the extremely tight race, Warnock leads Loeffler 50.5 to 49.5 percent, with 98 percent of votes counted. The second runoff, between Democrat Jon Ossoff and Republican David Perdue, is still too close to call. If Democrats prevail in both races, the party will take control of the Senate, paving the way for Joe Biden to enact

his agenda after he is sworn in as president on January 20. Warnock, 51, is the senior pastor at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, the same church pastored by civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. His victory makes him the first Black senator in Georgia's history. "I am going to the Senate to work for all of Georgia," Warnock said in live remarks broadcast on social media early on Wednesday morning. "To everyone out there struggling today, whether you voted for me or not, know this: I hear you. I see you. And every day I'm in the United States Senate, I will fight for you. I will fight for your family." Warnock will be up for election again in 2022, as this victory is to fill the remaining two



years of the Senate term originally won in 2016 by Republican Johnny Isakson, who stepped down last year and was temporarily replaced by Loeffler. The election results show how the politics in Georgia, a state long dominated by Republicans, is changing. In November,

Biden defeated President Donald Trump by 11,779 votes, becoming the first Democratic presidential candidate to win the state since 1992. Warnock's success - and the tight race between Ossoff and Perdue - further show that Georgia will continue to be a competitive battleground. The conclusion of these historic double-barrelled elections comes after a gruelling two-month campaign sprint in which the candidates and outside groups spent more than \$500m combined since Election Day - November 3. Given the high stakes of the outcome, the races captivated the American political world over the December holidays, and drew nationwide attention. The growth of urban and suburban

areas around cities like Atlanta combined with an increasingly diversified population has increased Democratic status in the state, potentially reshaping the state's structures of political power. "The Atlanta area is rapidly changing, and that is outweighing a lot of rural Georgia," said Jessica Taylor, a political analyst for the Cook Political Report. "It's a purple state, but it's also perhaps a centre-right state. Very slightly still, but it's one that's changing." Warnock's most robust support came from areas in and around cities, such as Atlanta, Macon and Savannah, while Perdue and Loeffler relied on support from the state's peripheries that voted in high numbers for Trump in 2016 and 2020.

Azerbaijan to build international airport in Fuzuli

DNA

BAKU: President Ilham Aliyev has said that Azerbaijan will build an international airport in its recently-liberated Fuzuli region in 2021.

Aliyev made the remarks on January 5 at a video meeting with Anar Karimov, whom he appointed as culture minister. "An international airport will be built in Fuzuli on my instructions. This instruction has already been given. Places are being identified now. Mine clearance work will be carried out. I have ordered that an international airport be established in Fuzuli this year. At least a runway should be put into operation. The distance from there to Shusha is short," Aliyev said. The president said that the new airport will open new opportunities to invite foreign guests to Shusha.

"In Soviet times, you had to go to Shusha either from Khankandi or through the Lachin corridor. We are building a new road now. Of course, those roads are there too, and our citizens, those engaged in repair work there these days are using these roads - the Aghdam-Khankandi-Shusha road and the Lachin corridor. In other words, these roads are open to us. We should be

able to go there whenever we want, and it will be the case. However, the construction of the Fuzuli international airport will create opportunities to invite foreign guests to Shusha. It will be possible to come there and then travel a short distance to Shusha," he said. In his speech, the head of state declared Shusha to be capital of Azerbaijani culture. The city was liberated from the Armenian occupation on November 8, 2020. "I declare Shusha to be the capital of Azerbaijani culture. The city of Shusha deserves that. I think that it can be considered not only the cultural capital of Azerbaijan but also of the entire region. The cultural life of Shusha should be rich. Work has already begun on the restoration of Shusha. A large delegation was sent there on my instruction. So the housing stock and historical sites must be inspected, the damage must be accurately calculated, and we must begin the restoration of Shusha. However, the original appearance and the historical image of Shusha must be restored without wasting time, but at the same time without haste." Aliyev stressed that all mosques in Shusha must be overhauled, restored and their original appearance returned to them.

