



# Islamabad POST

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**Army Chief hails historical Pakistan-KSA relationship**

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## Briefs

### Justice Isa's phone hacked

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court Justice Qazi Faez Isa's cell phone has been hacked, the top court's public relations office said in a statement on Tuesday. In the statement, the office said: "It is intimated to all and sundry that the cell phone of Hon'ble Justice Qazi Faez Isa has been hacked." The statement said that there is "suspicion" that "misguiding communication" could be relayed via the judge's mobile phone.

### Indian designs failed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Foreign Affairs Shah Mehmood Qureshi on Monday said that despite Indian efforts Pakistan is not diplomatically isolated and invited the opposition parties for discussion with the government on the foreign policy issues facing the country. Speaking at the floor of the Senate here, he said the political parties should pursue a bipartisan approach in foreign affairs in line with the national interest. The minister said the parties which were in government for multiple times were very much responsible for the present state of foreign affairs and rejected the opposition's criticism that the country is facing isolation.

### PM Imran wasted nation's time

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Shahid Khaqan Abbasi Tuesday said Prime Minister Imran Khan wasted the nation's time by edited video of the phone calls that he received yesterday. The former premier talked to media and said expensive petrol and electricity have made the lives of people difficult but the rulers are unconcerned. Tax of Rs15 was imposed on petroleum products during the PML-N tenure which has now increased to Rs40, he added.

## Army Chief hails historical Pak-KSA ties

We are proud of the strong bonds of Islam, brotherhood and cultural communion that bind us together

NAVEED MIRAJ

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Bajwa, during the graduation ceremony of 144th GD (P), 90th Engineering Course and 100th AD courses hailed presence of cadets from KSA for training at PAF Academy Asghar Khan. This is a manifestation of warm fraternal ties between Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and our Defence Forces indeed. We are proud of the strong bonds of Islam, brotherhood and cultural communion that bind us together, COAS added.

The graduation ceremony of 144th GD (P), 90th Engineering Course and 100th AD courses was held at PAF Academy, Asghar Khan on Tuesday. Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Qamar Javed Bajwa, was the chief guest on the occasion. Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan, Chief of Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force was also present at the ceremony. The COAS congratulated the graduating cadets on their landmark achievement. While addressing the graduating cadets, COAS said that

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### Indian diplomat summoned

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: A senior Indian diplomat was summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Tuesday to register Pakistan's strong protest over ceasefire violations by India. According to Foreign Office, due to the indiscriminate and unprovoked firing by the Indian occupation forces in Hot-spring and Jandrot Sectors, four persons including three women were injured. Condemning the deplorable targeting of innocent civilians by the Indian occupation forces, spokesperson of Pakistan Foreign Office underscored that such senseless acts are in clear violation of the 2003 Ceasefire Understanding. The spokesperson said these egregious violations of international law reflect consistent Indian attempts to escalate the situation along the LoC and are a threat to regional peace and security.



ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed presenting souvenir to British High Commissioner Christian Turner. DNA

## 16 years of US-Pak scholarship program

At the anniversary event, alumni from the MNBSP program shared their personal stories

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Pakistan's Higher Education Commission (HEC) celebrated the 16th anniversary of the Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program (MNBSP), which is administered in partnership with the United States Government through the U.S. Agency for International Development. Since 2004, USAID has worked with HEC to provide

equitable access to higher education and increase enrollment at Pakistani universities through merit scholarships for economically disadvantaged students. MNBSP has granted more than 5,300 scholarships in total, and more than half of the scholarships have been awarded to female students. Recipients demonstrate strong academic skills and financial need, and the majority live in remote rural areas. The MNBSP awards

scholarships to study agriculture, engineering, medical sciences, and social sciences. Recipients are eligible to study at 30 private and public partner universities across the country. "USAID is proud to partner with HEC in our shared desire to bring more highly-skilled and well-educated young Pakistanis into the workforce," said USAID Mission Director Julie Koenen.

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan witnessing the first Covid-19 vaccine being administered to a frontline health worker. - DNA

## PM Imran Khan kicks off vaccination drive

The more you abide by coronavirus safety measures, the easier it will be to protect everyone from the virus

SHUJAAT HAMZA

### 'Will resign if PDM returns looted money'

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Tuesday kicked off Pakistan's coronavirus vaccination drive, once again reminding the people to continue to exercise precautions. Under the supervision of the prime minister, his adviser on health Dr Faisal Sultan, and National Command and Operations Centre chief Asad Umar, the first vaccine was administered in Pakistan - given to a healthcare worker in Islamabad. "The more you abide by coronavirus safety measures, the easier it will be to protect everyone from

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has said that he is ready to tender his resignation but on the condition that leaders of opposition parties return the money they looted from the nation. The prime minister made this offer during the cabinet meeting while discussing the overall political situation in the country. He dared the opposition to resign from the assemblies and said that if they would have the guts to resign then they would have never chosen the path to flee away from the country. The prime minister demanded of the top opposition leaders including Nawaz Sharif, Asif Zardari and Maulana Fazlur Rehman to return the money looted from the country. While mocking the January 31 deadline of the opposition parties, he said that neither their resignations came nor they were able to gather the public and bring a long march to Islamabad. "Tendering resignation requires a lot of guts," he said and further mocked that how those who ran away after getting an NRO could dare to adopt the resignation option. - DNA

the virus," said PM Imran Khan, addressing a gathering to mark the occasion. "I congratulate [all those present here] for working at great speed to import a vaccine. We also thank China for gifting us 500,000 vaccines," he said. The prime minister said that similar to the shot the doctor had received, healthcare workers across the country that work with coronavirus patients will be the first to be given the jab, after which the age groups most at risk will be administered the shot. The premier also sought to assure the nation that the vaccine distribution across the various provinces is being done in a "just" manner.

### Myanmar issue; China in talks with stakeholders

DNA

ANKARA: Hours before the UN Security Council meeting to discuss the military takeover in Myanmar, China said Tuesday it was "negotiating with all parties involved." "Any move made by the international community should help Myanmar bring political and social stability... help find a peaceful solution and avoid further conflict," China's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Wang Wenbin told a news conference in Beijing. Wang was referring to the UN Security Council meeting on Myanmar scheduled for today, Chinese daily Global Times reported. "China is negotiating with all parties involved," he added.

Continued on Page 06

### 'Govt to take action against land mafia'



IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: The government has decided to take stern action against the land grabbers to retrieve the state land. This was announced by Minister for Information Shibli Faraz while briefing media in Islamabad on Tuesday evening about decisions taken in the federal cabinet held with Prime Minister Imran Khan in the chair. The Minister said, in this regard, Railways Minister Azam Khan Sawati was directed to

take serious measures for retrieving Railways' land. He said the cabinet was briefed on steps taken for Naya Pakistan Housing Scheme. It was informed that to facilitate the construction sector, measures have been taken to simplify the NOC procedure. For low cost housing, with the coordination of State Bank, banks have been directed to fix a five-percent quota for housing sector in their loan schemes. For this purpose, the cabinet has passed the foreclosure law.

### Lowest cases reported in 3 months

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: The national tally on Tuesday of total active COVID-19 cases recorded 33,365 with 1,220 more people tested positive for the deadly virus and 1,285 people recovered from the disease while the pandemic claimed sixty three lives during the last 24 hours. Sixty three corona patients have died during past 24 hours, 53 were under treatment in hospital and ten in their respective homes or quarantines died on Monday, according to the latest update issued by the National command and Operation Centre (NCO). During the last 24 hours most of the deaths had occurred in the Punjab followed by Sindh. It added that out of the total 63 deaths during last 24 hours 34 patients died on ventilators.

### Pak, UK agree to complete extradition treaty

NAVEED MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Britain have agreed to complete the extradition treaty between the two countries at the earliest. The understanding to this effect came during the meeting of Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed and British High Commissioner Christian Turner in Islamabad Tuesday. Speaking on the occasion, Sheikh Rasheed stressed on taking measures to ensure that the criminals do not find refuge anywhere. He said Britain's positive security advice about Pakistan has improved its image globally.

## Pak, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan mull cooperation

The sides signed a roadmap for construction of Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar railway project

POST REPORT

TASHKENT: The Afghan acting foreign minister, Mohammed Haneef Atmar, on Tuesday took part in a trilateral meeting with high level officials from Uzbekistan and Pakistan to discuss ways to strengthen cooperation in the economy, trade, security and transportation, the Afghan Foreign Ministry said. Uzbek Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Investment and Foreign Trade of Uzbekistan Sardor Umurzakov plays host to the meeting in Tashkent. During the meeting, the sides signed a roadmap for the construction of Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar railway project that is expected to significantly increase the transit potential of Central Asia. The railway technical project is expected to be completed by May. When operational, the railway will significantly reduce the time and cost of transporting goods between South Asia and Europe through Central Asia. Besides this, the Uzbek side expressed its full support to the ongoing intra-Afghan peace process in Doha.

Umurzakov noted that peace and stability in Afghanistan are key factors for development, economic growth, and increased cooperation at the regional level. He noted that Tashkent is ready to invest in Afghanistan's infrastructure and support comprehensive regional connectivity. In December 2018, the Uzbekistan Railway said that the Uzbek, Russian, Kazakh, Afghan and Pakistani railway companies would create a financial consortium for the construction of

the new railroad. The transport corridor is expected to link the European Union, Russia, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and the Southeast Asian countries. Earlier Uzbekistan and Pakistan on Monday showed resolve to enter into a preferential trade agreement and cooperate in shipping, textile, engineering and information technology sectors. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, president of Uzbekistan discussed matters related to economic cooperation during a meeting with



TASHKENT: Prime Minister Imran Khan's Adviser of Commerce Abdur Razzaq Daowd addressing the conference. -DNA

Adviser on Commerce and Investment Razak Dawood, who is leading a delegation to Uzbekistan, according to an official statement. This was the first meeting of joint working group on trade and economic affairs and the meeting of tripartite working group on the implementation of the "Trans-Afghan railway project". The meeting would continue till 4 February. The delegation includes officials of ministry of commerce and other related ministries and departments. The visit is a follow-up to the visit of Uzbekistan Deputy Prime Minister Sardor Umurzakov in September last year. The proposed 573km long railway link will be laid from Peshawar to Kabul and from Kabul to Uzbekistan via Mazar-e-Sharif. Estimated 27 stations, 912 artificial constructions and seven tunnels will be established to facilitate cargo movement. The railway link will be crucial to economic development of the three countries, Central Asian Republics and will help strengthening the regional ties. During the meeting of the joint working group, both sides expressed their desire to enhance trade relations between the two countries.

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Navalny hearing begins, dozens arrested outside court - Page 06

Biden threatens sanctions after Myanmar military coup - Page 07

Belarus businessmen keen in importing Pakistani products - Page 08



## Briefs

## EFP calls for employees' full social security

DNA

KARACHI: "Employers should provide full coverage of social security benefits to their employees to reap the full fruit of improved enterprise productivity." This was stated by Zaki Ahmed Khan, Vice President EFP, while addressing Awareness Raising Meetings with Employers on Social Security Schemes in Sindh. These meetings were organized by EFP in collaboration with ILO at the SITE Association of Trade & Industry and the Towel Manufacturers Association of Pakistan. Zaki Ahmed Khan pointed out that only 42% of the secured workers were covered under the social security scheme and it was the need of the hour that this coverage should be increased so that the scope of benefit provided to workers through employers' contribution may be widened to the maximum number of eligible workers. He also stressed upon the need for improvement of quality of SSSI services so that employers and workers are attracted towards the Social Security Institution for seeking Social protection which is the dire need of the hour in the pandemic scenario in particular.

## Masood wants media role for Kashmiris

MIRPUR [AJK]: The AJK President Sardar Masood Khan on Tuesday called upon the international media, civil society and freedom-loving people around the globe to speak more eloquently against the Indian government's illegal actions in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). "The steps that India has taken in IIOJK can be termed as a colonization of the territory and brutalization of its people. India invaded Kashmir, bifurcated the territory and annexed it with its federation without the consent of Kashmiris and this was an open war against them," he asserted. Addressing two different webinars on Kashmir organized by Pakistan Embassy in Azerbaijan and Pakistan Embassy in Berlin Germany in connection with Kashmir Solidarity Day, the president said that the people of Jammu and Kashmir had been fighting for freedom for 200 years, first, against the Dogra regime and then against the successive regimes of the Indian state, AJK President office told media.

## Sindh to reopen all shrines for public today

DNA

KARACHI: After a sharp decline in the coronavirus cases in the province, the Sindh government has decided to reopen all shrines for the general public from Wednesday (Wednesday). The announcement was made by Sindh Auqaf Minister Sohail Anwar Syal. The shrines across the province will reopen from tomorrow under strict health-related standard operating procedures (SOPs). Wearing masks for the visitors and social distance is mandatory, he added. On Monday, Sindh government had issued fresh standard operating procedures (SOPs) to be followed in the province, easing restrictions on business centres amid a decline in COVID-19 cases. A notification of the Sindh home department detailing the fresh SOPs read that the guidelines will remain in place until February 28. Under the new directives, wearing a facemask would be mandatory at every public place and, public and private offices. The home department's notification read that only 50 percent of the staff of the public and private offices would be allowed to work from their workplace while the remaining will adopt a work from home policy.



RISALPUR: Chief of Army Staff, General Qamar Javed Bajwa and Air Chief Marshal, Mujahid Anwar Khan, Chief of the Air Staff witnessing the 'Sherdil' aerobatics at the graduation ceremony held at PAF academy. – DNA



## KFUEIT celebrates WIHW

DNA

RAHIM YAR KHAN: World Interfaith Harmony Week is an annual event observed during the first week of February. World Interfaith Harmony Week (WIHW), conceived to promote peace and nonviolence, was first proposed by King Abdullah II of Jordan at the United Nations in 2010. Recognizing the imperative need for dialogue among different faiths and religions to enhance mutual understanding, harmony and cooperation among people, the General Assembly encourages all States to spread the message of interfaith harmony and goodwill in the world's churches, mosques, synagogues, temples and other places of worship during that week, voluntarily and according to their religious traditions or convictions. The World Interfaith Harmony Week provides a platform—one week in a year—when all interfaith groups and other groups of goodwill can show the world what a powerful movement they are. This week will allow for these groups to become aware of each other and strengthen the movement by building ties and avoiding duplicating each others' efforts. To celebrate the Interfaith Harmony Week and to spread the message of peace and harmony of Khwaja Ghulam Fareed (RA) to all corners of the world, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology cohosted a virtual international conference on 2nd February 2021. The conference was organized in collaboration with 'The Universal Peace Federation International', 'Coalition of Faith-Based Organizations', 'International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace' and 'LIOSIONS Organization'. KFUEIT provided IT resources and consultancy for the virtual conference. Over 500 international participants from 27 different countries registered and attend the virtual conference. The daylong conference consisted of two sessions.

