



Islamabad POST

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Islamophobia, xenophobia should 'stop': Erdogan

Detailed News On Page-06

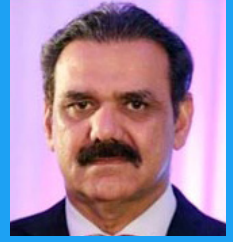
Chinese envoy hopes to resolve trade issues

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Chinese agri experience to help Pakistan

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Briefs

PDM has achieved 70% of goals

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) President Maulana Fazlur Rehman while refuting rumours about resigning from the PDM leadership said the February 4 summit of the anti-government alliance will take important decisions. Talking to a private television channel on Wednesday, the PDM president said the PDM movement has achieved 70 percent of its goals and it is united. "The headlines on various channels are baseless and rumour-mongers are ignorant," he further added. Fazl said he did not talk about resigning from the PDM presidency in his telephonic conversations.

Vaccine free of cost, says Dr Faisal

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Special Assistant on National Health Services Dr Faisal Sultan says the government will provide COVID-19 vaccine free of cost to general public. Participating in an online workshop pertaining to Health, he said China has gifted half million doses of the vaccine to Pakistan, which will be made available to the people free of cost. The Special Assistant said that in first phase, frontline health workers will be vaccinated, while in the second phase, senior citizens will be administered with the anti-pandemic medicine.

PTI not to take senate majority

DNA

ISLAMABAD: PML-N leader and former interior minister Ahsan Iqbal said Wednesday that the party will contest the upcoming Senate elections to deter the PTI from obtaining a two-thirds majority in the parliament. Speaking to media outside an accountability court, the PML-N leader said that his party did not believe in "leaving the field open for the PTI". Iqbal said that if the PML-N did not contest elections, then the ruling party will obtain a two-thirds majority.

No confidence move doomed to fail: Shibli

The minister said that now the economy was improving because of prudent policies pursued by the government

NAVEED MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz said on Wednesday that the component parties of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) lacked unity as all of them were pursuing conflicting narratives and interests. Talking to media persons outside Parliament House after PTI Parliamentary party meeting chaired by Prime Minister Imran Khan, he said that the PDM had internal differences having no consensus as PPP and PML-N had their own interests. He said that the PPP wanted to move a no confidence motion but the PML-N had a different viewpoint. He said that PDM had earlier announced many other steps but failed to achieve any target. He said if the opposition moved a no confidence motion against the Prime Minister in the National Assembly it would meet the same fate like

No rifts within PDM: Maryam

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: PML-N vice president Maryam Nawaz on Wednesday refuted speculation of internal rifts within the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), saying that the alliance had "exemplary coordination". Speaking to media from the Khokhar brothers' residence, the PML-N leader said that the government's wish to see the Opposition's alliance fall victim to internal rifts would yield nothing. "Even if there is a disagreement on any matter within the PDM, it is resolved in an amicable manner," she said. Maryam urged PPP chairperson Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari to present his suggestion on bringing about an in-house change with other members of the PDM.

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ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Greece, Andreas Papastavrou called on Federal Minister for Defence, Pervez Khattak. – DNA

NCOC announces vaccination strategy

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The National Command and Control Centre (NCOC) on Wednesday unveiled a comprehensive plan to administer the vaccine for the Covid-19 across the country to curb the pandemic's spread.

The plan has been adopted after taking all the provinces and other stakeholders on board, a meeting of NCOC held in Islamabad in this regard was apprised. It added that the strategy has been evolved in light of the established international regulations and health guidelines. The purpose of the strategy is to administer the vaccines through a coordinated system in a safe and

Counterfeiting of vaccine not Possible

RANA FARRUKH

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary for Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination, Nausheen Hamid said that counterfeiting of Coronavirus vaccine is not possible. A statement issued by Dr Nausheen said that Covid-19 vaccine will be available in Pakistan in mid-February however it will not be available at any medical store. She said that trials of CanSinoBio vaccine were conducted in Pakistan, the results of which are being compiled in Canada, soon the vaccine will be imported to Pakistan. Dr Nausheen said that Sino firm would be the first in the country. The government is ordering 1.1 million doses of CanSinoBio vaccine. This vaccine is being provided to Pakistan free of cost by China. The Parliamentary Secretary said that the results of the clinical experiment of the Sino firm are more than 85% effective. Medical personnel will begin receiving the vaccine in the coming days. Staff working in Corona Wards will be vaccinated first, she added.

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ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of European Union Androulla Kaminara addressing International Women Chambers conference organized by Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry. – DNA

Pakistan-Italy hold annual consultations

The Foreign Secretary also briefed the Italian side on the vast investment opportunities and avenues in Pakistan

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The 5th Round of Pakistan-Italy Annual Bilateral Political Consultations was held virtually on Wednesday. Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood led the Pakistan side, while Secretary General of Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Ambassador Elisabetta Belloni led the Italian delegation. Entire spectrum of bilateral relations including fight against the Pandemic; political, trade and eco-

conomic relations; energy; defence; migration and people-to-people exchanges were reviewed during the Consultations. Views were also exchanged on regional and global issues. Agreeing that Pakistan and Italy have exemplary relations based on mutual trust and principles of cooperation, the two sides resolved to further expand the relationship in all dimensions. Foreign Secretary expressed condolences over loss of lives in Italy due to Covid-19 and commended the efforts of the Italian

Government in containing the pandemic. He briefed his counterpart on the measures taken by the Government of Pakistan to control the second wave of Covid-19, while saving lives, securing livelihoods, and stimulating the economy. The two sides exchanged views on the socio-economic impact of the pandemic and discussed ways of mitigating the adverse effects. The Foreign Secretary also briefed the Italian side on the vast investment opportunities and avenues in Pakistan and assured that

Italian companies and investors will be fully facilitated in all sectors. He thanked the Italian side for its support on GSP Plus status for Pakistan with the European Union. The Foreign Secretary emphasized the need to increase business-to-business interface as soon as the Covid situation subsides. The Foreign Secretary highlighted the importance of strong Pakistani diaspora in Italy, which acts as a bridge between the two countries.

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Pak wants regional peace: FM

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has reaffirmed its commitment to multilateral cooperation for preserving peace, preventing conflict and realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The resolve was expressed by Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi, while speaking in a virtual High Level Refreshment Conference for UN Secretary General's Peace-building Fund. The Foreign Minister announced a token contribution of 25,000 dollars to the Secretary General's Peace-building Fund. He said the pledge underscores Pakistan's

Continued on Page 06

Jordan CJCS calls on Army Chief

The visiting dignitary appreciated professionalism of Pakistan Army and its efforts for regional peace



DNA

RAWALPINDI: Major General Yousef Ahmed Al-Hnati, Chairman Joint Chief of Staff Jordan Armed Forces called on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS), on Wednesday. During the meeting matters of mutual & professional interest and regional security situation were discussed. According to an Inter Service

Public Relations (ISPR) press release, the Army Chief said that Pakistan values its brotherly relations with Jordan and Pakistan Army looks forward for enhanced defence and security cooperation with Jordan Armed Forces. On the occasion, the visiting dignitary appreciated professionalism of Pakistan Army and its continuous efforts for regional peace and stability, the statement added.

Malaysia releases seized PIA plane

DNA

KARACHI: The Malaysian authorities have released the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) plane which was seized after the national flag carrier failed to clear the dues of the leasing firm. A PIA spokesperson told media on Wednesday that the airline has reached an agreement with the leasing firm for an out-of-court settlement after which the court ordered to release the plane. "The airline will bring the plane back to the country as a commercial flight for which PIA staff is being sent to Malaysia," he said. Malaysian authorities seized the Boeing 777 aircraft on Jan 15 after a court allowed an application by the plane's lessor, Peregrine Aviation Charlie Limited, to keep it grounded pending the outcome of a \$14 million lease dispute with PIA in a UK court.

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Japan grants US\$ 4.57m for oral polio vaccine

MATSUDA Kuninori, Ambassador of Japan paid tribute to all the frontline polio workers engaged in vaccination amid the prevailing risk of COVID-19

NAVEED MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan provides US\$ 4.57 million grant to procure essential oral polio vaccine as part of its continued support to Pakistan for polio eradication. This latest grant will be utilized for the procurement of 23.66 million doses of vaccines. It will allow the programme to reach under five years old children living in the districts with persistent polio virus transmission. Districts across the country during vaccination drives planned in 2021. The notes of the grant were signed and ex-

changed between the Government of Japan and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and between Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and UNICEF. "Polio eradication is the top-most priority of the Government. We are resolutely committed to eradicating polio even in difficult times of COVID-19 pandemic. The Government of Pakistan is grateful to the people and the Government of Japan for their timely and generous support for helping us reach every child with essential polio vaccine. I am confident that we will together reach the milestone of polio-free Pakistan and



world," said Dr. Faisal Sultan, the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister, National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination. H.E. MATSUDA Kuninori, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan paid tribute to all the frontline polio workers engaged in vaccination amid the prevailing risk of COVID-19. He added, "Japan remains committed to assisting the people of Pakistan together with UNICEF in their goal of eradicating polio." "We highly appreciate the brave and tireless efforts of the Government of Pakistan despite COVID-19 pandemic. With this Grant Aid, JICA will assist the vaccine procurement for children living

in high-risk areas through UNICEF. The road towards polio eradication might be rough and steep. However, we will fight together for the earliest realization of polio-free Pakistan," said Mr. Shigeki Furuta, JICA Chief Representative. "Last year, from March to July, over 39 million children missed out on vaccination due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This increased the immunity gap, reversing previous gains made towards eradication. Despite the setback due to the COVID pandemic, the country has continued its efforts to make Pakistan Polio free," said

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COVID-19 claims 74 more lives

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The national tally of total active COVID-19 cases in the country on Wednesday reached 33,820 with 1,563 more people tested positive for the deadly virus and 2,081 people recovered from the disease during the last 24 hours. Seventy four corona patients died Tuesday, 63 in hospitals and 11 in their respective homes or quarantines, according to the latest update of the NCOC. Some 41,285 tests were conducted across the country on Tuesday, including 11,083 in Sindh, 16,704 in Punjab, 6,537 in KP, 5,994 in ICT, 373 in Balochistan, 323 in GB, and 271 in AJK.

Briefs

'Govt won't be affected by any of opp's plans'

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Governor Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar on Wednesday said the incumbent government will not be affected by any of the opposition's plans, be it from A to Z. National Assembly Standing Committee on Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs Chairman Faizullah Kamoka called on the Punjab governor. All tactics of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) failed before and similar thing will happen in future, Chaudhry Sarwar said. "PDM parties have neither come on same page till date, and nor will they come in future. Hurdles in development being created by the opposition are not in the national interest. PDM is a temporary alliance whereas the government and its allies are united" he said. He said that "Prime Minister Imran Khan never makes compromises and bravely faces all problems. The process of accountability will continue in the country which is heading in right direction for the first time." Faizullah Kamoka said work is done for the progress of common man for the first time, and the opposition's agenda based on anarchy will fail.

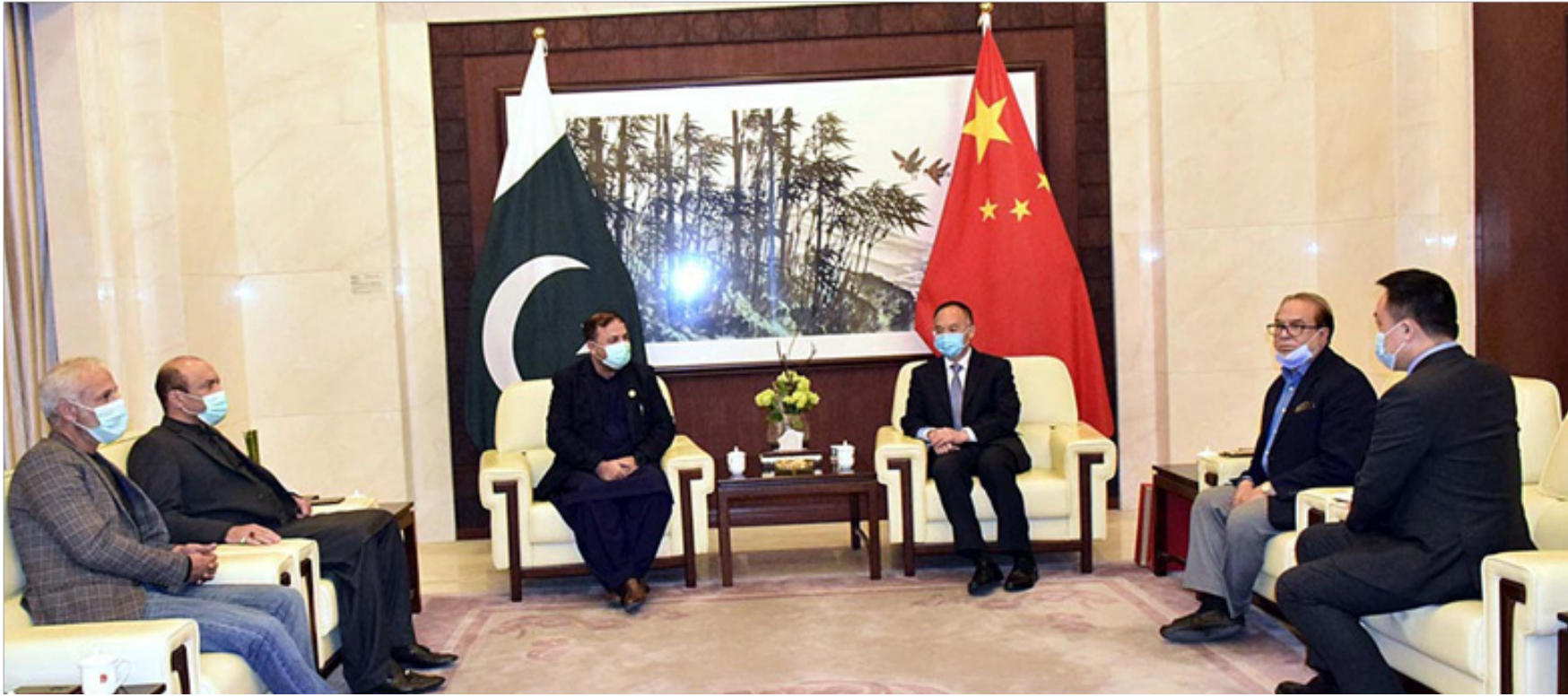
'Civic Gang' running network of housemaids

DNA

KARACHI: The arrested dacoits of 'Civic Gang' have made revelations about running an organised network of housemaids in Karachi who assisted them in carrying out robberies. The gang of dacoits associated with 'Civic Gang' by Sharea Faisal police officials on January 22 made revelations about their style of crimes in the different parts of the metropolis. Police officials said that the accused men include Waseem alias Commando, Javed Shafiq and Ameen. The accused men have also been identified by police officers of Gulberg and Taimuria police stations. It emerged that an organised network of housemaids is being run by the dacoits' gang to carry out robberies in a specific time period for preventing themselves from being caught. The police officials said that the criminals used to get released within three months after being arrested. The gang members had earlier been arrested by Gulshan police seven months ago. They have used a personal Civic and Corolla vehicles during robberies. During the last raid when they got surrounded by the police team during a raid in Gulistan-e-Johar area, the accused men took hide in an adjacent bungalow and later fled from the scene after the police and local resident went away after two hours, they revealed.