N.Cyprus expects to begin vaccination by Jan.15

FOREIGN DESK

LEFKOSA: Turkish Cypriot authorities hope to start vaccinating the country's population against the novel coronavirus by Jan. 15 at the latest, the country's top health official told Anadolu Agency Wednesday. The government aims to have 60% of its population immunized to the virus by March, Health Minister Ali Pili said, underlining that the fight against COVID-19 continues in the Turkish

Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), as well as in Turkey. "We'll conduct the vaccination program with Turkey. [...] I discussed with [Turkish Health] Minister Koca that we'd start the first vaccinations next week at the latest. We'll first administer these vaccines to healthcare professionals and nursing home residents," added Pili.

He noted that the vaccines, which had been sent by Turkey, would be administered at Dr. Burhan Nalbantoglu Hospital, Lefkosa Emergen-

cy Hospital and other health centers. Pili also said the TRNC on Tuesday had sent samples to Turkey to test for a recent new strain of the coronavirus that was first reported in the UK recently, adding that cases of the variant had emerged in the Greek Cypriot administration, as well as other countries. Though not ruling out the possibility of imposing new measures against the virus in the country, he said a full lockdown was not currently necessary. "If necessary, we may im-

pose a lockdown for 15-20 days for public health and to end the pandemic sooner," he added. The COVID-19 pandemic has claimed more than 1.87 million lives in 191 countries and regions since it originated in China last December. Over 86.5 million cases have been reported worldwide, with more than 48.5 million recoveries, according to figures compiled by the US' Johns Hopkins University. The US, India, and Brazil remain the worst-hit countries in terms of cases.

Julian Assange denied bail by UK court

FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: Julian Assange has been refused bail because he "has an incentive to abscond" and there is a good chance he would fail to return to court if freed, according to the judge who delivered the decision in London. Wednesday's ruling by District Judge Vanessa Baraitser at Westminster Magistrates Court means the WikiLeaks founder will continue to be held at the maximum-security Belmarsh prison in the UK capital. Baraitser told the court: "I am satisfied that there



are substantial grounds for believing that if Mr Assange is released today he will fail to surrender to the court to face the appellant proceedings." The decision marks a defeat for As-

sange's legal team, which had been celebrating a ruling earlier this week against the US's attempt to extradite him. On Monday at the Old Bailey, Baraitser said if Assange were sent across the Atlantic to face 18 criminal charges of breaking an espionage law and conspiring to hack government computers, he would be at risk of suicide. Assange, 49, an Australian citizen, has been jailed at Belmarsh since he was arrested at the Ecuadorian embassy in London in 2019 for breaching bail conditions in a separate extradition case involving Sweden.

Indonesia sends diplomatic notes to Iran

FOREIGN DESK

JAKARTA: Indonesia sent diplomatic notes to Iran in pursuit of a clarification on its two nationals working for a South Korea-registered oil tanker seized by Tehran in the Strait of Hormuz. The Indonesian Embassy in Tehran has contacted and coordinated with several parties to handle the case, the embassy noted in a written statement released on Wednesday. "The Indonesian Embassy in Tehran has sent diplomatic notes to the Iranian Foreign Ministry to seek clarification over the two Indonesian crew members as well as to gain consular access and hold communication with both of them," the embassy stated. The Iranian Foreign Ministry noted that its officials had paid a visit to MT Hankook Chemi and confirmed that all its crew members, including two Indonesians, were in good health. Reuters quoted Iranian news agency Tasnim as saying on Monday (Jan 4) that the crew members of the South Korea-registered tanker, seized by Iran in the Strait of Hormuz earlier in the day, are held in custody in the Iran port city of Bandar Abbas. The crew members are from South Korea, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Myanmar. Reuters quoted Tasnim as saying that Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards seized the tanker for allegedly causing chemical pollution in the bay.

