



# Islamabad POST

Wednesday, January 20, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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**UN chief urges Israel to halt new settlements**

Detailed News On Page-07

**Projects under CPEC are heading in right direction**

Detailed News On Page-04



**Italian Envoy for joint efforts to enhance trade**

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## Briefs

**Border markets vital for prosperity**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has said establishment of border markets is vital for the prosperity of the population living in border areas of Balochistan and merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Chairing a review meeting in Islamabad regarding establishment of Boarder Markets along Pakistan's border with Afghanistan and Iran, Prime Minister directed to fast track the process of establishment of Border Markets to provide job opportunities to local people and to control smuggling.

**Pakistan to get vaccine 'within weeks'**

ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will receive its first batch of the coronavirus vaccine directly from manufacturers, as well as the global platform of COVAX, in the first quarter of the year, the senior-most health official in Pakistan said. The government will be ordering doses from more than one international supplier within this quarter, Dr. Faisal Sultan, the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Health, told media. Pakistan will only procure vaccines that have been approved by the DRAP "after evaluation of its quality vis a vis efficacy data", Dr. Sultan explained.

**Govt will be toppled through ECP**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Tuesday said the incumbent government will be toppled through the ECP. The erstwhile premier, before appearing in an accountability court in the LNG case, said in an informal discussion that all flaws in Pakistan need to be revealed in front of all. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said Broadsheet issue consists of people who took commission, and many individuals are involved in it.

## Govt to probe Broadsheet case within 45 days

The Minister said in light of the committee's recommendations strict action will be taken against the culprits

ANSAR BHATTI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Cabinet has constituted an inquiry committee to investigate the Broadsheet matter and fix the responsibility on those who illegally benefitted themselves. This was announced by Minister for Information and Broadcasting Shibli Faraz during a press conference in Islamabad along with Minister for Science Fawad Chaudhary and Minister for Human Rights Shireen Mazari. Shibli Faraz said the committee will be comprised of a former judge of High Court or Supreme Court, a senior officer from FIA, Attorney General Office, a senior lawyer and any officer nominated by the Prime Minister. He said the ToRs of the committee have been formulated according to which it will complete the investigation within 45 days. The Minister said in light of the committee's recommendations strict action will be taken against the culprits who looted the national exchequer. He said Broadsheet case is based on facts revealing the corruption stories of previous rulers.

Commenting on PDM's protest in front of Election Commission Office, Shibli Faraz expressed gratitude to the people of twin cities for rejecting the narrative of opposition. Fawad Chaudhary on the occasion said Broadsheet was registered in 1999 during Pervez Musharraf era, helped the then

Continued on Page 06

**'Broadsheet proved Nawaz lied to nation'**

KHAYAM ABBASI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar on Tuesday said that Broadsheet revelations have proved that former prime minister Nawaz Sharif lied to the Parliament, Supreme court and the nation. Umar in his tweet said: "With the broadsheet award details now public in which it is stated clearly by the arbitrator that Sharif family owned the Avenfield apartments as far back as 2000 at least, it is conclusively established that nawaz sharif lied to the Parliament, the Supreme court and the nation." "With the Broadsheet award details now public in which it is stated clearly by the arbitrator that Sharif family owned the Avenfield apartments as far back as 2000 at least, it is conclusively established that Nawaz Sharif lied to the Parliament, the Supreme Court and the nation," he tweeted. The minister added that the British Judge had clearly said in his verdict that total charges for the services to identify the hidden assets of Sharif family including Avenfield flat were US\$20.5 million and that amount was payable to the Broadsheet.



ISLAMABAD: European Ambassadors met Special Secretary Europe Dr. Rashid at Ministry of Foreign Affairs to wish him all the best in his new function as Ambassador and in appreciation of the good cooperation. Ambassadors of Romania, Germany, EU, Poland, Hungary, Switzerland, the Netherland, UK, Spain, Austria, France are seen in the picture. - DNA

## PTI received funding from India, Israel: PDM

NAVEED MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz has said the PDM parties had gathered outside the ECP to remind it of its constitutional obligations. Maryam alleged that Prime Minister Imran had received funds from people in Israel and India, saying: "Do you know who funded him from India? Bharatiya

Janata Party member Inder Dosanjh. And the Israeli who funded him was Barry C. Schneps."

She was addressing a PDM rally in front of Election Commission of Pakistan. Terming the PTI foreign funding case the "biggest fraud in Pakistan's history", she said although the cases against her father, PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif,

Continued on Page 06

**Sheikh says would welcome long march**

RANA FARRUKH / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed has on Tuesday said that the PDM protesters came to the Red Zone because PM Imran Khan allowed them to do so. Addressing the press conference in Islamabad, Sheikh Rasheed said we provided free hand to the PDM leaders but still they failed.

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: The Indonesian Ambassador to Pakistan, H.E. Adam M. Tugio held a meeting with the Director-General of the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry on Tuesday, 19 January 2021. The meeting discussed on how to explore the potential relations between Indonesia and Pakistan and to enhance the collaborative efforts between think tanks of both countries in the future. - DNA

**PDM's anti-state narrative not to succeed: FM**

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Tuesday said the opposition alliance of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) was strengthening the agenda of anti-Pakistan elements and also promoting their narrative. The PDM had in fact adopted an anti-state narrative and the government would not succumb to their pressure, he said in a statement. Qureshi said the PDM parties were trying to cover the rift within their ranks and for the purpose they were pursuing the agenda, which was detrimental to national interests. However, they would not succeed in their tactics, he added. - DNA

**PM Imran to visit South Waziristan today**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan is all set to visit South Waziristan today (Wednesday) to distribute amongst the youth Kamyab Jawan Program cheques as announced on Tuesday by his special assistant for youth affairs Usman Dar, media reported. Taking to microblogging site Twitter earlier today, Usman Dar tweeted the PM will go to South Waziristan to distribute cheques amongst the youth under Kamyab Jawan Program. The Prime Minister will also review development works and underway projects in the region while he ensures economic prospects for their youth. - DNA

## Biden set to take oath amidst protests' threat

Trump plans to leave the White House on Wednesday morning

DNA

WASHINGTON: Joe Biden will be sworn in as the 46th president of the United States today in a ceremony that will keep with tradition while being unlike any other inauguration in U.S. history. As housekeepers prepare the White House for President-elect Joe Biden, over 25,000 National Guard troops will be occupying the streets of Washington. That is five times more than the number deployed in Afghanistan and Iraq combined. Acting US Secretary of Defense Christopher Miller



said on Monday there were "25,000 Guardsmen" who would leave "no stone unturned in securing the capital". "There are more troops in DC now than there are in Afghanistan and Iraq," Congressman Seth Moulton remarked on the development. On the morning of January

20, Donald Trump and Melania Trump will depart the White House as President and first lady, but they will not invite their incoming counterparts, Joe and Jill Biden, inside before they do. Trump plans to leave the White House on Wednesday morning but not for the inauguration stage outside the Congress building where the new president takes oath of office. He will be flying home to Florida. Instead of a president and first lady, the Bidens will be greeted by the White House chief usher

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## Inside...

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NEPRA unveils its CSR drive "Power with Prosperity" - Page 03

ICCI asks govt to formulate policies for promoting FDI - Page 04

A post-Trump Palestine - Page 05

PCB approaches govt to allow limited crowd in PSL - Page 06

Shanghai Business Connect calls for digital cooperation - Page 07

President for enhanced ties with friendly countries - Page 08

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## Briefs

## Rape victim escapes from abductors' captivity

DNA

OKARA: A 14-year-old girl has escaped from abductors' captivity after around five months from Mandi Ahmedabad located in Okara district of Punjab. The teenage girl had been subjected to rape for months by one of the abductors and kept inside a room after allegedly being kidnapped by five men. According to her father, the group of men had arrested her daughter on August 28. A case had been registered against five accused including the prime suspect Zahid who had raped the girl for months. Earlier in February last year, a 16-year-old girl, who managed to flee from kidnappers, had alleged for being subjected to rape by unidentified persons in Punjab's Jhang district.



ISLAMABAD: January 19 – Prime Minister Imran Khan chairs meeting of the Federal Cabinet. – DNA

## 30 new buses to soon join BRT fleet

PESHAWAR: Spokesman Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) has said that 30 new buses were in the last stage of manufacturing that would soon join the BRT fleet to enhance its commuting capacity. In a media statement, the BRT Spokesman said the new buses would be 18 meters long articulated vehicles and provide state of the art commuting facilities to the passengers. Every bus, he informed, would have a capacity of carrying 125 passengers. These new buses, he said would be used on the Express Route that was the most popular route of the BRT service adding at the time 128 buses were running on BRT route. The service was gaining momentum and its passengers increasing with each passing day as for the first time in the country third generation hybrid buses were introduced in the provincial metropolis. – APP

## CDA's anti-encroachment operation underway

Newly constructed building, 10 illegal boundary walls, 01 illegal building, 01 room, 03 roadside setups, and DPC of one building were demolished during the anti encroachment operation of CDA at Bari Imam. Construction material was also captured

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Anti encroachment operation of Capital Development Authority (CDA) is underway in the city. In the joint venture of the department of environment and department of DMA the authority removed dozens of encroachments from Park road during last one week. The said area has been cleared and the captured goods have been submitted to CDA's store. Newly constructed

building, 10 illegal boundary walls, 01 illegal building, 01 room, 03 roadside setups, and DPC of one building were demolished during the anti encroachment operation of CDA at Bari Imam. Construction material was also captured. Similarly, anti encroachment operation was also conducted at C-15 where a number of illegal constructions were demolished. Illegal constructions and encroachments at 06 different places of Bani Gala were also demolished during the operation. Polls were re-

moved from street at F-7/3. Illegal stalls were removed from G-8. Iron pillars were removed from a street of F-8 whereas an illegal security cabin was also demolished at the occasion. Illegal boundary wall and a gate were demolished at F-11. Operation was also conducted at Khhana Pull where a number of illegal constructions and encroachments were demolished. DPC of a new building was demolished at Lakhwal. 01 illegal stall and a shade were demolished in I-9 during the CDA's operation against encroachments.