## Trans-Himalaya Forum calls for closer co-op to combat challenges

Senator Mushahid Hussain urges tackling Climate Change & Coronavirus without a 'Cold War mindset', calls for regional meeting before Glasgow Climate Summit in November 2021

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The Online Seminar on Ecological Environment Protection convened under the auspices of the Trans-Himalaya Forum for International Cooperation simultaneously from Beijing and Lhasa, capital of Tibet province of China. The Forum had a diverse and distinguished participation from Asia, Europe, USA and Latin America, including former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and former Prime Minister of Australia, Kevin Rudd. China's Vice Foreign Minister Lou Zhaohui, who has served as Ambassador to Pakistan, also gave a Keynote Speech. The Forum was organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China and the Tibet provincial government acted as one-host.

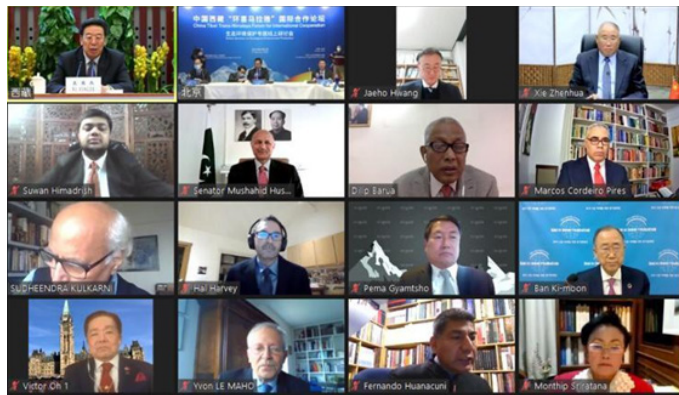
Speaking on behalf of the Pakistan Parliament, Senator Mushahid Hussain, Chairman, Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, spoke on Pakistan's Climate Change challenges, China's leadership role on Climate Change and the way forward for future cooperation. He thanked China for being the first country to give a generous donation of half a million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, which were airlifted yesterday.

He briefed the audience about the looming environmental crisis in Pakistan and said that Pakistan is among the 7th most vulnerable countries gravely affected by climate change. In the last 25 years, it had over 150 freak weather incidents of flash floods, forest fires, melting glaciers, freaky heat waves, landslides and avalanches, which have displaced populations and disrupted

life in general. For instance, during the floods that hit Pakistan 10 years ago, 20% of Pakistan's territory and 10% of its population was displaced in two provinces, causing a whopping \$ 16 billion loss to the national economy.

Senator Mushahid said that China's commitment to climate change, especially underlined by President Xi Jinping that China will become carbon-neutral by 2060 and China is trying to peak carbon-dioxide emissions before 2030 is a heartening

development. He commended President Xi Jinping's dream to build a road of green development at the second Belt & Road Forum and said that under Chinese leadership, the forthcoming World Climate Change conference scheduled to be held in November 2021, COP 26, in Glasgow will be a great success. Moreover, he proposed three important elements for the way-forward on climate change in the context of the Trans-Himalaya Forum for International Cooperation. Firstly, he called for delinking the issue of climate change from geopolitics and a cold war mentality and echoed President Xi's 'abandoning ideological prejudice' rhetoric. Secondly, he urged the need to select specific projects to promote climate change in the Trans-Himalaya region from the Green Climate Fund (GCF).



## Detained UCP students granted bail

Waqar Zaka reached the Lahore court and saw for himself the release of the arrested students and daily wage laborers who could not pay the lawyer's fee

SHUJAAT HAMZA

LAHORE: Chairman Technology Movement Pakistan Waqar Zaka, while speaking in favor of the detained students of University of Central Punjab, claimed that he would appear in court himself and take steps for the release of the

students. In this regard, Waqar Zaka reached the Lahore court and saw for himself the release of the arrested students and daily wage laborers who could not pay the lawyer's fee, and took steps for their bail with the help of a local lawyer. Waqar Zaka said that he was happy that all the students who had been targeted by the uni-

versity administration would now be able to meet their parents and continue their education after their release through the efforts of Technology Movement Pakistan. He said that not only bail but also this false FIR will be eliminated. Earlier, Waqar Zaka had also met the arrested students, and assured them his team's assistance.



LAHORE: President, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Shahbaz Sharif coming to appear before the accountability court. – DNA

## ICCI urges to promote Pak-Turkmenistan ties

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) said that current level of bilateral trade between Pakistan and Turkmenistan was much less than the potential of both countries, therefore, both should focus on developing strong business linkages between their private sectors to improve bilateral trade. He said that Pakistan and Turkmenistan should consider signing a free trade agreement to address hurdles and increase trade ties. He said that regular exchange of business delegations and organizing trade exhibitions on reciprocal basis should be encouraged for further promotion of trade and economic relations. He said that all stakeholders should make strenuous efforts to establish peace in Afghanistan that would open a short route for Pakistan to Central Asian countries. He said that after the coronavirus, ICCI would consider taking a delegation to Turkmenistan to explore new avenues of bilateral

cooperation. Fatma Azim Senior Vice President, Vice President ICCI, Mian Shaukat Masud and others also shared useful ideas for further improving bilateral trade ties between Pakistan and Turkmenistan. Speaking at the occasion, Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan said that his country possessed the world's 2nd largest gas reserves and was ready to provide 3000 MW electricity to Pakistan, which would cost Pakistan almost half of its current energy price helping its industry to achieve better growth. He said this while giving a presentation to the business community at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) on potential areas of bilateral cooperation between Turkmenistan and Pakistan. He identified 1840 Km TAPI (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) gas pipeline, 1635 Km optic fibre line and power transmission line as potential areas of strong cooperation between Turkmenistan and Pakistan and added that materialization of these mega projects would bring multiple benefits to the economy of Pakistan.

## CTD arrests most wanted terrorist in Karachi

DNA

KARACHI: The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) and a sensitive institution have arrested a most wanted terrorist named in 'Red Book' during a joint raid in Karachi. A most wanted terrorist named in the government's Red Book, Zakir Raza alias Nadeem, has been arrested during a joint raid of CTD and a sensitive institution in Karachi. The CTD spokesperson said that he is a close aide of another terrorist, Abbas Raza, who had received weapons training from a neighbouring country. During the interrogation, Zakir Raza alias Nadeem revealed that he had also received automatic weapons and tactical training from a neighbouring country following the advice of Abbas Raza, who is also named as a most-wanted terrorist in Red Book.

## SAARC CCI seeks budget proposals from business community

ISLAMABAD: SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry on Tuesday sought proposals for the forthcoming budget from chambers and trade bodies for timely submission to the government for fully ensuring growth-oriented and business-friendly package to boost the economic activities during corona pandemic. In a statement issued here President SAARC CCI and Chairman United Business Group (UBG) Ifthikhar Ali Malik said Pakistan was passing through great ordeal due to corona virus pandemic and at this uncertain time, business community should come forward with a clear vision to steer out of the quagmire of impending economic crisis and in this regard, they should tailor proposals which help the government to revive the economy. The private sector wants to supplement the government's efforts, aimed at economic revival of the country, he said, adding that joint proposals would help make budget proposals business-friendly, which would ultimately result in a robust export-led growth. – APP

## 'Role of youth vital in exposing Indian brutalities'

She also urged the world organizations, the intelligentsia, the human rights bodies to highlight the plight and sufferings of the Kashmiri people whose only sin is their rightful demand for the "right to self-determination"

LAHORE: Chairperson Peace and Culture Organization Mushaal Hussein Mullick said the youth will have to play a formative role in exposing decades-long Indian brutalities against hapless Kashmiri people in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). Addressing a seminar 'We Are United' at Lahore College for Women University (LCWU) here on Tuesday, Mushaal urged the youth to use social media platforms to keep the world abreast of the gross human rights violations and state terrorism perpetrated by the Indian government. The seminar was conducted by Department of Mass Communication of LCWU in connection with the Kashmir Solidarity Day to be

observed globally on February 5 (Friday). Mushaal Hussein Mullick, wife of jailed Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Yasin Malik, said Kashmiri women and men are victims of barbarism by the Indian forces for the last 73 years, adding the Indian government imposed a lockdown for the last 550 days in the IIOJK. She also urged the world organizations, the intelligentsia, the human rights bodies to highlight the plight and sufferings of the Kashmiri people whose only sin is their rightful demand for the "right to self-determination". About the efforts of Pakistan government to sensitize the world, wife of the Hurriyat leader said, "Government of Pakistan is advocating demand of the Kashmiri people in a very strong manner".



"However, in the aftermath of Indian government's August 5 decisions there is need to formulate a Kashmir policy on war-footing to win support of international governments and the

Muslim Ummah", she said. Reminding the UN of its statutes, she said she is a firm believer in the UN laws on the rights of Children and Women in Conflict Zones, adding that she decided to become a voice of the voiceless after she and her daughter were humiliated in India during her visit to jailed Yasin Malik in 2014. Mushaal said the "paradise-like valley" is now the abode of bereaved mothers, young widows, orphans and oppressed children, and all those grief-stricken people looks towards the champions of human rights to save them from the barbaric rule imposed on them, adding the Kashmiri people in IIOJK want their right to self-determination as was enshrined in the statutes of the UN. – APP



## Briefs

### HEC, NPB collaborate for police reforms

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan and the National Police Bureau (NPB) have agreed to enhance cooperation between police organizations and country's higher education institutions and encouraging academia to play a proactive role in extending meaningful guidance for reforms through relevant research. In this connection, a Letter of Intent (LoI) has been signed by Dr. Shaista Sohail, Executive Director HEC and Dr. Ejaz Hussain, Director General NPB, Ministry of Interior, Islamabad. Police reforms and involvement of academia for informed policy decisions has emerged as a top priority in the Government's commitment for strengthening police institutions. Through this LoI, HEC and NPB intend to facilitate collaboration in research projects between researchers and the law enforcement agencies associated with NPB, so as to harness the research potential of academic institutions as well as solve real world problems through carefully designed and properly implemented research activities. Under this collaboration, inter alia, universities will be encouraged to approach NPB for joint workshops, seminars, focused group discussions, competitions, and involvement of student volunteers for community work. HEC will incorporate the contents related to public safety, frequently applied police laws, criminal procedure and fundamental constitutional rights in one of the mandatory General Education courses that HEC is developing for undergraduate students. Similarly, NPB will offer unpaid internships to students, whenever and wherever possible. It will also provide access to crime data regarding research to MPhil and PhD scholars, subject to necessary protections with respect to privacy and confidentiality.

### Police arrested four burglars

DNA

ATTOCK: The police Tuesday arrested four burglars who had stolen more than six million rupees from a house almost six months ago situated in the jurisdiction of Pindi gheb police station. DPO Attock Syed Khalid Hamdani had constituted a special team headed by DSP Pindi gheb Malik Tafseer Hussain which using all modern and conventional methods arrested all the four burglars including Sajjad r/o Pindsultani, Sadaqat alias Jaadoo, Manzoor and Nisar alias Saajoo all r/o Naka Ghulam Shah and recovered Rs 47,30,000 from their possession. It is worth mentioning that the aforesaid accused had burgled Rs 6127000 in June 2020 from the house of Naseer Ahmad r/o Naka Ghulam Shah who deals in poultry feed.

### IESCO circle incharges to hold E-Katcharies

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Spokesman of Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) Tuesday said that circles incharges would hold regular online katcharies in all five operations circles of the company to immediately resolve consumers' complaints. As per detail, SE Islamabad Circle would hold online Katchary on Wednesday on telephone No 051-9260194, SE Rawalpindi City Circle and SE Rawalpindi Cantt Circle on telephone No 051-9292675, SE Attock Circle on telephone No 051-4950343, SE Chakwal Circle on 0543-668500 and SE Jhelum Circle on 0544-9270276 from 10:30 am to 11:30 pm.

# Typhoid vaccination drive continues in federal capital

The first campaign was launched and successfully conducted in all districts of Sindh province reaching approximately 10 million children

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The government on Tuesday continued Typhoid Conjugate Vaccine (TCV) campaign in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) and Punjab as part of reaching an overall target of 12.7 million children between the ages of nine months to 15 years. According to official sources, in this second phase, the vaccination against Typhoid will continue in 12 districts of Punjab and the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) areas. They added in November 2019, Pakistan became the first country in the world to introduce Typhoid Conjugate Vaccine into its routine immunization programme to protect children against the highly infectious disease. The first campaign was launched and successfully conducted in all districts of Sindh province

reaching approximately 10 million children. "Every child has the right to live a healthy life and therefore Pakistan has prioritized strengthening its immunization program", says Dr Faisal Sultan, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on National Health Services. "It is high time that we protect our children from typhoid and other contagious diseases to give them a healthy start in life and a secure future. The present government is proactive to protect children against this fatal disease through a phased strategy", he added. The TCV drive has been started due to the high number of typhoid cases in the country as more than 8000 cases were reported in the year 2020. The impact of typhoid, especially on children under the age of 15 years, is having a negative impact on the overall health status of the population.