DRC: 22 civilians killed in rebel attack

WEB DESK

At least 22 civilians have been killed in a rebel attack on a village in the North Kivu province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), according to local officials. The violence in Mwenda village of the Beni territory was perpetrated by the Ugandan rebel group Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), Donat Kibwana, the administrator of the Beni territory, told Anadolu news agency. "ADF rebels attacked the village of Mwenda on Monday about 19:00 GMT, killing 22 civilians with machetes," Kibwana said, adding the death toll is provisional. Local leaders Ruwenzori Bozy Sindiwako and Iteni Muvunga Kimwele told the dpa news agency by telephone on Tuesday the rebels used machetes and bladed weapons to carry out the massacre and systematically looted the settlement. Fulbert Kasairo, a local official, said a dozen other villagers were also kidnapped by the attackers in order to transport stolen goods to other localities.

20 killed in air strike in Mali

FOREIGN DESK

MALI: France said it killed dozens of fighters in a weekend air raid in central Mali, while several villagers and a local group said up to 20 wedding guests were killed by fire from a helicopter. Villagers in Bounti said a lone helicopter opened fire in broad daylight on Sunday, sowing panic among a crowd gathered for a wedding. "It was run for your lives," resident Ahmadou Ghana said. Another villager, Mady Dicko, added: "We were surprised by the intensity of the strike. The helicopter was flying very low." On Sunday, Tabital Pulakuu, an association that promotes the culture of Mali's Fulani ethnic group, reported an "air strike that claimed the lives of at least 20 civilians" during a wedding. A French military spokesman, Colonel Frederic Barbry, denied a connection between the raid and the wedding party, saying such a link "does not correspond to information collected prior to the air strike". Barbry told The Associated Press news agency the operation followed an intelligence mission of several days that showed a "suspicious gathering of people". The French military was able to conclude it was a "terrorist armed group based on individuals' attitudes, their equipment and other intelligence information", he said.

Turkey, UK sign \$25bn post-Brexit trade deal

"This actually opens up new territory for Turkey in negotiating a renewed and updated customs union with the EU," said Can Selcuki, general manager of Istanbul Economics Research

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: The post-Brexit trade deal between Turkey and the United Kingdom has safeguarded \$25bn worth of business between the nations that find themselves two of the largest economies on the fringes of the European Union. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan described it as "the most important trade deal" since Ankara signed a customs union with the EU in 1995, while the UK's International Trade Secretary Liz Truss said it would lead to a "new, more ambitious deal with Turkey in the near future". Ruhsar Pekcan, Turkey's trade minister, said: "Without a deal, about 75 percent of Turkish exports to the UK would be subject to tariffs,

causing the loss of about \$2.4bn; this risk is now gone." The free trade agreement (FTA) that came into effect on New Year's Day replicates ties that existed when the UK was still in the EU, which became void after December 31. It ensures continued tariff-free trade on non-agricultural products between the UK and Turkey. Because of Ankara's customs union with the bloc, Britain first had to sign its own deal with Europe before sealing the Turkey treaty. Gulcin Ozkan, vice dean and professor of finance at King's College London, said although the deal was "business as usual" it was a "huge relief" for both countries relative to the scenario of a no-deal Brexit and the absence of an FTA between Turkey and the UK.

From the Turkish perspective, the Brexit deal, rather than the FTA, could have greater implications. "This actually opens up new territory for Turkey in negotiating a renewed and updated customs union with the EU," said Can Selcuki, general manager of Istanbul Economics Research. "For the first time, a large country in the periphery of Europe has made a trade deal with the EU and that could provide a model for the future of the Turkey-EU customs union and that provides the most significant partnership going forward." Turkey has been pressing for reform to its customs union with the EU to reflect the realities of 21st-century trade brought about by developments in information and communication technologies. However, deteriorating relations

between Ankara and the EU have slowed talks. The agreement with the UK, meanwhile, requires negotiations over the next two years to expand the deal to possibly include the agriculture and services sectors. "When the customs union was signed, some things weren't important such as e-trade," said Sedat Aybar, professor of economics at Istanbul Aydin University. "The FTA with Britain, as a living document, is going to be worked on and include e-trade and services over the next two years as it is upgraded. This will pave the way for the EU to revise the customs union," Aybar said. "It's a very dynamic, exciting and advantageous process." Both the UK and Turkey have had problematic relations with the EU in recent years. The UK resisted