NH&MP launches road safety campaign

LAHORE: National Highways and Motorways Police (NH&MP), Training College Sheikhupura Commandant DIG Mehboob Aslam on Wednesday said that motorcyclists were involved in most of the accidents so that it was needed to educate and guide them about road safety measures. He expressed these views after inaugurating a road safety campaign launched in collaboration with Honda Atlas here. He said that patience, discipline and courage were the hallmark of NH&MP, adding that motorway officials were utilizing their energies to educate the people, besides enforcing traffic rules and laws. It was among top priorities of NH&MP to put in place measures for reducing accidents at national highways, he said and added that the dilapidated headlights, non-availability of side mirrors and rear lights were among major causes of motorcyclists' accidents. He said that head injuries during accidents could also be prevented by using standardized helmets and implementation on traffic rules and laws. — APP



ISLAMABAD: FPCCI delegation led by Qurban Ali, Chairman FPCCI met with Chinese ambassador Nong Rong at Chinese Embassy. — DNA

Chinese envoy hopes to resolve bilateral trade issues

Mr Qurban Ali presents cultural Gown of Gilgit Baltistan to Chinese ambassador. Both sides focused to resolve issues between two countries on trade matters, such as to control transport expense on Pak China border

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: A Delegation of FPCCI Office Bearers led by Mr. Qurban Ali, Head FPCCI Capital Office Islamabad met with Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong. Mr. Qurban Ali discussed important points and the various problems facing on (Pak China border) by business community of Pakistan, where as Chinese Ambassador

also showed his country's interest, and hope to develop both country's businessmen close to each other mutual understanding on the platform of business. They also discussed CPEC, its economic zones development, and bilateral trade issues as well. And agreed to solve the problem in near future. FPCCI delegation also highlights the problems faced by business community on the border of Sust. H.E. Nong Rong

Ambassador of China gave satisfactory response in the matter. The delegation of FPCCI Office Bearers included, Mirza Abdul Rehman Coordinator FPCCI Capital Office Islamabad, immediate past vice president FPCCI & Founder President Nagar CCI Muhammad Ali Quaid, Mehboob Rabani President Hunza CCI, and Mr. Mushtaq Hussain former President Gilgit CCI. Mr Qurban Ali presents cultural

Gown of Gilgit Baltistan to Chinese ambassador. Both sides focused to resolve issues between two countries on trade matters, such as to control transport expense on Pak China border, behavioral matters with Pakistani community & business men on China Check post, to keep Khunjerab Post open all the year and to finish weekly leave to improve border trade was also discussed in the meeting.

Haji Qurban Ali said that CPEC & Economic Zones are a marvelous gift to Pakistan and it's Business Community from our long lasting friend China, and this initiative of China help Pakistan to bring foreign investment in the region. Visa Issues faced in Covid situation by major businessmen and both sides businessmen were also discussed and both agreed to resolve the matter soon.

FM Qureshi for deepening Pakistan-Kuwait cooperation

He also underscored the importance of facilitating travel between the two countries, which could be instrumental in significantly enhancing bilateral interactions in myriad fields



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Wednesday reaffirmed Pakistan's desire to forge stronger bilateral relations with the State of Kuwait. He was talking to Ambassador Ali Suleman Al-Saeed, Assistant Foreign Minister on Asian Affairs of the State of Kuwait who called on him here. The Foreign Minister stressed the importance of deepening and diversifying bilateral coop-

eration — in particular in the areas of trade, investment, manpower export, and food security, a press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here said. He also underscored the importance of facilitating travel between the two countries, which could be instrumental in significantly enhancing bilateral interactions in myriad fields. Foreign Minister Qureshi lauded the positive and

constructive role played by the Kuwaiti leadership towards the resolution of differences among the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. The Assistant Foreign Minister of Kuwait reciprocated the Foreign Minister Qureshi's views on further fortifying the bilateral relationship. He said his visit reflected the keenness of the leadership of Kuwait to enhance cooperation and collaboration with Pakistan in diverse arenas. During the meeting, the two sides expressed satisfaction at mutual collaboration in multilateral organizations, in particular the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Views were also exchanged on regional developments, including stability in the Gulf/Middle East and CPEC. The Assistant Foreign Minister of Kuwait is on an official visit to Pakistan to hold the Third Round of Bilateral Political Consultations (BPC). The last round was held in Kuwait in May 2016. — APP

Condolence reference in memory of Adeel Sarwar

ABRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Though death is an absolute reality, but role of Mr. Adeel Sarwar, a seasoned journalist will always be remembered not only in the horizon of journalism and among journalists but in other walks of life. His life revolved around the affection and affiliation with Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.w) and His Ahlul Bayt (as). Along with his personal and professional commitments, Mr. Sarwar has always been found practicing his religious beliefs and was a bridge in between various sects for interfaith harmony. He will be remembered among journalists, politicians, religious personnel and social fraternity. This was stated by speakers in a condolence reference, held in memoir of Mr. Sarwar sudden demise. The reference was arranged in Rawalpindi

Press Club by National Press Club Islamabad. Mr. Nasir Zaidi, Secretary, Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists, Mr. Shakeel Anjum, President National Press Club, Mr. Anwar Raza, Secretary, National Press Club, Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Narcotics, Sheikh Rashid Shafiq, Mr. Sardar Naseem, Ex-Mayor Rawalpindi, Alama Syed Qamar Haider Zaidi and Mr. Bu Ali Mehdi, from Tehreek-e-Nifaz-e-Fiqh-e-Jafferia, Dr. Jamal Nasir, Chairman Green Task Force, Mr. Nadeem Sheikh, Vice president FPCCI, Mr. Raza Ahmad Shah, Representative of Jamate-Islami, Mr. Arif Abbasi and Mr. Sajid Qureshi, Representatives of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, Alama Syed Izhar Hussain Bukhari, Representative of Jamiat Ullema Islam, Mr. Shahid Ghafoor Paracha, president Anjuman Tajir-an Rawalpindi specially joined the session.

Karachi-Shanghai sign economic exchange MoU

KARACHI: The Consulate General of Pakistan in Shanghai in coordination with Shanghai Federation of Industry and Commerce (SFIC) and Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) organized the 'Shanghai-Karachi Economic and Trade Exchange webinar'. The main highlight of the webinar was the signing of the cooperation Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between SFIC and KCCI. The event coincided with the 70th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic ties between Pakistan and China and marked one of the many activities to commemorate this milestone year, according to a statement issued by Pakistan Embassy Beijing here Wednesday. The Webinar was attended by more than 50 enterprises from both sides. The Consul General congratulated the two sides on successful signing of the MoU, which will serve as a platform for comprehensive cooperation

between enterprises and trade associations of the two sides. The two sides were urged to remain engaged to achieve result-oriented cooperation and effectively operationalize the MoU. The MoU between SFIC and KCCI will revitalize the sister city relations between Karachi and Shanghai as the two cities are celebrating 37 years of sister city cooperation this year as well as enhance overall bilateral cooperation between the two countries. — APP

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RAWALPINDI: Chief executive Murree Brewery company Ispahanyar Bhandara presenting company souvenirs to MD Tetra Pak and his team. — DNA

Pakistan demands direct US market access

He said Pakistan had been keen to explore potential trade concessions as it could import more US cotton in return for preferential US market access for its apparel export. A preferential Trade Agreement (FTA) could be a long goal because of complexity involved in the process

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Wednesday demanded new US leadership direct market access at zero duty and Joint Ventures (JVs) in economic sphere in the wake of war against terrorism. Founder Chairman Pak US Business Council and veteran trade leader Iftikhar Ali Malik said US should convene meeting of Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) to move forward for result oriented progress. There is already a GSP plus status for Pakistan in the US but new steps could be taken for getting maximum benefits of trade preferential facility, he further added.

He said that what is Pakistan needs is to opt the model of joint ventures on the pattern of Egypt and some African countries to enhance trade ties with biggest economies like the US. Iftikhar said the last meeting of TIFA was held in May last in which both sides had discussed ways to improve access to products such as agricultural goods and medicines in either markets. He said Pakistan had been keen to explore potential trade concessions as it could import more US cotton in return for preferential US market access for its apparel export. A preferential Trade Agreement (FTA) could be a long goal because of complexity involved in the process, he further said and added that the

TIFA framework provided an institutional mechanism to carry forward those discussions and come up with new ideas. He said the US should remove the bottlenecks in bilateral investment treaty and efforts should now be made to better FTA and it is now imperative that the US should offer same package and incentives which it offers to Bangladesh and Sri Lanka in textile exports, such as duty concessions and market access. "There must be an incentive package for Pakistan for being a front-line state in combating terrorism with the US. He said that Pakistan is time tested friend and suffered colossal irreparable economic losses running in billions of dollars in war on terrorism in the region. He further said visa restrictions

should be eased for the Pakistani businessmen and exporters and joint efforts are needed to further cement the existing economic ties between Pakistan and US private sector. He said Pakistan and US are enjoying amicable relationship and coalition partners against war on terror. Iftikhar Ali Malik who is also president SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Chairman United Business Group (UBG) said Pakistan was emerging as a fast developing and modern republic in South Asia. He urged Pakistani-American businessmen to avail immense business potential in Pakistan as well. He said it's now world record that Pakistan has been hosting 2.7 million Afghan refugees for forty years.

Federal promises Karachi extra 400MW

DNA

KARACHI: The federal government of Pakistan has Wednesday okayed an additional 400 megawatts of electricity to Karachi, that in a bid to ensure the port city does not suffer long power outages in the coming summers. According to details the inside sources of the energy sector have shared with a private channel, the decision came following the session held earlier today between the federal power division and Karachi's sole power distributor K Electric.

The sources confirmed that the session approved 1,200MW to Karachi post April instead of a present supply of 800MW, however the agreement for the development of additional power supply has yet to be penned. The session also deliberated the financial crises faced by the power and gas distributors, KE and SSGC, noting that these shall be resolved soon. In the next two years, the huddle said Karachi will receive an extra 1400 MG energy to offset the deficit. It may be noted that just yesterday it was reported that several areas of Karachi had experienced prolonged and unannounced load shedding. According to details, around 10 neighborhoods faced power outages for up to eight hours. The areas most impacted included Shah Faisal, Korangi, Landhi, Liaquatabad, Keamari, Paposh Nagar, where residents complained of load shedding for eight hours. The KE spokesperson, in a statement, denied reports of any unannounced load-shedding in the metropolis. "There is no unannounced or announced load shedding in Karachi," a spokesperson for the K-Electric said. On the other hand, Karachiites are also suffering from 10 to 12 hours of gas load-shedding in residential areas of the city.

PR to be run on business model: Swati

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Azam Swati said on Wednesday that Pakistan Railways will be run on a business model. He said this while addressing a ceremony held in the chamber of commerce. Swati said that the government committed to make Pakistan railways a profitable entity, adding the department will be run on a successful business model. "Railway department suffered Rs20.3 billion loss in last six months due to Covid-19 and suffered an operational loss of Rs1.2 trillion in last 50 years," he said. The minister vowed to bring the railway department on track in the next six months and invited businessmen to come forward for the revival of PR. It was reported yesterday that the passengers face problems as the ticket reservation system of the Pakistan Railways crashed across Pakistan. The booking offices of PR, scheduled to open 8 in the morning were not opened at the Cantt, City, Landhi railway stations. The passengers willing to travel through Pakistan Railways faced hardships in getting their reservations. Last week, Federal Minister for Railways Azam Swati had said that the government is taking effective steps to make the Railways a profitable entity.

Faisalabad: DC inspects brick kilns

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali inspected the brick kilns at Chack 209 and 215 RB and ordered to registered case against two owner of brick kiln for not converting brick kiln in Zig Zag technology. Additional Deputy Commissioner General Khurram Pervez and Assistant Commissioner Sadar Umar Maqbool also accompanied with him. On this occasion, the construction of a kiln was dismantled with heavy machinery. The Deputy Commissioner said that crackdown was being carried out by the district administration officers against brick kilns operating without zigzag technology. He said that smoke from kilns is a major cause of smog so people involved in this business should shift their kilns to Zigzag technology as shifting of kilns to Zigzag technology is essential to save the environment from pollution.

Briefs

Efforts afoot to make Islamabad safe: SSP

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Syed Mustafa Tanvir on Wednesday said efforts were afoot to make Islamabad safest city as it is a foremost priority of the federal capital police.

A massive crackdown was launched against anti-social elements and drug peddlers to purge this menace from the city, the SSP said in a statement. Meanwhile, Islamabad Police arrested 11 outlaws from various areas of the city and recovered narcotics and weapons from their possession.

The police stations falling under the jurisdiction of Industrial Area zone conducted special checking following the directions of SP Liaqat Hayat Niazi.