## 112,500 children receive anti-typhoid vaccine in Rwp

RAWALPINDI: Incharge District Vaccination, Programme Chaudary Muhammad Hussain on Tuesday informed that a two-week long anti-typhoid campaign to be continued successfully in different areas of Rawalpindi division. Under the ongoing vigorous drive, he told APP that over 112,500 children have so far administered the anti-typhoid vaccine in urban areas of the Rawalpindi, Gujjar Khan, Murree, Kotli Satayan, Kalar Syeda, Taxila, Kahuta and Cantonment areas of Rawalpindi. Hussain told that 1101 mobile teams were participating in the drive to complete the task of vaccination. During the campaign, he said, vaccination was also being administered to children of 9 months to 15 years of age at educational institutions besides who were present at home. He said a healthy child was essential for a healthy society and this message should be conveyed in every nook and corner of the district. - APP

The disease is most commonly caused by contaminated drinking water, poor sanitation infrastructure, and lack of food safety preventive measures. "Typhoid can be prevented through an

vaccination campaign aiming to immunize maximum number of children in Punjab and the ICT. "We urge parents to fully cooperate with health workers and vaccinators who are carrying out this door-to-door campaign." He said that the Government of Pakistan has engaged 6,975 skilled and trained vaccinators and 6,975 assistants to effectively and safely immunize children during this campaign. Along with this, a total of 13,950 social mobilizers have also been trained to visit households mobilizing parents and caregivers to visit the vaccination sites with their children. "Typhoid, especially the extensively drug-resistant variant is a serious disease and vaccination is one of the most effective public health interventions. "We highly appreciate the support being received from the Punjab Government and

ICT besides Capital Development Authority (CDA) for this campaign which aims to vaccinate large number of children in the shortest possible time," says Dr. Palitha Mahipala, World Health Organization (WHO) Representative in Pakistan. The number of typhoid cases registered in the country and the emergence of extensively drug-resistant typhoid is an alarming situation. It can however be controlled through TCV which is a one-dose vaccine, injected intra-muscularly, at a lower cost, has higher efficacy, and is expected to provide long lasting immunity in adults, children, and infants older than nine months of age. "TCV has tremendous potential to prevent transmission of typhoid and limit the spread of drug-resistant typhoid strains with only one dose," says Aida Girma, UNICEF Representative in Pakistan.

## IG for enhancing capacity of cops

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Qazi Jamil-ur-Rehman on Tuesday stressed the need to enhance capacity of cops serving under security division to ensure the protection of VIPs. Refresher courses should be arranged on modern lines to improve the skills of duty personnel, the IG passed those instructions during his visit at police security division, here. Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Waqar-Ud-Din Syed briefed the IG over functioning of various departments of security division. Jameel directed to further tighten security of Islamabad red zone and other important places in the city. He also instructed the DIG security to conduct 'Police Darbar' on regular basis to resolve the issues of force in swift manner. The police 'Jawans' are our assets, so best ever, facilities should be provided to them, the IG remarked. He asked the officers to keep the morale of force high and take special measures for the welfare of policeman.



ISLAMABAD: Editor-in-chief Daily Islamabad POST, CENTRELINE magazine and DNA news editor, Ansar Mehmood Bhatti and Col @ Raza Ali in a group photo with Chaudhry Akram Burq at the latter's office. - DNA

## SSP for renewed efforts to reduce crimes

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senior-Superintendent of Police (Operations) Dr Syed Mustafa Tanvir on Tuesday asked all the Station House Officers for renewed efforts to reduce crimes in the federal capital. The staff at police stations should demonstrate gentle behavior with the visitors, besides early redressal of their complaints, the SSP said in a statement issued here. He ordered all zonal SPs to ensure all out efforts to provide maximum relief to the masses. Meanwhile, capital police had arrested 27 outlaws including eight proclaimed offenders from various areas of the city and recovered hashish, heroine, wine, sto-

len valuables and weapons from their possession. According to police spokesman, a team constituted by SP (Saddar-Zone) Muhammad Sarfraz Virk under the supervision of SHO Golra along with others held five accused Gulzaman, Khawer Shahzad, Nabeel Qasir, Muhammad Shahzad Ahmed and Qasir Ali and recovered stolen valuable from their possession. Similarly, the Secretariat police arrested three accused Muhammad Makki, Muhammad Azam and Waris and recovered two Kalashnikovs and one 30 bore pistol along with ammunition from their possession. Koral police arrested Pashem Khan and recovered one 9mm pistol from him. Khanna police arrested accused Tufail and recovered one 30 bore pistol from him.

Likewise, Karachi company police arrested three accused Misbah-Ullah, Jabbar and Riaz and recovered 20 wine bottles, 140 gram heroin from their possession. Ramana police arrested accused Aziz-Ullah and recovered one 30 bore pistol from him. Industrial-Area police arrested two accused Kaleem and Asif and recovered one 12 bore gun and one 30 bore pistol along with ammunition from their possession. Noon police arrested Deen Muhammad and recovered 505 gram hashish from him. Golra police arrested accused Riasat Ali and recovered 120 gram heroin. Sihal police recovered 415 gram hashish. Cases have been registered against the nabbed persons and further investigations are underway from them.

## NUMS issues magazine supplement on COVID-19

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: National University of Medical Sciences (NUMS) has brought out a special supplement of its "Life and Science" research magazine on the impact of the COVID-19 with having review of all the data and advances made so far to deal with it. "Life and Science" is a quarterly "online multidisciplinary journal of clinical and basic translational science". It reflects the key purpose of "understanding and improving life" through knowledge and action which is the motto of NUMS. The magazine while discussing environmental effects on the virus said that temperature and humidity have combined impact on COVID-19. "Increase in air

temperature and humidity decrease the severity of the virus. Air quality index and air pollutants have significant relation with the severity of the disease and mortality," said a review article by Mahwish Ali. The "healthy dietary life style can prevent and manage viral infections by boosting our immune system." However there is no single dietary element that has been confirmed in treatment or prevention of coronavirus, said a review article by Sara Mumtaz, Rida Fatima Saeed and Asma Saleem Qazi. Examining the reasons behind increase of domestic violence, the magazine said, "the results have shown that the pandemic is one of the major factors for domestic violence." "Other causes are economic crisis, forced lock-

down, fear of having disease, unemployment, congested houses and limited source of facilities for victims," it said after searching the existing literature from December 2019 to August 2020. Life and Science" carries articles of NUMS faculty and all professionals in the field are encouraged to contribute to it. Meanwhile, NUMS quickly adapted itself to tackle the unprecedented challenges posed by the coronavirus and it took all possible steps to conduct online classes and its exams after taking on board its faculty and students. The university has already trained its faculty members to teach online. It has been also organizing regular webinars and workshops for both teachers and students to address all issues in this regard.

## Pharma exports increased by 23.62%

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pharmaceutical products exports during first six months of FY 2020-21 grew by 23.62 per cent as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of last year. During the period from July-Dec 20, pharmaceutical products worth US \$ 138,751 thousand exported as compared to worth US \$ 112,238 thousand of same period of last year. According to the data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the exports of other Chemicals increased by 17.89 per cent, worth US \$ 247,966 thousand were exported as compared to the exports of US \$ 210,342 thousand of same period of last year. Meanwhile, Plastic Materials exports increased by 7.86 per cent, worth US \$ 164,434 thousand were also exported in current financial year as compared to the exports of valuing US \$ 152,455 thousand of same period of last year.

## MoHR portal to help learning rights

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Human Rights portal would enable users to learn about their rights guaranteed to them in the Constitution as well as federal and provincial legislation, said an official of MoHR here on Tuesday. The portal will serve as a platform for creating awareness about human rights laws, practices and gaps. He said that the portal would facilitate 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 the relevant reports and publications that have been published by the government, civil society organizations and UN agencies on critical human rights issues", he added. Laws are categorized according to provinces as well as thematic areas including Civil, Political and Economic Rights; Child's Rights; Women's Rights; and Rights of Minorities. In the portal, Information is also available on various institutions and bodies designed to promote and protect human rights at the federal and provincial level; including legislative bodies, human rights committees, provincial human rights departments, and statutory bodies, he remarked. The official further said that comprehensive training resources and materials will also be available on the portal for the benefit of human rights practitioners and personnel. The training resources cover a range of topics such as Pakistan's International Human Rights Obligations and Human Rights Data Collection and Documentation. - APP

## PNCA all set to hold programs on Kashmir day

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) will hold mega cultural programs and activities to mark the forthcoming Kashmir Solidarity day falling on February 5. In collaboration with Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan, the program aimed to highlight the sacrifices of innocent Kashmiri people struggling for their right of self-determination in the Indian Occupied Kashmir through purely a cultural perspective. Students of different schools and colleges will present children show in which speeches tableaux and Kashmiri songs will be presented to show solidarity with Kashmiris. He said that stage show will be presented to highlight the plight of Kashmiri people and Indian's army barbarism. The event will feature musical show based on patriotic and folk songs by folk artists and musicians along with Muzakra Screening of documentaries on Kashmir.

## 'No elite group to get priority in vaccination'

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary of National Health Services Dr Nausheen Hamid Tuesday made it clear that no elite group would be prioritized for Covid-19 vaccination and healthcare workers were first in line for the vaccination drive which would kick off tomorrow. Talking to a private news channel, she said healthcare workers and people above 65 years of age would be given coronavirus vaccine on first priority, adding that safety would be ensured for people receiving the Covid-19 vaccine. "The safety of the Chinese vaccine has been scientifically certified, she said, adding that majority people had participated in clinical tests before they were vaccinated. I believe the Chinese vaccine will protect the citizens effectively". She further said the healthcare workers not to hesitate to get the Covid-19 vaccine as the whole world was clamoring for a Covid-vaccine. She said that Pakistan had also received a letter from the World Health Organisation's Covax platform, indicating of a supply of up to 17 million doses of the AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine during the first half of 2021, which is honoured for us that the Global platform has been approaching themselves to Pakistan for vaccination doses. A vaccine nerve center has been established at NCOC along with vaccine administration and coordination centres at provincial and district level, she added. - DNA



## PUCAR pays tribute to Kashmiris' struggle

Director Punjab Council of the Arts Waqar Ahmed thanked distinguished guests and said it was appreciable step to show solidarity with people of Kashmir

ZUBAIR AHMED

RAWALPINDI: The senior poets of the region at a poetry recital paid rich tribute to the people of Kashmir for their untiring struggle for right of self-determination here on Tuesday. The poetry recital was arranged under auspices of Halqa-e-Illam o Adab and Punjab Council of the Arts, Rawalpindi in connection with Kashmir Solidarity which was presided over by Dr Farhat Abbas. Renowned poets Dr Khalid Iqbal Yasir, Naseem-e-Sahar and Qayyum Tahir were



guests of honor. The recital was anchored by Arif Farhad and Haroon Abbas Qamar. The poets Dr Farhat Abbas, Naseem e Sehar, Anjum Khaleeq, Qayyum Tahir, Dr Khalid Iqbal Yasir, Abdul Qadir Taban, Khalid Mehmood Malik, Nasir Mehmood Nasir, Talat Munir, Akbar Niazi, Dr Mazhar Iqbal, Shaikat Kamal Rana, Zahra Batool, Umbrin Umber and Sardar Fakhar Khan recited poetry and paid tribute to people of Kashmir. Director Punjab Council of the Arts Waqar Ahmed thanked distinguished guests and said it was appreciable step to show solidarity with people of Kashmir.



## Briefs

## Six drug peddlers, bootleggers arrested

RAWALPINDI: Police in their ongoing drive against drug peddlers and bootleggers conducted raids in different areas and arrested six accused besides recovering over eight kg charras, over one kg heroin and 250 bottles liquor from their possession. According to a police spokesman, in a raid, R A Bazaar police arrested two drug peddlers namely Arslan for possessing 1800 grams charras and 1200 grams heroin and a female, Mehak for carrying 1100 grams charras.

City police rounded up Naveed Ullah and recovered three kg charras from his possession. Sadiqabad police netted Shamraiz alias Tatu as police seized 2400 grams charras from his possession. Kalar Syedan police arrested two bootleggers identified as Muhammad Dawood and Botta Mash with 250 bottles liquor. Separate cases have been registered against all the accused under Narcotics Control Act while further investigations are underway. — APP

## BISP removes 29,961 from beneficiaries list

ISLAMABAD: Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) has exited an additional 29,961 individuals from its list of beneficiaries, following the data cleaning exercise under Ehsaas Governance framework. In a tweet, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Protection, Dr. Sania Nishtar Tuesday revealed that additional 29,961 individuals have been made ineligible for receiving the cash assistance as per availability of more data in 2020. Among those removed from the BISP list of beneficiaries included 15,326 pensioners, 273 government employees, 9,991 high income individuals (as documented by FBR data) and 4,371 employees of autonomous agencies (as per data of 30 out of 74 agencies), Dr. Nishtar disclosed.

Earlier in the year 2019, BISP exited 820,165 individuals from its beneficiaries' list out of which 142,556 were government servants. — APP

## Police held seven kite sellers, flyers

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi police in their crackdown against kite sellers and kite flyers conducted raids in different areas and arrested seven persons besides recovering 2100 kites and 10 kite flying string rolls from their possession. According to a police spokesman, Airport, Ratta Amral, New Town and Westridge police arrested seven kite sellers and flyers namely Kamran Rashid, Muhammad Younas, Faisal, Haider, Ali Raza, Owais Zafar and Hamza Tariq and recovered 2100 kites with 10 string rolls from their possession.

Separate cases have been registered against the accused. He said, police on the directives of City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Muhammad Ahsan Younas were conducting raids against the kite flying ban violators and taking action in accordance with the law. — APP

## ITP's education campaign in full swing

ISLAMABAD: The campaign of Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) launched to check lane violation was in full swing and road users were being educated to follow traffic rules and help minimize the accident ratio. The main objective of this road safety campaign was to ensure safety to people and road users were being educated for lane discipline during drive. Following directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Qazi Jamil ur Rehman, Senior Superintendent of Police (Traffic) Farukh Rasheed has constituted special squads to control lane violation on various roads and ensure smooth flow of traffic in the city. ITP's squads remain present on all important roads including Islamabad Expressway, Srinagar (Kashmir) highway to educate road users about traffic rules. Pamphlets and leaflets were being distributed to create awareness among citizens while teams of education wing headed by SSP (Traffic) Farrukh Rasheed are creating awareness about traffic rules. — APP



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi inaugurating the Virtual Training Programme of One Aligarh Innoversity at Aiwan-e-Sadr. — DNA

## 'With education & morality, Pak can emerge as great nation'

The One Aligarh Innoversity – a virtual university by non-profit organization Strandz – aims at transforming the country's education system in line with ideals of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday said Pakistan could emerge as a great nation by securing a high place in the world of contemporary education and by adopting the fundamentals of morality. "A combination of knowledge and values can earn the Pakistani nation success and integrity in the world," the President said at the launch of 'One Aligarh Innoversity', held here at the Aiwan-e-Sadr. The One Aligarh Innoversity – a virtual

university by non-profit organization Strandz – aims at transforming the country's education system in line with ideals of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. President Alvi stressed that knowledge alone could not guarantee a positive and balanced society unless coupled with the values based on humanity and social justice. He said great philosopher and academic Sir Syed Ahmed Khan developed a sense of realization among

the Muslims of sub-continent to attain education so as to avert exploitation at the hands of Hindus. The President said now, it was the time to inculcate the same concept of knowledge and morality among the youth of Pakistan to help them meet the challenges of modern world. As knowledge takes new forms of artificial intelligence and smart technology, he said, adapting to new modes of education was need of the day.