greater political integration within the EU, while Ankara has been angered by criticism of its human rights record and foreign policy. In favouring a decentralised EU, the UK supported Turkey's 2005 membership bid, which has been stalled since 2016, while France and Germany sought closer integration between existing members, Ozkan said. As Paris and Berlin denounced mass arrests in the wake of a 2016 coup attempt in Turkey, London soft-pedalled on confrontation with Ankara. The UK was the first Western power to send a minister to Turkey after the failed coup, which came less than a month after the Brexit vote. This approach led to criticism that the UK was ignoring issues such as human rights in favour of its commercial interests.

Briefs

New SOPs for Int'l passengers

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Civil Aviation Authority has issued a list of new SOPs for international passengers coming to Pakistan according to the categories their country of origin has been placed in due to the coronavirus pandemic. In a notification issued on Tuesday, the authority said 23 countries have been placed in Category A. This means that inbound passengers from these countries will not have to get a coronavirus test prior to travel. The countries in this category are: Australia, China, Cote D'Ivoire, Cuba, Fiji, Iceland, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Laos, Maldives, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Rwanda, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Togo, Uruguay, Vietnam, Zambia. All other countries have been placed in Category B which will require inbound passengers to get a PCR test at least 96 hours before traveling. If the passengers fail to show their negative test results, the airline will not issue a boarding pass. It will also be responsible for making sure that SOPs are followed. The new instructions will be valid until March 31. Aircrafts have to be disinfected before and after boarding and all members of the cabin and crew will have to wear face masks at all times except when having food.

Pak ranks 4th on happiness index

DNA

KARACHI: According to a Gallup International Survey at the end of the year 2020, 65% of Pakistanis claim to be happy in general. As compared to the previous year there is a decrease in proportion of Pakistanis who are generally happy. Gallup Survey also revealed that out of 41 countries, Pakistan ranked 4th on the Happiness Index. These interesting findings have emerged out of an annual, 46 country research conducted by Gallup International (founded by the world-renowned scholar and pollster Dr. George Gallup in 1947). The survey in Pakistan was done by Gallup Pakistan. The study comprised internationally of 38,709 respondents covering different ethnicities, regions, religions, age, and gender.

ICT police to be equipped on modern lines: Rasheed

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed on Wednesday said that the Islamabad police would be equipped on modern lines and would be made an exemplary force for other law enforcement agencies. Talking to a private news channel, he said that the overall security plan would be further improved to make Islamabad a safe city and checking system through smart cars, equipped with the latest technology will also be introduced soon. More cars will be provided to Islamabad police for effective checking," he said, adding that unnecessary 30 check posts have been removed from the city while latest technology would be used to conduct checking at various points of the city, he said. Sheik Rasheed believes that the footage of the Safe City cameras is technologically advanced too, which could help law enforcement agencies to identify suspects and criminals through the online system. He said that it was not possible to meet policing challenges of the modern era without employing the latest technology effectively and some people with negative thinking politicizing the issue of check posts which were unnecessary.

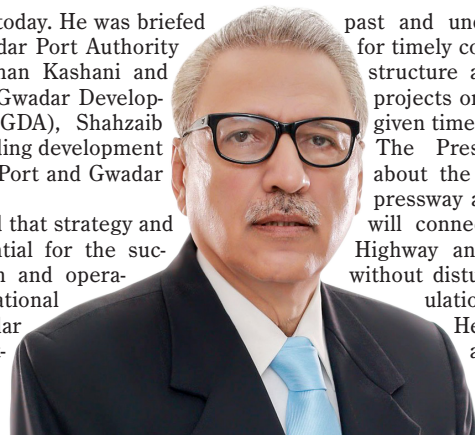
President for accelerating development of Gwadar Port

The President said that strategy and vision were essential for the successful completion and operationalization of national projects like Gwadar port