The police teams apprehended five accused Musawar Khan, Sakhi Dad, Qasir Taj, Muhammad Saddique and Muhammad Nazeer and recovered 230 gram heroin, four illicit pistol along with ammunition from their possession. Moreover SP (Saddar-zone) Muhammad Sarfraz Virk constituted special teams of Ramana and Margalla police stations that recovered 2100 grams of hashish by arresting two drug peddlers Abid and Abrhim. Similarly Ramana police also arrested two afghan Nationals accused namely Ahmed and Hassal.

Chairman PAL condoles death of poet Rehan Azmi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL), Dr. Yousuf Khushk on Wednesday expressed deep sorrow and grief over the demise of renowned poet Rehan Azmi. Chairman in his condolence message said that Rehan Azmi had been associated with PTV for a long time where he created beautiful songs. Dr. Yousuf Khushk said that Rehan Azmi had a prominent place in Rasai literature. He said that he wrote many poems on lamentation, peace and Karbala adding that he was the author of about 25 books, in which from dream to interpretation. Manzar Ba Manzar Karbala, Karbala and Rehan Karbala are noteworthy in one year. Dr. Yousuf Khushk, Chairman, PAL, prayed that Allah Almighty grant the deceased a place in the tide of mercy and grant patience to the bereaved.

MoHW allocates funds for govt houses

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Housing and Works has allocated special funds for repair maintenance of as many as 2,478 houses and flats (Cat-I to VI) in the federal capital. The Ministry was entrusted to carry out the maintenance work, adding that minor repairing was being carried out through the inquiry office, which would be completed within 15 days through a contract, an official told media. He said it was a fact that the sewerage system of Block No. 54, Category-V, Sector I-9/4, Islamabad was in extremely dilapidated condition.

The official said the maintenance work could not be carried out since long time due to nonavailability of funds and the residents of block are facing difficulties as the waste of entire block falls at different places. He said it was a fact that some pipes of block have been broken. The flats of I-9/4 were constructed in 1980's and extensive repair work was required to be carried out but due to paucity of funds maintenance work was due since long. The official said that funds were demanded each financial year but the allocation was not made accordingly.



ISLAMABAD: Federal minister for railways, Azam Khan Swati presenting souvenir at the occasion of International Conference of Women Chambers. — DNA

'Efforts being made to expand PRCS outreach'

Abrar ul Haq said special focus is being laid on transformation of the organization in order to bring transparency, especially in human resource, logistics, inventory, finance, transport and procurement departments

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) Chairman Abrar ul Haq has said that efforts are being made to expand outreach of the organization in order to utilize its full potential for service to the humanity. In a statement, the chairman said the PRCS plans to extensively work in the core areas of health services, disaster risk reduction, migration and social services during the next five years under the newly developed

five-year strategic plan.

He said reforms are being introduced in the organization to plug any existing loopholes and improve its performance and service delivery. He said under the new strategic plan, talks are underway with many local and international organizations to find new avenues of cooperation. Abrar ul Haq reiterated his resolve to transform the PRCS into a role model of quick humanitarian assistance.

"We have already introduced a number of positive changes. Where there was room for im-



provement, we brought in innovation. We created new departments, which were not existent, for functions which were indispensable," he said.

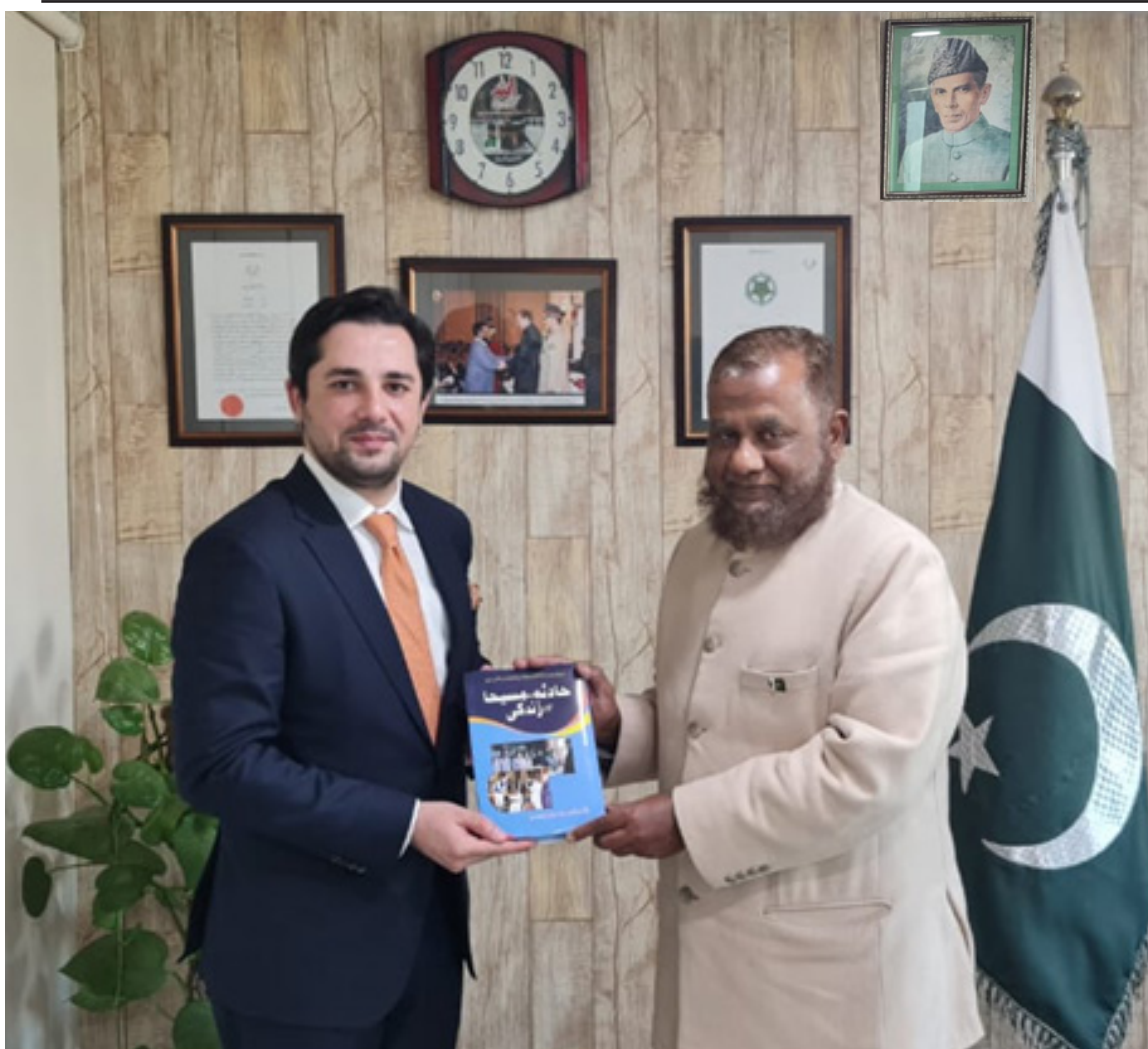
"It is because of my extensive charity work experience and humanitarian services that Prime Minister Imran Khan has entrusted me with the huge responsibility of transforming this premier organization," he said, adding that all the initiatives taken by him are in the best interest of the organization.

"Our performance during the challenging times of Covid-19 pandemic has been acknowledged not only nationally but also at the global level," he added.

Abrar ul Haq said special focus is being laid on transformation

of the organization in order to bring transparency, especially in human resource, logistics, inventory, finance, transport and procurement departments.

He lamented that some elements are busy in campaigning against the organization for their personal interests. He said he has introduced the policy of zero tolerance towards any type of corruption and malpractices within the organization. "I am here to completely reform the organization ... any NRO to anyone involved in wrongdoings is just out of question," he resolved.



ISLAMABAD: Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah (Sitare Intiaz), Chief collector Customs North Islamabad Presenting his Book to Muhammad Ahmed President and Malik Sohail Hussain Secretary General US-Pakistan International Chamber Pakistan Chapter at Customs House Islamabad. — DNA

Experts warn COVID-19 is not the last virus

SHUJAAT HAMZA / DNA

ISLAMABAD: It is not a last virus, so we have to be constantly aware and have good surveillance system and exchange information with people all over the world. It is most important at this moment for all of us to go on and fight this pandemic not only by making vaccines but also making therapeutics available for the people who are diseased. Prof. Dr. Thomas Iftner said while addressing concluding session of COMSTech international workshop on viral diseases diagnostics. Prof. Dr. Thomas Iftner from Institute for Medical Virology and Epidemiology of Viral Diseases, University of Tuebingen, Germany delivered concluding lecture on "existing strategies for vaccine development and combating novel viruses with special focus on COVID-19 pandemic" in which he talked in detail about the history of vaccines, development process, and benefits to the world. He described current vaccines that have been developed and are in the process of development around the world for COVID-19 pandemic. In concluding remarks, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General COMSTech said that for capacity building, organizing such events are extremely important. He mentioned that when economies, systems and even countries failed to cope with the COVID pandemic, this was the science that worked and provided solutions to this problem faced by the humanity. Dr. Choudhary emphasized that research on viral diseases is extremely important and now it is impossible to hide knowledge because viral diseases does not recognize borders and it has become a global problem. He said that COMSTech and ICCBS would help virologists to travel to work in labs around the world. Dr. Choudhary said that it is our responsibility to link institutions around the world for research.

Mathematical modeling for climate action urged

Organized by COMSATS Centre for Climate and Sustainability, the webinar brought together intellectual inputs, ideas, experience, best practices and policy advice from Ghana, Iran, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Integrating mathematical modeling and simulation in research could aide formulate climate change related policies at national and international levels to better deal with changing climate conditions. Such recommendations constituted the core of the deliberations of an international webinar of the Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the South (COMSATS) held within the framework of Sustainable Development Goal 13

(SDG13 - Climate Action) titled: "Modeling and simulation on climate change and environmental pollution: Strengthening resilience in the Global South" Organized by COMSATS Centre for Climate and Sustainability (CCCS), the event brought together intellectual inputs, ideas, experience, best practices and policy advice from Ghana, Iran, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Turkey. The event was held in collaboration with its Centre of Excellence on mathematical sciences, modelling and simulation - the National Mathematical Centre (NMC), Nigeria.



Moderated by Mr. Bilal Anwar, General Manager, Commonwealth Climate Finance Hub, the webinar highlighted the role of modelling and simulations in evidence-based knowledge to formulate policies and legislation to help reduce carbon emissions and increasing adaptation efforts in the Global South. Addressing at this occasion, Dr. S.M. Junaid Zaidi, said that Commission through continuous support of the Chairperson of the Commission— President of Ghana, who has been keen for devel-

opment of Science and Technology, not in Ghana but all also in members states of the Commission having its membership for 27 countries from three continents including Africa, Asian and Latin America. Multi-stakeholder partnerships, integrated approaches, mitigation and adaption strategies were recognized as the need of the hour to overcome the impacts of climate change in the Global South in terms of floods, heat waves, food security and extreme weather conditions.

CDA retrieves 100 kanal state land

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Islamabad Capital Territory Administration Wednesday jointly conducted anti encroachment operation at Shah Allah Ditta and recovered 100 kanal state land. The CDA has acquired 800-kanal land since 1989 in Shah Allah Ditta, said CDA spokesperson while talking to APP. He said the land mafia was illegally selling CDA's land to native people, Pakistanis in Karachi and oversea, after China Cutting. Influential people are involved in illegal occupation of land and sale, the spokesman said adding the entire operation was kept secret and illegal structures were demolished. — APP

SC adjourns Daniel Pearl murder case

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) on Wednesday adjourned hearing against the accused, acquitted by the Sindh High Court (SHC) in American journalist Daniel Pearl murder case till Thursday. A three-member bench, headed by Justice Mushir Alam and comprising Justice Sardar Tariq Masood and Justice Yahya Afridi heard the appeals filed by the Sindh government and Pearl's parents challenging the acquittal of the previously convicted men by the SHC.

The petitioners challenged the April 2, high court verdict that overturned the sentences of four convicts in the case. During the course of proceedings, Advocate Faisal Siddiqui counsel for Daniel Pearl's heirs submitted documents regarding terrorism charges against main accused Umar Ahmed Sheikh. The court sought response from the Sindh government on terrorism charges against Umar Sheikh.

The bench asked why prosecution did not present the case before the court despite having such a powerful case.

Advocate Mahmood A Sheikh, counsel for the accused, submitted Umar Sheikh's letter in the court. Umar Sheikh had written a letter to the SHC chief justice from the jail, he added. He said Umar Sheikh had stated in the letter that he had been in jail for 17 years and his case should be fixed for hearing.

Umar Sheikh had also stated in the letter that a man named Atta-ur-Rehman was involved in the kidnapping and murder of Daniel Pearl, he added. He alleged that Atta-ur-Rehman was detained by the army and was not produced in court. Umar Sheikh had been kept in solitary confinement in the jail, he added.

IHC disposes of case against campus exams

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday disposed of a petition filed by some students seeking directives for online exams due to COVID-19 and sent the matter to Higher Education Commission (HEC). The court said that it couldn't interfere in policy decisions, saying that there was no discrimination in it.

Justice Baber Sattar heard the case filed by the students of National University for Modern Languages (NUML) in subject to the online exams. The petitioners' lawyer pleaded that the students had been in houses in their respective areas due to the outbreak of COVID-19. He said that the university administration previously asked for online exams but now it had announced to take campus exams. The petitioners' said that they had been studying online then how could they give exams in campus. At this, the court said that it was not a valid point, adding that there was no illegality or discrimination in the process. The court sent the matter to HEC to take a decision and disposed of the case. — APP

Briefs

Rupee gains 10 paisas against US dollar

ISLAMABAD: The exchange rate of Pakistani rupee strengthened by 10 paisas against the US dollar in the interbank trading on Wednesday and closed at Rs160.53 as compared to the previous day's closing of Rs160.63. Meanwhile, according to Forex Association of Pakistan, the buying and selling rates of dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs160.4 and Rs161.1 respectively.