The President expressed confidence that One Aligarh Innoversity would realize the dreams of the Quaid-e-Azam and national poet Allama Muhammad Iqbal in making the homeland prosperous. Chairman Strandz Air Marshal (ret'd) Shahid Hamid said the initiative, as a well-thoughtout and culturally-driven process, would prove a game-changer in the field of education. Around 300-400 professionals will be affiliated with

the virtual university, the second phase of which will be launched in brick and mortar form in year 2022, he added. Ahmed Saeed, the great-great-grandson of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan said One Aligarh Innoversity would be run on a futuristic approach along with social training of students combined with character-building and physical development. Colonel (ret'd) Syed Zafaruddin Ahmed, an Aleeq, stressed a system of education that ensured

national unity and character-building. Member of Strandz retired Colonel Naveed Zafar said the main objective of the Innoversity was personal unification, resetting of paradigms and mindsets, and transforming the ability to map knowledge. Earlier, the President formally inaugurated the One Aligarh Innoversity by pressing the button at the virtual launch on the occasion. First Lady Samina Alvi also attended the event. — APP

## Scientific policy imperative to meet climate challenges'

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Water Environment Forum Pakistan, Nisar A Memon on Tuesday appreciating the efforts of environmental forums for tackling climate related problems emphasized to introduce policy and plans based on scientific knowledge to combat future challenges. Chairing a virtual meeting on Coastal Climate Action 2021 in Karachi he called for well connected cooperation and collaboration among all the stakeholders and asked them to share ideas, experiences, resources, research and programmes for greater awareness leading to the new initiatives' success. "We are here to consider combining the forces to cooperate and collaborate by sharing ideas, experiences, resources, research and programs for greater awareness leading to science based policy plans," he said. The meeting was attended by Syed Mumtaz Ali Shah, Chief Secretary Sindh, Karachi, Pema Gyamscho DG, ICIMOD, Kathmandu, Mehmood Cheema, Coun-

try Representative IUCN, Islamabad, Hammad Naqi Khan, WWF Pakistan DG, Lahore, Waseem Vohra, Chair Environment Water Chemical Committee, FPCCI, Karachi, Muhammad Aslam Ghauri, Secretary Climate & Coastal, Sindh Government, Karachi, Dr. Ghulam Rasul, Regional Manager, ICIMOD, Kathmandu, Syed Raghbi Abbas Shah, Former Chairman, WAPDA, Hyderabad, and Hina Lotia, Consultant Climate Change, Islamabad. Speaking on the occasion, Syed Mumtaz Ali Shah, said that Sindh has been adopting global, regional and national initiatives towards ameliorating the condition of coastal inhabitants severely affected by cyclones, floods, droughts, sea level and temperature rise. Coastal area of Sindh, he said was one of the poorest of the poor where "we as a government need to focus and therefore, we are open for the public and private partnership on water and environment". — APP

## IG for enhancing capacity of security division cops

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Qazi Jamil ur Rehman on Tuesday stressed the need to enhance capacity of cops serving under security division to ensure the protection of VIPs. Refresher courses should be arranged on modern lines to improve the skills of duty personnel, the IG passed those instructions during his visit at police security division, here. Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Waqar-Ud-Din Syed briefed the IG over functioning of various depart-

ments of security division. Jameel directed to further tighten security of Islamabad red zone and other important places in the city. He also instructed the DIG security to conduct 'Police Darbar' on regular basis to resolve the issues of force in swift manner. The police 'Jawans' are our assets, so best ever, facilities should be provided to them, the IG remarked. He asked the officers to keep the morale of force high and take special measures for the welfare of policeman. — APP

## Progress review meeting of anti encroachment drive held

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Amir Ali Ahmed has issued directions to the officials of CDA, ICT and Islamabad police to ensure the retrieval of all illegally occupied lands. A progress review meeting of anti encroachment drive was held under the chairmanship of Amir Ali Ahmed here Tuesday. The CDA Chairman said that land grabbers to be dealt with iron hand and encroachment operations

should be conducted without any pressure to purge the capital city of the land grabbers. The meeting has decided to hold daily meeting to monitor the progress of this drive and directed all concerns to enhance coordination to achieve desired results. Earlier Capital Development Authority (CDA) Enforcement Directorate has so far demolished almost 150 structures along the green belt of I.J.P Road in its anti-encroachment drive.

The encroachments were removed during the anti-encroachment operation that started on Tuesday along the road from Fiazabad, Double Road, Pindora Chungi, New Katarran, Khayaban-i-Sir Syed, Mandi Morr and Dhok Naju. According to CDA spokesperson, the mafia had built concrete and temporary kiosks along the green belt which were demolished by the CDA. The authority has dug out the ditches at retrieved land, he added. — APP

## Telenor crosses 47m subscribers in Q4 2020

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Telenor Pakistan announced its Q4 results for 2020 today and reported an improvement in overall performance and added more than 1 million subscribers in Q4 bringing overall subscriber base to over 47 million. In what has been a challenging year with the pandemic negatively impacting the results, the subscription and traffic (S&T) revenues declined 6.1% for 2020.

However, the trends have been improving for the 2nd half of 2020, and Q4 S&T revenues were flat on reported basis, with underlying growth on normalized basis. Telenor Pakistan's Q4 performance showed an improvement in underlying S&T revenue, however due to continuous challenging factors in the business environment, the company experienced a flatish subscription and traffic (S&T) revenue of -0.3%. Still, in a highly competitive and challenging market Telenor

Pakistan has successfully managed to deliver EBITDA growth both for Q4 and YoY as a result of the company's strategy to prioritize costs, improve subscriber engagement and introducing market portfolios at the right time. "I am happy to share that our efforts to improve subscriber engagement contributed to our overall performance. Despite the challenges faced by the pandemic and other factors, we were able to strengthen the profitability with a YoY EBITDA growth

and we ended the year on a strong note by adding more than a million new subscribers on net basis. We were successfully able to control our OPEX by prioritizing spending and providing our customers with the services and offers they need at the right time. Now we remain focused on improving the business environment to provide the opportunity for further profitable investments and growth" Said Fridtjof Rusten, Chief Finance Officer Telenor Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral M Amjad Khan Niazi in a group photo after the 44th Board of Governors meeting of the Bahria University. — DNA

## NAB rejects campaign against mega cases

ISLAMABAD: National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on Tuesday rejected smear campaign against 179 mega corruption cases by terming it baseless, fabricated and continuation of propaganda campaign against the bureau. A NAB spokesman said in a statement that out of 179 mega corruption cases, 63 such cases have been brought to a logical conclusion, while 95 corruption cases are pending in the various accountability courts for which NAB has sought speedy hearing in the esteemed accountability courts. Out of 63 mega corruption cases which have been brought to a logical conclusion, the accountability courts had sentenced the accused a total of Rs. 4.364 billion in 12 cases on the basis of solid evidence. According to details, Abdul Qadir Tawakal and others were awarded Rs 613 million, Ishtiaq Hussain Messrs. Bariq Syndicate Rawal-

pindi and others Rs 200 million, Pakistan Medical Cooperative Housing Society management and land suppliers Rs 70 million, Harris Afzal son of Sher Muhammad Afzal and others Rs 1 billion fine. Similarly, Seth Nisar Ahmed and others sentenced Rs. 179.069 million, Sheikh Muhammad Afzal Chief Executive / Director Harris Steel Industry Pvt. Ltd. and others Rs. 331 million, Raza Habib Chief Executive, Mrs. Shumaila Messrs. Janat Apparel Pvt. Ltd. Faisalabad Rs. 174 million. Sheikh Mohammad Afzal sentenced Rs 435 million, Galaxy City Rawalpindi management and other fined Rs 213 million, Ayaz Khan Niazi, former NICL chairman and others Rs 900 million, Syed Mureed Kazim former provincial minister for revenue In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ahsanullah, a former senior member of the Board of Reve-

nue and others, was fined Rs 200 million, while Saeed Akhtar, general manager of Pakistan Railways and others, was fined US 3. 3.78 million in different cases. In six cases, NAB had managed voluntary returns up to Rs 7.859 billion and deposited in national exchequer. The management of Al-Hamra Hills & Eden Builders returned Rs. 1.902 billion, the management of Manzar-e-Kohsar Ahabab Housing Society Moza Jhando and others returned Rs. 80 million, M Amjad Aziz, CEO, Divine Developers, and others returned Rs 313.308 million, Khushal Associates Nowshera and others Rs. 60 million, Shah Nawaz Murree, former Provincial Minister for Sports, Government of Balochistan, Rs. 14 million, while Riaz Ahmed, DIG / Former Project Director, Police Department, Balochistan, returned Rs. 5.5 billion to treasury under plea bargain.

In addition, in 4 mega corruption cases, the accused made a plea bargain through which a total of Rs 1.256 billion was recovered by the NAB from the accused and deposited in the national treasury. Syed Masoom Shah, former special assistant to chief minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and others have returned Rs. 300 million, Messrs. Capital Builders Pvt. Ltd. (New Islamabad Garden, Islamabad) and others Rs. 440 million, management and land supplier of Messrs. Teletown Pvt. Ltd. and others Rs. 311 million, Rao Fahim Yaseen, Rao Nadeem Yasin. Rao Naveed Yaseen and all the partners of Messrs. Wind Mills Restaurant Lahore and others made a plea bargain of Rs. 205 million. Under NAB Act 25 (b), plea bargain is considered a punishment in which the accused not only pleads guilty but also pleads guilty. — APP

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## SC bars NAB from investigating Peshawar BRT project

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Tuesday accepted the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's petition and barred the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) from investigating the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Peshawar project. A three-member SC bench comprising Justice Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Sajjad Ali Shah and Justice Munib Akhtar heard the case and annulled the Peshawar High Court verdict regarding investigations of the BRT project. The PHC in 2018 had ordered the NAB to start an inquiry into the BRT project. During the course of proceedings, the bench observed that the PHC's decision was based on speculations. Advocate Makhdoom Ali Khan, counsel for the KP government, said NAB was ordered by the Peshawar High Court to investigate the BRT. Justice Bandial observed that the KP government was accused of spending more funds on the project than the allocated ones. The BRT contractor was blacklisted, he added. Makhdoom Ali Khan said the high court had declared the BRT as an illegal project irrespective of the fact that its all regulatory procedures were completed by the provincial and federal governments. The court after hearing the arguments accepted the KP government's plea to stop NAB's probe. It observed that approvals were obtained from all the competent authorities regarding the BRT project. Last year, the top court had stopped the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) from probing alleged irregularities in the Peshawar BRT project. The BRT project, built at a cost of Rs 70 billion, was a 27.5 kilometre-long corridor track with 31 stations and seven feeder routes stretching 62km with 146 stops to facilitate thousands of passengers every day.

## JI stands with Kashmiris in their struggle

RAWALPINDI: President Jammal-e-Islami (JI) Women Wing Ayesha Syed Tuesday said that his party always stood with the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJ&K) in their struggle for their right to self determination and will continue this in future as well. Addressing a seminar in connection with Kashmir Day held here at JI city office, she said that around 24000 women have become widows while eleven thousands were raped during last one year. Ayesha said that India had repeatedly violated United Nation's resolution but the world organizations had failed to take notice of the repressive measures unleashed by the Modi's government against the innocent people. She said that freedom was the basic right of the oppressed Kashmiri people and the sacrifices of thousands of Kashmiri people will soon bear fruit". The President said that greater unity and consensus was needed to take the Kashmir liberation movement in a more effective manner to accomplish the mission of the martyrs. Ayesha Syed said that the right to self-determination was a vital component of the human dignity. "Negation of this right is the negation of human freedom, universal declaration of Human Rights, and Human Rights covenants," she added. — APP

## PES helped 3,180 victims during Jan

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Emergency Service (PES), Rescue 1122 has responded to 3,459 emergencies and rescued 3,180 affectees during the month of January. Officials said the average response time to rescue citizens from an emergency remained 6.81 minutes. The emergency calls to which Rescue 1122 responded to include: 1065 road traffic accidents, 1898 medical emergencies, 84 fire emergencies, 89 crime calls and 319 other miscellaneous emergencies. Furthermore out of 3459 rescued victims 835 have been provided first aid at the site and 2094 were shifted to the hospital after provision of emergency medical treatment by the trained paramedics of Rescue 1122 Rawalpindi, he added. — APP



## Threats to dialogue

**T**HE writing has been on the wall for all to see. Recent months have seen violence in Afghanistan continue to rise, and the peace deal signed nearly a year ago looks to be in trouble. The blame-game has begun once again. The Afghan Taliban have claimed that the allied forces are not adhering to the terms agreed to. However, due to the uptick in violence and civilian casualties, the new Biden Administration has hinted at staying in Afghanistan all the way up to May, in a bid to enforce peace.

The status quo and the growing distance between negotiating parties was always expected. The former US Presidential Administration had tried its level best to pull-out of Afghanistan within the stipulated January 2021 deadline, even at the cost of peace and negotiations between warring factions in Afghanistan. This left both sides with a lot of expectation but little tangible benefit.

The new US President and his team have a big challenge on their hands, in keeping the peace deal from collapsing and ensuring that the Afghan Taliban and the government come to a power-sharing agreement which keeps the rights of civilians as a focal point, while denouncing violence altogether.