DNA

GWADAR: President Dr Arif Alvi has underlined the need to utilize Gwadar Port free zone area for transit trade with Afghanistan and Balochistan in addition to Karachi ports. He said that the speedy flow of traffic at Gwadar port must be ensured. He urged the authorities to accelerate development activities and remove any hindrances in this regard through consensus-building and consultation with the relevant stakeholders. He gave these remarks at a briefing on progress work about the Master Plan of Gwadar city and operationalization of Gwadar

Port, at Gwadar, today. He was briefed by Chairman Gwadar Port Authority (GPA), Naseer Khan Kashani and Director General Gwadar Development Authority (GDA), Shahzaib Khan Kakar regarding development works on Gwadar Port and Gwadar city respectively. The President said that strategy and vision were essential for the successful completion and operationalization of national projects like Gwadar port. He lamented the slow pace of development in Gwadar in the



past and underscored the need for timely completion of all infrastructure and industry related projects on the port as per the given timelines. The President was briefed about the 19 km Eastbay Expressway along the port which will connect with the Coastal Highway and help carry cargo without disturbing the local population of Gwadar. He was also briefed about the 60 acres free zone area in Gwadar which will include recreation-

al facilities, hospitals, schools and multiple industries. President Dr. Arif Alvi appreciated GDA and GPA for their briefing on Master plan of Gwadar City and Gwadar Port and urged both the organizations to expedite the work on port as well as city in Gwadar. He advised both the organizations that the needs of local fishermen should also be accounted for in the Master Plan. He also thanked the Chinese Government for constructing state-of-the-art China Business Center (CBC) in Gwadar. The meeting was also attended by Balochistan Revenue Minister, Saleem Khosa, Balochistan Minister for Religious Affairs, Lala Rasheed, MPA, Noor Mohammad Dummat and others.

Govt removes IG Islamabad Amir Zulfiqar from post

RAJA PERVAIZ

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has removed Inspector General (IG) Islamabad, Amir Zulfiqar and appoint Qazi Jameel-ur-Rehman of Police Service of Pakistan as new IG of Islamabad. According to reports, Inspector General (IG) Islamabad Amir Zulfiqar has been transferred, Qazi Jameel-ur-Rehman has been appointed as the new IG in his place. A notification of transfer of Amir Zulfiqar has also been issued. Earlier, Qazi Jameel-ur-Rehman was serving in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

"Qazi Jami-ur-Rehman, a BS-20 Officer of Police Service of Pakistan, presently serving under Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, is transferred and posted as Inspector General, Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police, under Interior Division, in his own pay and scale, with immediate effect and until further orders," read a notification issued to this effect. According to sources the demands had been made for changing the IG in the wake of a 22-year-old Osama Satti's murder at the hands of Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) men in an alleged staged shootout in Islamabad. The transfer comes a few days after a young man was killed on January 2 when Islamabad police personnel opened fire at him for not stopping his car near Sector G-10.

Qureshi for more robust partnership with Africa

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi Wednesday while underlining the importance of Africa as 'continent of future', said that Pakistan enjoyed friendly relations and political goodwill in African countries that needed to be translated into a more robust economic partnership. He said Pakistan had embarked on the 'Engage Africa' initiative, aimed at expanding Pakistan's diplomatic footprint and deepening economic engagement with Africa, having 54 countries and a population of 1.3 billion. The foreign minister was chairing a third virtual envoys meeting regarding long-term focus on economic diplomacy, Foreign Office spokesperson said in a press release. With emphasis on Africa, and held under the Government's 'Engage Africa' initiative, Pakistan's Heads of Missions in Abuja, Addis Abba, Algiers, Nairobi, Tripoli, Port Louis, Rabat, Pretoria, Niamey, Khartoum, Dar es Salaam, Dakar, Harare and Tunis participated in the meeting.