In interbank trading, the price of euro appreciated by 07 paisas and closed at Rs195 against the last day's trading of Rs194.93, State Bank of Pakistan reported. The Japanese Yen remained unchanged to close at Rs154, whereas an increase of Rs 1.52 was witnessed in the exchange rate of British Pound which was traded at Rs220.51 as compared to its last closing of Rs218.99.

The exchange rates of Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal decreased by 03 paisas each to close at Rs 43.70 and Rs 42.82 respectively. - APP

AIOU offers admissions to overseas Pakistanis

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has offered admissions in the first phase of Spring 2021 semester to overseas Pakistanis in matric, intermediate and I. Com programmes. The admissions are offered to the students living in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Bahrain and America. AIOU is imparting education not only to hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis living in different parts of the country but it also provides education facilities to overseas Pakistanis based in Middle East and America.

It is pertinent to mention here that a great number of Pakistanis are working in different parts of the world, especially Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, and Bahrain however, majority of them are labourers and they are either illiterate or low educated. These Pakistani are sending a huge amount of foreign remittances to the country each year. Being a national institution AIOU has extended its education facilities to these overseas Pakistan and has provided them the opportunity of enrolment and enhancing their level of education. Prof. Dr. Zia ul-Qayyum, Vice Chancellor AIOU has expressed the hope that after availing the educational facility of the university, the overseas Pakistanis would be in a better position to get good jobs and improve their social status.

SECP reforms developing capital market

ISLAMABAD: Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has made significant capital market reforms featuring legal, structural, regulatory, operational and product development initiatives which were helping in development of a robust and transparent capital market in the country "In order to enhance security of investor's assets with the securities brokers and strengthen the overall brokerage industry, framework for a new regulatory regime has been introduced involving categorization of securities brokers according to their financial resources and governance standards," says annual report of SECP. Securities brokers that would comply with enhanced net worth, corporate governance and compliance requirements shall be allowed to retain custody of investor assets. Small sized brokerage houses shall not be maintaining custody of customer assets and therefore will be subject to less stringent regulatory requirements. This would enable such brokerage houses to operate at lower costs and accordingly focus on their core competence of trading and investment advice and aid in expanding market outreach. Minimum and maximum range of brokerage commission has been implemented for ensuring quality of brokerage service provided by securities brokers, reducing anomalies and supporting growth of the brokerage industry. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Vice President foreign affairs PML N Shaikh Arslan Hafeez meeting with newly-arrived ambassador of Uzbekistan Aybek Osmanov, at the Uzbek embassy. - DNA

HEC advises universities for exams based on their capacity

In this policy, Higher Education Commission already allowed universities to use their discretion to conduct exams, either on-campus or online as long as the chosen mode provides a fair assessment of students' performance

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has taken note of the concerns raised by students of some universities that their examinations should be conducted online. The apprehensions of students were reviewed carefully in consultation with the Vice Chancellors of all the provinces and regions, keeping in view the difficulties brought about by the

pandemic and opening of universities from February 01, 2021.

HEC Guidance on Assessment and Examinations is available at the link <https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/HECAnnouncements/Documents/nCoVirus/Assessments-Examinations.pdf>. In this policy, HEC already allowed universities to use their discretion to conduct exams, either on-campus or online as long as the chosen mode provides a fair assessment of students' performance. Universities should take

stock of their "exam readiness", i.e., technological readiness, managerial capacity, and the announced policy, and choose the best possible mode of assessment. Online exams either can be used if the universities administer 'Open Book Exams' or establish an invigilation system in a supervised environment. In this mode, universities will also have to use Turnitin to check similarity index with Web and the answers of other students. Further, viva/oral exam may be integrated in the as-

essment where necessary. On-campus exams can be used only under strict compliance with all Covid-19 health and safety protocols. Universities may also have to organize make-up classes for two weeks in case students consider the course coverage to be deficient. Assessment of all courses requiring psychomotor skills, such as medicine, engineering, subjects involving lab/studio work must be held on campus. All students in a single course will

be examined in the same mode i.e., either on-line or on-campus. Since March 2020, HEC has been continuously monitoring the pandemic situation and coordinated with the universities to minimize academic disruption and continue online education with quality safeguards. The HEC Guidance on Online Readiness (#5) and Assessments and Examinations (#6) are available on HEC website and provide the requirements and minimum standards to be observed by universities.

Ehsaas Tahafuz Unit at HFH inaugurated



RAWALPINDI: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation, Dr. Sania Nishtar here on Wednesday inaugurated Ehsaas Tahafuz Project Management Unit at Holy Family Hospital (HFH). On this occasion, Dr. Sania Nishtar visited the Orthopedic, Gynecology and Gastropare-

sis departments where she expressed satisfaction over healthcare facilities being provided to the ailing humanity under the programme. Dr. Nishtar interacted with the staff and beneficiary women present at the center and inquired about treatment and other facilities provided at the center. Dr. Muhammad Umar, Vice Chancellor RMU/ Allied Hospitals briefed the Special Assistant about the development projects and medical facilities being provided in the Hospital. On this occasion, she assured the government's full support in making the system more transparent and patient-friendly to make the Programme a successful. - APP

Minister for dialogue to counter Islamophobia

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan on Wednesday emphasized the need for engaging Muslims with western countries to spread awareness about Islam among non-Muslims through constructive dialogue to counter Islamophobia. The misconceptions spread in the world because there were no practical display of the teachings of Islam. It is important to practically manifesting the true spirit of Islam, he said while speaking at an online conference here.

The conference "Countering Islamophobia: Deconstructing Misconceptions", organized by Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS) was aimed at understanding the rising dilemma of Islamophobia, examine the world's perspective, and establish a unified response by Muslim nations to tackle the anti-Muslim sentiments. Ali Muhammad Khan mentioned that "Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was sent as a blessing not only for Muslims but for the entire humanity, it is something to ponder that why our religion of peace is now seen as a religion of hatred?" Vice-Chancellor, Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB) Dr. Athar Mahboob highlighted the Systematic Genocide of Muslims around the world and Moral Imperatives. - APP

Studies (CGSS) was aimed at understanding the rising dilemma of Islamophobia, examine the world's perspective, and establish a unified response by Muslim nations to tackle the anti-Muslim sentiments. Ali Muhammad Khan mentioned that "Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was sent as a blessing not only for Muslims but for the entire humanity, it is something to ponder that why our religion of peace is now seen as a religion of hatred?" Vice-Chancellor, Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB) Dr. Athar Mahboob highlighted the Systematic Genocide of Muslims around the world and Moral Imperatives. - APP

CDA launches One Link services

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) has decided to open one window while following the coronavirus SOPs. Citizens will be provided the facility of one window on the day and time decided by the CDA. There will be complete ban on rush and irrelevant persons at one window. Elderly and disabled will be given priority. According to detail, due to the cur-

rent wave of coronavirus pandemic the department of one window of CDA was closed for people. Due to closure of one window the masses were facing difficulties in transfer of their properties and they were facing delay in their work. CDA received various complaints for opening the one window. However, CDA has decided to keep the one window operation open while following the SOPs to facilitate the masses. It would be mandatory for people coming to one window to wear mask

and gloves while having sanitizers and assuring all the SOPs devised against the spread of coronavirus pandemic. Citizens will be allowed to enter in one window operation only on due date and time. The citizens have been directed to not to bring irrelevant persons along with them. There would be complete ban on entry of other people in one window till the already gone come back. The process of receiving applications for all the other departments of CDA is also underway at one window.



ISLAMABAD: Federal minister for National food security and research, Syed Fakhar Imam presenting a shield to Danish ambassador to Pakistan, Lis Rosenholm. - DNA

ICCI shows concerns over accounts attachment

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that the business community was feeling very perturbed over the attachment of bank accounts of taxpayers by the tax department as it was shattering their confidence and called upon the FBR to refrain from this practice as it would discourage new investment and force the businessmen to consider moving their businesses to other safe destinations. He said it seemed that the bank accounts of taxpayers were attached to meet the unrealistic and unachievable revenue targetset by the government, but this approach would bring harmful consequences for the economy as it would discourage people to keep their cash in bank accounts. He expressed these views during a meeting with a group of businessmen. Fatma Azim Senior Vice Presi-

dent, Abdul Rehman Khan Vice President ICCI, Mian Akram Farid Chairman Founder Group, Tariq Sadiq, Sanaulah Khan, Naem Siddiqui, Khalid Chaudhry and



others were present in the meeting. Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan appealed to the Prime Minister Imran Khan, Finance Minister Dr. Abdul Hafeez Sheikh and

Chairman FBR Javed Ghani to take serious notice of such actions by the FBR and issue directions to tax officers to stop attaching the bank accounts of taxpayers in order to save them from harassment and further troubles. Mian Akram Farid, Chairman Founder Group said that during the Covid-19 situation, the business community extended all possible cooperation to the government despite the fact that many businesses were facing the danger of closure. He said in these tough times, the business community did not lay off any worker and thus supported many families from facing acute financial problems. He said that instead of providing any tax relief to the businessmen, the FBR was creating a lot of problems for the taxpayers and thus was causing embarrassment for the government as well. He said that under these circumstances it has become difficult to do business in Pakistan and urged that FBR should shun the practice of attachment of bank accounts of taxpayers to save them from more difficulties.

MoHREU portal to be launched soon

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR) was all set to launch Pakistan's first Human Rights Information Resource Portal which has been developed in partnership with the European Union. Portal has been envisioned to serve as a central repository of up-to-date and cutting-edge human rights knowledge for students, academics, practitioners and the citizenry at large, said a press release issued here on Wednesday. The Portal will serve as a platform for increasing awareness about human rights laws, practices, and gaps; facilitating the development of new initiatives, research, policies, and solutions in the field of human rights in Pakistan. It will include comprehensive material on Pakistan's domestic institutional human rights framework and international commitments; as well as relevant reports and publications that have been published by the government, civil society organizations and UN agencies on critical human rights issues. - APP

No gas for textile industry

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Feroze Alam Lari, Chairman, Towel Manufacturers' Association of Pakistan has said that despite availability of huge value added Textile export orders available to the exporters of this country, still different issues from time to time pinch the balloon of growing exports of Textile sector. Export Sector already is facing the scarcity of cotton yarn in the domestic market due to reduction in production of cotton bales and export of cotton yarn which is basic raw material of Textile. Now the last nail in the coffin of the textile exporters is non-availability of gas in coming days for the industry. Gas is the basic fuel for manufacturing & processing of the Textile goods. Despite COVID-19 across the world, Textile exporters of this country engaged the international buyers and fetched valuable export orders from the buyers due to Government export friendly initiatives & policies. The Export Oriented Industry now-a-days between wind and water and expressed severe concern over the decision taken by the government to cut gas supply to general industrial units from February 2021 and cut the supply of gas for the export oriented industry from the march 2021.

Notice issued to NAB on Zardari's plea

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court issued on Wednesday a notice to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on a petition by former president Asif Ali Zardari seeking transfer of corruption cases filed against him in Islamabad's accountability courts to Karachi. An apex court bench, headed by Justice Umar Ata Bandial, also issued notices to the PPP co-chairman's sister Faryal Talpur and all other people nominated as accused along with Zardari in the graft references. During the preliminary hearing on Wednesday, the SC bench observed that it needs to determine under what conditions the top court ordered for filing of references in Islamabad. The SC's Jan 7, 2019 verdict is final, which can neither be reversed nor implementation of it stalled. Zardari's lawyer Farooq H Naek contended that it's his client's right to file a plea for transfer of a case under the NAB law, which couldn't be taken away by the court through the verdict. Justice Bandial noted that the cases were filed in Islamabad by the NAB on the basis of various accusations. He said the corruption watchdog filed the references in Islamabad on the court order. The SC judge asked if Asif Ali Zardari had references filed against him in Islamabad in the past, to which the counsel replied that references were instituted against his client in Lahore and Rawalpindi and one was even heard at Attock Fort. He said the former president got acquitted in all the cases in the past. The hearing was adjourned for one month.

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Border skirmishes

IT is inevitable that a country with an aggressive foreign policy and dangerously nationalist leaders will have tense relations with its neighbouring countries. So lies the case with India—its jingoistic tendencies have led to stand-offs with Pakistan, Nepal and China, and look to get worse every day. The recent brawl between Indian and Chinese troops on the Himalayan border is an example of this. The incident is just one of a series of many clashes between India and China, who have been engaged in an increasingly violent and costly face-off along their 2,100-mile-long border since May. Tensions between the two countries surged to an all-time high when at least twenty Indian soldiers were killed during a border clash at the Galwan Valley in June.

The statements from India and China clearly lay out who the aggressor was. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian has urged India to exercise restraint and stressed that China's border troops are committed to upholding peace and tranquillity along the border with India. In contrast, the Indian military has played down the latest skirmish as a "minor face-off", yet the Indian media, which is largely an arm of the state, continues to exaggerate the conflict with China and paints it as an enemy.

A state looking to minimise the conflict would not antagonise the most populous country in the world. Just like it does with Pakistan, the Indian government has encouraged its media to vilify and incite hatred towards China.

The government has sought to block Chinese companies from getting deals in India, banning more than 150 Chinese apps made by its tech giants. Chinese products are being halted in customs logjams at Indian ports. These actions will lead to more violence at the borders.

It is welcoming to see China exercise caution when it does not need to. India is on thin ice—instead of helping itself, it continues to aggravate conflict on all its borders.



Global cooperation

WHILE addressing the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), PM Imran Khan pushed for the importance of striving for global welfare in the midst of a disabling pandemic. In recognition of the barriers that developing countries still have to overcome, he urged the international community to incorporate special provisions in their foreign policies to provide relief to all those struggling to keep up in such trying times. Promoting such levels of cooperation through diplomatic means is commendable and needs to continue to inspire positive change throughout the world.

According to his speech, Imran Khan highlighted the dire need for an equitable supply of COVID-19 vaccines, debt relief, the return of stolen and frozen assets as well as the provision of additional financial aid for fighting the virus and climate change alike. Without such help, developing countries stand to lose more people to poverty, hunger and disease. Considering such associated risks, it is vital for prominent members of the government, especially heads of states, to make sure that they are heard on a worldwide platform.