## NAB seizes properties of Nawaz Shareef in Pakistan

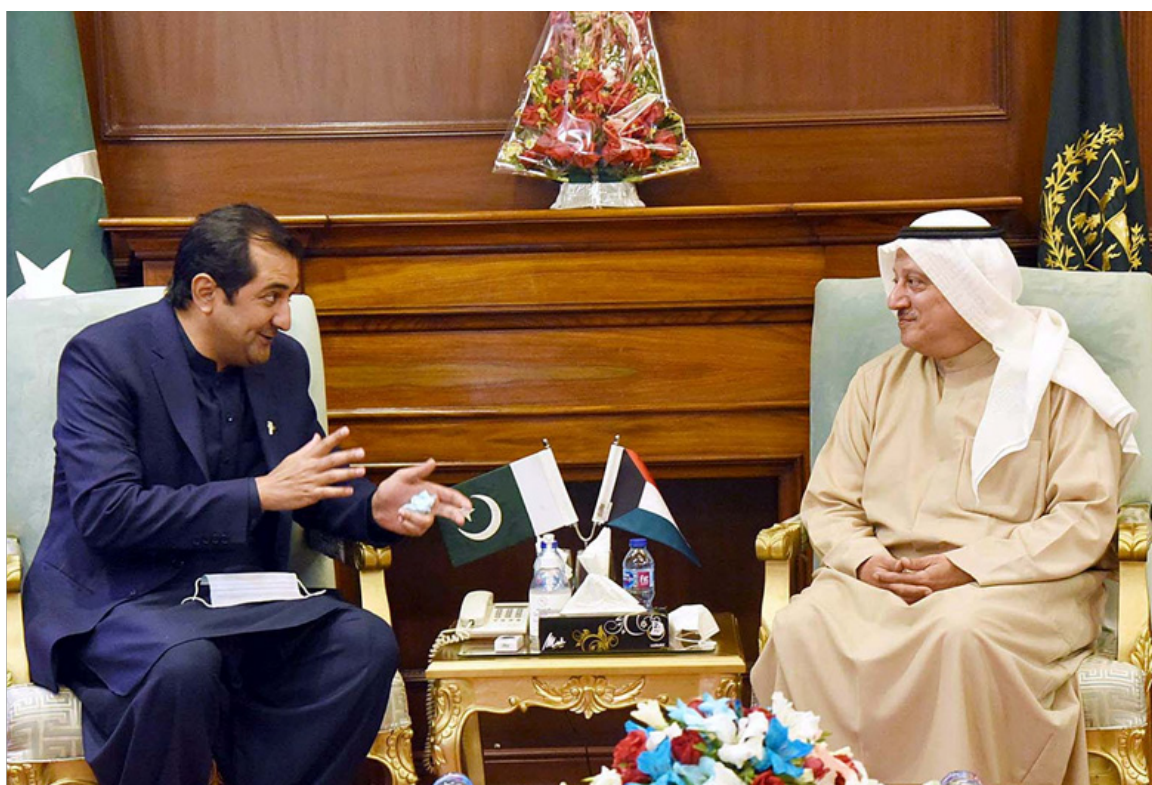
DNA

LAHORE: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on Tuesday revealed that it has seized all properties of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif in Pakistan in the illegal plot allotment case which also involves Jang/Geo Editor-in-Chief Mir Shakilur Rehman. The anti-graft body's investigation officer, Abid Hussain, informed the

court that earlier orders have been executed in the case and the property has been seized. The court also fixed January 28 for Rehman's indictment and summoned co-accused former Lahore Development Authority (LDA) director-general Humayun Faiz Rasool at the next hearing. The court had found Rehman, Nawaz, Rasool and another co-accused Bashir Ahmed guilty. According to the an-

ti-corruption watchdog, Rehman had illegally acquired 54 plots, each measuring one kanal, at Canal Bank in H-Block of Lahore's Johar Town in 1986 in connivance with then Punjab chief minister Nawaz Sharif. Under the LDA rules, the exemption could be granted for 15 plots only. However, 54 plots were exempted in a single block on Nawaz's approval. Under the exemption policy, 70% of the land was

supposed to remain with the LDA but it was never transferred. Last year in November, an accountability court in Lahore declared former prime minister Nawaz an absconder and issued non-bailable arrest warrants against him in an illegal plot allotment case. During the previous hearing, the NAB prosecutor maintained that Rehman also included two streets in the allotted plots with Nawaz's connivance.



ISLAMABAD: CM GB Muhammad Khalid Khursheed Khan meeting with ambassador of Kuwait in Pakistan Nasar Abdul Rehman J Almutairi at GB House. – DNA

## Allocation of gas to new LNG terminals opposed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Petroleum Division has strongly opposed the proposal of Maritime Affairs Division for allocating the existing capacity in gas pipeline to the upcoming two new liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals at Port Qasim, Karachi, saying that they should "come online first". "These new terminals are only on paper and no construction work has yet been initiated," the Petroleum Division officials apprised the members of the Cabinet Committee on Energy (CCoE) during a meeting on. They said the suggestion was against third party access rules that allow private parties to market gas through a competitive process. Earlier, the government had announced a new policy for five private parties to

set up LNG terminals. The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority had also notified third party access rules that allow private parties to sell and market gas through a competitive process. The sources said that during the meeting, the Petroleum Division officials said that it was against those rules to allocate existing gas capacity to upcoming terminals. "It will create a monopoly of upcoming LNG terminals planned by Energas Terminal Pvt Ltd and Taber Energy Pvt Ltd and deprive others," they said, adding that three other parties like Pakistan Gas Port Ltd, Engro and Global Energy were also working on setting up terminals. The Petroleum Division officials argued that the capacity in the gas pipeline should be allocated on first-come-first-served basis. Secondly, they said, the di-

vision would allocate capacity in the gas pipeline to the upcoming LNG terminals when they come online. Following reservations of the Petroleum Division, the CCoE formed a committee comprising Minister for Maritime Affairs Ali Zaidi, Petroleum Minister Omar Ayub, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Petroleum Nadeem Babar and Special Assistant to PM on Power Tabish Gohar. In its meeting on August 2, 2019, the Cabinet Division decided that all five parties, who had conducted QRA on the sites assigned to them, may be issued provisional Letter of Intent (LoI). The Ministry of Maritime Affairs in collaboration with the Petroleum Division had facilitated the new LNG terminal developers in securing the No Objection Certificates (NOCs) from various ministries/departments for expeditious completion of the new terminals.

NO. 4(2)/2006-HA-II  
GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN  
MINISTRY OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS AND INTERFAITH HARMONY  
First Floor Kohsar Block Pak Secretariat, Islamabad  
(DIRECTORATES OF HAJJ)

## SITUATIONS VACANT

Applications are invited for various vacancies for recruitment / appointment in the Directorates of Hajj in Pakistan under administrative control of Ministry of Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony, Islamabad on temporary basis as per given details:-

Sr. #	Name of Post	BPS	No. of posts	Educational Qualification & Experience	Provincial / Regional Quota	Present Place of posting	Age Limit	
							Min	Max
1.	Assistant	15	02	• Graduate. • 06 weeks' Basic IT Training Course (including MS Office conducted by NITB) is mandatory for initial appointment after selection and during probation period.	01 = Merit 01 = KPK	02-Lahore or anywhere in Pakistan	18 Years	28 Years
2.	Stenotypist	14	04	• Intermediate. • Minimum speed of 80/40 w.p.m in shorthand/typing respectively • Must be computer literate	02 = Merit 01 = Punjab (women) 01 = AJK	02-Islamabad 01-Quetta 01-Multan or anywhere in Pakistan	18 Years	25 Years
3.	UDC	11	03	• Intermediate. • 03 weeks' Basic IT Training Course (including MS Office conducted by NITB) is mandatory for initial appointment after selection and during probation period.	01 = Merit 01 = Punjab 01 = KPK	02-Karachi 01-Multan or anywhere in Pakistan	18 Years	25 Years
4.	LDC	09	01	• Matric • Minimum typing speed of 30 w.p.m • 03 weeks Basic IT Training Course (including MS Office conducted by NITB) is mandatory for initial appointment after selection and during probation period.	01 = Merit	01-Lahore or anywhere in Pakistan	18 Years	25 Years

## GENERAL INFORMATION/ INSTRUCTIONS

- The recruitment shall be made in accordance with the recruitment Policy conveyed by Establishment Division vide O.Ms No. 53/1/2008-SP dated 22-10-2014 and dated 06-05-2020 as amended from time to time.
- Only shortlisted candidates shall be called for Test / Interview.
- Applicants already in Government service must have NOC at the time of interview (in case he / she qualifies the test) otherwise they have no right to claim.
- An applicant can apply for more than one post, separately.
- Candidates shall be entitled for relaxation of five years in upper age limit as per rules. Any other relaxation in upper age limit will be given as admissible under the rules.
- The candidates shall provide original documents alongwith set of attested copies of the degrees / Certificates by HEC / recognized Board / Institute, domicile and any other documents at the time of Test / Interview.
- The information given by the applicants will be got verified by the provincial governments. In case of any false or forged information / documents submitted by the candidates, the Ministry of Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony reserves the right to cancel candidature of the particular candidate even after employment. Legal action will also be taken against the candidate.
- The Ministry of Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony reserves the right to increase or decrease the number of posts as per requirement against any post without assigning any reason.
- Selected candidates can be posted in any Directorate of Hajj in Pakistan
- Once the test centre has been selected by the candidate, no change will be allowed further.
- Candidates shall apply online by visiting the link: <https://mora.gov.pk> within 15 days from the date of advertisement, those who apply online, they do not need to forward application directly through mail.
- No TA/DA will be admissible for appearing in test / Interview.

Section Officer (Hajj Admn)  
Tele: 051-9207507

## APPLICATION FORM

Name of Post: _____	Photo
Quota (for which apply): _____	
1. Name of Applicant: _____	
2. Father's Name: _____	
3. Date of Birth: _____	
4. Age on closing date: _____	
5. Domicile: _____	
6. CNIC No. _____	
7. Education qualification: _____	
8. Experience (if any): _____	
9. Postal Address: _____	
10. Permanent Address: _____	
11. Phone No. (Res): _____	
12. Mobile No. _____	
13. Email address: _____	
14. Tick anyone of the test centres:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Islamabad <input type="checkbox"/> Karachi <input type="checkbox"/> Lahore <input type="checkbox"/> Peshawar <input type="checkbox"/> Quetta <input type="checkbox"/> Multan	
PID (I) No. 3893/20	Applicant Signature



## Briefs

## PDM's protest aims to get NRO: Farrukh Habib

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary for Railway's Farrukh Habib Tuesday criticized the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) and its protest outside the Election Commission of Pakistan office as to pressurizing national institutions to get National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO).

Talking to a private news channel, he condemned PDM for holding public rallies amid the coronavirus pandemic, adding, unnatural alliance of opposition has become promoter of coronavirus in the country and government will not go anywhere with these so called gatherings.

He said PDM's undemocratic movement had no future and parliament is the best forum for dialogue, adding, opposition has always used parliament for its own interests. He said opposition parties to submit records of their foreign funding to the ECP instead of blackmailing state institutions. Habib said the opposition parties had formed the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) to protect the wealth accumulated through corruption and not for any public cause. They were just trying to divert the attention of common people from their corruption and want to seek an NRO (National Reconciliation Ordinance) from the government, he added. — APP

## FBR reforms improve Pak's ranking of Trading

ISLAMABAD: In a major achievement towards ensuring ease of doing business, Pakistan has improved 31 positions, from 142nd to 111th, on the rank of Trading Across Border Index, Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) said here Tuesday.

The board had made trading across borders easier by focusing three crucial areas including enhancing the integration of various agencies in the Web-Based One Customs (WEBOC) electronic system; reducing the number of documents required for import / export clearances; enhancing capacities of Pakistan Customs officials for playing pro-active role in smoothly regulating border trade. Climbing up the ladder in Trading Across Border Index has enabled Pakistan in jumping up 28 places — from 136th to 108th — in World Bank's (WB)'s 'Ease of Doing Business 2020' and securing a place among the top 10 countries have done the most in the corresponding / past year to improve the ease of doing business in their countries.