Pak on path to become economic hub: Moed

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is on a path to become a global economic hub and aims to become a melting pot of competing global economic interests. This was stated by SAPM on National Security Division and Strategic Policy Planning, Dr. Moeed Yusuf while chairing the 8th Advisory Board Meeting of the National Security Committee. While chairing the meeting, SAPM Dr. Moeed Yusuf said that under the economic security model, instead of the conventional geo-strategic lens, Pakistan aims to leverage its geo-economic position by partnering with the world. We are looking for economic partnerships and provide avenues for investment, said Dr. Moeed Yusuf. Talking on the regional connectivity, the SAPM on National Security Division and Strategic Policy Planning Dr. Moeed Yusuf said that Pakistan because of its geo-economic location has the potential to serve as a regional pivot and become a hub of trade and economic activities. "Pakistan's vision of connectivity and economic security will bring dividends to the region and the partners", said Dr. Moeed Yusuf.

Saudi envoy lauds Pakistan's anti-COVID-19 measures



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan Nawaf Bin Saeed Al-Maliki Wednesday appreciated the

measures taken by Pakistan to stem the spread of deadly coronavirus (COVID-19) in the country. The envoy, who called on Minister for Aviation Ghulam Sarwar Khan here, also

assured to restore the Umrah flight operation as soon as the prevailing virus situation got normalized. The two sides desired and prayed to overcome the looming threat of virus so

that the religious obligation of Hajj could be performed in routine this year, a news release said. The meeting also discussed ways and means to start flight operations from Pakistan to Abha, the capital city of Saudi Arabia's Aseer Province. The Aviation Minister said weekly two flights would be operated on that route, which would help promote tourism activities and further strengthen the existing ties between the two countries. The ambassador assured to take necessary measures in that regard. The two sides also held a detailed discussion to further increase bilateral cooperation in the aviation sector. Ghulam Sarwar Khan congratulated the envoy over the restoration of Saudi Arabia-Qatar ties and welcome the positive developments taking place in the Gulf states terming them 'welcoming' for regional peace, prosperity and development.

Pakistan welcomes resumption of intra-Afghan negotiations

NAVEED MIRAJ / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has welcomed commencement of the second round of Intra Afghan Negotiations in Doha today. The two teams have made significant progress by finalizing the rules and procedures last month and have now reconvened to negotiate on substantive issues. The year 2020 witnessed substantial progress towards peace in Afghanistan, with a number of positive developments including conclusion of U.S.-Taliban Peace Agreement on 29 February 2020, start of intra-Afghan Negotiations on 12 September 2020, and agreement on Rules and Procedures on 2 December 2020, which paved the way for meaningful progress in the peace talks. We remain hopeful that the year 2021 will witness the dawn of a peaceful and stable Afghanistan. We hope that the two negotiating teams would continue to engage with open-mind and will observe patience, prudence and perseverance to seize this historic opportunity for peace. We call upon both sides to remain constructively engaged and show flexibility in the negotiations for reaching an inclusive, broad-based and comprehensive political settlement which would lead to lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan. Pakistan's constructive role and facilitation of the Afghan peace process has been recognized by all sides and the international community. We strongly believe that there is no military solution to the Afghan conflict and that the only way forward is a negotiated political solution through an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process. Pakistan, on its part, would continue to extend all possible support for the Afghan peace process.

EU approves Moderna vaccine

"Good news for our efforts to bring more COVID-19 vaccines to Europeans," Commission President Ursula von der Leyen tweeted

BRUSSELS: The US-developed COVID-19 vaccine got conditional market approval from the EU's medical watchdog. If finally approved by the EU Commission, it will become the second vaccine authorized for use in the 27-nation bloc. The European Medicines Agency (EMA) recommended Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine for conditional market authorization on Wednesday, the agency announced following a meeting. If approved by the European Commission, which is considered a formality, it will become the second vaccine available in the EU to fight the coronavirus. Leaders of EU nations have come under fire for their slow vaccine rollout programs, compared with those in Israel and other countries. The BioNTech-Pfizer vaccine is currently the only authorized coronavirus vaccination in the EU. It received fast-track authorization by the EMA on December 21, but supply chain issues and low production capacity have marred the rollout of the mass vaccination programs across the bloc. "This vaccine provides us with another tool to overcome the current emergency," Emer Cooke, Executive Director of EMA, said. Wednesday's EMA meeting to discuss the Moderna vaccine was the second this week after an initial meeting on Monday proved inconclusive. The United States, Canada and Israel have already authorized the Moderna shot. The commission could finally approve the vaccine later on Wednesday, news agency Reuters reported, citing the Dutch medicines authority. "Good news for our efforts to bring more COVID-19 vaccines to Europeans," Commission President Ursula von der Leyen tweeted. "Now we are working at full speed to approve it and make it available in the EU," she added. Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz called the authorization "a further important step in the fight against the pandemic." "With it, we have more vaccines available in the EU to combat the pandemic." - DNA