Through the application of his welfare model on an international scale, our PM has not only addressed the grievances of the developing states but has also proposed viable solutions that can be implemented by those who have abundant capacity to help.

Such diplomatic efforts to incur greater collaboration are a marker of good governance and fortunately. There is no denying that many countries like Pakistan are suffering with crippling debt, inefficient national and local bodies, rising inflation, unstable economies, extreme scarcity of resources and the inability to produce and procure vaccines in abundance. This paints a grim picture for all those living within the nation, who battle a lowering quality of life as well as the coronavirus. The only way to get through this is with the empathetic support of our developed counterparts.

UAE's startling success against Covid-19: An Overview

Khalid Taimur Akram

INTRODUCTION

EVER since the world is struck by the dangerously contagious COVID-19 pandemic, the governments and decision-makers across the states were tested like never before. The states that were unprepared against this novel coronavirus had to face severe repercussions and had to pay a hefty price for their negligence. While those governments which were aware of the repercussions of the serious challenge, left no stones unturned to eradicate it under their pragmatic approach and firm measures. In this context, the prudent and triumphant strategies of the leadership of United Arab Emirates (UAE) provides a glaring manifestation of the later approach as mentioned above.

The UAE is the tribal federation of seven emirates (Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Umm al-Qaiwain, Fujairah, Ajman, and Ra's al-Khaimah), acquiring a sizeable portion of the Southeastern Arabian Peninsula. This part of the Arabian Peninsula which consists of one of the most viable states of the world, the UAE, with immense potential is known for its thriving economy and vibrant metropolis has boosted exceptionally during the course of past decades. It has witnessed a profound transformation from an impoverished region of small desert principalities, to a modern state with rapid advancement. The federation here has expedited infrastructure upgradation, generated numerous job opportunities and has provided wide-ranging benefits by involving mega private sectors as well. The country's relevant trade zones and conducive investment policies have attracted foreign traders, thereby, increasing the lucrative amount of profit for the development of the region. The open economy with a high per capita income and a sizeable annual trade surplus has offered a plethora of opportunities to the world to cooperate and invest in multiple dimensions with the Gulf States. The successful efforts by the government in diversifying the economic patterns, have reduced the portion of total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) up to 30% from the oil and gas sector. The world has become a global village. The countries are more inclined towards cooperation. In this regard, the UAE is further positioning to better take the advantage of globalization. The inclusive transformative measures taken by the government are credible to highlight. The sustainable development and economic prosperity in various sectors have resulted as a boon for the UAE and other partner states as well. The drastic measures are being placed in various domains, including the increasing globalized capital, economy, labor, medical, and technology. Furthermore, in recent times, UAE has effectively tackled the fierce impacts emanated from the Covid-19 crisis and also assisted worldwide countries in combating the pandemic.

The UAE's Initiatives to Curtail Adverse Impacts of Covid-19: The novel virus has impacted everyone globally in an unexpected and unprecedented manner. It has killed and infected millions of people. The virus has impacted the

vulnerable segments of societies across the globe.

In the wake of COVID-19, the dynamic leadership of the UAE has demonstrated high levels of commitment and power in curbing the spread of the pandemic both locally and globally and has effectively relied on its efficient bureaucracy and stable governance systems. Presently, the grand vaccination program to protect people from the virus has started globally. The substantial initiative taken by the UAE federation to terminate and eradicate the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, are coordinated through its National Emergency Crisis and Disaster Management Authority (NCEMA), in close partnership with a wide range of federal and local government institutions, which includes the United Nations System, and other regional and international partners. These efforts are multi-sectoral in nature, including efforts to boost capacities of the health sector in the UAE and abroad, enact a range of policy measures to provide liquidity and economic incentives for the private sector, and other measures intended to reduce the hardships felt by individuals as a result of the pandemic across all the seven states within UAE.

To combat the virus, the successful process of vaccination has also been initiated in the UAE. The Gulf States have approved the American Pfizer-BioNTech, Russian Sputnik V, and Chinese-made Sinopharm vaccines for mass use. It has also provided over 1,277 metric tons of aid to 107 countries, supporting more than 1.2 million medical professionals in the process. Right from the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the authorities have enacted several measures to limit the spread of the virus. Since the global vaccination process has started, UAE is witnessing a great deal of success in recovering from the adverse impacts of this contagious virus. In 2020, the authorities started to gradually reopen the shopping centers and other businesses and subject to appropriate social distancing requirements. Moreover, they have also begun facilitating the repatriation of foreign workers who were eager to return to their native countries. Several airlines have resumed a limited number of regular passenger flights and the authorities have also resumed issuing visas to foreign visitors and international tourists. Consequently, the government has also gradually reopened some cultural landmarks to visitors. Issuance of employment visas for vital government and semi-government sectors, as well as entry permits for domestic workers, have also been the top priority of the UAE government.

Furthermore, Abu Dhabi authorities have announced that they will resume all touristic, cultural, economic and entertainment activities in quick span of time. As per an analysis, approximately, 8 percent of the UAE's population has been vaccinated. It is expected that in coming two months, half of the population will be vaccinated. In this regard, it is expected that Dubai and the UAE are likely to be the "biggest beneficiary" due to easy access to vaccines. Moreover, the Dubai Expo's rescheduled opening in October 2021 has also bright prospects of further strengthening and improv-

ing tourism this year as the Covid-19 immunization program moves forward. Perhaps nothing can describe the UAE government's inspiring efforts like His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai. He explained the federation's collective efforts as:

"During this crisis, the UAE has shown to the world that it is a single cohesive team, one family moving in unison to overcome the exceptional circumstances that we are currently facing. We are truly blessed to live on this safe land and we thank God for this spirit of solidarity and this sturdy and collaborative nation." Therefore, it is no surprise that UAE is looking set for a V-shaped economic recovery in 2021 under the auspices of its successful management of to combat the pandemic, alongside the rapid development of vaccines as mentioned above. Similarly, and The World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have also projected a positive course for the blooming economy of the UAE, following with rapid growth and substantial measures in developing the vaccine and the subsequent swift implementation programs. According to an anticipation of the IMF, the UAE economy is has grown 1.3% in 2021, while the World Bank has predicted 1% GDP hike in this year. This highlights a great turn for UAE's rise in economy and future trajectory.

Vision 2021 of the UAE: The UAE's government has taken well structure policy ramifications to revamp the economy from the devastating impacts of the virus. Moreover, the government has introduced grand vision 2021 for inclusive economic development and security.

This includes major six sectors:

- Advanced healthcare system.
- World-class education system.
- Sustainable framework for environment and up-graded infrastructure.
- Cohesive society and preserved identity.
- Public friendly strategies and fair judiciary.
- Competitive and inclusive economy.

For paving the way for smooth execution of these initiatives and prospects in real, the present UAE government has successfully neutralized the COVID-19 pandemic's venomous effects and has made sure there are no roadblocks in the way of their ambitious socio-economic goals.

Conclusion: In the wake of the vicious blows from the rampant and ever-spreading coronavirus pandemic, the current dynamic leadership of the United Arab Emirates has set an excellent precedent for combating this contagious virus, which will serve as an enlightening model for other countries that desire to cruise towards an era of economic prosperity and well-being which is free of COVID-19. For this, it is imperative that all countries closely examine the successful fight against the pandemic from the shores of the UAE.

— The writer is the Executive Director, Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad

UAE is the tribal federation of seven emirates (Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Umm al-Qaiwain, Ajman, and Ra's al-Khaimah), acquiring a sizeable portion of the Southeastern Arabian Peninsula. This part of the Arabian Peninsula which consists of one of the most viable states of world, the UAE, with immense potential is known for its thriving economy and vibrant metropolis has boosted exceptionally during the course of past decades



Joe Biden's balanced world view

Iqbal Khan

Biden has kept his word. His spending proposal sets aside \$400 billion to address Covid-19; \$1 trillion in direct relief to families and individuals; and \$440 billion to help communities and businesses hit the hardest by the pandemic. The proposal envisages: Topping up the \$600 cash relief passed by Congress last month with \$1,400 payments additionally; A hike in unemployment benefits from \$300 to \$400 per week through September; Fourteen weeks of paid sick and family and medical leave

IN a time of tumult and a confluence of crises, Joe Biden was sworn in as the president of the United States, at a US Capitol that, according to Jonathan Lemire, "had been battered by an insurrectionist siege just two weeks earlier" declaring that "democracy has prevailed" and summoning American resilience and unity to confront the deeply divided nation's historic and cataclysmic woes.

Then, according to Associated Press, "taking his place in the White House Oval Office, he plunged into a stack of executive actions that began to undo the heart of his polarizing predecessor's agenda on matters from the deadly pandemic to climate change". As Biden administration pushes forward on the coronavirus front, deadly virus continues to surge and states complain they are running out of vaccine doses. Enhanced production, better distribution and administration of the vaccine are the starting points to control the disease. Easier said than done!

It is heartening that despite domestic pressures, President Biden has ordered his administration to support projects to deploy COVID-19 vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics to people in need around the world. Washington will cease reducing US staff counts at the World Health Organization and will pay its financial obligations to it. Biden issued a strong repudiation of white supremacy and domestic terrorism seen on the rise under Donald Trump. Biden is the first president to directly address the ills of white supremacy in an inaugural speech. According to Steve, Republicans are waking up to a Washington where Democrats control the White House and Congress, adjusting to an era of diminished power, deep uncertainty and internal feuding. At the heart of the Republican reckoning lies a fundamental question with no clear answer: Without Trump, what does the modern-day Republican Party stand for? Republicans have just begun to decide whether to continue down the road of Trump's norm-shattering populism or return to the party's conservative roots. Lara Seligman and Bryan Bender have brought to light a rare fault line of the US state system, regarding Pentagon's resistance to Biden's team during transition. "Defence has traditionally been a bipartisan business between and among professionals, and this is terrible

optics for those who want to copy this pettiness in the future," said Mackenzie Eaglen, a fellow at American Enterprise Institute. The effort to block the transition from key national security information is "useless, poor form, and horrible precedent." According to POLITICO, briefings on some of the pressing defence matters never happened, some were delayed to the last minute, or were controlled by overbearing minders from the Trump administration's side.

The Pentagon blocked incoming administration from gaining access to critical information about current operations, and the Covid-19 vaccine distribution programme as well. Effort to obstruct was led by senior White House appointees at the Pentagon, which is unprecedented in modern presidential transitions. Biden openly decried it calling it "nothing short, in my view, of irresponsibility". Tensions between the Pentagon and the Biden agency landing team emerged almost the moment the General Services Administration authorized the transition to begin in late November after an initial delay following the election. While the military side of—the Joint Staff and the geographic combatant commanders—were more cooperative, the civilian side set up roadblocks at every turn. "They really should not be allowed to get away with this. It's just completely irresponsible and indefensible," said one transition official.

"To play politics with the country's national security is just really unacceptable." Transition "personnel are not government employees and thus limited to some extent on what they can receive," Gough said. "Membership on a transition team alone is not a license to access confidential, privileged or classified government information." But people with the transition said the outgoing team's conduct went far beyond the norm and pointed to loyalists installed by the White House as the main reason for the obstruction. During a time when the US is vastly divided, Biden's words felt like the glue to seal it back together. There was no denying the overall sense of solidarity and hope within Biden's speech. "This is America's day. This is democracy's day. A day of history and hope," President Biden said. "Politics doesn't

have to be a raging fire, destroying everything in its path. Every disagreement doesn't have to be a cause for total war. And we must reject the culture in which facts themselves are manipulated and even manufactured," Biden said. "Our history has been a constant struggle between the American ideal that we are all created equal and the harsh, ugly reality that racism, nativism, fear, demonization have long torn us apart. The battle is perennial, and victory is never assured," Biden added.

But the answer is not to turn inward, to retreat into competing factions, distrusting those who don't look like you do, or worship the way you do, or don't get their news from the same sources you do. "We must end this uncivil war that pits red against blue, rural versus urban, conservative versus liberal". "We can do this if we open our souls instead of hardening our hearts. If we show a little tolerance and humility. If we're willing to stand in the other person's shoes just for a moment. Biden has kept his word. His spending proposal sets aside \$400 billion to address Covid-19; \$1 trillion in direct relief to families and individuals; and \$440 billion to help communities and businesses hit the hardest by the pandemic. The proposal envisages: Topping up the \$600 cash relief passed by Congress last month with \$1,400 payments additionally; A hike in unemployment benefits from \$300 to \$400 per week through September; Fourteen weeks of paid sick and family and medical leave; A rise in the national minimum wage to \$15 per hour; \$160 billion earmarked for a broad range of programmes, including Covid-19 vaccination, testing, therapeutics, contact tracing and personal protective equipment; \$170 billion for schools. It is an unabashedly progressive agenda that the left has been trying to advance for decades.

At least for the moment, the old ways are back: reverence of custom, rituals dating back two centuries, scenes of grace, calls for unity. Four years after Trump's dark portrayal of "American carnage," Biden set out his intent on the same platform of the flag-beckoned Capitol to write "an American story of hope," Calvin Woodward writes.

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Briefs

NCOC
announces
vaccination
strategy

From Page 01

healthy environment. In this regard, it said, National Immunisation Management System (NIMS) will be run by the National Vaccine Administration and Coordination Cell (NVACC).

The forum was apprised that vaccination centres have been established across the country, while the training of staff and other arrangements have been completed to begin the inoculation. Once informed about the vaccination, the masses as well as the front-line healthcare workers will have to send an SMS to 1166 or visit the NIMS website for registration.

Afterwards, a PIN code will be sent to the applicant while an AVC will be designated to them based on their present address. Once the vaccine is made available, the applicants will receive further details. Prior to the vaccination, the system will authenticate the Computerised National Identity Card (CNIC) number of the applicant. Once confirmed by the NIMS, the vaccine will be administered to the masses. The details will be viewable through a real-time dashboard of the system.

The meeting was told that after consultation with all the stakeholders, it has been decided to reopen the universities as well as the primary and middle classes across the country from February 1.