This milestone has led Pakistan to be the sixth global reformer and first in South Asia that has brought ease in doing business for the national / international trade, said FBR in a statement. The statement said that it was important to note that border facilitation was amongst the top priority areas as per the comprehensive policy laid down by the government, adding that concerted efforts by Pakistan Customs, under FBR, led to impressive performance in terms of compliance to the provisions of World Trade Organization (WTO)'s Trade Facilitation Agreement; hence, complementing Pakistan's rise in Trading Across Border Index. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of UAE Hamad Alzaabi in a meeting with Additional Secretary UN Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan. — DNA

## ICCI asks govt to formulate policies for promoting FDI

Fatma Azim said that many countries including China, Hong Kong, Singapore and South Korea have achieved fast economic growth by focusing on FDI and stressed that Pakistan should also pay preferential attention to promoting FDI

ISLAMABAD: Showing concerns over the 30 percent fall in foreign direct investment (FDI) in Pakistan during the first half of fiscal year (July-Dec), the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) has called upon the government to make more conducive policies for attracting local and foreign investment in the country, which was very important to steer the economy out of current challenges. Fatma Azim, Acting Pres-

ident and Abdul Rehman Khan, Vice President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry that as per latest data issued by the State Bank of Pakistan, the country received \$952 million foreign investment during July-December 2020 compared to \$1.357 billion in the same period of last fiscal year, showing a 30 percent decline, which should be a cause of concern for the policymakers. They said that the

economy of Pakistan was facing many challenges due to Covid-19 pandemic and in these circumstances, promoting FDI was a good option to improve the health of the economy. They said that many overseas Pakistanis as well as foreign investors were interested in investing in Pakistan, but they needed a more conducive environment and consistent economic policies to invest in our country. Fatma Azim said that

many countries including China, Hong Kong, Singapore and South Korea have achieved fast economic growth by focusing on FDI and stressed that Pakistan should also pay preferential attention to promoting FDI. She said that boosting FDI was important for Pakistan to supplement domestic investment, accelerate industrialization & business activities, improve revenue growth, create jobs and reduce poverty.

ICCI Acting President said FDI was also crucial for upgradation and modernization of the industrial base of the country to increase exports and urged that the government should use all possible options to promote foreign investment as the potential of many sectors of Pakistan's economy could not be realized without fetching more FDI. She was of the view that facilitating the local investors

was very important to encourage FDI as when local investors would enhance investment in Pakistan, it would give more confidence to the foreign investors to invest in our country. She said that the government should bring reforms in the tax regime for investors and formulate new investment policies to attract maximum local and foreign investment in the country. She further urged that the government should ad-

## IG for appointing competent teachers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Inspector General of Police (IGP), Islamabad Qazi Jamil-ur-Rehman on Tuesday underscored the need for appointing talented teachers at police training school to enhance the capacity building of newly recruits. "Competent teachers can train the newly recruited personnel on modern lines to integrate them in society and fight against injustice," he said during his visit at police training school. Senior officials of police including IGP establishment, SSP headquarters and school

principle briefed the IG on training being imparted to recruits. He asked the teachers to train the fresh recruits on new methods of investigation, collection of evidences from the crime scene. Rehman directed the school principle to ensure all out efforts for the provision of good food, accommodation and clean environment to the recruits. The training school plays a pivotal role in the training of recruits, he said adding that it was also part of the training that complainants at police stations should be treated in best way, besides resolving their legitimate problems in effective manner.

## Funeral prayers of Shaheed Constable offered

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Funeral prayers of Shaheed Constable Naveed Asghar was offered at Police Line Headquarters, informed police spokesman. Rawalpindi RPO, CPO, Chief Traffic Officer, SSP Operations, SSP Investigation, Divisional SPs and other senior police officers and personnel attended the funeral prayer. A smart contingent of police presented the salute to

the martyr. Constable Naveed Asghar Shaheed was martyred while fighting the drug pushers yesterday. RPO Imran Ahmar said the martyrs were our pride whose eternal sacrifices are a source of honor and respect for the department. CPO Muhammad Ahsan Younas said that sacrifices of police martyrs would always be remembered, adding that police department was standing with the martyrs families in this hour of grief.

## Over 3500 facilitates in capital's 'Panahgahs' daily

ISLAMABAD: Shelter Homes of the federal capital are providing homelike dine and sleep environment to over 3500 destitute and homeless in harsh winter's condition. The facilities offer over 500 homeless to stay at night in a cozy atmosphere during cold weather and food centers (Langar Khanas) were serving nutritious hygienic meal daily to more than 3,000 poor and needy, showed the official data issued here on Tuesday. "Panahgahs" are fully operational at five main locations of the Federal Capital including Bara Kahu, Mandi Mor, Peshawar Mor, Tarlai and Tarnol," Prime Minister's Focal Person on Shelter Homes Naseem

ur Rehman told APP. He said there were around 93 dedicated places and a large number of Langar Khanas (food centers) across the country that had served around 150,000 poor people to this day by providing healthy food and night stay in hygienic settings. Naseem said Rs 300 was being spent on each dweller every day, helping the poor people, especially migrant workers to save Rs 6,000 per month that obviously provided him an opportunity to directly spend the hard earned money on his family welfare. "It actually manifests Prime Minister Imran Khan's vision of transforming the country into Madina-like state

where all the citizens irrespective of their caste, religion, race and social status were treated equally," he added. He said once there was starvation, and helpless people were forced to sleep on pavements and in public parks. "Now I can say, in the long run, this Panahgah project will prove a remarkable initiative to alleviate poverty in an effective manner," he maintained. Explaining the policy to ensure sustainability of the programme, Naseem said it was providing an organized and strategic approach to the 'giving'. It also makes the 'giving' a dignified process by keeping in mind respect and dignity of the receiver, he added. — APP



RAWALPINDI: Funeral prayers of Shaheed constable Naveed Asghar offered at Police Lines Headquarters. RPO Rawalpindi, CPO Rawalpindi, Chief Traffic Officer Rawalpindi, SSP Operations, SSP Investigation, Divisional SPs and other senior police officers and personnel attended the funeral prayers. — DNA

## MPA sent to jail on judicial remand

DNA

ABBOTTABAD, Jan 19 (APP): Anti Terrorist Court (ATC) Abbottabad on Tuesday ordered to shift the double murderer-accused member KP assembly Faisal Zaman to jail on judicial remand, after the completion of six days physical remand. According to the details, Anti Terrorist Court (ATC) Abbottabad on the request of CTD Hazara granted four days physical remand on January 12 which was completed on January 16th and CTD once again requested two more days remand period which was accepted by the ATC. After the completion of two days physical remand the accused of the double murder case was presented before the ATC on 19th of January.

MPA Faisal Zaman was nominated in the murder case of provincial deputy general secretary of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Malik Tahir Iqbal, and his friend councillor Sardar Gul Nawaz.

## Pashto literary society delegation meet chairman PAL

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) Dr Yousuf Khusk on Tuesday met here with a delegation of writers from Pashto Literary Society. Welcoming the delegation, Chairman Academy of Letters, Pakistan Prof. Dr. Yousuf Khusk said that PAL is a national institution which helps in the promotion and development of literature in Pakistani languages. Healthy literary engagements were among the main objectives of the Academy of Letters, Pakistan. He informed the delegation that Academy would soon organize a national literary seminar on Khushal Khan Khattak and Ajmal Khattak. He said that there was a strong need to promote literature in KP to patronize the writers of this area in befitting manner. The participants appreciated the performance of PAL and Dr. Yousuf Khusk and assured their full cooperation in this regard. — APP

## Speakers laud lawmakers for promoting participatory development

ISLAMABAD: Speakers of an online session Tuesday lauded the role of parliamentarians and NGOs for encouraging and ensuring inclusive and participatory development for everyone, everywhere. The session titled "The Role of Parliamentarians in Ensuring Inclusive and Participatory Development in Pakistan", gathered wide ranging participants including 30 members of the national and provincial assemblies' Parliamentary Taskforces on SDGs, as well as other eminent representatives, for exchange of ideas and good practices with the former Prime Minister of Belgium and Club de Madrid Member, Yves Leterme, and Arnau Ramirez, Spanish Member of the Parliament. The session was held under the aegis of Club de Madrid in partnership with the Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs, Aurat Foundation and Parliamentary Commission for Human Rights to find ways and means for supporting inclusive implementation of Agenda 2030 in Pakistan under the Shared Societies Project. — APP

## Secy Planning, Chinese envoy discuss matters related to CPEC

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of China to Pakistan Nong Rong says the projects under China Pakistan Economic Corridor are heading in right direction and would continue to progress on expedited pace. Talking to Secretary Planning and Development Mithar Niaz Rana in Islamabad today (Tuesday), the envoy said CPEC is the flagship project that manifests the longstanding friendship between China and Pakistan. He said CPEC is a product of vision of two brotherly countries that goes beyond traditional business dealings reflecting decade's old strong bonds of bilateral co-

operation and shared goals with win-win situation for all. During the meeting, mat-

ters related to bilateral relations, projects under CPEC and progress of upcoming

10th Joint Coordination Committee on CPEC came under discussion.



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## Proteas in Pakistan

**T**EAM South Africa has already landed on the soil of Pakistan. The 21-member strong South African side will play two Tests and a Twenty 20 series against Pakistan. This is the first time after a gap of fourteen years that the South African squad will be showing their talent in the grounds of Pakistan. South Africa's arrival heralds the arrival of quality international cricket to Pakistan; this is another important side that is here for cricket. Ever since 2015, Pakistan's attempts to organise international cricket at home have been successful. Bringing the deserted stadiums back to life by convincing international teams to play in Pakistan is no small feat. Successive governments and the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) deserve credit for bringing cricket back home. Hopefully, other teams will also find the courage to visit Pakistan soon after South Africa's successful fixture. The year 2021 holds a line up of several other teams, including New Zealand, England and West Indies for Pakistan. However, there is another issue that Pakistan has been struggling with for quite some time; the crisis of performance. Pakistan, of late, has failed in putting up an impressive show of game against its opponents. The occasional struggles of green shirts even against weaker opponents like Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka show that Pakistani side lacks consistency. When it comes to solid teams, they outclass us without much resistance from our players. Many critics have rightly criticised and questioned the approach of the management team. The poor selection choices and inadequate training sessions before going into the series have affected the overall performance of the national team recently. The lack of focus on fitness has yielded similar results. Pakistan's announced squad against experienced South Africa is beyond comprehension, at least in the short run. The selectors and the coaches have to address the genuine concerns that the critics often show over the approaches they take regarding the team's performance.