It still remains to be seen whether this is even achievable anymore. With Taliban gaining the upper hand in violence and promoting terror and claims of the US reneging on its side of the agreement, it is clear that the non-state actor will not accede to a drawdown in conflict, unless US recalls more of its troops. On the other hand, the US cannot acquiesce to this demand unless violence is controlled. This leaves us in an impossible situation, one that might require revisiting the drawing board.

The role of international stakeholders such as Pakistan and other regional players will be instrumental in the months to come. Both sides must be convinced to keep dialogue open, or else the efforts made in reaching a settlement will become redundant quickly.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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

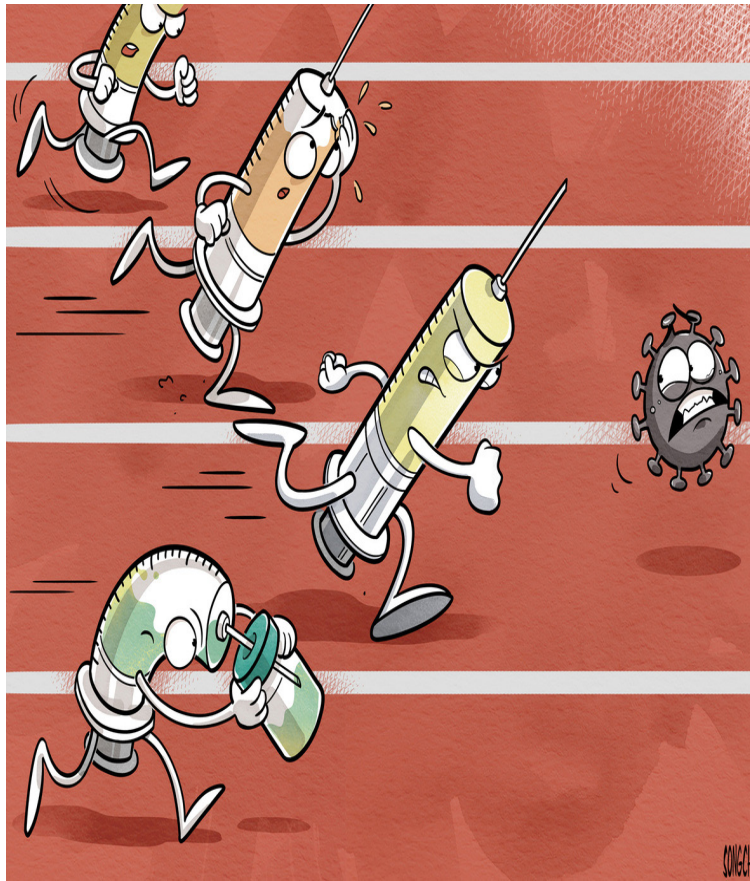
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## Lifelong learning

MUHAMMAD OMAR IFTIKHAR

**L**EARNING must continue every day. Students should learn some skills after they graduate, employees must learn a new job after they are promoted. Learning is an unceasing, interminable, incessant process that happens at our conscious and subconscious level. It is this learning and the quest to gain knowledge that lets us conduct research. Students need to become lifelong learners. They should read books other than their textbooks to absorb information to help them win the race of life. Acquiring grades is important to complete their degree program, but gaining knowledge is significant to make them well-informed. In today's age of digital media, information is present at our fingertips. We need to know the direction where we are going and the information follows.

Professionals including teachers, businessmen, bankers, architects, pilots, doctors, and those from the industries of automobile, manufacturing, construction, technology, services sector among others need to be at par with the information about their respective industries. The concept to abandon learning once a life goal is achieved makes a human mind rusty. A student completing his intermediate education must think about completing Masters's, Ph.D., before proceeding to add value to his industry by conducting more research. Pakistan is blessed with talented human resources.

The challenge is to motivate the youth and the adults to continue with their pursuit of learning. This learning comes in many forms including reading, researching, teaching, conversing, writing, exploring, observing, among others. We must inculcate in ourselves the seed to discover the world around us so we may realize the world within. Learning is the ladder that makes our consciousness reach new heights. While this ladder does not have an end, each step brings us closer to a new realization, to a unique thought, to an original theory of life.

# Senate elections; A test of political leadership

Shujaat Hamza



The two major political parties, the Pakistan Muslim League-N and the Pakistan People's Party, have been gaining majorities in the Punjab and Sindh Assemblies, respectively, and that is why the PML-N has, in the past, elected several leaders from Sindh as senators from Punjab. PPP elects several leaders from Punjab from Sindh quota. Similarly, the former MMA had made the late Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani of Sindh a senator from KPK

**E**VERY three years, with the retirement of half the members of the Senate and the election of new members, on one hand there is a shift in parliamentary politics, on the other hand the moral examination of political parties begins.

The tragedy of our politics and political leadership is that whether the election of MPs is in the hands of the people, or whether it is a nomination for special seats, party affiliation, political experience, or personal ties are considered 'merit' rather than ability and loyalty.

The two major political parties, the Pakistan Muslim League-N and the Pakistan People's Party, have been gaining majorities in the Punjab and Sindh Assemblies, respectively, and that is why the PML-N has in the past elected several leaders from Sindh as senators from Punjab. PPP elects several leaders from Punjab from Sindh quota. Similarly, the former MMA had made the late Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani of Sindh a senator from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, while the ANP had also elected Karachi leader Shahi Syed from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The constitutional and moral status of this tradition is a separate debate, but even politically it has not benefited the parties concerned. Those who were elected from other province's quota and made their presence felt in the upper house and benefited the party include Senator Farooq Naik, Senator Abdul Rehman Malik and Senator Mustafa Nawaz Khokhar.

They proved that they were eligible to become members of the Senate. On the contrary, the PML-N ticket holders in the Senate often proved to be a burden for the

party and the Senate.

Senator Mushahidullah Khan, Senator Saleem Zia, Senator Nihal Hashmi, Senator AsadJunejo and Senator Raheela Magsi from Sindh were elected from the quota of Punjab and Islamabad, but only Mushahidullah Khan from the upper house made his presence felt and strengthened the party's rhetoric. The rest never spoke in the Senate. Now there are plans to elect former Sindh Governor Muhammad Zubair and PML-N Sindh President Syed Shah Muhammad Shah from the Punjab quota.

From a political point of view, Shah Mohammad Shah can be more effective than Mohammad Zubair, because he has a political identity and can be instrumental in popularizing the party within Sindh. Mohammad Zubair has been the governor. This time PML-N has no position to elect a senator in any province except Punjab, the PDM platform may get a seat from Balochistan, or a chance in Khyber Pakh-

tunkhwa, but instead an ally from Punjab will have to be accommodated, while in Punjab too, a maximum of five seats can be won by conducting polling with utmost care and using one's votes. The opposition has a hard time, and in the meantime there is a need in the Senate for leaders who are popular with the people in the House and can walk with the party.

In this regard, the PMLN Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter President Amir Muqam has proved his political status and importance at all levels, at the moment he has more right to be brought to the Senate from the quota of Punjab. It was due to Amir Muqam's personal efforts in 2018 that Pir Sabir Shah was elected from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, this time it is very difficult for PML-N to get a seat in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. PDM forum can also be used to get alternative votes from Balochistan by voting for others in KP.

By electing Amir Maqam from Punjab, not only the party workers can be encouraged, but also the party narrative can get a strong voice in the upper house. Amir Muqam has the approval of Nawaz Sharif, Maryam Nawaz and Shahbaz Sharif and is probably one of the few party leaders who are not part of any grouping and are working for the party cause.

If we look only at the two and a half years of the incumbent government and the politics of the opposition, Amir Maqam has played a dynamic role by making the most sacrifices, yet he has been the victim of revenge by the federal and provincial governments. Getting elected from the Punjab Assembly may prove to be a good decision of the PML-N leadership, which will lead to the party's popularity in the future.



# Should we delete the Facebook account?

Dr Tamoor Azam



Social Media companies hire individuals called "Attention Engineers". By using algorithm gorges on data about us their duty is to read and analyze our mindset. What type of links do we like to click? Which videos do we like to watch? In our contact lists, whose updates are we more concerned about? How anxiously we are waiting for notifications?

**F**ACEBOOK have witnessed criticism and controversies since its launch in 2004. But its popularity remains atop in social media due to the façade of indifference it has managed. It's a grim reality that people diddle around Facebook, squander away precious time which descends the path to escape liabilities and eventually an emotional upheaval occurs in the family. Research tells that we spent large a portion of our day in a state of fragmented attention, breaking up the attention constantly to take a quick glance to just check them which will permanently reduce the capacity for concentration.

A famous neurologist Robert Sapolsky had researched on this and called it, "magic of maybe". When we look at the phone maybe there is text or maybe not, the uncertainty in what the text might deliver results in a 400% increase in dopamine. It's roughly the same amount of dopamine as a person gets from cocaine. That means we are giving highly addictive drugs into the hands of our new generation. As they have already saturated with this technology. Facebook is like a "virtual cage" that moves along with us, restrict our free will, and treats all of us as "lab animals".

Social Media companies hire individuals called "Attention Engineers". By using algorithm gorges on data about us their duty is to read and analyze our mindset. What type of links do we like to click? Which videos do we like to watch? In our contact lists, whose updates are we more concerned about? How anxiously we are waiting for notifications? Who are you connecting with in-person and online, clink on likes or ignores? What facial expressions do we make or how do we react in different situations? Have Facebook been spying on us? Yes, they read our personality traits and figure out whether we are introverts, extroverts, conservatives, liberals, and atheists.

Infect, we receive engineered feedback all the time that makes us neurotic. B. F. Skinner was a famous behaviorist. He used to set up a "Skinner Box", a methodical system where caged animals treated after specific actions they performed. Nobody pets or whispers to the animals, just a purely isolated mechanical action - a new kind of training for modern times where we are being trained by using behaviorist techniques. Facebook is like an idiot demon that monitors us. We are being remote-controlled and unconsciously behave like Facebooks "well train-dog" or a "robot".

We are unintentionally suffering from Facebook depression where we start to compare our life/activities with others and there is less satisfaction or sadness. It is human psychology that we really care what other people think of us. So, when we upload our new photo or profile photo on Facebook, our mind becomes very vulnerable to know that what other people think of my new profile photo. We enjoy the ephemeral joys in Facebook by the perceived sense of perfection because we get the reward in short-term signals like hearts, thumbs up, and unfortunately conflate them with truths but, it is just fake brittle popularity. We don't realize while using Facebook, but we are programmed. Social media tools are designed to be addictive. Simon Sinek motivational speaker and leadership guru said when you wake up in the morning, you're checking your mobile-first before greeting your wife, and this is an "addictive behavior".

Lack of vetting for news is a phenomenon of social media. Any person can anytime sprout a piece of fake news, fake account and cast aspersions upon anyone where no one can exert check and balance. Fake and Real news goes in tandem, due to the rough benchmark, it's hard to determine which is true. So, to err is human but to err on technology is an absurdity. From domes-

tic to international level this platform is being misused Like in the 2017 presidential elections in France, around 30,000 politically motivated fake accounts had detected who were involved in spreading misinformation.

It's still unknown how many fake accounts are creating in one day and how many have created in total until this day is an enigma. The problems faced by advertisers concerning Facebook's video matric miscalculation, it truly beggars all description. The dark side of "Facebook Live" is a PR nightmare when people broadcasted acts of violence, like quarrels, homicide, and suicides. Jaron Lanier is considered as one of the fathers of vertical reality and veteran of Silicon Valley explains "How social media ruins your life and harming your health" in his famous book "Ten arguments for deleting your social media accounts right now".

He concerns that Facebook and Tweeter are re-programming how we feel and think? According to him this rarely happened unless you signed up to be a test subject in an experiment in the basement of a university's psychology building. Then you'd go into a room and be tested while someone watched you through a one-way mirror. Even though you knew an experiment was going on, you didn't realize how you were being manipulated. At least you gave consent to be manipulated in some way. One could become paranoid if Facebook's filthy game with US intelligence revealed. The Satirical tabloid and website reported that Mark Zuckerberg shares Facebook information to the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency). It is an inevitable truth that how can US citizen avoids sharing anything from the CIA.

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## Briefs

## Myanmar issue; China in talks with stakeholders

From Page 01

On Monday, Myanmar's military declared a state of emergency hours after detaining President Win Myint, de facto leader and State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, and other senior members of the ruling National League for Democracy (NLD) party. The coup took place a few hours before the first session of the country's new parliament was set to convene following the November elections in which Suu Kyi's ruling party made sweeping gains. The military claimed the coup was staged due to "election fraud" in the polls that it said resulted in the dominance of the NLD in parliament.

## Faisalabad score big victories in QH C' ship

LAHORE: Four matches were played on the ninth day of First Quaide-Azam Inter-Division Hockey Championship 2021 here at the National Hockey stadium on Tuesday.

Director General Sports Punjab Adnan Arshad Aulakh, along with Punjab Hockey Association (PHA) Secretary Lt-Col (ret'd) Asif Naz Khokhar, Director Sports Hafeez Bhatti, Divisional Sports Officer Multan Rana Nadeem Anjum, Divisional Sports Officer Sahiwal Tariq Nazir and other top officials also witnessed the exciting matches.

DG, SBP awarded a cash prize of Rs ten thousand to Faisalabad hockey team for winning their match against Sargodha. "All the nine divisional hockey teams have promising players and we are preparing the data of all outstanding performers of the event and top performers will be imparted further training under the supervision of qualified coaches so that they can serve the national hockey team in future national and international events in a befitting manner," he added.