No
confidence
move doomed
to fail: Shibli

From Page 01

opposition's other options, though it was their constitutional and democratic right. The Information Minister said that in the parliamentary party meeting Adviser on Economic Affairs Hafeez Sheikh gave a detailed briefing on the economy.

The meeting was informed that when the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf came into power, the country was facing a huge trade deficit and the present regime had to take tough decisions to keep the economy afloat.

The minister said that now the economy was improving because of prudent policies pursued by the government. He said that the previous government artificially controlled the dollar exchange rate which hampered industrial sector development and exports whereas reliance on imports increased. Shibli Faraz said that the opposition has been continuously spreading negative propaganda regarding loans. He said out of Rs 11 trillion loans, Rs 6 trillion were utilized for payment of previous loans and interest payment. Shibli said Rs.1.2 trillion were provided to support different sectors especially the disadvantaged segments of the society in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic while Rs.3 trillion were the impact of change in dollar and rupee parity.

He said that the rising dollar exchange rate increased the debt by Rs 3 trillion. He said that due to the efforts of the government, high inflation has now been brought down to single digit from double digit which has left a positive impact on the prices of commodities. He said now the reserves of the State Bank of Pakistan have also increased, large scale manufacturing and construction sector had registered a boost whereas remittances and taxes collection have also increased. Shibli Faraz said that prices of edibles like cooking oil, wheat and sugar have increased in the international market which had an impact on the local market as well.

However, he said that the fall in the price of LNG in the international market would also result in price fall in Pakistan. He said that the positive impacts of improvement in the national economy have started now reaching the common people. When asked about the upcoming Senate elections, the Minister said the government believed in holding the elections in the most transparent manner and past practice of sale and purchase of votes should end. He said the government has sought guidance of the Supreme Court on holding the elections through open balloting. He said it had also prepared a bill on the matter and it will be seen whether or not the opposition supports the legislation on the issue.



WAH CANTT: PLAYERS of Nishtar Hockey Club posing for a picture during a match with Zakir Academy Wah Cantt played at Shahnaz Shaikh Hockey Stadium. – DNA

Fawad Alam's century puts
Pakistan ahead in 1st Test

Away from his personal landmark and his epic backstory, Pakistan's match situation turned on the second day through the course of three crucial stands. Alam and Azhar Ali were involved in the first. The pair added 94 for the fifth wicket but most importantly, went through the morning session undefeated

SPORTS DESK

KARACHI: Fawad Alam has a First Class average of 56. A good chunk of it is down to the runs accumulated at his home ground at the National Stadium in Karachi. To the locals, therefore, there was no surprise when he casually brought behind a 14-wicket day to stroke third Test hundred and his second in three Tests. The rest of the fraternity, however, remained perplexed about how Pakistan's system could justify keeping him out of the Test team for 11 years.

Having been made to wait on 94 for over two overs, a loft over long-on for six off his 220th delivery brought the milestone cherry on a fine hand. Alam's 109 lifted Pakistan from a desperate 27 for 4 - with considerable help from Azhar Ali and Faheem Ashraf - to a lead of 88, a position from which the hosts would consider themselves well ahead of the game after two days of play. Understandably, the emotions came flooding out. There was a deep breath, a quiet prayer followed by animated gestures towards a dressing room serenading him with a standing ovation. It was all deserved. Alam had copped blows to his wrist early in the day and began the day with his side under immense duress. But once he settled, there was but a single defining moment when he didn't look in control. That moment, for South Africa, came and passed when Alam was on 35 and played inside the line

to a Keshav Maharaj delivery and nicked the ball to first slip where Dean Elgar was slow to get down and complete the catch. Away from his personal landmark and his epic backstory, Pakistan's match situation turned on the second day through the course of three crucial stands. Alam and Azhar Ali were involved in the first. The pair added 94 for the fifth wicket but most importantly, went through the morning session undefeated. It was a far cry from the tumbling charade of Day 1 even if the Karachi deck held on to its vagaries. The unevenness of bounce was on display in the first over of the day as Kagiso Rabada's deliveries reached keeper Quinton de Kock on the first bounce. Naturally, this resulted in a solitary slip fielder as South Africa set straight fields, including a very straight short mid-on by the pitch for Ali. South Africa also opened with two fielders on the deep behind square with a view to inducing a false shot from the odd delivery that climbs steeply. To their luck, no such demons rose and Pakistan's overnight batsmen quickly got warmed up with a bevy of singles either side of the wicket. The pair saw through Rabada's brisk six-over spell in the morning and even though they managed a solitary boundary in the first hour,

'Never blamed anyone,
waited for my time'

KARACHI: Centurion Fawad Alam has stated that he has no regrets about missing 10 years of international Test cricket as he now only looks forward to doing wonders for Pakistan. The 35-year-old Fawad scored 109 off 245 balls, which included nine fours and two sixes. He rescued Pakistan after they were struggling at 33/4 at the start of the second day's play. "My aim has always been to avail the opportunities. I always prayed to Allah to give that is better for me and was waiting for my time," Fawad said in a post-day virtual presser. "I don't think like that (10 years have been wasted) because if I would, the number of runs I made in domestic cricket and piled up records couldn't have been possible," he added. On the other hand, Fawad praised team management for awarding him the opportunities after he failed in two innings in England. – DNA

36 runs were whittled off the deficit. Fawad moved into second gear at the onset of spin, cracking a cut shot off Maharaj even as a rapidly frustrated South Africa burnt their reviews over calls that were not even 50-50. The visitors were offered a comeback chance just after Lunch when Azhar fell soon after getting to his half-century for 51 to Maharaj. South Africa controlled the running with Maharaj bowling a long 10-over spell (1 for 24) with the quicks alternating in short bursts at the other end with a reverse-swinging old Kookaburra. But the built-up pressure dissipated once Maharaj was done with his spell.

G7 condemns
Navalny's arrest

FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: The foreign ministers of the G7 bloc condemned on Tuesday the arrest and detention of opposition politician Alexey Navalny after his return to Russia. We, the G7 Foreign Ministers of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States of America and the High Representative of the European Union, are united in condemning the politically motivated arrest and detention of Alexey Navalny. We are also deeply concerned by the detention of thousands of peaceful protesters and journalists, and call upon Russia to adhere to its national and international obligations and release those detained arbitrarily for exercising their right of peaceful assembly on 23 January. The violent suppression by police forces of the right of individuals to express their opinion is unacceptable. These events confirm a continuous negative pattern of shrinking space for the opposition, civil society, human rights

defenders and independent voices in Russia.

It is deplorable that Mr Navalny is being detained in relation to court decisions which the European Court of Human Rights determined in 2017 to be arbitrary and manifestly unreasonable. We the G7 Foreign Ministers call upon the Russian authorities for Mr Navalny's immediate and unconditional release. Russia is bound by its national and international obligations to respect and ensure human rights. G7 Foreign Ministers recall their condemnation, in the strongest possible terms, of the poisoning of Mr Navalny in August 2020 with a chemical nerve-agent of the "Novichok" group, a substance developed by Russia.

We reiterate that any use of chemical weapons is unacceptable and contravenes international norms against the use of such weapons. We, the G7 Foreign Ministers, again urge the Russian authorities to investigate and credibly explain the use of a chemical weapon on its soil in the light of Russia's obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention. The confirmed use of chemical weapons against an opposition politician, as well as Mr Navalny's latest detention further undermine democracy, independent voices, and political plurality in Russia.

Indian farmer leaders
to continue protests

FOREIGN DESK

NEW DELHI: Leaders of the farmers' unions in India have condemned the violence during a "tractor rally" held by farmers in the Indian capital to demand repeal of new agricultural laws. On Tuesday, tens of thousands of farmers began the day in a convoy of tractors festooned with Indian and religious flags along New Delhi's outskirts as the country celebrated its Republic Day. But hundreds of protesters – some on horseback – broke away from approved routes, heading for government buildings in the city centre where the annual Republic Day parade of troops and military hardware was taking place.

Some of the protesters reached the Mughal-era Red Fort complex in the old part of the capital, carrying ceremonial swords and scattering police who tried to prevent them from entering. Once inside, they put up their own emblem on the flagpole where the prime minister normally gives an independence day speech in August. One farmer was killed in what police said was an accident after his tractor overturned after hitting a barricade. At least 86 police officers were injured, an official statement said. Police said they had started nearly two

dozen cases for "rioting" and "assault with deadly weapons" in connection with the violence and accused those who diverged from the agreed routes of "violence and destruction". "They have caused great damage to public property and many police personnel have also been injured," a police statement said. Protest organiser Samyukt Kisan Morcha later on Tuesday said the groups deviating from set routes did not represent the majority of farmers. "We also condemn and regret the undesirable and unacceptable events that have taken place today and dissociate ourselves from those indulging in such acts," the group of farm unions said in a statement.



BAGHDAD: Pakistan's minister for Defence Production, Ms. Zobia Jalal called on Foreign Minister of Iraq, Fuad Hussain at Iraqi Foreign Ministry Baghdad. – APP

Islamophobia, xenophobia should 'stop': Erdogan

Erdogan said that humanity is going through a difficult period, adding that the "racism virus" has become increasingly widespread along with the pandemic

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: The world should step up to say "stop" to Islamophobia and xenophobia which have multiplied in recent years through the use of digital platforms, Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Wednesday. His remarks came in a video message released on the occasion of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day. "The International community should take action so that tragedies such as the Holocaust, Bosnia, Rwanda, and Cambodia do not re-

cur," he said.

Erdogan said that humanity is going through a difficult period, adding that the "racism virus" has become increasingly widespread along with the pandemic. He underlined that there is a "serious increase" in acts of violence on places of worship, such as mosques, synagogues, and churches. "Hate crimes against some segments of society with different ethnic identities, religions, language, and appearances have been increasing day by day." Racist terrorism has turned into a security threat that undermines social peace and people's will to live together, Erdogan said.



"The signs of the Holocaust, the Bosnian, Rwandan, and Cambodian genocides, in which millions of people lost their lives, were evident

with systematic discrimination, marginalization, and rising hate speech long before these massacres," he said. He emphasized that all these genocides serve as a reminder to the international community to fight against all kinds of discrimination and prevent crimes against humanity. "It is far beyond being a mere moral attitude that should be adopted by every state, but also a contractual obligation under the 1948 UN Convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide." Erdogan said that each and every international organization, government, media, politician, civil society,

religious group, and opinion leader has "essential roles" to play in this context. Turkey has been making efforts in this regard on international platforms, particularly the Alliance of Civilizations Initiative. "Likewise, with the open-door policy we implement, we protect everyone who takes refuge in our country regardless of their beliefs, language, and origin," the president said. "On this occasion, I respectfully remember the memories of the victims of the genocide and hope for a future where all kinds of discrimination will end, and crimes against humanity will not be experienced," Erdogan concluded.

Pak wants
regional
peace: FM

From Page 01

longstanding political, human and financial commitment to UN's endeavors in peace-keeping and peace-building. Shah Mahmood Qureshi said as a major troop and police contributing country, Pakistan take pride in its rich UN peacekeeping history.

He said over the last 60 years, Pakistan's peacekeepers have represented the blue flag in 46 UN Missions across four continents of the world. Meanwhile, talking to media at Parliament House, the Foreign Minister rejected any possibility of bilateral trade with India. The Foreign Minister said Kashmir is not an internal issue of India but an internationally recognized dispute. He said Pakistan has raised the Kashmir issue at international fora including the United Nations.

About Afghanistan, the Foreign Minister said there is no military solution to the Afghan issue and comprehensive dialogue is the only way forward. He said priorities of the new US administration are in line with our vision we will continue to work for peace with it.

Pak-Italy
hold annual
consultations

From Page 01

He appreciated Pakistan's re-inclusion in the seasonal visa program and non-seasonal work visas and stated that the two sides should work together to streamline matters related to migration. The Foreign Secretary briefed on the grave human rights situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IOJK) and the attempts to change the demographic structure of the occupied territory. He stressed that the international community must take full cognizance of the deteriorating situation in IOJK and support peaceful settlement of Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions.

With regard to Afghanistan, the Foreign Secretary underlined that there was no military solution to the conflict and that a negotiated political settlement was the only way forward. He highlighted Pakistan's positive contributions to the Afghan peace process and stressed the importance for the Afghan stakeholders to seize this historic opportunity to secure durable peace and stability in Afghanistan. The Foreign Secretary underlined the need for reduction of violence leading to ceasefire and the imperative of an inclusive, broad-based and comprehensive political solution through an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned process. The Foreign Secretary congratulated Italy on assuming Presidency of G-20 and co-Presidency of COP-26. The two sides expressed satisfaction on existing strong cooperation at international fora, in particular at the United Nations, including on the issue of Security Council Reforms. They agreed to work together to further deepen mutual cooperation in the multilateral arena.

Japan grants
US\$ 4.57m for
polio vaccine

From Page 01

Aida Girma, UNICEF Representative in Pakistan, highlighting the unwavering support of the Government of Pakistan. "The continuous support from the Government of Japan will help the country to get vaccines to the areas where they are needed most, and help Pakistan rebuild children's immunity to get back on track to making Pakistan Polio free," she added.

Pakistan is currently facing a challenging situation in polio eradication with the upsurge of number of polio cases. A total of 84 (19 January 2021) polio cases have been reported including 26 from Balochistan, 22 each from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh, and 14 from Punjab. The Polio programme suspended vaccination activities from March to mid-July 2020 due to COVID-19, but services resumed after mid-July to get vaccines to children countrywide. The Government of Japan has been supporting the Polio Eradication programme in Pakistan since 1996. Over these years, the grant and loan contribution from the Government of Japan has amounted to more than US\$ 226.37 million dollars to support programme in Pakistan through UNICEF.

Briefs

Israeli forces
shoot dead
Palestinian
teen

FOREIGN DESK

JERUSALEM: Israeli forces have shot dead a Palestinian teen near the Jewish settlement of Ariel in the occupied West Bank. According to an Israeli military statement on Tuesday, Atallah Rayyan, 17, tried to carry out a stabbing attack against Israeli soldiers deployed at the Ariel settlement junction. The statement said the soldiers at the military post "spotted an assailant who attempted to stab two (Israeli) soldiers". "One of the soldiers blocked the assailant's multiple stabbing attacks and the commander of the troops who was at the scene fired towards the assailant and neutralised him."