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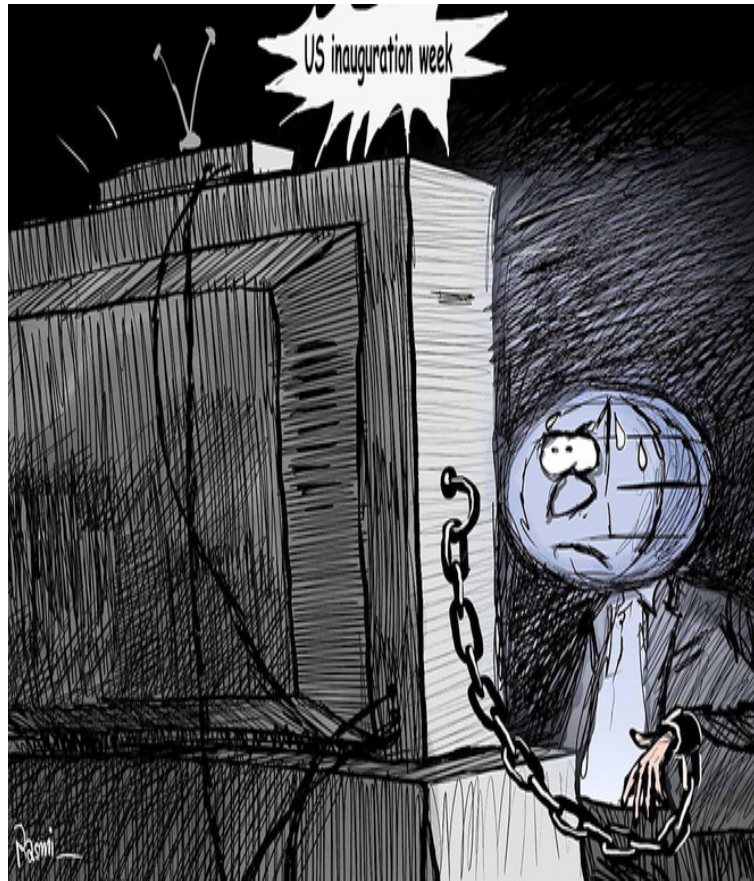
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## Violence in Afghanistan

**V**IOLENCE in Afghanistan continues, even though warring stakeholders have been discussing a peace deal for over a year. The US, the Afghan government and the Taliban have all expressed a willingness to negotiate, and yet, Sunday's gun attack on two female Afghan judges that led to their deaths indicates that there is still some misplaced belief in violence as a bargaining tool in the discussions. The fallout of this latest attack is by no means small. The United States and the Afghan government have both indicated that the Taliban is behind this incident. The Taliban on the other hand, has not taken responsibility, but their predisposition to attack empowered women points to a solid motive. So far, the Taliban have yet to agree to a future Afghanistan where women enjoy equal rights. This is why pointing fingers at the militant outfit makes sense. The Taliban would be well-served by issuing a statement regarding this incident and others of its kind. If it is not the perpetrator, it should clarify this. There have been targeted attacks on members of the intelligence in the country in the past year. This means that a strategy to deprive Afghanistan from its best minds is being employed. There is also the need for the Afghan Taliban to agree to the long-delayed ceasefire, as initially settled between all parties. This demand is one that has been ignored by the Taliban, but with the increase in civilian casualties, the Taliban leaders cannot really assert that they are looking for a peaceful end to the conflict if they cannot even acquiesce to a drawdown in violence. The role of India as a spoiler to peace, both in the region and Afghanistan specifically, cannot be discounted. The recent unannounced visit by the National Security Advisor of India, Ajit Doval, also leaves room for suspicion. While the funding channels and logistical support to terrorists from India may not necessarily be geared towards the Afghan people—Pakistan remains New Delhi's prime target—it is important to understand that any provision of armaments or financial support for militants is almost never fully utilised towards the intended target.

## A post-Trump Palestine

Ahmed Abu Artema



Six million Palestinians – deprived of their liberty and homeland – continue to live in historical Palestine. Millions of other Palestinians live in neighbouring Arab countries and the diaspora. Their identity, their very existence, erodes day by day the deception Israel has used to whitewash its apartheid and present itself to the world as a “model democracy”

**F**OR decades, Palestinians have suffered under Israeli colonial occupation backed and empowered by US political, financial, and military support. This has allowed Israel to gradually expand its settlement and colonisation of Palestine, to the point that now only about 5 percent of historical Palestine's land is actually controlled by Palestinians. This process continued almost undisturbed by international scrutiny for years, under the cover of Washington's “peace process” and its self-declared position as mediator between the Palestinian and Israeli sides.

When Donald Trump became US president in 2017, however, he disrupted this carefully crafted process of gradual colonisation. He embraced the most racist and extremist Israeli agenda and eliminated the established practice of paying lip service to Palestinian rights.

Israel's right-wing government was given the green light to do as it pleased, while the American president kept validating its illegal, criminal acts. This effectively accelerated the process of establishing “facts on the ground” – i.e. the usurpation of Palestinian land and subversion of any Palestinian political leverage to the point that Palestinian demands become impossible to fulfil and their rights irrelevant. So what does Trump's legacy mean for the Palestinians?

Four years of Trump: Although the US Congress passed a bill recognising Jerusalem as the capital of Israel in 1995, successive US administrations postponed acting on it due to the absence of an agreement between the Palestinian Authority and Israel on the status of the holy city. On December 6, 2017, Trump turned what was already on paper into reality by issuing an executive order to move the US embassy to Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The move happened on May 14 the following year, which coincided with the 70th anniversary of the Nakba and which the Israelis marked by massacring dozens of Palestinians in Gaza. A few months later, Trump announced that he was defunding the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA). This was not only a catastrophe for millions of Palestinians who depend on the UN agency for food, education and health care, but it was an attempt to erase the status of the Palestinians as refugees and, by doing

so, their right of return. By trying to destroy UNRWA, Trump was doing the bidding of the Israeli government which has done everything it can for decades to prevent ethnically cleansed Palestinians from returning and reclaiming their land.

The right of return was also further undermined by the “deal of the century” Trump and his son-in-law Jared Kushner put forward. Copying the language of previous US “peace initiatives”, the proposal promised “peace” and “prosperity” for the Palestinians but denied most of their demands, including self-determination in the form of a sovereign Palestinian state. Meanwhile, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced on November 18, 2019, that the US government considers the construction of Israeli settlements in the West Bank not to be a violation of international law.

In his final months as president, Trump did not fail to give yet another lavish gift to Israel: normalisation with Arab states. This was yet another major blow for the Palestinian cause.

In the aftermath of the second Intifada, the Arab League – upon the initiative of the late Saudi King Abdullah – committed to normalise relations with Israel only in exchange for the establishment of a Palestinian state on 1967 borders, the return of refugees, and the withdrawal of Israel from the Golan Heights. In August, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain signed normalisation deals with Israel, under the patronage of the Trump administration, without demanding any concessions on the Palestinian issue in return; Morocco and Sudan followed suit shortly after. This was a clear break with the Arab consensus of “land for peace”.

Thus, by the end of the Trump's presidency, Palestinians seem stripped of whatever they could be stripped of.

A post-Trump Palestine: Joe Biden's victory in the US presidential elections in November seems to have brought some optimism in certain Palestinian quarters that the US will change its policy towards the Palestinians. Let us not forget that Trump's policies were never really in contradiction to Washington's traditional stance on Palestine, showing full and unconditional support for the Israeli state.

To expect Biden to change anything or compensate for the damage his predecessor has done is foolish. In fact, he and his team have made it abundantly

clearly that they will not reverse Trump's decisions, including the moving of the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. His administration will not support the Palestinians' struggle for justice; it will not seek their liberation, the end of the Israeli occupation, the dismantling of the Israeli apartheid regime, or the return of Palestinian refugees to their homeland.

The lesson the Palestinians should learn from the four long years of Trump's presidency is not to bet on any US administration ever embracing their interests and rights or becoming an objective arbiter. The US political elite is an enabler of Israeli occupation and colonisation of Palestine, it has always been and will remain such in the future. And, just like Trump, it will continue to give Israel everything it wants, whether it is legitimacy for its illegal theft of land or an unlimited supply of advanced weapons to use against the Palestinians.

Fully supported by the US, Israel continues its pursuit to establish “facts on the ground” – to establish absolute domination over all of historical Palestine and to make Palestinian statehood impossible. But there is one fact that Israel is completely failing to establish, despite all its military might, financial resources and limitless backing by a superpower: It cannot erase the Palestinians.

Six million Palestinians – deprived of their liberty and homeland – continue to live in historical Palestine. Millions of other Palestinians live in neighbouring Arab countries and the diaspora. Their identity, their very existence, erodes day by day the deception Israel has used to whitewash its apartheid and present itself to the world as a “model democracy”. More importantly, the Palestinian lives and spirit actively undermine the Israeli occupation and apartheid.

Palestinians are suffering shocking deprivation and torment by the Israelis, but they are steadfast. Their very existence has become resistance. And time is not on their tormentor's side. At this moment in time, Israel may appear as a victorious coloniser, having lifted almost all barriers to annexing the West Bank. But the Palestinian struggle is making headway. In the not-so-distant future, justice will prevail and Palestinians will have their freedom.

– Courtesy: Al Jazeera

## Big apathetic, inflation-sharing

Attiya Munawer



The govt introduces a new system for the betterment of the people, but the administration does not spare any effort to make it useless due to its irresponsible behavior. The government's approval of the (DSSI) system is commendable, but unless the district commissioners and deputy commissioners fulfill their responsibilities

**T**HE steps taken by the present government to revive the economy and as a result of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan agreement have led to a storm of inflation in the country, which has broken the back of the common man. Even the screams of the poor and the white-clad have come out. At present, the biggest problem of the people is hunger, poverty and rising inflation, which the helpless people are struggling with every day.

This back-breaking inflation has taken away the veil from the heads of the poor, two loaves of bread to eat, a roof over their heads and clothes to cover their bodies. So, it has become difficult to earn a day. Despite the government's claims, there is no merit in the institutions, political recruitment is being done through recommendation and bribery, everyone from top to bottom is in the hands of one or the other while the common man is destined to face inflation and unemployment. If the government does not control rising inflation, unemployment and indifference, the devastating effects of poverty, hunger and unemployment will sweep everything away.

This fact can't be denied that there was a time when Pakistan was known to be the cheapest country in the region, but today the common man in Pakistan has been deprived of two meals a day. There is no shortage of inflation increasing people in this country, on the one hand there is unavailability with rising prices of electricity, gas, and petrol and on the other hand the prices of food items are constantly rising. In this situation, it is not enough for the Prime Minister to say that the mafia is involved in raising inflation and we will not

give up on this mafia, but it is the responsibility of the government to curb the inflation mafia by providing goods to the consumers at cheap rates through proper policies and administrative control. The current government has been taking various measures to control inflation since coming to power, but so far no significant results have been achieved. Prime Minister Imran Khan and his team are working to control inflation for which the Prime Minister has approved the Decision Support System for Inflation (DSSI) which will record and monitor the prices of essential commodities in 17 major cities of the country.

Under this system, the prices of goods collected from the markets of 17 cities and the prices fixed by the Deputy Commissioner's Office will be compared. In addition to gathering market information, the system will also help the relevant Deputy Commissioners in measuring their performance in controlling inflation.

Any move by Prime Minister Imran Khan to curb this rising inflation would be a good thing as Pakistan is expected to have the highest inflation rate in Asia this year. If Prime Minister Imran Khan and his team manage to win public confidence by controlling inflation, it will not be difficult for them to garner public support to overcome any political crisis based on their performance; however it is very important to address the shortcomings of the current system. The government introduces a new system for the betterment of the people, but the administration does not spare any effort to make it useless due to its irresponsible behavior. The government's approval of the (DSSI) system is commendable, but unless the district commissioners and deputy commissioners fulfill their

responsibilities, it is not possible to stem the tide of rising inflation, for which the administration will have to be held accountable with appointments on merit only then will the system be able to succeed.