China and Pakistan sign MoU on translation, publication of classics

The two sides agreed to publish 50 classics, deemed to be the most classic, important and top-rated in the two countries in the next five years, with the joint efforts of experts in culture and publication from both sides

BEIJING: China and Pakistan signed a memorandum on translation and publication of classics on Tuesday, in an effort to give fresh impetus to cultural and people-to-people exchanges between the two countries. Zhang Jianchun, deputy secretary of the Communist Party's propaganda department and Mrs. Nausheen Amjad, Secretary National Heritage and Culture Department, on behalf of both parties, signed on the memorandum, according to Chinese media on Wednesday. The two sides agreed to publish 50 classics, deemed to be the most classic, important and top-rated in the two countries in the next five years, with the joint efforts of experts in culture and publication from both sides. It is also part of the activities to mark the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and Pakistan. This is the second memorandum of such kind China signed with an Asian country, following the one signed with Singapore on December 8, 2020. - DNA



QUETTA: Relatives of the slain colliers holding sit-in along with dead bodies in consecutive four days after dying at Western Bypass. - APP

'Growing Hindutva making India lose its mind'

India's deliberate attack on the United Nations vehicle showed that India had completely ignored international norms and international law, he added

BEIJING: "Recently, the Indian military did 'something big'. The Indian troops not only dare to frequently invade the territories of neighbouring countries, but also in defiance of everything, dare to 'beard the lion in his den' and take the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping vehicle as a target," Cheng Xizhong, visiting professor at Southwest University of Political Science and Law, said on Wednesday. According to a statement from the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the Indian troops resorted to unprovoked fire in Chirikot sector of the Line of

Control (LoC) and "targeted a UN vehicle with two military observers on board" when they were on the way to interact with victims of ceasefire violations in Azad Jammu & Kashmir. The vehicle was seriously damaged. Due to the timely rescue and safe evacuation by the Pakistani troops, the two UN military observers remained unharmed and were safely evacuated to Rawalakot region, Cheng Xizhong said in his article. He said India's barbarity had been universally opposed and condemned by the international community. Russian media said that the Indian military sudden-

ly launched an attack on the UN convoy in Kashmir, and the bullets directly hit the vehicle of two UN observers. Fortunately, the accompanying Pakistani soldiers fought back and escorted the UN observers to a safe place.



Cheng said at the beginning of the century, he participated in peace-keeping operations in Africa. "There are clear signs on all the UN vehicles, so it was impossible for the Indian troops not to see them. This UN vehicle was on the way to interact with victims of ceasefire violations by India. Obviously, India wanted to stop it and prevent UN personnel from seeing the crimes committed by the Indian troops." India's deliberate attack on the UN vehicle showed that India had completely ignored international norms and international law, he added. Cheng said on Decem-

ber 22 (2020), the Indian troops suddenly attacked civilians with mortars and heavy weapons near the LoC (Line of Control), killing a 50-year-old woman and injuring three others, including a four-year-old minor. In 2020, India carried out over 3,000 ceasefire violations, resulting in 276 Pakistani civilians killed. "The madness of the Indian military is sending a dangerous signal that India is on the verge of losing control. The growing populism, Hindutva mindset and hegemonic aspirations are making India under the Narendra Modi administration lose its mind," he said. - APP