The first match of day between Sahiwal and Rawalpindi failed to produce any result as both the teams scored two goals each during the stipulated time. Though Sahiwal team netted two back-to-back field goals in 8th and 11th minutes but they could not capitalize the advantage in the final stages of the match and Rawalpindi leveled the score with two successive goals in 49th and 57th minute. Raja Arman and Shakir Ali were the goal scorers for Sahiwal while Sikander Ali Zaki and M Suleman struck the two goals for Rawalpindi team. Sahiwal team got four penalty corners whereas Rawalpindi team clinched a solitary penalty corner and they managed to convert it into a goal. The Lahore team topped DG Khan by 4-0 in the second match of the day. Mohammad Rabiya of Lahore was in excellent touch scoring two field goals in 14th and 29th minute while skipper Hannan Shahid and Hasan Ameen netted the remaining two goals in the 35th and 45th minute of the one-sided match. - APP

## Amir, Waseem urge investigation into boxer's death

## SPORTS DESK

KARACHI: British boxer Amir Khan and Pakistani star Mohammad Waseem have urged the authorities to look into the death of boxer Muhammad Aslam, with the former claiming that the deceased's life was endangered by pitting him in a mismatch against a bigger boxer while the latter pushed for a clamp-down against unsanctioned events without stand-by medical teams. "The bouts of the rival boxers show that he was of more weight than that of the deceased." He emphasised that doctors and medical teams must be present ringside at boxing events for treatment of fighters. Aslam, a 33-year-old boxer from Pishin, received a deadly knockout blow on face during a "Boxing Night" organised by Rasheed Baloch-led Pakistan Boxing Council at a club in Karachi.



ISTANBUL: Ambassador of Pakistan Syrus Qazi, called on Turkish minister of industry and technology Mustafa Varank. Both sides agreed to enhance bilateral cooperation for mutual benefit. The Ambassador lauded Turkey's impressive industrialisation and said there are lessons for Pakistan in this. - DNA

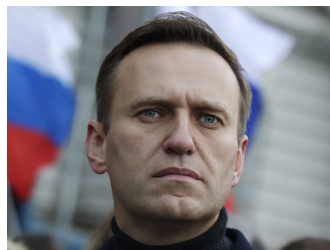
## Navalny hearing begins, dozens arrested outside court

Navalny was arrested on January 17 as he returned from Germany, where had been recovering from an attempted assassination with a military-grade nerve agent

## FOREIGN DESK

MOSCOW: A Moscow court on Tuesday began hearing whether opposition figure Alexei Navalny should face prison time. Prosecutors allege he violated the terms of his probation, but Navalny and other government critics see it as a bid to silence the Kremlin opponent. "The main thing in this process is to intimidate a huge number of people, this is how it works. They are putting one person behind bars to scare millions," Navalny said at the Moscow hearing. There was a heavy security presence outside the building, where riot police were seen hauling protesters off. The OVD-Info monitoring group reported that more than 230 people were

detained. Outside a nearby metro station large numbers of police vans awaited new detainees and police officers randomly searched people coming out of the metro. DW correspondent Emily Sherwin said those arrested had been peaceful. One young protester told DW: "I believe that people should be free to their opinion and that Navalny should be free. And I want to live in a country where money is used for charity and for the people and not for our president because it's just unfair." Another protester Sophia, 19, told DW that despite the arrests, she shouldn't be afraid, just like Navalny wasn't afraid to come back to Russia. "I came here because I want to sup-



port political prisoner Alexei Navalny. I think that lawlessness is taking place in Russia at (high) levels and I really want it to stop," she said. "Many people are very afraid of losing their job, of getting imprisoned. But I believe that we should all follow the behaviour of Alexei Navalny. He is a political prisoner and he is a hero for many of us." Navalny was arrested on January

17 as he returned from Germany, where had been recovering from an attempted assassination with a military-grade nerve agent. There is international consensus that Russian security forces were behind the poisoning, though the Kremlin vehemently denies the allegations. The 44-year-old anti-corruption investigator stands accused of violating the probation conditions of a 2014 money-laundering conviction that he says was a politically motivated fabrication. Penitentiary services asked the Simonovsky District Court to upgrade his three-and-a-half year suspended sentence into a custodial sentence. Navalny's lawyers argue that he could not register with Russian authorities in person as stipulated, because he was recovering in Germany. Navalny also

said his rights to due process were grossly violated and that his arrest was a travesty of justice. He is already serving a 30-day sentence in connection with the same case. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said he hoped that the "nonsense" would not affect ties with the European Union, which has sharply criticized Moscow's treatment of Navalny. He said Russia would not be lectured by EU foreign affairs chief Josep Borrell when he visits Moscow this week. More than 5,750 people have been arrested over the past two weekends, with tens of thousands of people defying authorities and miserably cold weather to protest his detention. Most of them were released, but face fines and short jail terms.

## UN CERF releases \$2m for Karabakh

## DNA

NEW YORK: The United Nations has released USD 2 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to support the UN's ongoing humanitarian response to temporarily displaced people in the conflict-affected areas of Azerbaijan. Following the 9 November 2020 trilateral statement, UN resident agencies in Azerbaijan have been providing initial support in the areas of food, shelter, hygiene, preparation for winter, mine risk awareness, access to healthcare, psychosocial support, and education. "The CERF funding will scale up UN agencies' ongoing activities to help the conflict-affected people return to normal life," said Ghulam Isaczai, UN Resident Coordinator in Azerbaijan. "We will continue working closely with the Government of Azerbaijan, civil society, and other stakeholders to meet the urgent needs of the highly

vulnerable population, including women and children." The CERF allocation builds on the results of a rapid inter-agency assessment that the UN Country Team conducted in the conflict-affected areas with the support of the Government of Azerbaijan. The funding will help to provide shelter and non-food items to the affected population; assist in the coordination of demining activities; and deliver essential medicines and medical equipment, as well as mental health and psychosocial services. The UN Country Team in Azerbaijan in partnership with government agencies carried out several preliminary needs assessment missions in conflict-affected areas and has been providing its assistance in the following areas: WHO and UNFPA have delivered personal protective equipment and emergency kits to families in conflict-affected areas, as well as supported the continuation of primary healthcare services despite the COV-

ID-19 and conflict-induced strains on 60 medical facilities. Shelter and core relief items: UNHCR mobilized USD 1.5 million to secure non-food items, including tents, blankets and mattresses, and is currently mobilizing USD400 thousand to provide as cash-based interventions. Psychosocial support: Most of the 40,000 temporarily displaced people have suffered immense stress and anxiety, especially children. Given the severe shortage of medical staff and absence of psychology professionals in the conflict-hit areas, both WHO and UNICEF are training psychology counsellors to support mental health services at hospitals and schools. Mine risk action: A joint UNDP-UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) assessment mission was undertaken recently in close coordination with ANAMA, the national mine action agency, to assess mines and unexploded ordnance contaminations in several of the conflict-affected districts.

## Root names Ajmal as most 'skillful bowler'

## SPORTS DESK

KARACHI: England's captain Joe Root has named off-spinner Saeed Ajmal as one of the most skillful and challenging bowler ever faced in his career. Apart from Ajmal, the 30-year-old Root also named Australia's Ryan Harris. "Harris was a wonderful bowler. He went through injuries otherwise I think he should have played more for Australia," Root said in a show 'Polite Enquires'. "I didn't get to face Saeed Ajmal in his absolute peak but I've faced him in the county game after he re-

modeled his action and played for Worcestershire. He was still very skillful and had the ability to take the ball both ways," he added. "You can think of why he had so much success throughout his career," he concluded. Last week, South Africa's Faf du Plessis also recalled the time he faced Saeed in 2013. "Saeed Ajmal was a challenge for me in UAE as a young, new batsman in sub-continent conditions. I remember every time I would go out to bat Saeed was warming up to bowl. Sometimes I would wake up in the middle of the night and Ajmal would be bowling at me," Faf said.

## Russia's Sputnik V vaccine 91.6% effective

## FOREIGN DESK

MOSCOW: Russia's Sputnik V vaccine is 91.6 percent effective against symptomatic Covid-19, according to results published in The Lancet on Tuesday that independent experts said allayed transparency concerns over the job, which Moscow is already rolling out. Sputnik V - named after the Soviet-era satellite - was approved in Russia months before results from its final-stage clinical trials were published, leading to scepticism from experts. But the new analysis of data from 20,000 participants in

Phase 3 trials suggests that the two-dose vaccination offers more than 90 percent efficacy against symptomatic Covid-19. "The development of the Sputnik V vaccine has been criticised for unseemly haste, corner cutting, and an absence of transparency," said an independent Lancet commentary by Ian Jones of the University of Reading and Polly Roy of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. "But the outcome reported here is clear and the scientific principle of vaccination is demonstrated, which means another vaccine can now join the fight to reduce the incidence of Covid-19."



RAWALPINDI: Pakistani cricketers warming up during a practice session at the Cricket Stadium. - DNA

## Iran proposes coordinated return to nuclear deal

US President Joe Biden's administration has pledged to return to the nuclear pact, which former President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew from in 2018 as part of his "maximum pressure" strategy against Tehran. As part of the deal, signed in 2015, Iran agreed to curb its nuclear programme

## MONITORING DESK

TEHRAN: Iran's foreign minister has said a European Union official could help "synchronise" or "coordinate" efforts by Iran and the United States to return to a 2015 nuclear accord, as a standstill persists over which country will take the first step. In an interview with CNN on Monday, Mohammad Javad Zarif said the Iran nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), created a joint

commission coordinated by the EU's foreign policy chief. That official, Josep Borrell, can "choreograph the actions" needed from both sides, Zarif said. "There can be a mechanism to basically either synchronise it or coordinate what can be done," he said. US President Joe Biden's administration has pledged to return to the nuclear pact, which former President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew from in 2018 as part of his "maximum pressure" strategy against Tehran. As part of the deal, signed in 2015, Iran

agreed to curb its nuclear programme in exchange for a lifting of international sanctions. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said Washington will return to the Iran nuclear deal provided Tehran gets back into compliance with its terms. Blinken has also said the Biden administration plans to negotiate a "longer and stronger" accord. But Zarif on Monday warned that the US does not have "unlimited" time to return to the deal. "The United States needs to come back into compliance and Iran will be ready - immediately - to respond,"

Zarif said. "The timing is not the issue. The issue is whether the United States, whether the new administration, wants to follow the old failed policies of the Trump administration or not." Political analysts have urged the US to re-engage diplomatically with Iran, saying it is the only way to curb the Iranian nuclear programme. Barbara Slavin, director of the Future of Iran Initiative at the Atlantic Council, said in early January that the window of opportunity is short, as Iran will hold presidential elections in June. "Only diplomacy has proven

effective in constraining Iran's nuclear activities. It is the only sensible way forward," Slavin wrote at that time. Another analyst said Zarif's stance might lay the ground for talks on reviving the deal, despite Iran's prior insistence that the United States lift sanctions first. "It is entirely unsurprising to me that we are hearing, amid a largely uncompromising position from the Iranians, occasional bread crumbs that will enable them" to enter into a negotiation, said Suzanne Maloney of the Brookings Institution.

## Army Chief hails historical Pak-KSA ties

From Page 01

Pakistan is a peace loving country that has rendered great sacrifices for regional and global peace. We stand firmly committed to the ideal of mutual respect and peaceful co-existence. It is time to extend hand of peace in all directions, COAS remarked. Pakistan and India must also resolve the longstanding issue of Jammu and Kashmir in a dignified and peaceful manner as per the aspirations of people of Jammu and Kashmir and bring this human tragedy to its logical conclusion, COAS emphasized.

However, we will not allow anybody or any entity to misinterpret our desire for peace as a sign of weakness. COAS said that Armed Forces of Pakistan are fully capable and prepared to thwart any threat. The immaculate coordination and harmony displayed by all the three services in operations against the enemies of Pakistan has brought great improvement in the internal security environment, COAS said. COAS specially commended the critical role played by Pakistan Air Force in War on Terror. The outstanding courage and professional excellence displayed by brave air warriors of Pakistan Air Force during Operation Swift Retort is a manifestation of our resolve and capability. The whole nation is proud of its Air Force and I earnestly hope that PAF will scale new heights of glory and excellence in the years to come, COAS reiterated.

A total of 133 graduating Cadets including 11 Royal Saudi Air Force Cadets and 6 lady cadets graduated at the occasion. COAS awarded branch insignias to the graduating officers and also gave away trophies to the distinction holders.

Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee Trophy for the best performance in General Service Training was awarded to Aviation Cadet Faizan Iqbal. Best Allied Cadet Trophy was won by RCAF Cadet Hatem Muhammad Alsafiani. Chief of the Air Staff trophy for overall best performance in Air Defence was won by Aviation Cadet Shahryar Khan. Chief of the Air Staff trophy for the best performance in Engineering was won by Aviation Cadet Muhammad Usman. Chief of the Air Staff trophy for best performance in Flying Training was awarded to Aviation Cadet Danish Qayyum. Sword of Honour for overall best performance in College of Aeronautical Engineering was won by Aviation Cadet Muhammad Usman. Sword of honour for overall best performance in college of Flying Training was won by Muhammad Ibtisam Naem. The ceremony was followed by a thrilling aerial display by PAF Academy Aerobatics team "Sherdil" and a specialized military drill "Hamza Flight" of the academy. Earlier, on his arrival, the COAS was received by Air vice Marshal Shakil Ghazanfar, Air Officer Commanding, and PAF Asghar Khan Academy. The ceremony was witnessed by high-ranking Military & Civil Officials, Diplomats, foreign dignitaries and a large number of guests of graduating cadets.

## Iran to start vaccination by mid-February

## FOREIGN DESK

TEHRAN: President Hassan Rouhani said on Tuesday that COVID-19 vaccination will start by the end of Iranian month of Bahman state media reported. President Rouhani said that the first stage of vaccination, will cover the medical staff and high-risk groups, adding that situation will be completely different after the vaccination. He said that currently, million-strong doses of foreign vaccines have been imported for vaccination, Rouhani hoped for providing home-made vaccines in summer. He said that tourism is an important economic sector in Iran, adding that revitalizing tourism will be helpful for the national economy. President Rouhani hailed reports of growing number of tourists visiting Iran over the last few years. He pointed to opening over 2,200 tourism projects during the incumbent government, saying that some 670 hotels are now under construction.



## Briefs

## Prosecutors seek lengthy jail sentence for Navalny

## FOREIGN DESK

MOSCOW: A Russian court convened on Tuesday to consider jailing Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny for up to three and a half years in a case that has sparked nationwide protests and talk of new Western sanctions.

The Moscow court hearing came after tens of thousands filled the streets across the country on Sunday, chanting slogans against President Vladimir Putin and demanding freedom for Navalny, who was detained last month on his return from Germany, where he was treated for an alleged nerve agent attack. Navalny watched Tuesday's hearing from inside a glass cage in the courtroom. Before proceedings began, he praised Yulia, his wife, who was present after being fined the previous day for taking part in a protest to demand his release.