The statement added that Israeli forces suffered no casualties. A video released by the army showed a female soldier identified as "Cpl L" who said she was on guard duty when an assailant "with a knife in hand jumped on top of me". She said she fended him off by pushing him and hitting him several times with her gun. The Israeli soldier said the attacker then attempted to stab her before her commander shot him with a single bullet. However, the video showed only the back of the soldier and no photos or video of the incident were immediately available.

The Palestinian health ministry confirmed that "a citizen" had been shot dead by the "occupation forces". Palestinian and Israeli rights groups have accused Israel of using excessive force against "lone wolf" Palestinian attackers, and of killing some suspected attackers who could have been apprehended.

'EU vaccine
delivery
dates weren't
guaranteed'

FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: AstraZeneca is pushing back strongly against criticism from EU officials over delayed deliveries of its Covid-19 vaccine. In an interview with Italian newspaper la Repubblica on Tuesday, AstraZeneca CEO Pascal Soriot said the company had agreed to make its "best effort" to deliver the doses EU countries had ordered but was not contractually committed to a schedule. Soriot also told the newspaper that countries such as the United Kingdom were quicker than the European Union to finalize their orders, meaning the drugmaker was unable to give the bloc an iron-clad commitment on its delivery schedule. The "head start" also gave AstraZeneca's operation in the United Kingdom more time to resolve the kind of supply chain issues that are now affecting EU deliveries, the CEO said. "We've had also teething issues like this in the UK supply chain. But the UK contract was signed three months before the European vaccine deal. So, with the UK, we have had an extra three months to fix all the glitches we experienced. As for Europe, we are three months behind in fixing those glitches," he said.

Indonesian
volcano
unleashes
river of lava

WEB DESK

YOGYAKARTA: Indonesia's most active volcano erupted Wednesday with a river of lava and searing gas clouds flowing 3,000 meters (nearly 10,000 feet) down its slopes. No casualties were reported. The sounds of the eruption could be heard 30 kilometers (18 miles) away, officials said. It was Mount Merapi's biggest lava flow since authorities raised its danger level in November, said Hanik Humaida, the head of Yogyakarta's Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation Center. She said the volcano's lava dome is growing rapidly, causing hot lava and gas clouds to flow down its slopes. After morning rain, the ashfall turned into muck in several villages. More than 150 people, mostly elderly, living within 5 kilometers (3 miles) of the crater were evacuated to barracks set up for displaced people.



ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner, Dr. Christian Turner called on the federal minister for finance and revenue, Dr. Abdul Hafeez Sheikh, at the finance division in Islamabad. High Commissioner was accompanied by head of development Ms. Annabel Gerry on the occasion. — DNA

'Metsamor Nuclear Power,
threat for entire region'

Besides, we are also concerned that Armenia radioactively contaminated our lands, which had been under occupation for about 30 years. According to the head of the Department of the Institute of Geology and Geophysics, of Azerbaijan National Academy of Science

DNA

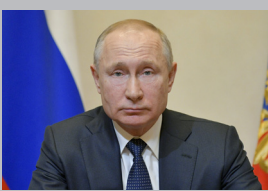
BAKU: Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan Sabina Aliyeva has released a statement on the potential threat of Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant for the entire region, Ombudsman Apparatus told media. The statement reads: "We are seriously concerned about the recent discussions in the Armenian Parliament regarding the use of radioactive waste from Metsamor nuclear power plant for military purposes. At a meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Regional Affairs and Eurasian Integration, Deputy Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of Armenia, said that the Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) produced a significant amount of radioactive waste, as well as nuclear fuel not classified as "industrial waste". Besides, we are also concerned that Armenia radioactively contaminated our lands, which had been under occupation for about 30 years. According to the head of the Department of the Institute of Geology and Geophysics, of Azerbaijan National Academy of Science, the waste of the Metsamor NPP was buried in the territory of Agdere town and Kalbajar district of Azerbaijan. The expired Metsamor NPP has become an open



threat not only to Armenia itself but also to the entire region. Moreover, it is located in an earthquake-prone area of the South Caucasus which makes its operation even more dangerous. There are 5 tectonic faults around the NPP and one of the main faults is only 500 meters from the station.

Thus, all countries of the region, are exposed to the threat of suffering the same fate of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant and the Japanese Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. A number of international organizations also stressed their concern about Metsamor NPP. Federica Mogherini, Vice-President, of the EU Commission said: "The EU is fully aware of the risks posed by the Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant (MNPP). Therefore, a swift closure and decommissioning of the MNPP remain a key objective for the EU and the European Neighborhood Policy Action Plan, as this power plant cannot be upgraded to meet internationally recognized nuclear safety standards." However, it seems that Armenia is not planning to close the plant, on the contrary, they extended its operation beyond 2026.

Taking into account all the hazards that the Metsamor NPP may cause, I call on all relevant international organizations to take urgent measures for its immediate closure, the safe suspension of its operation, and realization of all stages of radioactive waste management under strict international control in full compliance with requirements established in Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management of the International Atomic Energy Agency, as well as PACE Resolution 1588 (2007) to prevent disasters like Chernobyl or Fukushima."

Putin warns of
global tensions
similar to 1930s

FOREIGN DESK

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin said the world risks sliding into an "all against all" conflict amid tensions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and growing economic inequality. Addressing the World Economic Forum on Wednesday for the first time in 12 years, Putin drew parallels with the 1930s when he said a failure to resolve international problems sparked World War II. "Today, such a global hot conflict is, I hope, in principle impossible," Putin said in his online speech to The Davos Agenda. "But, I repeat, the situation can develop unpredictably and uncontrollably."

Putin spoke a day after Russia and the U.S. exchanged diplomatic notes agreeing

to a five-year extension of the 2010 New START treaty limiting strategic nuclear weapons that was due to expire Feb. 5. Russia's parliament voted unanimously to back the extension on Wednesday. In a speech that was short on policy prescriptions, the Russian president hit out at technology giants that he said were competing with national governments in part over the views and beliefs held by their citizens. He called for international cooperation to ensure greater availability of vaccines against Covid-19 in poor countries, and said governments should strive to ensure decent living standards for all citizens after decades in which the focus had been on lowering taxes for the wealthy and corporations. Putin said the agreement Tuesday to extend the New START treaty was a step in the right direction. He made no mention of Saturday's nationwide protests in Russia in support of jailed opposition leader Alexey Navalny.

Stalin's killing of Kyrgyz
intellectuals remains vivid

MONITORING DESK

BISHKEK: The execution of 138 Kyrgyz intellectuals in 1938 by the order of the Soviet leader Joseph Stalin is still vivid in people's memories. The graves of the intellectuals are located in the Ata Beyit Memorial Complex in the Kyrgyz village of Chong-Tash, located around 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) south of the capital Bishkek. The complex was built in 2000 at the initiative of the country's first president, Askar Akayev, in their memory. Speaking to Anadolu Agency, the head of the complex, Gulnara Tursunbekova, said it has turned into a spiritual center with visits by students, tourists and official delegations. Tursunbekova said the guides at the complex are an effort to hand down the legacy of the 138 intellectuals, who pioneered the establishment of the Kyrgyz state, to the next generations. A museum at the complex displays coins, shoes, documents, newspa-



per clippings, photographs and IDs unearthed from the mass grave and biographies of the victims.

The complex also features a monument called "Urkun," meaning 'exodus,' which symbolizes the revolt by the Kyrgyz people in 1916 against their conscription into the imperial Russian army and their subsequent fleeing to China. Through an irony of fate, world-famous Kyrgyz author and statesman Chingiz

Aitmatov, who named the cemetery Ata Beyit (Grave of Our Fathers) is also buried at the cemetery. Those who lost their lives on April 7, 2010 in the People's April Revolution are also buried at the Ata Beyit cemetery. Ata-Beyit, where nearly all of the first Kyrgyz intellectuals are buried, is one of the first places visited by local and foreign tourists as well as foreign statesmen. Restoration of honor for Kyrgyz intellectuals

As the leader of a totalitarian regime, Joseph Stalin ordered the exile of millions of people from various nations after coming to power in the Soviet Union in 1924. The architect of the Kyrgyz Latin alphabet, Kasym Tynystanov, Isenali Arabayev, who prepared the first Kyrgyz alphabet, Yusup Abdrakhmanov, who laid the foundation stone of the Kyrgyz state, Bayali Isaakeyev, Imanali Aydarbekov and many others were targeted by Stalin's regime.

131 arrested
during Dutch
virus curfew

FOREIGN DESK

HAGUE: Dutch police said Wednesday that the fourth night of the Netherlands' coronavirus curfew passed more peacefully than the previous three nights marred by rioting. Even so, officers arrested 131 people, mainly for public order offenses and incitement.

"It was calmer around the curfew on Tuesday night than the days before," police said in a statement.

Underscoring the role of young people, who have been forced to stay home from school for weeks due to the country's tough lockdown, police said that most suspects arrested for inciting riots using social media were aged under 18 years.

The rioting has rocked the Netherlands, which has a caretaker government after Prime Minister Mark Rutte's ruling coalition resigned earlier this month over a scandal involving child welfare benefit fraud investigations. The pandemic is expected to be a key campaign issue before a general election scheduled for March 17. Neighboring Belgium expressed fears Wednesday that the unrest could spread, with calls for protests against the country's tough lockdown and its 9 p.m. curfew mounting on social media. The Dutch curfew, which began Saturday, also begins at 9 p.m.

"The violent demonstrations that degenerated in the Netherlands have apparently incited certain people to call, also in our country, for demonstrations against the health measures," Belgian Interior Minister Annelies Verindien's office said.

Economic
profiteering
fuelling war
in Yemen: UN

WEB DESK

NEW YORK: Economic profiteering is fuelling the catastrophe in Yemen where a six-year war has led to repeated attacks on civilians, forced disappearances, and other gross violations human rights violations, UN experts said. A new United Nations report estimates Houthi rebels diverted at least \$1.8bn in 2019 earmarked for the government to pay salaries and provide basic services to citizens. Yemen's government, meanwhile, implemented a scheme to illegally divert to traders \$423m of Saudi money meant to buy rice and other commodities for the Yemeni people, it said. The report describes a deteriorating situation in Yemen, where the panel of experts said the Houthis and the government "appear to be indifferent" to the devastating effect of the economy's downfall on its people while continuing to divert the country's economic and financial resources.

Six years of war between a US-backed Arab coalition supporting the internationally recognised government and the Iran-aligned Houthi rebels have been catastrophic for Yemen, killing more than 112,000 people, creating the world's worst humanitarian crisis, bringing the country to the brink of famine and wrecking infrastructure.

Belarus opp
urges tougher
response on
Lukashenko

MONITORING DESK

MINSK: The European Union and the United States must do more to help end the disputed rule of Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko, opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya says, calling on the EU to impose a further round of sanctions. Belarus has been rocked by waves of protests since an Aug. 9 presidential election that Lukashenko says he won but the opposition - backed by Western countries - says was stolen, although the demonstrations have ebbed in recent weeks. Thousands of protesters have been rounded up and nearly all opposition political figures have been driven into exile or jailed. "It's crucial to impose pressure on those responsible for human and civil rights violations, but also target corrupt officials and businessmen," Tsikhanouskaya said from the Lithuanian capital Vilnius where she fled after the election.

Turkish Consulate, PYMA agree to boost trade ties

Turkish Commercial Attache, assured that the proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Turkey & Pakistan & MOU are Major Development in the Bilateral Trade & Demands raised by Pakistan Yarn Merchants Association will be fulfilled

DNA

KARACHI: Turkish Consulate in Karachi and Pakistan Yarn Merchants Association (PYMA), have agreed on joint efforts to boost bilateral trade & investment ties. In this regard, new avenues for investment in various sectors of the economy, especially investment, will be explored and attention will also be paid to the exchange of trade delegations. H.E. Eyup Yildirim, Commercial Attache, Consulate General of Republic of Turkey & his team in a meeting held at PYMA office, assured the yarn traders of their full support. On this occasion, M. Hanif Lakhany, Senior Vice Chairman PYMA, M. Farhan Ashrafi, Vice Chairman, senior members Khurshid A. Shaikh, M. Aslam Moten, M.

Saqib Goodluck, Danish Hanif, Khurram Bharara, Sohail Nisar, Waheed Umer, Abdull Naeem, Altaf Haroon, M. Anis Mandavia were also present.

Turkish Commercial Attache, assured that the proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between

Turkey & Pakistan & MOU are Major Development in the Bilateral Trade & Demands raised by Pakistan Yarn Merchants Association will be fulfilled.

He further said that Turkey & Pakistan will work together for the promotion of Yarn, Fabric &

Textile Industry whereas initiatives will be taken for the meetings between Businessmen of both the countries on quarterly basis. Beside this after COVID PANDEMIC, B2B meetings will be arranged between Businessmen of Turkey & Pakistan. While

replying to different questions from members, Executive Committee of PYMA, said that Turkey will provide full support to Businessmen from Pakistan for opening Business offices in Turkey & this will be a move under strategic Economic Front (SEF) between both the countries. M. Hanif Lakhany, Senior Vice Chairman and Farhan Ashrafi, Vice Chairman PYMA called the role of the Consulate important in promoting bilateral trade and ensuring easy access to Turkish markets, including visas for Yarn traders. They said that details of Turkey's economic zone, incentives given to foreign investors in terms of foreign investment should be exchanged and details of yarns, garments, textile manufacturers, importers and exporters should also be exchanged.



Briefs

Joe Biden, Putin hold telephonic talks

DNA

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden and Russian leader Vladimir Putin held their first conversation as counterparts on Tuesday in a phone call that underscored troubled relations and the delicate balance between the former Cold War foes.

According to the White House, Biden raised concerns about the arrest of opposition figure Alexei Navalny, Russia's alleged involvement in a massive cyber-espionage campaign and reports of Russian bounties on American troops in Afghanistan. The Kremlin, meanwhile, focused on Putin's response to Biden's proposal to extend the last remaining US-Russia arms control treaty.