There is no doubt that the PTI government is keen to provide relief to the people, but in an environment of political tension, achieving encouraging results does not seem possible. In this context, PML-Q President and senior politician Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain has advised the government to postpone all projects for a year and make short-term plans for poverty alleviation, work for the unemployed and the salaried class and all political leadership to come together and cooperate fully with the government to alleviate the suffering of the people. Chaudhry Shujaat's advice to his allies is not only a matter of time, but also necessary for the stability of the democratic system because unless plans are made on an emergency basis to provide relief to the people from inflation and unemployment. Mere announcements will not change the situation and the fruits of change will not reach the people in 2021, because according to the report of the Bureau of Statistics, 22 items including flour, ghee, sugar and pulses have become more expensive since the first week of January. If the pace of inflation continues to rise at the same rate, it will crush the people this year.

The government and the opposition, while showing indifference, take the advice of Chaudhry Shujaat seriously instead of being a part of those who share inflation among the people and take immediate steps to provide relief otherwise the people will not hesitate to reject both.

## Briefs

Govt to probe  
Broadsheet  
case within  
45 days

From Page 01

government and the newly established NAB to track down foreign assets purchased by Pakistanis through ill-gotten wealth. He said Broadsheet was assigned to search illegal assets of Pakistanis in Asia, America and Europe. He said the company exposed the illegal properties of Sharif family in different countries. Shireen Mazari said the inquiry committee to investigate the Broadsheet matter has been empowered to produce any officer or document from any institute so that responsibility could be fixed.

PTI received  
funding from

From Page 01

were expedited and decided within days, the ECP had "only held 70 hearings" of the PTI case since 2014.

"If you were so innocent why did you give applications to keep the proceedings secret?" she said, referring to the PTI. "This means theft took place and very big theft was done." Maryam said the State Bank of Pakistan had identified "23 secret accounts" of the PTI which she claimed were being operated through Prime Minister Imran's signatures. Addressing the ECP administration, Maryam asked why the commission had "remained silent" when its "feet and hands were tied in the 2018 elections". Addressing the rally, Maulana Fazlur Rehman alleged that the government was "not elected" and had no right to rule, and accused the "helpless" ECP of having failed to conduct transparent elections. "Some powerful institutions took over the election and imposed a daif-playing man on the people," he said.

"An incompetent person was made the ruler because this fool will remain in the front and those powerful institutions would rule [in the back]," he added. The PDM chief repeated the allegation that Prime Minister Imran had "fought elections on money from India and Israel". "Israel and India are Pakistan's enemies, you are using their money to make a person [the prime minister]. Pakistan is an atomic power, by making such a person sit on [the chair], they all become suspicious," he said, criticising the government's foreign policy which he said had cost Pakistan its regional allies. Noting that the government wanted the opposition not to bring students of seminars to political rallies, Rehman said such participants were of age and intelligent. He announced that madrasah students will attend the PDM Kashmir rally on February 5 as well as anti-Israel protests to be held in Karachi on Feb 21.

Indonesia  
death toll  
climbs to 90

## FOREIGN DESK

JAKARTA: The death toll from a powerful earthquake that struck Indonesia's Sulawesi Island last week rose to 90 as bodies of six more people were found during search and rescue operations, the country's disaster agency said Tuesday. The National Disaster Management Agency reported that 79 people were killed in Mamuju Regency and 11 in Majene Regency. Meanwhile, search and rescue teams recovered 18 more people from the rubble. A magnitude 6.2 earthquake struck six kilometers (3.73 miles) northeast of Majene city on Friday, at a depth of 10 kilometers (6.2 miles). A disaster emergency response status was declared in West Sulawesi province for 14 days from Jan. 15 to 28. Meanwhile, President Joko Widodo visited Mamuju Regency on Tuesday to observe the conditions of evacuees and the evacuation process. He said the government buildings collapsed by the earthquake will be rebuilt so that public services could run back immediately. The government will also provide financial aid for damaged houses, the president stated.



ISLAMABAD: German ambassador to Pakistan Bernhard Schlagheck called on Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed. – DNA

PCB approaches govt to  
allow limited crowd in PSL

PCB will plan strict COVID-19 protocols if they will be allowed to bring crowds to the stadium. It must be noted here that the sixth edition of the PSL is scheduled to start on February 20 in Karachi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has approached the governments of Punjab, Sindh, and the federal government to allow a limited crowd during the Pakistan Super League (PSL) season 6 in Karachi and Lahore. According to the details, the PCB has asked for permission to grant access to up to

14,000 people in the stadium in each match at both venues. As per the details, PCB will plan strict COVID-19 protocols if they will be allowed to bring crowds to the stadium. It must be noted here that the sixth edition of the PSL is scheduled to start on February 20 in Karachi. National Stadium will host 20 matches while Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium will host the last 14 matches including knock-out stage and final.

NCOC to reply on PCB's request to  
allow crowd in PSL 6 in February

LAHORE: The National Control Operation Centre (NCOC) has confirmed that they received Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB)'S request to allow a limited crowd in stadiums during PSL 6 matches. According to the sources, NCOC will reply to PCB on this matter in the first week of February following the current COVID-19 situation across the country. Meanwhile, PCB have started preparing strict COVID-19 SoPs for the crowd if they get a green signal from the government. On the other hand, PCB has released a tender for the service of ticket sales of all matches in Pakistan in the calendar year 2021. – DNA

'Navalny  
arrest Russia's  
internal affair'

DNA

MOSCOW: Russia said Tuesday the arrest of opposition leader Alexey Navalny is its internal affair, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. Russia will not take criticism from the West into account but is interested in good relations with other countries. Peskov also said the Navalny case does not require President Vladimir Putin's special attention as all Russian citizens' rights are guaranteed by law. A Russian court ruled Monday that Navalny will be kept in custody until Feb. 15, less than 24 hours after his return to the country.

Donald Trump bestows a rare  
award on King Hamad VI

DNA

MANAMA: US President Donald Trump bestowed a rare award on King Hamad of Bahrain on Tuesday, acknowledging the Gulf state's normalisation of ties with Israel on his last full day in office. Trump, who sees Arab recognition of Israel as a key overseas achievement of his presidency, already conferred the same award on King Mohammed VI of Morocco last week for his move to restore ties. Announcing his bestowal of the Legion of Merit, Degree Chief Commander, on King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Trump also paid tribute to Bahrain's hosting of a June 2019 conference on the economic dimensions of his controversial Middle East peace plan, which broke with decades of international consensus and was boycotted by the Palestinians. "King Hamad has shown extraordinary courage and



leadership through his support of the Vision for Peace and his decision to establish full diplomatic relations with the State of Israel," the official

Bahrain News Agency quoted Trump as saying. "King Hamad has challenged old assumptions about the possibility for peace in the region, and in doing so, positively reshaped the landscape of the Middle East for generations," Trump added. Just across the Gulf from Iran, Bahrain is a long-standing Western ally which is home to the US Fifth Fleet. In 2011, with support from neighbouring Saudi Arabia, the Sunni ruling family crushed month-long Shiite-led protests for an elected prime minister. It has since banned the two main opposition parties and thrown dozens of dissidents in jail. The Legion of Merit is a military award that was created to honour allied leaders in World War II and had gone into obscurity until it was revived by Trump, who last month also presented it to the prime ministers of Australia, India and Japan. On Wednesday at noon, President-elect Joe Biden will be sworn in and the Trump presidency will be over.

Palestinians set to receive first  
batch of Russian vaccines

## FOREIGN DESK

JERUSALEM: The Palestinian Authority (PA) is scheduled to receive on Tuesday a first shipment of 5,000 units of the main Russian COVID-19 vaccine known as Sputnik V, an Israeli official said. The shipment is due to be brought by a PA delegate into the occupied West Bank through Jordan, the official said on condition of anonymity, adding that the import had been approved by Israel's health ministry. According to local Palestinian news agency Maan, the Civil Affairs Minister Hussein al-Sheikh – who was in Russia for an official visit – will cross through the Allenby land border on Tuesday with the vaccines.

In December, Palestinian officials announced that they had signed a deal with Russia for four million doses of the Sputnik V vaccine. The PA Health Minister Mai al-Kaila last week issued "emergency approval" for administering Sputnik in areas where the Palestinians exercise limited self-rule. While there has been much fanfare over the speed at which Israel has been vaccinating its citizens, there has also been criticism directed at the government for failing to provide the vaccines to the more than 4.5 million Palestinians it occupies in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. On Monday, Human Rights Watch called on Israel to carry out its responsibilities, which is enshrined under the Fourth Geneva Convention.

These duties, alongside Israel's obligations under international human rights law, include ensuring medical supplies and providing vaccines in a non-discriminatory manner to Palestinians living under its control. Israel has so far managed to vaccinate 20 percent of its citizens, including Jewish settlers living in the occupied West Bank. "Nothing can justify today's reality in parts of the West Bank, where people on one side of the street are receiving vaccines, while those on the other do not, based on whether they're Jewish or Palestinian," said Omar Shakir, Israel and Palestine director at Human Rights Watch. "Everyone in the same territory should have equitable access to the vaccine, regardless of their ethnicity."

Tetra Pak becomes  
official nutrition  
partner for United

## KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Tetra Pak Pakistan is partnering with Islamabad United Team as its Official Nutrition Partner in the upcoming Pakistan Super League (PSL) due to take place in 2021. The signing ceremony for the partnership took place at the Tetra Pak Head Office on January 19th, 2021, while keeping strict COVID-19 SOPs in place. This is the third time Tetra Pak will be

partnering with Islamabad United having been their nutritional partners in the 2019 and 2020 series as well. The aim of this partnership is to create awareness about the nutritional value of UHT milk and that it is safe, natural and free from chemicals or preservatives making it essential for a healthy and active lifestyle. Players can drink nutrition-filled milk during the matches or in practice sessions through convenient packaged milk options.

## Japan eyes participation in restoring Karabakh

BAKU: Countries from around the world continue to show interest in involvement in restoring Azerbaijan's newly-liberated lands after the war in Autumn ended three decades of Armenian occupation. Japanese companies are interested in participating in the restoration and reconstruction work to be carried out in the energy field in Azerbaijan's liberated territories, Japan Ambassador to Azerbaijan Junichi Wada has said. Wada made the remarks during the meeting with Azerbaijan Energy Minister Parviz Shahbazov on January 19. The ambassador stressed the importance of the liberation of Azerbaijani territories from Armenian occupation and the restoration of territorial integrity for the future development of the country. In turn, the minister noted that

Azerbaijan has close cooperation with Japanese government agencies

and financial institutions in the energy sector. He added that Japanese

companies are implementing a number of successful projects in this

area. Furthermore, the participants were briefed on the plans for the restoration of liberated territories and the creation of a green energy zone, as well as the renewable energy potential of these territories. The parties discussed prospects for the development of bilateral cooperation in the energy field between the two countries, future cooperation opportunities, and exchange of experience and information in the relevant field. Additionally, the parties exchanged views on the prospects of cooperation in the mentioned areas and other issues of mutual interest. It should be noted that the trade turnover between the two countries amounted to \$200.4 million in 2020. Of the total turnover, Azerbaijan's export to Japan amounted to \$5.3 million, while import from Japan to \$195.1 million. – DNA

Biden set  
to take oath  
amidst

From Page 01

Timothy Harleth, according to a source familiar with the day's events and planning, Harleth, a 2017 Trump hire from the Trump International Hotel in Washington, will likely not stay on in the Biden administration, the source said, noting the role of chief usher in all probability will be filled by someone more familiar with the incoming president and first lady. The afternoon of Inauguration Day, then-President Biden will participate in a ceremonial wreath-laying at Arlington National Cemetery, joined by former Presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama. As was the case with previous inaugurations, most of Congress and the Supreme Court are expected to be in attendance, as are some former presidents. Barack Obama, George W. Bush and Bill Clinton are all set to attend.