"They said that you had seriously violated public order and were a bad girl. I'm proud of you," Navalny said. Russian police detained 112 people as they gathered near the court, the OVD-Info protest monitoring group said. During Sunday's protests, more than 5,400 protesters were detained by authorities during Sunday's demonstrations, according to OVD-Info.

## UAE confident F-35 jets sale will go through

## FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: The United Arab Emirates' ambassador to Washington says he is confident the sale of F-35 jets to his country will proceed after a review by the new US administration of some pending arms sales to American allies.

On former President Donald Trump's last day in office last month, the UAE signed agreements with the US to buy up to 50 stealth F-35 fighters, 18 armed drones, and other defence equipment in a deal worth \$23bn. "We did everything by the book and they will discover that once the review is complete and it will proceed," Ambassador Yousef al-Otaiba told a virtual Washington Institute forum on Monday, describing the review as "pro forma". Last month, a US Department of State official said President Joe Biden's administration was temporarily pausing the implementation of some weapons sales to US allies to review them. "Everything is still proceeding while undergoing a review at the same time. I am confident it will end up in the right place," al-Otaiba said. "If you are going to have less of a presence and less involvement in the Middle East you can't at the same time take tools away from your partners who are expected to do more," he said.

## Berlin welcomes Greece-Turk talks

## DNA

BERLIN: Germany's defence minister on Tuesday welcomed the resumption of talks between Greece and Turkey over an explosive standoff about eastern Mediterranean borders and energy rights at a meeting with her Turkish counterpart in Berlin.

"The important thing is that talks have opened up again," Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer said after the meeting with Turkish Defence Minister Hulusi Akar. "Further escalation in the Mediterranean must be avoided," she said, adding that she hoped "all parties will see this as an opportunity for dialogue". Germany sees itself playing a "mediating role" in the dispute, she said after holding phone calls with her Greek and Cypriot counterparts ahead of the meeting. Greece and Turkey bowed to EU pressure in late January and engaged in their first direct talks in nearly five years in a long-running dispute over eastern Mediterranean borders and energy rights. The meeting produced no breakthrough except for an agreement for the talks to continue in Athens at an undisclosed date.



KABUL: Pakistan ambassador to Afghanistan, Mansoor Ahmad Khan met with Stefano Pontecorvo, NATO senior civilian representative and discussed regarding peace efforts in Afghanistan. – DNA

## Biden threatens sanctions after Myanmar military coup

Biden condemned the military's takeover from the civilian-led government on Monday and its detention of the country's elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi as "a direct assault on the country's transition to democracy and the rule of law"

## FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden on Monday threatened to reimpose sanctions on Myanmar following a coup by the country's military leaders and called for a concerted international response to push them into relinquishing power. Biden condemned the military's takeover from the civilian-led government on Monday and its detention of the country's elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi as "a direct assault on the country's transition to democracy and the rule of law".

The crisis in Myanmar marks the first chief test of Biden's pledge to collaborate more with allies on international challenges, especially on China's rising influence, in contrast to predecessor Donald Trump's "America First" approach. The coup also brought rare policy alignment between Biden's Democrats and top Republicans as they denounced the military takeover and called for consequences. "The international community

should come together in one voice to press the Burmese military to immediately relinquish the power they have seized, release the activists and officials they have detained," Biden said in a statement. "The United States removed sanctions on Burma over the past decade based on progress toward democracy. The reversal of that progress will necessitate an immediate review of our sanction laws and authorities, followed by appropriate action," he said. Biden warned the US was "taking note of those who stand with the people of Burma in this difficult hour." "We will work with our partners throughout the region and the world to support the restoration of democracy and the rule of law, as well as to hold accountable those responsible for overturning Burma's democratic transition," he said. A US official later told the Reuters news agency the administration had launched high-level internal discussions aimed at crafting a "whole of government" response and planned to consult closely



with Congress. Greg Poling and Simon Hudes at Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies said there would almost certainly be new sanctions against those involved in the coup. "But that is unlikely to have much immediate impact on the generals," they said, given that few of them had any intention of travelling to or doing business in the US. Also, unlike its reaction to a 2014 coup in Thailand, the US cannot pull back on military exercises, training, and sales, because military-to-military relations with Myanmar are almost non-existent, they said. Former President Barack Obama

started easing sanctions on Myanmar in 2011 after the military began loosening its grip, and in 2016 lifted many remaining restrictions. In 2019, the Trump administration imposed targeted sanctions on four military commanders, including coup leader General Min Aung Hlaing, over allegations of abuses against Rohingya Muslims and other minorities. Human rights groups said the international community needed to recognise the shortcomings of their engagement during Myanmar's democratic transition and take tougher steps to rein in the military.

"The Tatmadaw has exposed the vast vulnerabilities of Myanmar's democratic institutions by staging this brazen coup," Akila Radhakrishnan, the president of the Global Justice Center. "Given the history of military rule, the risk of ensuing violence and atrocities is greater than any moment in recent memory. We can't ignore the repeated failure of the international community to take concerted action to curb military power and hold it accountable for

its constant human rights abuses, including its genocidal campaign against the Rohingya."

As the country's leader, Aung San Suu Kyi defended her nation at the International Court of Justice in The Hague on 2019 against charges of genocide in the treatment of the mostly Muslim Rohingya after at least 740,000 fled the western state of Rakhine in the wake of a brutal military crackdown in 2017. Monitors say the armed forces continue to commit abuses in Rakhine and in other ethnic minority areas of the country. The Network for Human Rights Documentation - Burma (ND-Burma) said an emergency meeting at the United Nations Security Council had to be convened, with a delegation to be sent to Myanmar. "Members must address the current situation in Myanmar with greater force and effectiveness than they have in the past," ND-Burma said in a statement. The 15-member Security Council plans to discuss Myanmar in a closed meeting on Tuesday, according to diplomats.

## Taliban accuse US forces of transporting Da'ish militants

Blaming the American forces for the recent uptick in violence in the country, the leaders said the US had defaulted on the terms agreed during the agreement in February and resumed the attacks

## FOREIGN DESK

TEHRAN: The Afghan Taliban have made a startling revelation that the United States forces in Afghanistan were involved in transporting Da'ish militants into the war-torn country through their helicopters.

Senior members of Taliban, who are currently on a visit to Iran to discuss the peace process, made the statement at a news conference in Tehran on Tuesday, according to Iranian Press TV. They went on to add that the US forces were also helping the Islamic State militants escape the areas under the Taliban's control. Blaming the American forces for the

## 3 killed in wave of bomb attacks in Afghanistan

KABUL: At least three people were killed and seven wounded in a series of explosions in Afghanistan on Tuesday, after Western countries called on the Taliban to end a wave of violence that the group denies responsibility for. With Washington and NATO reviewing plans to withdraw their forces from the country by May, one blast in Kabul hit an SUV and killed two people, including Mohammad Atif, the head of non-governmental charity Jamiat-i-Islah, police in the capital said. Two other explosions in the city, which caused injuries, targeted, respectively, a jeep of the counter-narcotics force and a civilian vehicle. – DNA

recent uptick in violence in the country, the leaders said the US had defaulted on the terms agreed during the agreement in February and resumed the attacks. "We have no access to the media but they have. They

attribute violence to us and that is not true. They start the violence. They start the violent action and that's still continuing." Regarding the Afghan peace initiatives, Taliban negotiators said that the group was work-

ing on an "inclusive system and establishment" and was against the "monopolising of power". They also hinted at resuming terms of reference of an earlier agreement signed with the US if the foreign forces did not succeed in withdrawing from Afghanistan. Earlier in the day, three people were killed and seven others wounded in a series of explosions in Afghanistan after the Western countries called on the Taliban to end a wave of violence that the group denies responsibility for. Last week, Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif stressed upon formation of an "all-inclusive" Afghan government during a meeting with a Taliban delegation in Tehran.

## Japan extends virus emergency

TOKYO: Japan's government approved a month-long extension of its coronavirus state of emergency on Tuesday, less than six months before the pandemic-postponed Olympic Games open in Tokyo. "We have decided to extend the state of emergency until March 7th," Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said at a meeting of the taskforce guiding the government's pandemic policy. The extension will apply to 10 of the 11 areas currently under the measure, including greater Tokyo, which had been due to end on February 7. It will not be extended in Tochigi, north of the capital, where cases are judged to have dropped sufficiently.

"In prefectures where the virus situation improves, we will gradually lift the state of emergency, without having to wait for March 7th," Suga added. The extension had been widely expected, with government spokesman Katsumoto Kato telling reporters Tuesday morning that "it is our understanding that continued vigilance is warranted for a while". Japan's virus emergency is significantly looser than the lockdowns seen elsewhere in the world, and primarily calls for increased teleworking and the closure of bars and restaurants from 8pm.

Legislation currently working its way through parliament would add enforcement measures including fines for businesses that do not close early. But even the comparatively relaxed approach appears to have yielded results, with new infections dropping across the country. Still, after facing criticism for its initial reluctance to impose the measure, the government has been cautious about lifting it too quickly. "Since the declaration of the state of emergency last month, the number of coronavirus patients in Japan is declining and we can say this measure focusing on shorter hours at restaurants has clearly been effective," Suga said. – DNA

## Pak Embassy in Azerbaijan hosts webinar on Kashmir

Ms. Mullickin her recorded message stated that Kashmir had been turned into a largest prison in the world where torture, arbitrary confinement, and rape was used as a weapon. He appealed to the international community to raise voice against the injustices committed in Kashmir by the Indian forces

## DNA

BAKU: A webinar titled "Kashmir: An Unfinished Agenda" was hosted by the Embassy of Pakistan in Azerbaijan on Monday. The President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJ&K) were also shown. This collage comprising the self-made videos by the Azerbaijan youth sent to the just cause of Kashmir. In his emphatic statement, Sardar Masood Khan talked about the historical, geographical, cultural and commercial linkages of Jammu and Kashmir with Pakistan. He argued that

Yasin Malik), and a human rights activist based in US, Malik Nadeem Abid. During the webinar, video messages prepared by the Azerbaijani youth expressing solidarity with the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJ&K) were also shown. This collage comprising the self-made videos by the Azerbaijan youth sent to the just cause of Kashmir. In his emphatic statement, Sardar Masood Khan talked about the historical, geographical, cultural and commercial linkages of Jammu and Kashmir with Pakistan. He argued that



India occupied the territory through deceit and repression. On 5 August 2019, India reoccupied the territory and did all it could to suppress the Kashmiri people. President Masood Khan rejected creation of new political class in Kashmir.

He demanded India to release all Kashmiri political leaders and stop genocide in Kashmir. He called upon the UNSC, OIC, friendly countries, international civil society and Human Rights organisations to play their role in ending the dispute.

Malik Nadeem Abid highlighted the atrocities committed by the Indian occupation forces in Kashmir and equated Indian actions in Kashmir to genocide. He proposed that the UN Secretary General should nominate plebiscite administrator for Jammu and Kashmir as per the UNSC resolutions. Ms. Mullickin her recorded message stated that Kashmir had been turned into a largest prison in the world where torture, arbitrary confinement, and rape was used as a weapon. He appealed to the international community to raise voice against the injustices committed in Kashmir by the Indian forces. Mem-

ber of Parliament Ms. Pashayeva noted that Azerbaijan and Pakistan had a number of similarities and common interests. Our challenges were also similar. She stressed that Justice for Kashmir and restoration of Peace in the region was among the greatest desires of Azerbaijan. Ms. Pashayeva added that Azerbaijan would continue to support Pakistan's rightful position in resolving the Kashmir dispute. Ambassador Bilal Hayee moderated the event and made introductory remarks highlighting the current situation in the IIOJ&K. The event was live streamed from the Embassy's official Facebook page.

## Twitter blocks farmers accounts

## WEB DESK

NEW DELHI: Twitter on Monday temporarily blocked dozens of accounts and tweets in India at the Hindu nationalist government's request, including those of a prominent news magazine and farmers staging mass protests in the capital. An Information Technology ministry source told the AFP news agency the government had directed the social media giant to act against about 250 Twitter accounts and tweets that posed a "grave threat to public order".

The accounts were blocked on Monday afternoon but were accessible again hours later. Tens of thousands of farmers have been protesting since November 26 in camps on the outskirts of New Delhi against the deregulation of India's agriculture sector. One rally last week turned into a deadly rampage. Since then, police have detained dozens of farmers and a journalist who writes for Caravan magazine. The magazine, some farmer activists and unions, some opposition leaders, an actor and an economist were among those whose Twitter accounts were blocked in India.

A Twitter spokeswoman said "it may be necessary to withhold access to certain content in a particular country from time to time" if "a properly scoped" request is made. A spokesman for the farmers said their accounts "had not done anything wrong" apart from supporting the long-running protests.

The executive editor of Caravan, Vinod K Jose, said the blocking of their account was the "latest in a long list of targeted attacks" by authorities against the publication over their reporting. Global media watchdog Reporters Without Borders slammed the suspensions, which it called a "shocking case of blatant censorship".

## Italy's ruling parties face deadline

## DNA

ROME: Italy's ruling parties remained locked in talks ahead of a deadline Tuesday to agree a new government, risking further uncertainty despite the coronavirus pandemic that has devastated the economy. Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte quit last week after one of his coalition partners withdrew in a row over the government's handling of Covid-19, but still hopes to return at the helm of a revised cabinet.

The ruling parties, notably the populist Five Star Movement (M5S) and centre-left Democratic Party, have since Friday been in detailed talks on the way forward, including with former premier Matteo Renzi's Italia Viva, which sparked the crisis by leaving the government last month.

President Sergio Mattarella, who as head of state is responsible for finding a way through the crisis, gave them until Tuesday to show they could form a government - with or without Conte at the helm. Mattarella has stressed the urgency of the task as Italy navigates the pandemic, which has killed almost 89,000 people.

## China mission going 'very well': WHO

## DNA

WUHAN, CHINA: The World Health Organization mission probing the origins of Covid-19 in China was going "very well", one of its members said Tuesday, as the team visited an animal disease control centre in the city where the first cases were reported.