While the readouts from the two capitals emphasised different elements, they both suggested that US-Russia relations will be guided, at least at the beginning of the Biden administration, by a desire to do no harm but also no urgency to repair existing damage.

The two presidents agreed to have their teams work urgently to complete a five-year extension of the New START nuclear weapons treaty that expires next month. Former President Donald Trump's administration had withdrawn from two arms control treaties with Russia and had been prepared to let New START lapse. Unlike his immediate predecessors — including Trump, who was enamoured of Putin and frequently undercut his own administration's tough stance on Russia — Biden has not held out hope for a "reset" in relations.

'No one allowed to disrupt peace in country'

DNA

PESHAWAR: Interior Minister, Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad here Wednesday said peace has been achieved after a lot of sacrifices and no one would be allowed to disrupt peace and law and order situation in the country. He expressed these views while jointly presiding over a high-level meeting along with Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan on the law and order situation in the province here at civil secretariat. Chief Secretary KP, Dr Kazim Niaz, Inspector General of Police, Dr Sanaulah Abbasi and others senior officials of law enforcement agencies, district administration and police attended the meeting. While highly appreciating the sacrifices of law enforcement organizations, police and districts administration for restoration of peace in the province, the Interior Minister said KP has played a frontline role for establishment of peace in the country and the entire nation held sacrifices of its people and law enforcement agencies in high esteem.

Bilawal thankful for good wishes

DNA

KARACHI: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has expressed gratitude to those who sent congratulatory messages on the wedding ceremony of his sister Bakhtawar Bhutto Zardari. In a statement issued from Media Cell Bilawal House, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that fewer guests have been invited to the wedding reception of Bakhtawar Bhutto Zardari in view of SOPs of pandemic Coronavirus in Karachi. PPP Chairman expressed regret over the situation and said that he could not invite many dignitaries to the wedding due to SOPs of coronavirus. He further said that wedding receptions will be held in Islamabad, Lahore and Larkana also in which more dignitaries, friends and PPP family members will be invited to share the joys of the auspicious occasion.



ISLAMABAD: Federal minister for railways, Azam Khan Swati inaugurating International Conference of Women Chambers at Serena Hotel. — DNA

Azam Swati stresses facilities for women entrepreneurs

Railway Minister Azam Khan Swati inaugurated 4th Women Chamber of Commerce organized by Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce at Serena hotel in Islamabad

A.M.BHATTI

RAWALPINDI: We will run the railways under a new sustainable business model. Women could also play an important role in the development of railways. Under public-private partnership, private sector, chamber of commerce, women entrepreneurs can also be involved in the development of railways. These views were expressed by Federal Railway Minister Azam Khan Swati at the 4th Women Chamber of Commerce organized

by the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce at Serena hotel in Islamabad. The Women Convention was organized under the umbrella of International Chambers Summit (ICS) 2021. The Minister added that "Women can play an important role in social, economic and human development. The government believes in empowering women," he said. The minister said that its the vision of Prime Minister Imran government to provide facilities to women in every field. Railways will be made an economic hub,

but unfortunately this has not happened. In the last 50 years, a loss of Rs 1.2 trillion has been incurred, including a loss of Rs 20.3 billion in the last six months. There is a lot of potential for development in the railways. We will develop 167,000 railway lands across the country. Earlier, President Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mohammad Nasir Mirza said that the International Chambers Summit has three parts. Earlier, Chamber President Muhammad Nasir

Chambers Summit has three parts. On the first day, the Women's Business Convention was held with the aim of empowering women entrepreneurs to grow their businesses, highlighting the challenges faced by Women entrepreneurs, and finding solutions to them. During the Convention, representatives of SMEDA, TDAP, TDP, FBR, Oxfam, Hashu Foundation and EU Ambassador to Pakistan Androia Kaminara also spoke at the conference. The Women's Convention was attended by the

Presidents of Bahawalpur, Faisalabad, Lahore, Hazara, Layyah, Karachi South, Karachi Korangi, Multan, Peshawar and Rawalpindi Women's Chambers. A declaration was also issued at the end of the Women's Convention. Women Convener Noorin Ghaffar, Ishaq Shinwari from TDAP, Umberbereen Ifitkhar from FBR, Farina Mazhar from Board of Investment, Tania Butter from SMEDA, Arifullah from DGTO, Sahar Afshin from Oxfam, Ayesha Khan from Hashu Foundation were present on the occasion.

Belarus envoy lauds CGSS' role in research

DNA

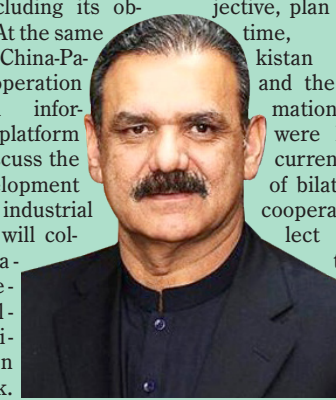
ISLAMABAD: A meeting was held between Mr. Khalid Taimur Akram, Executive Director, Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad and His Excellency Andrei Metelitsa, Ambassador of Belarus to Pakistan Wednesday at the Embassy of Belarus, Islamabad. Mr. Khalid Taimur Akram welcomed the newly appointed Ambassador to Pakistan and hoped that the mutual cooperation



between the two friendly nations will be further cemented. During the meeting, it was decided that both the parties collaborate in the fields of mutual interest particularly academia, research and analysis. His Excellency Andrei Metelitsa praised the efforts of CGSS in initiating and promoting bilateral relations between Belarus and Pakistan. It was agreed that CGSS will actively engage in activities with different institutions in Belarus to further enhance the mutual ties.

Chinese experience to help Pakistan Agri development

BEIJING: "The Chinese experience which is monumentally acknowledged worldwide will become very handy in adding value to our agriculture development of the country," said Lt Gen (R) Asim Saleem Bajwa, Chairman of CPEC Authority. Addressing at online launching ceremony of China-Pakistan Agricultural and Industrial Cooperation Information Platform, organized by China Economic Net (CEN) and China Machinery Engineering Corporation (CMEC), he said, "We are also looking forward to modernizing our supply chain, food processing industry and exports potential." "All the ministries are working and we are harmonizing our efforts to enhance our yield here, lifting our marginalized people out of poverty and then also enhancing our exports not only to China but to the entire world," he added. He said this initiative of launching a platform for agriculture and industrial information by Ambassador Nong Rong supported by CMEC and CEN couldn't have been at the better time. The platform will optimize the true potential of economic integration between the two countries. He also said agriculture is highly essential for Pakistan's food security and exports potential. Pakistan needs help in agriculture from mechanization to water management to cooperate farming and from seed germination to pest control. Pakistan needs help from our Chinese brothers, he remarked. Launching ceremony introduced the details of this platform, including its objective, plan and ways of use, etc. At the same time, discussions on China-Pakistan agricultural and the building of information communication were held, which were current and the future of bilateral agricultural cooperation. This platform will also display achievements and cooperation between China-Pakistan.



Saifullah urges PDM to show solidarity with Kashmiris

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chief Organizer Saifullah Khan Nyazee Wednesday said February 5 was observed as 'Kashmir Solidarity Day' to express solidarity with Kashmiri brethren and criticized Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) for planning to stage a political show on the same day instead of expressing unity and spirit with the national cause. Speaking here at special session with the beat reporters, the PTI chief organizer termed it against the norms to organize political rally on Kashmir Day. The PTI chief organizer said that Kashmir was very important issue which should be resolved as per aspiration of Kashmiri people and resolutions, lingering on the United Nations agenda for the last seven decades. PTI Central Information Secretary Ahmad Jawad, Central Secretary Finance Siraj Ahmad, Central Additional Secretary Dr. Abdul Hassan Ansari were also present on the occasion. The chief organizer of PTI while replying to different questions also highlighted the recent initiatives taken by the incumbent government and said the economic stability and price control were among the top most priorities of the PTI government. He said it was the pro-active and wise policies of Prime Minister Imran Khan, due to which economic growth was showing positive indicators as first quarter of current fiscal year witnessed a reasonable growth. Answering a question, he said that supply and demand system was being strengthened with the objectives to stabilize prices of essential commodities. Nyazee criticized the previous regimes of PML-N and PPP for damaging the system and defaming the national institutions. — DNA

PNC calls for holding Israel accountable

PNC appealed to the free Arab and Islamic nations to assume their responsibilities by implementing the political, financial and media decisions to save the city of Jerusalem

DNA

RAMALLAH: The crimes of the Israeli occupation authorities in occupied Jerusalem and its sanctuaries and national, historical and archaeological symbols require international accountability and punishment for violating international resolutions related to occupied Jerusalem, including what was decided by UNESCO, PNC said. In a statement issued on Wednesday, PNC added, that the occupation authorities' insistence on preventing all renovation works in the holy Mosque, Al-Aqsa, disrupting the entry of required materials necessary for maintenance,

and the previous measurements of spaces and buildings inside the holy Mosque, Al-Aqsa, continuing restrictions on the employees of the Islamic Endowments Department in the Mosque. The summons and arrests of the guards come in line with completing the implementation of Jerusalem Judaization project and its Islamic and Christian holy sites, and tightening the occupation security and political control over it. PNC statement explained that these violations come as an extension of Israeli Judaization project under the name of "East Jerusalem City Center Plan" to distort the heart of the historic city of Jerusalem with its neighborhoods, markets, and streets, and change its Arab, Islamic and Christian character, including the Islamic cemeteries in it, which was affected by the occupation tools of aggression and sabotage and violating its sanctity. The Israeli occupation's persistence in obliterating the landmarks of the city of Jerusalem, as is happening now with the Palace of the Mufti: Hajj Amin Al-Husseini, in Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in East Jerusalem, and the plans to convert it into a Jewish synagogue, and plundering its history, national symbolism and historical value, is a flagrant violation of the Hague Convention and the Geneva Conventions,

PNC continued, "UNESCO" organization decisions rejected the claim of Israeli sovereignty over the city of Jerusalem as an occupied Palestinian city. The statement pointed out that the control of the Palace of the Mufti by force ten years ago, and the demolition of the Shepherd Hotel and the establishment of a settlement on the neighboring land, aims at isolating the north of the Holy City from its Palestinian surroundings by a settlement girdle. PNC appealed to the free Arab and Islamic nations, their governments, parliaments and institutions, to assume their responsibilities by implementing

the political, financial and media decisions to save the city of Jerusalem and its Christian and Islamic sanctities, especially the Holy Mosque, before it is too late, and not to leave it alone confronting the Israeli tools of oppression and Judaization, and to thwart its desperate Israeli attempts to impose its sovereignty over the city of Jerusalem. History and generations to come will never have mercy on anyone who is negligent or excessive in the blessed Arabic and Islamic Al-Aqsa Mosque, the first of the two Giblas and the third to the two Holy Mosques, and the Ascent of our honorable Messenger to heaven.

the political, financial and media decisions to save the city of Jerusalem and its Christian and Islamic sanctities, especially the Holy Mosque, before it is too late, and not to leave it alone confronting the Israeli tools of oppression and Judaization, and to thwart its desperate Israeli attempts to impose its sovereignty over the city of Jerusalem. History and generations to come will never have mercy on anyone who is negligent or excessive in the blessed Arabic and Islamic Al-Aqsa Mosque, the first of the two Giblas and the third to the two Holy Mosques, and the Ascent of our honorable Messenger to heaven.

YouTube indefinitely suspends Trump

DNA

WASHINGTON: YouTube has suspended Donald Trump indefinitely from the platform and said it will also prevent the former president's lawyer Rudy Giuliani from being able to monetise his clips. United States media reported. It comes a week after the social media giant confirmed it would extend a ban on Trump's channel — which has just under three million subscribers — joining other social media platforms in banning his accounts following the deadly January 6 Capitol riot. The Google-owned firm has faced some criticism over its slow response following the violence in Washington, as well as the proliferation of conspiracy theories on the platform. "In light of concerns about the ongoing potential for violence, the Donald J Trump channel will remain suspended," a YouTube spokesperson told Politico.

Smart lockdown in some Punjab areas

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: The Punjab government on Wednesday imposed smart lockdown in several areas of the provincial capital, Gujranwala, Gujrat and Hafizabad to minimize the danger of coronavirus pandemic. According to the Primary & Secondary Healthcare Department (P&SHD) Punjab spokesperson, smart lockdown is being imposed in the areas from where excessive corona cases have been reported. The smart lockdown has been implemented in 16 areas of Lahore, 1 area of Gujranwala, 1 area of Gujrat and 3 areas of Hafizabad.

In the provincial capital, some streets of B-Bolck Johar Town, Sector-A Township, Eden City, Amjad Khursheed Road, Askari 10, DHA-Phase 1, DHA-Phase 3, GOR-3 Shadman, Askari 11, Raza Block Allama Iqbal Town, Kareem Block Allama Iqbal Town, Rachna Block Allama Iqbal Town, Faiz Road New Muslim Town and Mujahidabad have been sealed. In Gujranwala, a street of Wahdat Colony and Bhanwara in Sarialamgir Gujrat have been locked down to protect the citizens from the pandemic. While Kassoki, Kharbain and Merakkh Kalan areas of Hafizabad have been locked down. All shopping malls, restaurants, private and government offices will remain closed during the lockdown in the areas. Smart lockdown has been declared to limit the movement of residents in the most affected places and it could protect the citizens of other areas from the COVID-19.

IHC urged not to remove Durrani's name from ECL

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Defence has submitted a written response to a petition filed by former Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) chief retired Lt Gen Asad Durrani at the Islamabad High Court, urging the court not to remove his name from the ECL. According to a copy of the response seen by Geo News, the ministry has told the court that it has evidence which suggests Durrani remained in contact with Indian spy agency Research and Analysis Wing (RAW). The defence ministry also said that it has evidence which suggests Durrani has been in contact with anti-state elements from other countries since 2008. The former ISI chief has moved the high court to seek the removal of his name from the no-fly list, stating that he wants to go abroad. Durrani's name was included in the ECL in 2019 following the Ministry of Defence's recommendation, sources said.