Sheikh  
says would  
welcome  
long march

From Page 01

It was already made clear that whoever speaks against the Army, will not be forgiven, added Rasheed. He further added that after Tuesday's show we warmly welcome PDM's long march, adding that it will be the last card. Pointing at the less protesters outside ECP, the interior minister said that you [PDM leaders] deserved what people did to you. Earlier in a day, Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed said that he will serve Kashmiri tea if a large number of people would attend the long march.

Magnitude 6.4  
earthquake hits  
Argentina

## WEB DESK

A magnitude 6.4 earthquake trembled Argentina's west-central San Juan province Monday night, according to the nation's disaster agency. The National Institute for Seismic Prevention (INPRES) said the quake struck at 11.46 p.m. local time Monday (0246GMT Tuesday) with a depth of 8 kilometers (around 5 miles). A series of aftershocks were recorded with lesser magnitudes of 4.4, 4.9, and 4.1 during the early hours of Tuesday, affecting San Juan and towns of Caucete, Mirayes, and Barreal as well as the Media Agua Valley, the INPRES said. "So far, there are no fatalities," Governor Sergio Unac told a news conference following the quake, adding that local authorities continue to analyze the damage. Several locations experienced power cuts, while in the town of Zonda four people were evacuated from their homes. Unac said the electricity service is now gradually being re-established. "At this moment I want to transmit calm to the families, after the earthquake that we have experienced in San Juan," the governor on Twitter called on families affected by the quake.

India clinch  
Australia Test  
series with  
historic win

## SPORTS DESK

SYDNEY: India have pulled off a record run-chase in a thrilling final session to hand Australia their first defeat at Brisbane's Gabba ground since 1988 and clinch the four-Test series 2-1 to win the Border-Gavaskar trophy. Wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant starred with a swashbuckling 89 not out as the injury-depleted visitors overhauled the 328-run target with three overs to go, winning by three wickets on the last day of the series on Tuesday. Australia had not been beaten at the Gabba since falling to Viv Richards' all-conquering West Indies side by nine wickets in November 1988. India's 329 for seven also smashed the 69-year-old record for the biggest run-chase at the Gabba, set by Australia who scored 236 for seven to beat the West Indies in 1951. After never winning a Test series on Australian soil until 2018-19, India has now done it twice on consecutive tours Down Under. The four-Test series had been tied 1-1, meaning India needed only a draw to retain the trophy.

## Briefs

### Tens of thousands skip India's vaccination drive

## FOREIGN DESK

NEW DELHI: India has stepped up efforts to bolster trust in coronavirus vaccines after it was revealed that nearly one-third of those invited to receive the vaccine at the launch of a nationwide drive failed to turn up. The government confirmed late on Monday that two post-vaccination deaths had been reported. One was a 52-year-old man who the health ministry said died on Saturday in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh from "cardiopulmonary disease" and not the injection. A post-mortem is being conducted on a 43-year-old man in Karnataka state who suffered a heart attack. The government said that over the first three days of vaccinations, 580 people had reported adverse symptoms. India began one of the world's most ambitious vaccination programmes last week, aiming to inoculate 300 million of its population of 1.3 billion by July. In the first three days of the drive, which started on Saturday, the government said 381,305 vaccinations were administered. In the capital New Delhi, only 53 percent of the people expected came for the shots, according to a health official. "These are initial days and we understand people are waiting to see how the procedure pans out and how other vaccines fare," said Suneela Garg, a member of the coronavirus task force for the capital. "These numbers will go up as confidence is strengthened. And for that, we have to tackle misinformation."

## Taiwan stages military drills

## FOREIGN DESK

Taiwanese troops using tanks, mortars and small arms have staged a drill aimed at repelling an attack from China, which has increased its threats to reclaim the island and stepped up its own displays of military might. "No matter what is happening around the Taiwan Strait, our determination to guard our homeland will never change," Major General Chen Chongji, director of the department of political warfare, said on Tuesday. The drills at the Hukou Army Base, south of the capital, Taipei, were intended as a show of Taiwan's determination to maintain peace between the sides through a show of force, said Chen. They are also meant to reassure the public the military is maintaining its guard before next month's Lunar New Year festival when many soldiers take leave. China considers the democratically-governed island, which lies 160km (100 miles) off its southeast coast, as part of its territory. But President Tsai Ing-wen, who was re-elected in January 2020, has firmly rejected Beijing's claim, leading it to stage war games and dispatch fighter jets and reconnaissance planes on an almost daily basis towards Taiwan in recent months. Analysts say the "grey-zone" warfare tactics are aimed at exhausting the Taiwanese military.

## Norway policy on Pfizer vaccine unchanged

## WEB DESK

OSLO: Norway will not change its policy on the use of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine following deaths among highly frail recipients, but officials have said that health workers should properly assess patients before deciding whether to give them the jab. As of January 14, 23 reports of deaths suspected to be associated with COVID-19 vaccines had been submitted to the Norwegian health registry. Of the 13 cases analysed in detail so far, the concerned individuals were elderly, frail and had serious diseases, Camilla Stoltenberg, director of the Norwegian Institute of Public Health (FHI), told reporters on Monday. "It is important to remember that about 45 people die every day in nursing homes in Norway, so it is not a given that this represents any excess mortality or that there is a causal connection," she said.

## Shanghai Business Connect calls for digital cooperation

The past 20 years can be called a period of active development of multifaceted cooperation within the SCO, a successful combination of national and regional interests in many areas of economic development of our countries



## DNA

BEIJING: A group of dynamic business entrepreneurs and diplomats from countries associated with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) gathered over the weekend at the launch of the first Shanghai Business Connect (SBC) event in Shanghai to network and discuss collaborations in an increasingly digitalized world, a process that has gained additional momentum and significance in the times of the COVID-19 pandemic. The two-day congregation was also the first SCO-related event in a year that marks the 20th anniversary of the foundation of the Eurasian bloc. "The past 20 years can be called a period of active development of multifaceted cooperation within the SCO, a successful combination of national and regional interests in many areas of economic development of our countries," SCO Secretary General Vladimir Norov said in his opening remarks delivered via a video message at the SBC launch event on Saturday. "Today, the SCO countries, by joining forces, are

jointly fighting the coronavirus pandemic, which, along with causing significant damage to the economy and public health, has accelerated the process of digital transformation in almost all sectors of the socio-economic life of our states," Norov emphasized. "It is obvious that the development of the digital economy and the active use of modern digital technologies can play a decisive role in overcoming the negative consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and creating new sources of economic growth in our countries, which is of particular importance, and is one of the main directions of the SCO's activities," he added. The SBC describes its mission as bringing together the best practices and tools from companies in e-commerce, AI and Fintech from China and other SCO countries and synergizing them in the implementation of sound, and contemporary trade practices aimed at improving people's livelihood. Noting that the strengthening of digital connectivity in the SCO countries will open up new prospects and opportunities for economic development and increase the investment

attractiveness of the region, Norov expressed hope that the SBC "will make a constructive contribution to the further development of digitalization and the development of mutually beneficial cooperation in the digital economy in the SCO space." SCO Deputy Secretary General Serali Jonon addressed the gathering in person. He reiterated the Eurasian bloc's commitment to the "development of digitalization, telecommunication technologies, smart city technology and new production technologies based on robotics and artificial intelligence." "In this regard, today's event is timely and important in terms of the exchange of experience and the establishment of practical contacts between companies in the field of e-commerce and "smart" technologies, as well as in the creation of innovative projects in the field of information technology and the digital economy," Jonon remarked. Since its foundation on June 15, 2001, the SCO has expanded over the past two decades to now represent more than 60 percent of the Eurasian landmass and close to 50 percent of the world's population.

"The new year has given us the opportunity to come together in the city where it all started... Personally, I see a lot of symbolism and synergy for the SCO's 20th anniversary year to begin in the city of its birth and with the first Shanghai Business Connect," said Olim Alimov, CEO of ShangHe Trade and Culture House and also the Director of UCBC Beijing. "The SBC is a platform that brings together multitalented entrepreneurs from the SCO countries to build new and meaningful relationships in order to establish sustainable partnership that can not only result in co-creation of projects but lasting friendship," Alimov said, adding that earlier on Friday the Shanghai Network-Business Club was launched to "drive the SBC mission throughout China and the greater SCO space." We will work hard towards building the platform where trade could be simpler, investment could be smarter, sustainable and systematic, financing could be cheap and traveling to any of the SCO country could be like going back home. Because, for us, SCO

is home," Olim added, encapsulating the "Shanghai Spirit" that delineates the founding principles of the SCO. The event was jointly organized by Yan'nan Jitian Technology Co. Ltd. and ShangHe Trade and Culture House in cooperation with and support from the SCO Secretariat, the Business Connect Secretariat, SCOLAR Network (a youth platform for SCO countries), and the United Center for Business Cooperation (UCBC Beijing). Other key speakers at the SBC launch event included Shen Huadi, member of the standing committee of Jiading District Committee and deputy district mayor; Zhu Tao, deputy director of Shanghai Internet Information Office; Sergey Kanavskiy, executive secretary of the SCO Business Council; Beknazar Dzekshenkulov, minister counsellor at the Embassy of Kyrgyz Republic in China and also the permanent representative of his country to the SCO Secretariat; Muhammad Ruman Ahmad, Pakistan's permanent representative to the SCO Secretariat; and Muhammad Egamzod, Tajikistan's permanent representative to the SCO Secretariat.

## Turkey slaps advertising ban on Twitter

## FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: Turkey has hit Twitter, Pinterest and Periscope with advertising bans after they failed to follow Facebook and appoint a local representative to take down contentious posts under a new media law published on Tuesday. Under the law, which critics say stifles dissent, social media companies that do not appoint such representatives are liable for a series of penalties, including the move by the Information and Communication Technologies Authority (BTK) to impose advertising bans. The latest decision in the country's Official Gazette said the bans went into effect from Tuesday. Twitter, its live-streaming app Periscope, and image-sharing app Pinterest were not immediately available for comment. The new law allows authorities to remove content from platforms, rather than blocking access as they did in the past. This has raised concerns as people have turned to online platforms in the past years since Ankara tightened its grip on mainstream media after President Recep Tayyip Erdogan survived a coup attempt in 2016. In previous months, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter faced millions of dollars in fines in Turkey

for not complying. Companies that do not abide by the law will ultimately have their bandwidth slashed, essentially blocking access. Deputy Minister of Transport Omer Fatih Sayan said Twitter and Pinterest's bandwidth would be cut by 50 percent in April and 90 percent in May. Twitter said last month it would shut down Periscope by March due to declining usage. "We are determined to do whatever is necessary to protect the data, privacy and rights of our nation," Sayan said on Twitter. "We will never allow digital fascism and disregard of rules to prevail in Turkey," he said, echoing tough comments by Erdogan. Freedom of speech defenders warn the law is part of Erdogan's attempt to control social media and stop any dissent against his government. On Monday, Facebook joined other companies in saying it would appoint a local representative but added it would withdraw the person if it faced pressure regarding what is allowed on its platform. Milena Buyum, Amnesty International's Turkey campaigner, said on Monday: "Facebook's decision leaves them - and Google, YouTube and others - in serious danger of becoming an instrument of state censorship."