China has faced criticism at home and abroad for playing down the initial outbreak and concealing information when it first emerged in Wuhan in December 2019, raising doubts over the usefulness of the WHO trip. The investigative team arrived at the Hubei province animal disease prevention centre in Wuhan Tuesday morning, where the group donned white hazmat suits for a tour of the facilities. Team member Peter Daszak told journalists the mission was "excellent" and proceeding "very well" as the group was driven into the facility, while team lead Peter Ben Embarek nodded when asked if the experts were being given sufficient access in Wuhan.



**Briefs**

**Shehbaz Sharif raises health issue**

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif once again raised the issue of his health during a court hearing on Tuesday related to the money-laundering case against him and his son, Hamza Shehbaz. An accountability court in Lahore heard the case proceedings for which both PML-N leaders were escorted under strict security. At the rostrum, the former chief minister of Punjab said he was grateful to the court for the order it gave regarding his health, noting that his personal physician was added to the medical board. Shehbaz said some of his "medical tests are yet to be carried out" but the jail authorities have been "constantly delaying them". Officials at the prison where he has been detained "kept making excuses to hinder the tests," he claimed, adding that they had only taken blood samples from him. In addition, he presented the much-touted Transparency International report on corruption to the court and addressed the judge, saying: "Look, there was no corruption during our government." To which, the senior judge told Shehbaz "not to waste his time and let him do his work in the court."

**BISP removes additional 29,961 individuals**

ZUBAIR AHMED

ISLAMABAD: Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) has exited an additional 29,961 individuals from its list of beneficiaries, following the data cleaning exercise under Ehsaas Governance framework. In a tweet, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Protection, Dr. Sania Nishtar Tuesday revealed that additional 29,961 individuals have been made ineligible for receiving the cash assistance as per availability of more data in 2020. Among those removed from the BISP list of beneficiaries included 15,326 pensioners, 273 government employees, 9,991 high income individuals (as documented by FBR data) and 4,371 employees of autonomous agencies (as per data of 30 out of 74 agencies). Dr. Nishtar disclosed. Earlier in the year 2019, BISP exited 820,165 individuals from its beneficiaries' list out of which 142,556 were government servants.

**Sindh to close schools if cases increase**

DNA

KARACHI: Sindh might close schools if the coronavirus infections in the province witness an increase. The announcement came a day after all of the educational institutions in the province reopened. Sindh Education Minister Saeed Ghani, addressing a press conference on Tuesday, said that on February 1, all educational institutions reopened, while some unprepared schools remained close. "Parents who do not want to send their children to schools can refrain from it. Also, the administration can't ensure SOPs implementation; the parents should play their part in it as well," the education minister said. Moreover, the education minister said that 50% attendance was permitted in the schools in a bid to keep the virus at bay, adding that the government had conducted COVID-19 testing in schools and colleges. Until now, the positivity rate in colleges is 1.9%, while in schools it stands at 5.9%, Ghani said. The education minister highlighted that four colleges had been shut after several COVID-19 cases were reported there. Sharing further statistics, he said that the government had conducted 11,845 tests in the province's schools and from them, 546 came positive. "As the minister, I want the education department to improve."

**Belarus businessmen keen in importing Pakistani products**

Expressing gratitude for the briefing, Mr. Topouzidis assured to start import of basmati rice and Himalayan salt products in the near future, as a start



DNA

MINSK: Ambassador Sajjad Haider Khan held a meeting with Pavel G. Topouzidis, owner of "Korona Chain Stores" who is also the Chairman of the Board of Directors of "Tabak Invest" to discuss trade and investment opportunities with Pakistan.

Mr. Topouzidis is also the Honorary Consul of Greece and Romania in Minsk. Highlighting the quality and price competitiveness of Pakistani exportable commodities, the Ambassador proposed providing opportunity for export of Home Textile products, rice, Himalayan Pink salt products, Kinnow and denim products to

be sold at the Korona stores across Belarus. Besides, potential for import of tobacco and marble was also discussed. Expressing gratitude for the briefing, Mr. Topouzidis assured to start import of basmati rice and Himalayan salt products in the near future, as a start.



**China's locust monitoring protects Pak agriculture**

DNA

BEIJING: China's supported Desert Locust Monitoring Archive protects Pakistani agriculture, says a report published by Gwadar Pro on Monday. In order to protect Pakistani agriculture from desert locust, as of January 2021, 15 desert locust disaster monitoring reports have been issued. The report says, all of them were uploaded to Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) this week.

In order to provide real-time information on the locust situation, the data in the system is continuously updated. Meanwhile, analytical reports are also being produced and released regularly. The monitoring archive, integrated with multi-source Earth Observation data, self-developed models and algorithms, is launched by RSCROP, supported by Institute of Remote Sensing and Digital Earth of Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS). Publishing the reports on GBIF means that valuable

data is accessible to each Pakistani for free. The archive focuses on the situation of desert locusts in Pakistan, meanwhile also mentions cases in other countries such as Kenya, Ethiopia, Yemen and so on. RSCROP said that the archive will provide technical support for multinational joint prevention and control of locust. "Through protecting ecosystem security and biodiversity, we'd love to contribute China's scientific and technological strength to Pakistani food security and

human well-being. The online archive, believed as an effective means for dealing with locust disasters, will protect Pakistan's agricultural development. RSCROP confirmed that they will continue to follow the progress, constantly work on Pakistani desert locust prevention, and release related service data and scientific reports. The system has been used by government organs, international organizations, research institutes, universities and enterprises in China, Britain and Italy.

**SC orders removal of Omar Sheikh from death cell**

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court has ordered the immediate removal of Ahmed Omar Sheikh, accused in the murder case of American journalist Daniel Pearl, from the death cell. During the proceedings, the attorney-general told the court that Sheikh is not an ordinary accused, but a mastermind of terrorists and that he will disappear if released. Justice Mumib Akhtar said the sacrifices of the armed forces are not denied, but the court is bound by the Constitution. Justice Bandial remarked that Sheikh was accused of kidnapping Pearl. He asked the attorney-general whether it had been proved that Sheikh was involved in terrorist activities. The attorney-general argued that the federation has the power to detain dangerous criminals, to which Justice Sajjad Ali Shah said that Sheikh had already been illegally detained for a month. "The court cannot legalise your illegal actions," Justice Shah told the attorney-general. Justice Akhtar said it was not the dark ages that an accused should remain in jail even after 18 years, while Justice Shah said that the face of the body was not visible in the video of Daniel Pearl's murder. The court then ordered immediate removal of Sheikh from the death cell and said he should be shifted to the general barracks for two days. After this, Sheikh should be shifted to a government rest house by Friday under tight security, where his family will be able to visit from 8am to 5pm.

**More than 100 million vaccinated**

PARIS: More than 100 million Covid-19 vaccines have been given around the world, an AFP tally from official sources found Tuesday. But none of the world's 29 poorest countries has formally started mass vaccination drives, while the richest nations have given more than two-thirds of jabs administered. Israel leads the race by far, with 37 percent of its population having received at least one dose, while more than a fifth have already got their second. Yet more than a third of humanity (35 percent) live in countries where vaccination has yet to begin. After Israel, the countries that have given the most doses are in North America, Europe and the Persian Gulf. The EU heads this group in per capita terms with shots given to 13.7 percent of its people, ahead of the US (32.2 million shots to 7.9 percent). The European Union has been clashing bitterly with AstraZeneca over access to supplies of its vaccine, with only 12.7 million shots given to 2.3 percent of its people. China by contrast has given 24 million shots, while India - where many of the vaccines are made - has given only four million to a tiny percentage of its vast population. The EU's best performing countries are tiny Malta (5.4 percent), Denmark (3.2 percent) and Poland (3.1 percent). The UK's nearest competitor in Europe is Serbia, which is also outside the bloc. It has given the Chinese Sinopharm and Russia's Sputnik V jabs to 6.2 percent of its population. - APP

**Sindh reduces exam duration to two hours**

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Sindh Education Minister Saeed Ghani has on Tuesday announced that the examination duration has been reduced from three hours to two and the paper pattern has been changed. The provincial minister addressed a press conference at the Sindh Assembly and said model papers according to the new pattern will be released soon. The government wants to compensate for the loss of students' education due to covid, he stressed. Saeed Ghani said, "The government conducted 13,966 coronavirus tests in colleges out of which 266 returned positive. Two colleges were closed as a result. 11,845 students were tested in schools and 546 were reported positive. "The government is trying to speed up the testing procedure and to achieve the maximum target on daily basis. A lot of work has been done in the education sector in Sindh. Those schools without buildings, teachers and students have been excluded from lists."

**OGDCL discovered gas/condensate at Sial-1 well**

ISLAMABAD: Oil & Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) as Operator (95%) and Government Holdings (Pvt.) Limited (5%) has discovered Gas & Condensate from its Exploratory Well Sial-1, which is located in District Hyderabad, Sindh Province. The structure of Sial-1 was drilled and tested using OGDCL's in house expertise. The well was drilled down to the depth of 2442 Meters. Based on logs data, the well was tested at rate of 1.146 Million Standard Cubic Feet per Day (MMSCFD) of gas and 680 barrels per day (BPD) of condensate through 32/64" choke at Well Head Flowing Pressure of 460 Pounds per Square Inch (Psi) from Lower Goru Formation. The discovery of Sial Well-1 is the result of aggressive exploration strategy adopted by the company. It has opened a new avenue and would add to the Hydrocarbon reserves base of OGDCL, its joint venture partners and of the country. It will also contribute in diminishing the supply and demand gap of oil & gas in the country through the exploration & exploitation of indigenous resources. - DNA



**Chinese enterprises to support Pakistani textile**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Optimistic about the huge advantages of Pakistan's textile industry, Challenge Fashion (Pvt) Ltd. has bought 80 acres of land in Lahore and is currently applying for the qualification of the Special Economic Zone, to fully enjoy the policy support of the local government and the preferential dividend of cross-regional market tax rates. According to Gwadar Pro, the company plans to invest USD 150 million in three phases to build a 100-ton fabric production park, which will start construction in mid-2021. 25

tons of fabric and garment equipment will be put into production in the second half of 2022, with 6,000 workers to be employed and projected annual sales of USD 80 million. Karen Chen, CEO of Challenge Fashion, told Gwadar Pro that the establishment of a supply chain cluster will help improve Pakistan's labor structure and management. "We hope to demonstrate China's industrial park standards to our Pakistani counterparts by creating a Chinese-regulated industrial park project. We can enable Chinese enterprises interested in overseas layout to see Pakistan's investment potential, and also provide project

landing sites for SMEs so that they can fully enjoy the preferential investment policies provided by the Pakistani government." Through the early experimental operation of Challenge Apparels, the company gains a deeper understanding of the business environment in Pakistan, which provides a practical basis for additional investment decisions. "Pakistan has significant labor advantage to ensure the sufficient labor supply. Most of the existing textile enterprises have relatively outdated equipment, back-

ward management and products of low efficiency and low added value. Therefore, Chinese-funded enterprises have great development potential in technology and management after investing in Pakistan." Karen said that "the tariff-free treatment of textiles exported to the EU, together with China's Free Trade Agreement, can guarantee the price edge of Pakistani products. Pakistani fabrics exported to Africa or Jordan can enter North America without tariffs, and the route is much shorter than from East Asia." Nevertheless, Pakistan's textile industry still boasts great potential for optimization and upgrading. "The

biggest obstacle to industrial investment in Pakistan lies in the location of the project, which is also one of the main reasons why the country is unable to develop industry on a large scale. There has been no mature industrial park system so far. The industrial parks are located in remote areas, which are not suitable for labor-intensive enterprises to carry out business," Karen further mentioned. As Pakistan's pillar industry, the textile industry has helped the country survive the difficult time of 2020 and is still regarded as an important force for strengthening the national economy during the ongoing global pandemic.

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**Altaf Hussain in ICU**

DNA

LONDON: The Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM) founder and leader, Altaf Hussain, is in the Barnet Hospital's Intensive Care Unit (ICU) after contracting Covid-19 around two to three weeks ago. Media visited the hospital on Monday and the staff confirmed that the Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM) leader is in the coronavirus ward of the hospital under intensive care and no visitor, friend or family is allowed to meet him - as is the rule for all COVID-19 patients. On Sunday night, an audio message of the Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM) leader was distributed in which the former Karachi strongman appealed, in a shaken voice, to his followers to pray for him after announcing that he had been admitted to the ICU. "I have been in the ICU in hospital for the last 20 days. It is due to your (supporters') prayers that I have been able to record this message on this day of Saturday, Jan 30, 2021," the MQM leader had said. Hussain had added: "May Allah protect everyone from this disease, Covid-19," he said, and appealed to listeners to "take precautions and help each other."

**FIA makes headway in fake licenses scandal**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has made progress in the fake pilots' licenses scandal, it emerged on Tuesday. During interrogation, several senior Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) officials have admitted to taking money from Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) as frontmen. According to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), the probe has revealed that the pilots had paid Rs0.5 million per paper to get someone else to attempt their exams for them. It is pertinent to mention here that the dubious licenses claims were put forward by Federal Minister for Aviation Ghulam Sarwar Khan in the National Assembly in June of last year after a Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) jet crashed in Karachi. Sarwar had announced in the NA that of the 860 pilots working in Pakistan, 262, over 30%, had fake flying licenses. He later backtracked and used a slightly different terminology of "licenses obtained through dubious means." This, he said, had been disclosed during a high-level investigation by a Board of Inquiry (BOI) constituted in February 2019.

**Over 0.5m health workers registered**

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Over 0.5mn frontline health workers have registered themselves for the first phase of the COVID-19 vaccination that is due to kick-off tomorrow (Wednesday). The drive will begin tomorrow at 11 in the morning at the NCOC, sources said and added that frontline health workers of 15 sensitive cities of the country will receive coronavirus jabs. The staff of government, private and coronavirus isolation centres will receive the dose of the vaccine in the first phase tomorrow. The vaccination process will be completed before March 31, sources privy to the development said. Meanwhile, the registration process of the health workers fighting the pandemic as first line of defense is also underway and up to now over 0.5mn workers have registered themselves. Sources within the health ministry said that the process of dispatching the Covid vaccine to all the provinces is underway with Punjab and Gilgit-Baltistan having already been sent the vaccine by road.