## Iran holds fifth military drill in two weeks

## FOREIGN DESK

TEHRAN: Iran's army has conducted another drill along the country's southern coasts days after the United States flew nuclear-capable B-52 bombers over the Middle East. In what is the fifth military show of force in two weeks, the army's ground forces held land, air, and sea war games along the coast of Makran and the Sea of Oman. State broadcaster aired dramatic footage of dozens of Iranian soldiers parachuting out of aeroplanes while images released by the army show attack helicopters, tanks and missiles in combat, and hundreds of personnel ready to be deployed. The army also said it is deploying rapid

response forces to test out "a variety of creative indigenous tactics" and is using divers to complete predefined scenarios. "Today, army ground forces have achieved considerable operational capabilities in deploying drones and missiles," said Brigadier General Mohammad Hossein Dadras, deputy chief of the Iranian army. "The power and might of the army's ground forces in responding to threats will be displayed in this exercise." The drill came days after the US once more flew B-52 bombers over the region, the fifth time in the past two months. The outgoing Donald Trump administration, which has pursued a "maximum pressure" policy accompanied with harsh economic sanctions on

Iran, first flew the bombers in the run-up to the January 3 anniversary of the assassination of Iran's top general Qassem Soleimani. Soleimani was killed in a Trump-ordered drone strike in Baghdad last year. In response to the increased US military presence, Iran's army and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) have organised several military shows of force in the new year. The army conducted a drill for locally made drones and fired torpedoes from locally made submarines, while the IRGC unveiled a huge underground missile base and tested long-range missiles that it said could take out enemy vessels and aircraft carriers more than 1,800km (1,118 miles) away.



GUJRAT: Chaudhry Wahiduddin, president GCCCI presents a commemorative shield to Special Assistant Chief Minister Punjab, Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan on the occasion of his visit to Gujarat Chamber of Commerce. - DNA

## Qatar calls on Gulf to engage with Iran

The call for dialogue by Qatar's foreign minister comes as Doha enters a rapprochement with its neighbouring Arab countries after resolving a three-year diplomatic standoff earlier this month

## FOREIGN DESK

DOHA: Qatar is urging Gulf nations to enter into a dialogue with Iran and has offered to broker negotiations after a three-year blockade on Doha was recently removed by its Arab neighbours. Qatar, which shares a major gas field with Iran, has for years called on Gulf Arab states to enter talks with Iran, which they accuse of fomenting unrest in the Middle East, accusations Tehran denies. Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani told Bloomberg TV in an interview broadcast on Monday that his government is "hopeful that this would happen". "We still

believe this should happen. This is also a desire that's shared by other GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] countries [for talks with Iran]," Sheikh Mohammed said. Iran's arch-rival Saudi Arabia has not publicly indicated any willingness to engage with Iran. Instead Saudi Arabia insisted this month's rapprochement with Qatar meant the Gulf family would be better able to combat "the threats posed by the Iranian regime's nuclear and ballistic missile programme". Commenting separately on potential US-Iran negotiations now that the Trump administration is on its way out, Doha's foreign minister said Qatar would facilitate those discussions if asked and support whoever is chosen to do so. "We want the

accomplishment, we want to see the deal happening," he said of potential talks between Washington and Tehran. "Wherever it is, whoever it is conducting this negotiation, we will support them." The comments come a day before President-elect Joe Biden is to be sworn in at the White House replacing President Donald Trump. The newly elected leader already promised to return to the negotiating table with Iran, marking a change of tone in US diplomacy in the region. On Monday Biden nominated longtime diplomat Wendy Sherman, a key negotiator of the Iran nuclear agreement, to be the next deputy secretary of state, the second-highest position at the Department of State. World powers signed a landmark

nuclear accord with Iran in 2015, which outlined a curb on Iran's nuclear activities in exchange for sanctions relief. However, Iran's economy has suffered badly from crippling economic sanctions as part of a "maximum pressure" campaign imposed by the US since Trump pulled out of the agreement in 2018. Since then, tensions between the two countries have increased amid a torrent of hostile rhetoric and military action. The call for dialogue by Qatar's foreign minister comes as Doha enters a rapprochement with its neighbouring Arab countries after resolving a three-year diplomatic standoff earlier this month. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, and Egypt severed economic

and diplomatic ties with Qatar in 2017 and imposed a land, sea, and air blockade, accusing Doha of supporting "terrorism" and being too close to Iran. Qatar repeatedly denied the claims and said there was no justification for severing relations. Borders have now reopened, embassies will soon be re-established, and families separated by the blockade are being reunited. The first direct flights between Qatar and Egypt and the UAE took to the skies on Monday. Sheikh Mohammed also told Bloomberg his government was supporting ongoing discussions between Iran and South Korea to secure the release of an oil tanker seized by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps early this month.

## Voters urged to reject niqab ban in referendum

## FOREIGN DESK

BERN: The Swiss government recommended on Tuesday that voters reject a proposal in a planned March 7 referendum to ban full facial coverings such as burqas and niqabs, worn by some Muslim women, saying the move would hurt tourism. Under Switzerland's system of direct democracy, any proposal to change the constitution goes to a popular vote if supporters raise more than 100,000 signatures. In 2009, Swiss voters backed a proposal to ban the construction of new minarets. The Swiss cantons of St Gallen and Ticino have already banned full-face coverings in regional votes, but the Swiss government said following through with a nationwide constitutional ban was a bad idea. "Very few people in Switzerland wear a full facial covering," the government said in a statement. "A nationwide ban would undermine the sovereignty of the cantons, damage tourism and be unhelpful for certain groups of women," it said. Most women who wear full facial coverings are tourists and only spend a brief time in the country, the statement added. Montreux and other destinations around Lake Geneva, as well as Interlaken in central Switzerland, traditionally attract some Muslim tourists, mainly from the wealthy Gulf Arab states. Switzerland's proposal also forbids forcing somebody to wear a facial covering based on their gender.

## UN urges Israel to 'halt, reverse' new settlements

## WEB DESK

NEW YORK: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has called on Israel to "halt and reverse" its decision last week to build nearly 800 new homes for Jewish settlers in the occupied West Bank. The decision is "a major obstacle to the achievement of the two-state solution, and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace" in the Middle East, Guterres said in a statement on Monday. "The establishment by Israel of settlements in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, has no legal validity and constitutes a flagrant violation under international law. "Settlement expansion... further erodes the possibility of ending the occupation and establishing a contiguous and viable sovereign Palestinian State, based on the pre-1967 lines," Guterres said. Israel on Sunday approved the construction of 780 homes in the occupied West Bank, ordered by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on January 11. All Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank are regarded as illegal under international law and by much of the international community.

## Tunisia President Saied urges protester restraint

## FOREIGN DESK

TUNIS: Demonstrators in Tunisia protested for the fourth-consecutive day against the worsening social and economic crisis in the country as the president showed up at one rally and told them to stop. Blocking streets and setting barricades on fire on Monday, demonstrators clashed with police who responded by firing tear gas. Protesters have looted shops and threw stones and Molotov cocktails at official buildings and businesses in some areas. President Kais Saied visited Ariana, a city near the capital Tunis, and asked people not to let others take advantage of their anger and poverty. "Through you, I want to speak to all the Tunisian people, I know the state of poverty and I also know who is exploiting your poverty. Don't let anyone exploit your misery, don't attack private or public property. We live today because of moral values and not because of theft or looting," Saied told a crowd. Tunisians angry about the high unemployment rate and the financial crisis in the North African nation have protested since Friday in Kasserine, Tunis and several other cities. Demonstrators shouted: "Dissolve the parliament, dissolve the parliament" on Monday.

## Briefs

### 'PDM to gain nothing out of ECP protest'

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Special assistant to the Punjab chief minister on information, Firdous Ashiq Awan Tuesday said that Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM)'s confused leadership was misleading public even when government agreed to talk to opposition on the issue of national interests. Talking to a private news channel, she said that the protest of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) outside the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) was beyond understanding and corrupt PDM cannot stop an institution from working through blackmailing tactics and creating chaos in the country. She said public was fed up with the negative politics of opposition who were leveling baseless allegations against the national institutions to get NRO. She said PML-N and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) have looted the country one after the other and their children were now ready to take turn, adding she said people had rejected these corrupt elements and declared their so-called public gatherings to save their corruption. Firdous further said that process of accountability would be completed without any discrimination and incumbent government was heading towards the destination of making Naya Pakistan. Replying to a query, she said that action will be taken against all those, who reaped benefit in the broadsheet saga and it would be made public soon.

### Pakistan crosses 11,000 virus deaths

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The number of coronavirus deaths in Pakistan surged to 11,055 on Tuesday, according to the NCOC tally as a new coronavirus variant threatens the country's prevention measures to curb the pandemic. Since the start of January 2021, the country has witnessed 48.8 deaths on average every day with hospital intensive care units nearing capacity across the country as active COVID-19 cases surge to 35,485. Over 2,000 people died of coronavirus in the month of December last year while the death toll for November 2020 was 1,268 and October recorded 339 fatalities. On Tuesday, the country's COVID-19 case tally stood at 523,011 with 1,800 new infections recorded in the past 24 hours. The NCOC data shows that 40,833 people have tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 since the beginning of the new year - at an average of 2268.5 infections per day. The month of December 2020 saw a total of 81,696 cases while November and October's infection tally stood at 66,512 and 21,164.

### NAB files reference against CM Murad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on Tuesday filed a reference in the fake bank accounts case against Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah over alleged abuse of power in provincial power projects. According to media, Omni Group's Abdul Majeed Ghani is also among the 17 suspects named by NAB in the reference. The reference has been filed in an accountability court in Islamabad. In the reference, the accountability watchdog has accused Shah of releasing funds for energy projects in contravention to the rules which caused losses to the national exchequer.



ISLAMABAD: The Residents Ambassadors-designates of Korea, Nepal, Belarus and Non-Residents Ambassadors-designates of Ireland, Kosovo, Mali and Sierra Leone presenting their credentials to President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on 19-01-2021. - DNA

# President for enhanced ties with friendly countries

He made these remarks while talking to the Residents Ambassadors-designates of Korea, Nepal, Belarus and Non-Residents Ambassadors-designates of Ireland, Kosovo, Mali and Sierra Leone

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has called for increased trade, investment, defence and cultural cooperation with all friendly countries. He said that Pakistan was home to some of the world's most revered Buddhist sites and expressed the hope that tourists from friendly countries would increasingly visit Pakistan. He made these remarks while talking to the Residents Ambassadors-designates of Korea, Ne-

pal, Belarus and Non-Residents Ambassadors-designates of Ireland, Kosovo, Mali and Sierra Leone, who made separate calls on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Tuesday. Earlier, the Resident Ambassador-designate of the Republic of Korea, Mr Suh Sangpyo, the Resident Ambassador-designate of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, Mr Tapas Adhikari, the Resident Ambassador-designate of the Republic of Belarus, Mr Andrei Metelitsa, and Non-Resident Ambassador-designate of the Republic

of Ireland, Ms Sonya McGuinness, the Non-Resident Ambassador-designate of the Republic of Kosovo, Mr IlirDugolli, the Non-Resident Ambassador-designate of the Republic of Mali, Mr Dianguinadit Yaya Doucoure and the Non-Resident Ambassador-designate of the Republic of Sierra Leone, Mr AlieBadara Kamara presented their credentials to President Dr Arif Alvi at a ceremony. The President congratulated the newly-appointed Ambassadors and expressed the hope that they would play their role in pro-

moting commercial and cultural relations with Pakistan. While talking to the envoys separately, President Dr Arif Alvi said that Pakistan's ranking in the Ease of Doing Business Index had improved tremendously and foreign investors needed to take advantage of investment friendly environment of the country. He added that Pakistan wanted to strengthen bilateral ties with friendly countries in all dimensions. He said that Pakistan was taking all possible measure to promote relations with countries in Afri-

can region under its "Engage Africa" policy and was willing to offer experience and expertise as well as technical assistance to African countries in all areas of mutual interest. He also briefed the envoys about the atrocities and gross Human Rights violations being committed by India against the innocent people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). He urged the international community to play its rightful role to stop India from committing such blatant violations of International Law.



ISLAMABAD: Former President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahmad Waheed and Malik Sohail Hussain senior business leader meeting with Spokesman Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Additional Secretary Zahid Hafeez Chaudhry. -DNA

## Danish envoy for expediting work on treatment plant

DNA

FAISALABAD: Ambassador of Denmark Mrs. Lis Rosenholm on Tuesday stressed the need for expediting work on the waste water treatment plant to ensure rapid completion of the project. She was addressing a meeting at WASA office here on Tuesday. Deputy Head of Mission Mrs. Bente Schiller, Commissioner Saqib Manan and WASA officers were also present on the occasion.

The ambassador said that this project will have a salutary impact on the overall environment of this fastest growing industrial city and the waste water could be utilized for irrigation purposes. She added that the treatment plant would be setup with the newest Danish technology which further cement the bilateral relations between the two countries. She said that WASA was providing best service to the people of Faisalabad and hoped that WASA would also play

its full role for rapid completion of waste water treatment plant. Divisional Commissioner Saqib Manan said that waste water treatment plant was a mega project of about Rs.19b which will resolve the problem of pollution through waste water. Moreover, the waste water could be available for agriculture purposes. On the occasion, MD WASA Jabbar Anwar Chaudhry welcomed the visit of Danish Ambassador Liz Rosenhall and Deputy Head of Mission Medium Bente Schiller.

## NAB court summons Mandviwalla on Feb 4

ISLAMABAD: Accountability court on Tuesday has summoned Senate deputy chairman Saleem Mandviwalla on February 4 in corruption references. During the proceedings, the court has approved fake bank accounts and illegal allotment of plots cases for hearing. According to the NAB kidney hill plots allotment case, Saleem Mandviwalla had facilitated Ejaz Haroon in selling government lands to Omni Group's CEO Abdul Ghani Majeed. - APP

## Italian Envoy for joint efforts to enhance trade

LAHORE: The Ambassador of Italy Andreas Ferrarese on Tuesday called on the President of Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mian Tariq Misbah. During the meeting, they have agreed to enhance mutual ties especially in areas of trade and economy. LCCI Senior Vice President Muhammad Nasir Hameed Khan, Executive Committee Members Chaudhry Khadim Hussain and Shahid Nazir were also present on the occasion. The Ambassador said that Italy gives utmost importance to its relations with Pakistan and all out efforts would be made to boost the economic ties. He said the Italian government is committed to strengthening ties with Pakistan wherever it finds any opportunity for mutual collaborations. He said that Italy has savings in excess of 5 Trillion Dollars so it has a lot of fiscal space to undertake investment projects. He said that Pakistani investors should come forward and avail investment opportunities. The Ambassador said that there is a potential for Pakistan and Italy to enhance the trade volume to 5 Billion Dollars. He further stated that there is a lot of potential in the sectors of Construction and Agriculture while the Tourism sector also holds great potential. He said that the long term visas of 3-5 years would be extended to the business community of Pakistan. This would help in enhancing B2B contacts and the trade relations. LCCI President Mian Tariq Misbah said that Italy is an important trading partner of Pakistan in Europe which comes at 5th place among the top exporting destinations for Pakistan and for the first time it has come at 1st place among the major supplying markets for Pakistan's imports in European Union. - DNA

## Malik calls for legal action against Modi

ISLAMABAD: Chairman, Senate Standing Committee on Interior and former Interior Minister, Senator A. Rehman Malik has demanded necessary legal proceedings against Indian Prime Minister Modi for his baseless allegations against Pakistan, after Arnab Goswami's WhatsApp chat leaks and revelation by DisinfoLab EU. Talking to journalists in Islamabad, he said both leaks have exposed the real face of BJP and Narendra Modi before the world. He said Arnab Goswami leaked chats have revealed that Pulwama attack was carried out by the Indian intelligence agency RAW in connivance with RSS to benefit Modi in general elections. He said that, he had categorically stated that the Pulwama incident was planned and executed by RAW to create anti-Pakistan feelings among Indians to be used to grab victory in elections. Senator A. Rehman Malik expressed his pleasures and congratulated the nation that Pakistan has become the tenth most powerful country in the world in terms of military power adding that nation is proud of Pakistan Army and the credit goes to Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa for his vision. - DNA

# Pak-China Centre to deepen Pak-SCO linkages

Pakistan Ambassador to China, Moin ul Haque and, Party Secretary of Jaiozhou District, Qingdao and Director General of Shanghai Cooperation Organization Demonstration Area (SCODA), Liu Jianjun jointly inaugurated the center

DNA

BEIJING: Pakistan-China Centre aimed at deepening Pakistan's linkages with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member states especially China in diverse fields of cooperation was inaugurated in Jiaozhou District, Qingdao, China. Pakistan Ambassador to China, Moin ul Haque and, Party Secretary of Jaiozhou District, Qingdao and Director General of Shanghai Cooperation Organization Demonstration Area (SCODA), Liu Jianjun jointly inaugurated the center

on Tuesday. Speaking on the occasion, the Ambassador highlighted that since becoming SCO's member in June 2017, Pakistan has been closely coordinating with all SCO member countries for the attainment of common objectives. He underscored that establishment of Pakistan-China Centre at the SCODA marked a major step towards Pakistan's closer integration with the member countries in multifaceted areas of cooperation including bilateral trade, investment, sports, people-to-people exchanges and two-way tourism. Ambassador Haque also expressed optimism that Pa-

kistan-China heralded the beginning of a new phase of cooperation between Pakistan and Qingdao in areas of common interests. He thanked the Government of Qingdao for its continued support for the establishment of the Centre. Earlier on Tuesday, Ambassador Moin ul Haque met Zhao Haozhi, Deputy Party Secretary and Mayor of Qingdao, China and discussed ways and means to further enhance bilateral cooperation. During the meeting, both sides held detailed discussions on deepening bilateral cooperation in the fields of investment, trade, tour-

ism and people-to-people exchanges. Welcoming the Ambassador to Qingdao, the Mayor briefed him about the increasing significance of Qingdao as the regional economic and trade hub. He highlighted that as China's all-weather strategic cooperative partner, provincial government and private and state-owned enterprises of Qingdao accorded top priority to the deepening of trade and cultural linkages with Pakistan. The Mayor highlighted that this objective could be facilitated by existing sister-city ties between Qingdao and Karachi. The Mayor expressed hope that as Pakistan and China were commemo-

rating the 70th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic ties in 2021, bilateral linkages between Qingdao and Pakistan would increase manifold this year. Thanking Mayor Zhao for warm welcome and his kind sentiments for Pakistan, Ambassador Haque congratulated him on his recent appointment as the Mayor of Qingdao. The ambassador expressed satisfaction at the growing ties between Pakistan and Qingdao in diverse fields of cooperation. He highlighted that besides existing cooperation, both sides could also initiate bilateral cooperation in new areas including blue economy, coastal tourism and media cooperation.

## Sindh proposes Rs1.5b for vaccine

DNA

KARACHI: Sindh Health Department on Tuesday recommended an allocation of Rs1.5 billion for procurement of anti-coronavirus vaccines. The Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) has granted approval for emergency use of two coronavirus vaccines - the AstraZeneca-Oxford vaccine with 70.4% efficacy and China's Sinopharm vaccine with an efficacy of 79% - while phase III clinical trials of the third vaccine by CanSino will be completed by the first week of February. A spokesperson for the provincial health department said a draft will be prepared sent to seek the approval of Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah. The provincial government is negotiating the import of COVID-19 vaccines with two private companies, according to media. The development comes after National Command and Operations Centre (NCOC) chief Asad Umar asserted that DRAP's decision meant the federal and provincial governments, as well as the private sector, was free to import and roll out the approved vaccines. With a new coronavirus variant threatening the country's prevention measures to curb the pandemic, Pakistan has seen an uptick in coronavirus infections as 40,833 people tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 since the beginning of the new year.

## Five bills approved for Balochistan's uplift

DNA

ISLAMABAD: To bring development in Balochistan at par with rest of the country, the federal cabinet on Tuesday approved several bills related to healthcare, technology, education and animal husbandry. The bills include Balochistan Vaccination Ordinance 1958, Balochistan Smart Cities Authority Bill 2020, Balochistan Digital Policy 2020, Balochistan Education Council Bill 2020, and Balochistan Livestock Breeding, Contagious Disease and Poultry Production Bill 2020. In conformation to the provision decisions of the Cabinet, the Balochistan Health Department worked on the bills on war footing basis, and also issued orders of recruitment of over 1,026 doctors. The cabinet was informed that among these doctors, 496 medical officers, 382 lady medical officers and 148 dental surgeons had been recruited. Eight District Headquarters (DHQs) have been declared as teaching and Post Graduate Medical Institutes (PGMI). Over 250 FCPS/MCPS qualified Doctors have also been selected and will be posted in 11 Teachings Hospitals and PGMI. The Children Hospital Quetta has been made fully functional recently by placing well-qualified Processors and Consultants, which will address the shortage of doctors in the province and strengthen the healthcare delivery system.

## 'Zardari, Sharif family used politics for business'

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Murad Saeed on Tuesday said that Zardari and Sharif families have even used their political parties for business. Murad Saeed, in a statement, said that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) have not provided their sources of funding to Election Commission of Pakistan despite a six week deadline by the commission. He further said that political parties were used as front companies which used to receive kickbacks from corruptions.